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ON MAY 27 1960 COUP AND ITS CAUSES

Abstract

It seems that there are two main causes of the May 27 coup. First, there was a general feeling among the bureaucratic elite that their influence on the Turkish political life and system was decreasing and an intervention was inevitable to restore this influence. Second, the university youth were displeased by the general policies of the government. However, as this study demonstrates, a third dimension in the making of the coup has played a role: the international dynamics. In other words, Turkey's geopolitics or geopolitical culture also were determining in the making of the coup. In this regard, in the study, a critical evaluation of the literature on the May 27 is presented with a comparative approach. In addition to this, an analysis of DP's clash and tensions with various social layers, universities, press, military and the opposition party is carried out.

Key Words: the May 27, Bureaucratic State Tradition, Turkey's Geopolitics

27 MAYIS DARBESİ VE SEBEPLERİ ÜZERİNE

Özet

Bürokrasinin Türk siyasal yaşamında etkisinin zayıflamaya başlamasının hissedilmesi ve bu etkinin yeniden tesisi için müdahalede bulunma arzusuyla 'cumhuriyetçi' üniversite gençliğinin genel olarak hükümet politikalarından rahatsız olması 27 Mayıs darbesinin iki önemli sebebi gibi görünmektedir. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışmada tartışıldığı gibi, 27 Mayısın iç dinamiklerini biçimlendiren bu etmenler müdahalenin sebeplerini açıklamakta yetersizdir. İç koşullar dış dinamiklerin istediği şekilde düzenlenmiştir, diğer bir deyişle, Türkiye'nin jeopolitiği veya jeopolitik kültürü de darbenin gerçekleşmesinde

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belirleyici olmuştur. Bu çalışmada 27 Mayıs'a dair kaleme alınmış literatürün karşılaştırmalı bir bakış açısından değerlendirilmesi de yapılmıştır. Buna ilaveten, DP'nin çeşitli toplumsal katmanlar, üniversiteler, basın, asker ve ana muhalefet partisi ile yaşadığı gerilimlerin bir analizi sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: 27 Mayıs, Bürokratik Devlet Geleneği, Türkiye'nin Jeopolitiği

INTRODUCTION

It is known that the main rival of the Democratic Party on the eve of coming into power was the Republican People's Party from which it was formed. It can be said that the DP was successful in the 1946 elections, despite the fact that the election was held immediately after the party was founded and its organization had not yet been spread throughout the country. However, the fact that the elections were held in the form of open voting-closed counting (Varlık and Ören, 2001: 82-86), and claims that government forces organized incredible schemes in the elections were never off the agenda during the period of 1946-1950 (Çavdar, 2000: 16 et al). Nevertheless, with the 62 MPs won according to the results of the elections of 1946, the DP showed an opposition that was light in weight but heavy in value. It could not be said that the opposition party, which had been in the parliament for the first time in election, was a uniform party in full consensus. As a matter of fact, the debate on how the opposition should be conducted was the cause of the first division.

A group of prominent names of the party who were claimed to have *secret ties* with the CHP (Republican People's Party) broke away from the party through resignations and expulsions over time (Ağaoğlu, 1993: 151 et al).³ What is interesting is that those who opposed the party management and found İnönü inefficient later on started to gather around İnönü, the main opposition leader then, in the second half of the fifties (Ağaoğlu, 1965: 55-68).

In the next 2 elections, the CHP had to pay for not having changed the electoral system while it could; this can be seen in the 1950 elections when it won 39% of the valid votes but could only win 68 seats in the parliament (Karpaz, 1996: 202). The elections of May 14, 1950 were held in the presence of the legal regulations that broadly eliminated the complaints of the opposition in the course of a 4-year period and the DP came into power.

A majority of the society certainly expected that the DP would win these elections; but what was really surprising was that the CHP was not so miserable after the elections despite the weariness being in power for 27 years brought. The fact that the CHP won almost 39% of the valid votes proves this (Ayata, 1992: 76). The attitude of the CHP against the DP, which actually took over the power on May 22, 1950, was never a "wait and see" attitude. The CHP supporters, especially its leader, repeated that the DP came into power by deceiving people and followed a *politics of deceiving* with promises that were impossible to realize.

The attitude of the DP, of course, was not at all bland when they understood that the most obvious examples of destructive opposition would begin to be exhibited. With the law numbered 6195 issued in 1953, the goods claimed to have been taken over by the CHP in single-party years were classified as *unfair acquisition* and transferred to treasure (Güneş, 1963: 345-361). The opposition of the CHP became even sharper against this law and it was said that

³ To find out that these allegations are not so groundless, see (Nesimi, 1977: 211-222).

the DP wanted to remain unrivalled in the political arena with this regulation done before the 1954 elections, and that this was clearly the intention of creating a dictatorship.

