

PRINCE SABAHADDIN AS A LIBERAL INTELLECTUAL

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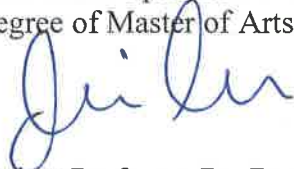
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## ABSTRACT

### PRINCE SABAHADDIN AS A LIBERAL INTELLECTUAL

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This thesis analyzes the political imaginary of Prince Sabahaddin, who is accepted as a liberal intellectual by the commentators in the literature. Prince Sabahaddin is accepted and reread as a liberal in this thesis. In order to demonstrate naming him as a liberal, the liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's thought is revealed by means of comparison with Alexis De Tocqueville. The main reason for this comparison is the proximity of their thoughts. As a result of this comparison, it is revealed that like Tocqueville, Prince Sabahaddin sees democracy as a way of life and the issue of mentality.

Keywords: Prince Sabahaddin, Alexis De Tocqueville, Liberalism

## ÖZET

### LİBERAL BİR ENTELLEKTÜEL OLARAK PRENS SABAHADDİN

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Bu tezde, yorumcular tarafından literatürde liberal olarak kabul edilen Prens Sabahaddin'in siyasi tahayyülü incelenmektedir. Prens Sabahaddin literatürdeki yorumculara benzer şekilde, bu tezde de liberal olarak kabul edilmekte fakat yeniden yorumlanmaktadır. Prens Sabahaddin'in liberal olarak yorumlanmasını açıklığa kavuşturmak için, Prens Sabahaddin'in siyasi tahayyülü ile Alexis De Tocqueville'in siyasi tahayyülü arasında bir mukayese yapılmaktadır. Bu mukayesenin sebebi, Prens Sabahaddin'in siyasi tahayyülünün Alexis De Tocqueville'in siyasi tahayyülünden izler taşıdığı düşüncesidir. Bu mukayese ile Prens Sabahaddin'in düşünce dünyasının liberal boyutlarını açıklığa kavuşturmak amaçlanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, De Tocqueville ve Prens Sabahaddin demokrasiyi bir yaşam şekli olarak algılamış ve bir zihniyet meselesi olarak yorumlamışlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Prens Sabahaddin, Alexis De Tocqueville, Liberalizm

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The main content of this thesis is to explore the political thought of Prince Sabahaddin in terms of his perspective towards the opposition. Thus, the main research question is whether Prince Sabahaddin situates the opposition, which is protected from the tyranny of the majority, and which is not accused of treachery and secessionism, in his political imaginary. The main aim is to reach a conclusion about Prince Sabahaddin as to whether his political imaginary gives society a chance to live independently from the domination of the state and also whether his political imaginary determines the public sphere as a sphere in which the society realizes itself in contrast to Turkis Republican experience closed to the public participation. Prince Sabahaddin is interpreted as a liberal by the commentators in the literature due to his criticisms of despotism. Prince Sabahaddin is interpreted as a liberal by the commentators through just focusing on his criticisms. Similarly, he is interpreted as a liberal in this thesis through not only focusing on his criticisms of despotism but also focusing on the liberal dimensions of his thought. The main contribution of this thesis to the literature on Prince Sabahaddin will be the comparison of his thought with that of Alexis De Tocqueville. Like De Tocqueville, Prince Sabahaddin emphasizes change of the mindset for the consolidation of democracy.

The second aim is to reveal the liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's thought. He is interpreted as a liberal in the literature mainly due to his criticisms of the authoritarian tendencies of Abdülhamit II and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). I argue that the interpretations in the literature on Prince Sabahaddin are not explanatory because they just focus on his criticisms of the arbitrary government. The political imaginary of Prince Sabahaddin has four liberal

dimensions. Firstly, he emphasizes independence and self-development of the individual. Secondly, he links social progress with education and economic progress with private property. The third dimension is his argument for representative government and his criticisms of arbitrary government. Finally, he sees individual liberty and decentralization as inseparable. He directly links liberty with participation in public affairs. In short, I will try to redefine him as a liberal through focusing on these dimensions of his thought.

To provide a clear explanation, I will reread Prince Sabahaddin as a liberal and try to situate his thought within liberal political thought. His political thought has close affinity with the perspectives of Locke, Kant, Smith, Mill and De Tocqueville. Therefore, these philosophers' political thoughts will constitute the main theoretical framework of this thesis. Alexis De Tocqueville becomes more prominent in this theoretical framework than the other philosophers. I think that the thoughts of Prince Sabahaddin and Alexis De Tocqueville have similarities that can be compared.