Nevertheless, the 1954 elections seemed to be a new hope for the CHP; but it is possible to say that there was a deep disappointment when the election results showed that the ruling party increased its power and that the opposition started to melt compared to the 1950 elections. The CHP received about 35% of the votes at these elections, while the number of seats won was reduced to 31 (Çavdar, 2000: 49 et al). The election results of 1954 caused a brief disagreement on the leader of the CHP Şemsettin Günaltay, who was the leader of the party in its last ruling year. Günaltay was saying that a CHP with İnönü leading would never come into power (Toker, 1991: 42-45).

The years of 1954-1957 are a period when the performance of the DP in a sense is questioned by large masses. When the dissatisfaction of the masses because of the negative effects of the economic downturn was added to the traditional opposition of the military and civilian wing of the bureaucracy; it can be said that that the ruling party, which was almost at the peak of the internal party factions, entered into a process of division and this was embodied with the Hürriyet (Freedom) Party (Demirci, 2002). Considering the HP'S votes in the 1957 election, it can be seen that it was not much successful in the election; however, the main effect of the destruction it made was that the voters regarded the CHP as the centre of the front to be established against the DP.

The outcomes of the 1957 elections were promising for the opposition while they meant that the alarm bells started to ring for the DP (Sarol, 1983: 784). In consequence of this election, DP was entering its third period as a party which, unlike the previous two periods, had not received the approval of half of the electorate. The CHP had a representation of 178 seats in parliament with an approximate rate of 41%, and, it thought that it would come into power again in the next elections if it did not give the DP a chance to recover (Arcayürek, 1984: 257 et al).

Undoubtedly, the CHP was not a party that was left alone in the opposition to the DP. With his charismatic personality and strong oratory *Osman Bölükbaşı* and his party *Republican Nation Party; Tahsin Demiray's Turkey Peasant Party;*⁴ *Fevzi Lütfi Karaosmanoğlu's HP* which was formed from the DP as a result of the disagreements of right to prove were other elements of the opposition parties. However, the real struggle between 1950 and 1960 was between the DP and the CHP. The other parties were important in that they proved that the CHP was not an ambitious party that carried out a destructive opposition in order to win the power again it had lost; on the contrary, the unrest came from almost every section of the society.

The CMP was a party of a person as described by political scientists (Turan, 1996: 120), and had the potential of a blocked vote in Kırşehir, the home town of its leader, rather than throughout the country. HP was almost a group of leaders; *the party consisting of names such as Ekrem Hayri Üstündağ, Fevzi Lütfi Karaosmanoğlu, Raif Aybar, Turan Güneş, Fethi Çelikbas, Ekrem Alican and Aydın Yalçın* was not founded to lead the masses like İnönü and Menderes did.

After 1957, when the route of the power march to be held until the next election was determined, the signs that there would be attacks from different sides with single target were

⁴ The CMP of Bölükbaşı and the TKP of Demiray united on October 16, 1958 and became Republican Peasant Nation Party (Çaylak, 2010: 348), and the said party was transformed into the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) on 9 February 1969 under the leadership of Türkeş (Bora and Can, 1991: 48).

seen. According to the main opposition leader, they had to have intense propaganda activities every day after the election as if the next election would be held tomorrow. The veteran writers of the press would hail İnönü, who would start trips around the country and bombard the ruling party, as the victorious commander of the War of Independence; propaganda trips would be shown in the headlines containing militarist items; the trips named *Thrace Invasion*, *Aegean Attack* would be carried out in a way that would provoke the ruling party (Erer, Undated: 360-365).

It was obvious that the trips that İnönü had launched throughout the country would not create any problems, and as a matter of fact, they created problems. The incidents that would be named in the Turkish political life as *Kayseri*, *Topkapı*, *Yeşilhisar* incidents happened in this process (Yerdeş, 2006: 24). Indeed, the incident of 9 Officers which was a sign of the Coup which was evidently coming, and that some senior CHP supporters were allegedly related to this incident were frequently spoken after May 27 (İpekçi and Coşar, 1965: 69 et al).

As a result, there are two major parties that may be the subject of the distance between May 27 and the parties: DP and CHP. It was rumoured that the CHP gathered the press, universities, the judiciary, and a part of the military around a target before May 27 and that it called for a coup by denouncing the DP because of its dictatorial attitudes and applications to the sections to be called *vigorous forces* in the coming years (Bayar, 1999: 68 et al).

There are claims that the CHP was the ringleader of May 27 with the youth demonstrations held by its youth organizations on April 28 in İstanbul and April 29 in Ankara, which were two important incidents of the period prior to May 27, the demonstrations that was called 555K and May 21 Harbiye march (Yalçın, 1994: 316). The allegations that the CHP was the dominant establishment where the civilian supporters of the coup gathered with the campaign of denouncement held to influence the court in Yassıada after the coup; with the witnesses who were allegedly known with their prevarication at the court and with the expression that they were *neither in nor out of May 27* have been voiced up until today (Kahraman, 1994: 145).

It is known that those who carried out the May 27 coup were the members of a coalition of junta organized within the Turkish Armed Forces. It is also recorded that the result of the schism in the National Unity Committee established after the coup resulted in an internal purge dated 13 November 1960. It is an unfair assessment to attribute the sin or pride of May 27 coup, or revolution to some sections, to the military just because they actually performed the coup. Here, in this very frame, the matter that this study is trying to put forth becomes clear. The developments on the way to May 27 are being debated on the axis of bureaucracy and university.

1. Historicity of Bureaucratic Domination

One of the three main stops of the Turkish modernization roadmap is the army, the other is the judiciary and the other is the bureaucracy. The history of the modernization of the government which became more evident during the *Tanzimat Period* (the reforms made in 1839) (Eryılmaz, 1990) was the bureaucracy of foreign affairs whose understanding and staff were removed with *the Greek Rebellion*. Due to the collaborative attitude they exhibited during the rebellion, the bureaucratic class consisting of Greek-Ottoman citizens constituting a very important part of the bureaucracy of Ottoman foreign affairs was purged (Timur, 1996: 21 and Ortaylı, 1983).

Koca Mustafa Reshid Pasha, whose name is almost identified with *Tanzimat* not only marked a certain period of the state *but also transferred the center of power from the Sultan to a new type of bureaucracy through Âli and Fuad Pashas* whom he trained himself, with the initiative taken at such a critical time (Timur, 1988). *The Translation Chamber* was the source of this new type of bureaucratic class equipped with a foreign language and the bureaucracy with the secular mind that passed to the republic period was born and developed from these vessels (Ortaylı, 1981: 229-234).

It can be said that the country was actually governed by this class from the *Tanzimat Fermanı (Imperial Edict of Reorganization)* declared on November 3, 1839, *immediately after the death of Sultan Mahmud II, until February 13, 1878, when Sultan Abdulhamid II* came to the throne and suspended the *Meclis-i Mebusan (Chamber of Deputies)* (Findley, 1996: 338–340).⁵ It is witnessed that even the sultan did not have the adequate power to resist the absolute sovereignty of the Ottoman bureaucracy which lasted for almost 39 years. It is among the strong claims that *Sultan Abdülaziz* who had this tendency to resist the bureaucracy, was murdered in a way which looked like a suicide.⁶

The process of purge of Islamic law also started during this period. The first achievement of the efforts of the Reformist modernists to gain positions in the conflict of power with the ulema was the establishment of *nizamiye courts* along with the *Islamic courts* (Tunaya, 1996: 110 et al). It cannot be said that this reform suddenly brought the state into a secular character; but it also cannot be denied that it was an important achievement in terms of the westernisation movement which was fed generously by the *Zeitgeist* of the era. The maxim *To be like the West* that was in the epistemological perceptions of almost every opposing or conformable section against the defeats against the West in almost every field was discussed as a matter of style and dosage rather than as a problem of target (Safa, 1938: 27-67).

In this respect, the West is an ideology that cannot be denied for the Ottoman intellectual, whether Ottoman or Western or Islamic, who is busy with writing prescriptions for the reclamation of the Empire. The period of Sultan Abdülhamid II, who is known as the red to a group and as the great khan to another group in the literature of Turkish political history, was a period when the political Pan-Islamism was at its peak as well as it covered the longest distance that the country took towards westernisation (Koloğlu, 1987: 425 et al).⁷

The roots of the bureaucratic class within the administrative structure inherited by the founding cadre of the Republic were fed from this tradition. Transforming the political and social structure that allows jacobenism in the country's modernization adventure remains only as a distant ideal. The bureaucracy, which assumes the mission of guiding the path to the destination, has the dilemmas that conflict with its own class interests. That is to say, the bureaucracy is unrivalled in leading since it is historically the most intelligent, the most equipped and the most capable class and in this respect, it is missing the participatory democracy, one of the most important qualities that characterize a modern society. The tool it uses largely corrupts its aim and it cannot restrain the desire of government. As Parla (1990: 325) said before in the context of Kemalist tutelage:

⁵ For English original, see (Findley, 1980: 291–294).

⁶ See the work that deals thoroughly with the incident (Öztuna, 1984).

⁷ See for details. (Tunaya, 1991).

"The widespread view that political anti-democracy is an inevitable method, or even a 'protutelage democratic' virtue, in the cause of cultural reformism, fails to notice this: the form and character of political life is not just an instrument; it is a value in itself; an anti-democratic ideology or institution does not go easy; it leaves deep traces, and has heavy burdens. Contrary to what is said, if there is no serious change, intention and potential for democratization in it, and if it takes the trouble to undergo a forced change under the pressure of external factors (from 1947)".

Thus, the bureaucracy learns by experience that as it exposes the country to the development, new power groups will naturally emerge in consequence of this process and that the differentiation that will take place in this way will turn into a conflict. In this direction, it can condemn the demands of participation of the base as a *counter-revolution* not as a long-awaited and expected development in terms of final target.⁸

The reflex of the civil bureaucracy before and after the May 27 coup is not surprising in this respect. Multi-party political life which inner dynamics had long demanded took place first through the Progressive Republican Party (Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası) (Zürcher, 1992) and then through Free Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası) (Yetkin, 1999) in a short period; but the first one was purged with great disturbance created by the division within the military bureaucracy (Toker, 1968: 44-49).