The final aim of this thesis is to draw a comparison between the political thought of Prince Sabahaddin and that of Alexis De Tocqueville. A comparison of the political imaginary of Prince Sabahaddin with a great thinker has not been made in the literature on him. I will try to contribute to the literature about Prince Sabahaddin through this comparison that will reveal the deepness of his political imaginary. To make this comparison, I use hermeneutic analysis for Prince Sabahaddin's studies.

There are mainly four chapters in this thesis. In the first chapter, I introduce the research subject that is the exploration of Prince Sabahaddin's thought. Thus, the main research question is whether Prince Sabahaddin situates the opposition in his political imaginary as protected from the tyranny of the majority. After explaining

the structure of the thesis, the main characteristics of Turkish politics that play a crucial role in raising this research question will be dealt.

The second chapter contains mainly three sections. In the first section of this chapter, the biography of Prince Sabahaddin is introduced with the emphasis on the political context in which he engages in his political activities. The second section includes an explanation of the intellectual sources of Prince Sabahaddin. The third section is designed to explain the liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's thought. The last section includes the theoretical framework of this thesis. The main aim of this part is to situate Prince Sabahaddin within the liberal tradition. The theoretical framework consists of some dimensions of thoughts of John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Alexis De Tocqueville, which has a close affinity with that of Prince Sabahaddin.

In the third chapter of this thesis, I make my contribution to the literature on Prince Sabahaddin through drawing a comparison of his thought to that of Alexis De Tocqueville. The main focus of this chapter is on their emphasis on individualism and decentralization. I argue that Prince Sabahaddin and De Tocqueville perceive democracy as a way of life, and both of them see the change in people's mindset as a prerequisite for the consolidation of democracy in addition to institutional changes. They see democracy as two-dimensional, political and social. Lastly, liberty means participation in public affairs for both of them. I present my concluding remarks in the last chapter, and I interpret that Prince Sabahaddin diagnoses political participation as the most important problem of Turkish politics.

Turkish political culture has three important characteristics. The first, and the most prominent one of them is the intolerant character of Turkish politics to the opposition. The second important character is the mentality based on making reforms

as solutions to the political problems. The last character is the concept of citizenship that calls obedience rather than liberty. The main research question of this thesis derives from these characteristics. Therefore, it is necessary to deal with these characteristics of Turkish politics.

The social engineering tradition and the efforts on the creation of a modern society in Turkey derive its sources from the thoughts of the Young Ottomans. In addition, since the establishment of the First Constitutional era, the political tradition of enforcement has been the dominant feature of Turkish politics rather than reconciliation (Koçak, 2009, p. 82).

The first modernization efforts in the Ottoman Empire began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century due to military failures. The focus of modernization was on economic and technical developments. The political developments were neglected by the Ottomans (Ortaylı, 2009, p. 40). Thus, the development of political thought in the Ottoman Empire barely made an appearance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a group of young elites named the Young Ottomans. The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was the main genesis of them. Practical and short term political ideas were produced for the salvation of the Empire (Çetinsaya, 2009, p. 54). The main characteristics of the thoughts of the Young Ottomans are the fact that they did not make any reference to the primary sources of the movement of thought. Thus, their thoughts were insulated and lacked theoretical depth (Mardin, 1989, p. 24). Thus, the thoughts of the Young Ottomans were diverse, and they were the opposition, although they still advocated modernization (Koçak, 2009, p. 72). The thoughts of Young Ottomans emerged as a reaction to the modernization efforts of the Ottoman Elite.

Democratization movements of *Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu* (Edict of *Gülhane*) and *Islahat Fermanı* (Reform Edict) were the efforts of Ottoman Elite, who were

worried about the disintegration of the state authority, in order to close with the Western powers. These reforms mainly proclaimed the security of life, honor, property, abolition of tax farming and arbitrarily recruitment to military, fair and public trial of accused people and the equality of all subjects of all religions in terms of application of these laws. The equality of all subjects without regard to their religious differences was the most shocking one for the Muslim subject. Although, traditions of Islam and the rule of the Ottoman Empire based on the tolerance of her non-Muslim subjects, and granted a kind of autonomy in terms of their communal affairs, the Muslim subject was exercising a superiority on the religious bases. Thus, to lose this superiority caused a discontent in the society (Lewis, 2002, pp. 106-108). The ideas of the Young Ottomans were actually an expression of discontent with the equality resulting from these reforms (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 25).