It is the second trial on which the civil bureaucracy puts its real weight. The dissatisfaction of large masses is at its limits and the charismatic leader of the regime is aware that the mechanisms of economic value transfer are ruthlessly functioning against large masses in the monopoly of a minority.⁹ He is hesitant at the point of making a *revolutionary* movement to break the power of bureaucratic molestation that operates without supervision, waywardly and under the command of one party. He sets aside his revolutionary side in the things he cannot afford; this time he activates his other feature, *legitimacy*, and has his oldest friends establish a rival political party which he believes will provide a soft transformation (Küçük, 2006: 58-59).

The attitude of the bureaucracy towards this move is even harder than he expects; when the reaction of the bureaucracy turns into an open threat for the party in the face of the complaisance of great public strata as expected (Tunçay, 1981: 262 et al), he has to join those in the accusations of *counter-revolution*. It is now inevitable for the party to dissolve itself which loses its biggest supporter.¹⁰

Within eight years until his death, there would be no new venture; but, the charismatic leader of the regime realizes that the second man is getting stronger. He is aware that he is a *war veteran, a halaskar (rescuer officer)* in the eyes of the large masses while the head of the government has no prestige for the public. With this consciousness, he applies the purge plan that was formed in his head a year before his death. In the face of this move, the bureaucracy

⁸ For an example, see (Eliçin, 1970).

⁹ For particulars, see (Timur, 1993).

¹⁰ For details, see these two works (Ağaoğlu, 1994) and (Okyar and Seyitdanlıoğlu, 2007) and (Avşar, 1998).

gives the head of the top, but its hesitating position would last only one year (Bağçe, 2012: 75-94).¹¹

The date November 11, 1938 would register the second man first as the president of the republic then as the *National Chief and the immutable general president*. The revenge of the system would be so bad; the charismatic leader called the *Eternal Chief* would fall into oblivion. Even reverence for his memory would be considered too much and it would be made permanent in his grave called temporary for 15 years. His pictures would be removed from the money, stamps, even the government offices to leave his place to the national chief; those closest to him would be purged while his old dissidents would be rewarded (Nadi, 1979: 243 and Yeşilyurt, 1997: 137 and 193).

Both the TCF and the SCF incidents would reveal that the influence of internal dynamics on the political order of the country is not sufficient alone. Economy policies created by the fact that development and growth ideals are the maxim of the bureaucratic class would come to a relatively liberal line after the *1923 İzmir Economy Congress* (İnan, 1982: 18-20).¹² The Law for the Encouragement of Industry, which was issued in 1927 after the declaration of the Republic, under the same name with the law dated 1913, was in fact a continuation of the national economics ideal of the Unionists; but it could not create the desired outcome. In 1929, when the effects of the great depression which affected all world markets were seen in Turkey, the decision of transition to economic statism was taken; but on one condition: the said policy would be moderate; and a person who was liberal in economic terms would carry out this policy: Mahmut Celal Bey (Boratav, 1982: 109).

Behind this appointment made to the Ministry of Economy is not İsmet Pasha, who was the prime minister, but Atatürk himself, and the meaning of this is clear: to not direct the capital circles, though very weak, to inertia and to not give the bureaucracy an opportunity. The mandatory alliance between capital circles, large landowners and bureaucracy began to deteriorate as a result of a change in the balance of power between them especially due to the extraordinary circumstances of the Second World War. The application called the *Tragedy of Conscription of Wealth* showed what the bureaucracy was capable to do (Kayra, 2011: 47 et al). The implementation of the law was completely shocking. Even the headlines of the press of the period can give an idea of the level of the drama.

¹¹ For the description of the event by those who were subjected to purge, see (Selek, 2009: 509 et al) and (İpekçi, 2004: 9–13 and 43–45).

¹² The year in which the *Law for the Encouragement of Industry* enacted in 1913 became effective, the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress, which held the power, became a party and evolved into the Party of Union and Progress. Thus, from a semi-secret society, the committee became a party dedicated to Western political life. Before 1913, the word *Fırka* (party) was used to mean the group that the members of the society established in the Assembly (Toprak, 2003: 12).

"The conscription of wealth law was accepted yesterday" (Akşam, 12 November, 1942).

"Tax deadline is over. The property of those who have not paid their debt will be seized from now on", (Cumhuriyet, 21 January 1943).

"Those who have not paid their wealth tax; the first group of seventeen people was sent to the concentration camp last night", (Cumhuriyet, 22 January 1943).

"Those who have not paid their wealth tax. The first group was sent to Aşkale last night. Two people of the group were released by paying 497,000 liras in the last minute. The passengers to Aşkale were dressed as if they were going to travel to Uludağ. They were wearing golf pants and snow glasses", (Son Posta, 28 January 1943).

The tax was fully accrued and charged in the course of dramatic events. In the work written by the Head of Provincial Treasury of İstanbul who described the tax as a disaster, it is written that only ten people were able to escape abroad in order to avoid this practice (Ökte, 1951: 237).

The appearance of the conflict after the end of the war necessitated the bureaucracy to adopt new measures and resulted in the issuance of the *Law of Provision of Land for Farmers* but the law remained obsolete¹³ in terms of its implementation. Rich landowners received crops of their resistance by bringing one of them to the ministry of agriculture: Cavit Oral. The spokesperson of the opposition circles opposing the said law was Adnan Menderes, who owed his political fame to this incident (Aksoy, 1969: 63-70). As Keyder (1995: 164) stated: *"The bourgeoisie found itself strong enough to distinguish itself from the bureaucracy at the ideological level, after it gained sufficient power through political guided accumulation and strengthened its ranks with the wartime profiteering."* The system also turned into a party with its appropriation to the organized competition.

2. Determination of Internal and External Dynamics

When the known chronology is followed, the transition from the period when the elections were only on paper before May 14, 1950 to the period when the elections became the only determinant gave a big power to the masses whose three quarters were still busy with agriculture; and the DP was aware of this realizing value transfers in economy policies that were protecting this section. This politics, which began to be applied against the bureaucracy

¹³ For an important review of the implementation results of the Act, see (Taraklı, 1976).

dominant in the sections that share the social commodity accumulation caused the attacks of the old ruling, now opposing party to start mercilessly just after 3 months after the elections were held. As the cynical attitude against large investments made during the DP period rebutted those who had this attitude over time, the tension also increased (Demirer, 1994: 42 et al).

Considering the development of the country and the problem of finance are inseparably united, it was not difficult to predict that this rapid development would begin to diminish after a while. Along with increased productivity in agriculture, the increase in the quantity of goods subject to exports, and therefore the increase in income, made those in the agriculture sector more prosperous, while the increase in inflation and the devaluation of the money affected the wage earners the most (Yirmibeşoğlu, 1999: 16 et al).

While the material dimension of the problem was in this direction, the spiritual dimension of it also began to be spoken. The villagers, who were once forbidden by the municipal police to walk at certain times of day at the *Ulus Square*, which was considered the most exclusive corner of the capital of the young republic, began to be considered as the most respected citizen (Köymen, 2008: 132 et al). Moreover, one of the most symbolic aspects of the founding philosophy of the republic, the azan began to be recited like the original. Thus, with the law dated June 16, 1950 and numbered 5665, which amended the law no 526 of Turkish Penal Code on the punishment of reciting the azan in other languages other than Turkish, the obstacle which obstructed reciting the azan in Arabic was eliminated. (Tarhanlı, 1993: 26). Rumour has it that CHP's Cevdet Kerim İncedayı's nightmare almost became real. *Will the country now be governed by Memos and Hüsos?*

The bureaucracy began to experience a severe depression in response to all these developments due to its traditional superiority complex. The answer to the question "*Who will govern?*" could never be the ignorant masses. The arrows of criticism were also directed to İnönü for having taken the decision to go for an early election (Altuğ, 2006: 73). However, these criticisms were not consistent; İnönü said *yes* to the multi-party system not because he believed in or adopted democracy. The foreign policy that he exhibited during the war kept the country out of the war as a work of fortune; however, especially when the anxiety he felt for the northern neighbour turned into a clear fear, he had to adopt the traditional balance game of Ottoman-Turkish diplomacy.¹⁴ According to the Allies, it was sometimes a country that was ready to receive a share of the legacy of the USSR immediately after a possible German victory, and at the same time a country that does not give confidence with its politics beside the alliance according to the progress of the war.¹⁵

The government of Şükrü Saracoğlu, who were recorded to say "*I am a Turkist Prime Minister! Turkism is a matter of culture as much as it is a matter of blood for us*" (Meram, 1969: 217) which implemented a policy of intimidation against various sections within the country according to the progress of the war, first provided covered support for the *Panturkist* movements, then, implemented widespread arrests to the Turkist movement which stood out with the May 3, 1944 march. (Sançar, 1976: 30-33).

When the demand to extend the *1925 Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression* in the interview between Molotov and Sarper in order to overcome the fear of war against the USSR with the end of the war in Europe was met with the insistence of the Commissioner of the

¹⁴ For a comprehensive review on the subject, see (Deringil, 2000).

¹⁵ See for details. (Glasneck, undated).

Foreign Affairs of the USSR that the demand could only be accepted with the proposal of a treaty that conformed to the new conditions, with demands for the Straits and Kars and Ardahan the perturbation greatly increased (Toker, 1971: 94).

The importance of this event is great because it shows how foreign politics affects the political manoeuvres inside. Ankara's policy against the US and Britain, which considered the arguments of the USSR at least arguable, was determined to try to show that the country was in danger of communism just like Eastern and South-eastern European states (Berkes, 2006: 349 et al). First, those who were arrested in 1944 and tortured and condemned in the *Small Torture Boxes* were acquitted (Türkeş, 1975 and Sançar, 1973: 49-72). This was also an indication of how open the judiciary bureaucracy was to the suggestions of political power.

As soon as the international conjuncture changed, that is, the relations with the Soviets began to become tense, this time the administration began to apply the stiffness policy to the various colours of the left thinking. Magazines such as *Görüşler*, *Adımlar* which were released by the couple of *Sabiha* and *Zekeriya Sertel* who were called as the İstanbul branch of Moscow and the printing house where the newspaper *Tan* was pressed were destroyed by a group of people.¹⁶

In the following years, the existence of several small and frail socialist parties arising out of the liberty of establishing class-based parties created the impression that Turkey was in an open danger of communism. (Tevetoğlu, 1967: 510 et al and Sertel, 1990). Four faculty members were expelled from the Faculty of Languages, History and Geography of Ankara University due to the fact that they instilled leftist thoughts on the students (Berkes, 2006: 399 et al). The poet *Sabahattin Ali* was first held in prison for a long time; then he was forced to leave the country with the fear that he would be killed; Sabahattin Ali, suspected of being linked to the National Security, was killed by a mysterious murder on the border of Bulgaria (Küçük, 1987: 137 et al).

Many other examples can be located. It can be said that the decision to transition to multi-party system in Turkey was a crop of the image that was desired to be exhibited to the democratic world in the face of the danger of loneliness in the new world established after the war. While the internal dynamics were ready for a multi-party system when the republic was founded, it is possible to say that impeding this was possible due to the fact that the external dynamics and the *Zeitgeist* of the era was not behind this will yet (Ahmad and Turgay, 1976: 11). The external dynamics are now ready, and in order to receive the necessary support from the West, the one-party National Chief regime, which looks like Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Stalin's Russia, needs to change. However, it is possible to see that the necessity of change alone is not sufficient in the process leading to 14 May 1950. The historical incompatibility between the system and democratic life was first seen in the 1946 elections and then in the oppressive attitude displayed against the opposition (Başgil, 2006: 59).

It would be correct not to say at this point that İnönü was the best to keep pace with the change. İnönü seems to be the leader who best reads the relation between the aim and the instrument in Turkish political life (Akbiyikoğlu, 1986: 43 et al). Just as he knew what the

¹⁶ In her memoirs, Sabiha Sertel (1978: 314) mentions that they understand by chance that the incident was the government's organization from a letter found in a book bought by Cami Baykurt. Sertel states that the letter, bearing Yaşar Çimen's signature and including the information that the order given was executed fully and a reward was expected, is in İstanbul. Zekeriya Sertel also mentions about the same letter, but notes that the book in which the letter was found was bought by him (Sertel, 2000: 231).

single-party authoritarian regime needed, İnönü had the same attitude in the multi-party regime. With the *July 12 Declaration*, *Recep Peker*, *Hasan Saka* and *Şemsettin Günaltay* governments gradually, he provided the minimum conditions for the transition to multi-party regime in real sense before May 14 (Timur, 2003: 117 et al). If he had not known how to skilfully apply his pragmatism in his political life, it would not have been possible for him to maintain his existence in Turkish political life in the 1921-1973 period.¹⁷

It is possible to say that the bureaucracy started to gradually move away from the centre of politics in the process going to May 27. In the conflict process between the elected and the appointed, it is also understandable that the bureaucracy at the side of the appointed is involved in the efforts to preserve its traditional influence. Although the spirit of the Constitution of 1924 based on parliamentary rule had to face many objections in practice, with the transition to multi-party system, it was able to break the bureaucratic molestation (Bayar, 1986: 16 et al).

In one-party years, the parliament never allowed the representation of the base; the candidates determined by the single and second men themselves used to sit on the chairs of the parliament when they were affirmed by the second electorate. For example; the following news in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper dated April 1, 1931 could give an idea: "*How many MPs will be elected? No one can predict the true state. The definite state will be understood when Gazi announces the final public list*" (Başkaya, 1991:113). There were even MPs that had never seen the city from where he was elected. It was unthinkable to imply that a law accepted by the Assembly was contrary to the Constitution. The bureaucracy was sometimes elected (!) at the parliament and sometimes appointed by the administrative mechanism in a uniform organization.

When the DP came to power, it had to face the party-state resistance of the administrative mechanism. They knew its role in the 1946 elections and they even knew that a group of generals at the top of military bureaucracy suggested the idea of intervention to İsmet Pasha just before the May 14 elections (Zürcher, 1995: 316). The purge at the army command level triggered by this incident was one of the first actions of the DP (Özdağ, 1997: 23 et al); but it was quite difficult to combat the bureaucracy's grandeur that was spread over the whole country. As a matter of fact, the bad effects of the economic policy on the wage-earning sector also increased bureaucratic resistance.

The applications of the ruling party like the authority to retire and taking into the service of Ministry in order to break the impact of judiciary bureaucracy resulted in the burning of the bridges in between. Financial difficulties of soldiers besides their professional problems dragged the bureaucratic opposition which was simmering to an apparent rebellion. There was already a low salary complaint in the Army coming from the Ottoman army. As a matter of fact, professor-in-ordinary Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, one of the best interpreters of the atmosphere of the period, had to warn Adnan Menderes for this reason and reminded that Abdülhamit was overthrown due to low officer salaries (Öztuna and Gökdemir, 1987: 29).

The constitution of May 27 may be said to be a revenge of the bureaucracy in a sense. The Assembly was no more the supreme decision maker. Within the framework of the principle that the Turkish nation would use the sovereignty via the competent organs, the supervision of compliance of laws with constitution was provided; authorities of the Council of State as the

¹⁷ See those works though not the most objective but the most comprehensive biography of İnönü Aydemir (1966, undated and 1968). In terms of reaction to this corpus, see (Kandemir, 1968).

jurisdiction were increased. The radio and the university became autonomous, and the effectiveness of the military bureaucracy in the system was made constitutional with the National Security Council. While the legislation and the jurisdiction were accepted in terms of both task and authority, executive was defined only as the task (Özbudun, 2000: 356).¹⁸

When the trial period in the Supreme Court of Justice in Yassıada is examined, it seems possible to follow the footsteps of the bureaucracy in the judicial wing. Even Istanbul Bar Association took a precatory decision that no member lawyer would defend the defendants (Decision of the Board of Directors of the Bar Association dated 31.05.1960 and numbered 21 Agenda, 3 Row, 1124 File Number found in the annex of the journal of Istanbul Bar Association Presidency, dated 02.07.2012 and 37770 Agenda numbered). As a result, the bureaucracy could be said to have regained its old position fully with May 27.

3. University and Youth Factors

Although the demonstrations of Istanbul and Ankara Universities on April 28-29, 1960 were the last straws, there was a more important case showing that the direction of the power-university relation was not at all pleasant. *Prof. Dr. Turhan Feyzioğlu*, the dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Ankara, was taken into the service of ministry due to a speech he made against the government in the opening ceremony of the faculty in the 1956-1957 academic year. In his speech, Feyzioğlu stated that the principal duty of the university was to search for, acquire and explain the truth within the freedom environment and otherwise it would be a *smooth-tongued* institution. Feyzioğlu resigned from university after the reflections of the speech on the press, and after a brief hesitation between the HP and the CHP, he began his political struggle in the CHP ranks (Küçük, 1988: 737 et al and Bozkir, 1997: 208).

It can be said that the most important of the reasons behind the university's starting opposition against the DP, with whom they never got along, was that the importance along with the responsibility of the university which it gained with the 1933 University Reform (Mazıcı, 1995: 56-70), gradually decreased beginning from 1950.

The fact that the DP was more willing to satisfy the sections of the society which were its base both hurt the traditional dominance of bureaucracy and army as well as the university was hurt by this new policy. As *Bayar* stated: The DP which was involved in the alliance among *ilmiye, kalemiye* and *seyfiye* (*main institutions in the Ottoman State*), which were traditionally power partners, for the benefit of *people* paid the price of this by being overthrown by the May 27 coup (Bayar, 1991: 12-13).

The attitude of the government towards the attitude of the academic members, who criticized the DP's performance, became even stricter. The measurements like forcing to retire and conducting an investigation as well as taking into the service of ministry caused the bridges between the university and the government to fully burn (Bulut, 2009: 139). The teaching members who led the demonstrations that started on the dates mentioned above in the two big universities of the country took a stricter stance towards the members of the dethroned government than the ones who performed the coup (Özdağ, 1997: 237).

Allegations that the rector had been tortured during police intervention without the permission of the rector and the brawl between some teaching staff and police during the events

¹⁸ See for details. (Aldıkaçtı, 1973) and (Tanör. 1986).

of Istanbul University on 28 April 1960 caused the university to have a vengeful attitude towards the incident in the morning of May 27. Immediately after the coup, the fact that the teaching staff stated that a legal coup could not be considered as an ordinary coup showed that they were in the first rank of the hostility hierarchy for the dethroned government (TC Prime Ministry, 1960: 64-66).

Above all, their opposition to the leading coup plotters' action plan that necessitated the arrest of relatively less people was almost .mind-boggling. Despite the presumption of innocence, Professors stated that the evictions made were inappropriate and wrong. All the members of the overthrown government were presumed not innocent but guilty, ; accordingly, on the contrary to the presumption of innocence which is the main principle of the criminal proceedings: "*They are all guilty until they are proved otherwise*" (Ipekci and Coşar, 1965: 276).

The words and the accusation of the teaching staff who got in disagreement after a short while against each other are also thought-provoking. In particular, the reaction of *Professor-in-Ordinary Sıdk Sami Onar, President of the Constitutional Commission*, against *Prof. Dr. Tarık Zafer Tunaya* and *Assoc. Prof. İsmet Giritli* in the context of MBK, *either them, or me* is quite interesting. Moreover, it can also be said that this reaction caused the two teaching members to be excluded from the university by being included in article 147 (Ilicak, 1975: 481).

Of course, the DP government cannot be said to be highly liberal and democratic. Those who try to justify the CHP when the single-party period is considered, or when the parties are criticised from the viewpoint of these two periods, alleging the extraordinary circumstances of the time as an excuse, show that they have no objectivity or impartiality when they criticise the DP not considering the time and the conjecture and justify their being overthrown.

In the matter of the murdered youth which later turned out to be wholly lie when the MBK called for the parents of the students who were assumed to be lost and when there was no application from the parents, the university is seen to be competing with the bush telegraph in agitation. Especially Onar, through a commission whose president was *Assoc. Dr. Kemal Oğuzman*, started to investigate the young people whom the DP had martyred (!) (Göze, 1975: 39).

According to such reports, which were perceived as real in that period, hundreds of students from the innocent university youth who expressed their objections in the democratic framework were killed and their corpses were ground in the mincing machines and turned into animal feed. The impact of lies, such as some of those students were buried under asphalt roads and the wounded were confined and left to death in unknown places, upon the army officers was not to be underestimated at all.

For instance, when Kamil Kırıkoğlu, once the general secretary of CHP, reached the conclusion in his report which he prepared by going to on-scene with the three-person parliamentary committee that there was no such incident, İnönü gets very angry and "*No way. You will not say this did not happen; you will pretend that it happened!*" (Kırıkoğlu, 1997: 90). On the other hand, Şefik Soyuyüce, one of the members of the MBK, who was among the 14 who were purged on November 13, 1960, said that he personally witnessed the death of 11 revolution martyrs (!) for whom their relatives had not made missing applications (Milliyet, September 23, 1960).

However, the only student who gets killed by the police bullet during the demonstrations is *Turan Emeksiz*. In fact, he was not killed by a targeted bullet, but by a bullet that bounced towards his head. Another student, *Nedim Küçüközpulat* on the other hand, dies of falling under the pallets of a tank in motion when he tried to climb with the enthusiasm that the army intervention had started. *Sökmen Gültekin* and *Lieutenant Ali İhsan Kalmaz*, who were military college students, were killed mistakenly by soldiers in the morning of May 27; while an 11-year old child whose name was *Ersan Özey*, died of a bullet shot on the car of his father who did not stop his car upon the soldiers' order to stop while they were driving in the streets of Ankara effusively.¹⁹ These are all the mortal cases that May 27 coup plotters could determine. As a result, the university seems to be responsible for May 27 in that it both encouraged the coup to take place, and expanded the scope of the arrests that were applied to a narrow group of people.

In Lieu of Conclusion

The popular possible causes of the 27 May movement, the first military coup in Turkey's history, do not seem to be very satisfactory when we consider their results. It can be observed that in almost all of the important milestones of Turkish political life, the determination of their internal dynamics was exaggerated while one tries to establish consistency between results and causes.

The process of subjecting the republic period of Turkish political life to a chronological classification seems to be able to give clues to analyse the process from 14 May 1950 to 27 May 1960. As it is known, one of the main reasons shown by those who believe that the DP, which was overthrown by the May 27 coup, deserved such fate is: violation of the Constitution and establishing a dictatorship in the country. If the thesis that the last decade was a big retrogress as if the country had a long and profound democratic culture and accumulation, such as British or French democracies, were valid; this claim would have been a bit understandable.

On the contrary, the one-man rule dominated the country until around 1945, especially from 1925, around two different leaders. In 1946, an anti-democratic election was held in an open voting-closed counting manner. Moreover, the opposition leader in the process from May 14 to May 27, was, from 1925 except the last year of the founding leader's life, first the prime minister, then the unchanged leader and president. In the years when he ruled the country, he would even determine the place where his photographs or reports about him would be put in the newspapers with the threat of closing the newspaper; let alone the opposition of the press.

More examples can be presented, from the economic situation to the level of the institutional process subject to organized competition. The absence of a massive stance behind or against the coup clearly undermines the thesis that society over time developed the practice of protecting its democratic gains. Therefore, the possibility that the above mentioned factors cannot be the main determinants of the coup as the internal dynamics; but the real determinants were external dynamics is gaining strength.

To put the results supporting this assertion in order: The new constitution, introduced on May 27, and the innovations it brought, provided a disproportionate force and opportunity to those who opposed US policies dominating the world system. During the period until the March 12 Memorandum was declared, relations between Turkey and the West began to show features

¹⁹ For the twisted and epic narrative of the death of Ali İhsan Kalmaz, see "Harbiye", *Akis*, Year 9 June 1960 Issue 303, p.18 et al.

that did not overlap with the alliance relations to which the country was bound. The Turkish-US tension, which started with the Johnson Letter and continued with the suppression of the ban on poppy seeding, is an uninterrupted example of this. It is also worth analysing the spring weather in the relations with the USSR despite the fact that there was a rightist government in power led by Demirel.

The answers to these questions, which can be the topic of a new study, strengthen the thesis that the main determinant of almost every important development, not only on May 27, in Turkey is the external dynamics because of the *sui generis* characteristics of the geography in which it is located. It seems to be the conclusion of this study that the internal dynamics in such processes do no more than preparing the stage for the final scene of the play.

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