The CUP came to power through the 1908 Revolution in order to end the despotism of Abdülhamit II, who abolished the First Constitutional Regime. However, it established a despotic regime in a short period after coming to power and suppressed the liberal opposition movements for the purpose of remaining in power (Somel, 2009, p. 110). The Kemalist Regime like the previous regime of the CUP, gained an authoritarian character, initiated the nation building process and started imposition of reforms over society through suppression of opposition and the minorities. These two despotic regimes witnessed two episodes of suppression of minorities; in the first Armenians and the second Kurds were suppressed gorily (Ünüvar, 2009, pp. 137-138).

Mardin (2008, pp. 177-190) diagnoses that Turkish political culture is symbolized by its intolerant character of the opposition. He argues that the suppression of opposition is not invented in the Republican era. The roots of

authoritarian character are derived from the Ottoman political culture. Politics in the Ottoman Empire was not open to kind of deviation from political orthodoxy. It was perceived as a sign of secession by the Ottoman statesmen. Therefore, it is not possible to talk about the emergence of the opposition in the sense of limiting absolute authority, provision of the alternative and real policies in the Ottoman Empire. Since the bureaucracy became the dominant political authority after the sultan, and since the experience of the First Constitutional era, the opposition movements in Turkey have been accused of treachery and secessionism. Thus, Turkish political culture is characterized by the hostility towards the opposition. This character of Turkish politics prevents the opposition from gaining legitimacy. Finally, the intolerance of deviations becomes concrete in the fear of secessionism, and this contributes to the prevailing authoritarian tendencies.

The beginning of modernization efforts, including partial reforms in the Ottoman Empire created a mentality that gives priority to pragmatism. This mentality radicalized since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and modernization became an overall westernization. This project of westernization overall was implemented during the establishment of the Republic. It depended upon the rationalism which was an instrument of the rule of the positivist-authoritarian ideology that perceived politics as a social technique of reproducing and controlling the society. This positivist-authoritarian ideology was formed by the mentality based on pragmatism which paved the way for the establishment of the state tutelage over the society. The public participation was prevented, and the political sphere started to be perceived as an administrative activity. Therefore, the republican experiment in Turkey shows a genetic deviation from its Western origins. While the Western origins define the liberty with the political participation, Turkish republican experience closes the

politics to the public sphere. Furthermore, it ruptures the traditional source of legitimacy, and it attributes the meaning of creation of a new society to the politics.

In this context, the political arena is defined as a sphere in which the society is reproduced, shaped and controlled and this perception prevented the emergence of the public sphere (Toker & Tekin, 2009, pp. 82-87). The non-existence of the public sphere triggered the perception of the politics as a sphere in which the opposition is perceived as illegitimate, suppressed and subjugated. Thus, the political sphere becomes the sphere of conflicts instead of reconciliation, and it is composed of the groups that demand unity and conflict with the diversities (Kadıoğlu, 1999, p. 14).

Citizenship depends upon the relation between the tradition of philosophy, reasoning, the Enlightenment, the power of criticizing and making judgments. These kinds of relationships that generate and keep alive the public sphere have not emerged in Turkey. In contrast, the citizenship in Turkey does not have liberating meaning and function. The authoritarian character of Turkish political culture is reflected on the citizenship (Toker & Tekin, 2009, p. 84). The citizens of the Turkish Republic are defined as civil servants who will actualize the civilization project dictated by the rulers. Therefore, the aim of politics in Turkey is to tell the citizens how they should be happy, instead of allowing them to determine and pursue their happiness as they wish. Therefore, the ideal citizen is defined as the citizen who has 'will.' Questioning is replaced by the will and the ideal citizen knows the answer and does not question. Furthermore, citizens are not encouraged to question and reason. Citizenship in Turkey mainly calls for the obedience, instead of calling for liberty by encouraging them to question and reason. Nondevelopment of reasoning skills and questioning alienates the citizens of liberty. Furthermore, liberty means 'unconstrained' for the citizens of Turkish Republic who has 'wills' instead of

meaning political participation for them. Thus the illegal and irregular political custom inevitably emerges (Kadioğlu, 1999, pp. 11-12). Hilav (2008, pp. 297-308) draws attention to this mentality that does not question authority as it is based on belief instead of questioning. He links reformism in Turkey with this mentality. In short, citizenship in Turkey stresses obedience to the state instead of liberation. The deviation of republican experience in Turkey from Western origins prevented the emergence of the public sphere. Citizenship in Turkey calls for obedience, and this prevented the emergence of a participatory culture.

Sezer (2012, pp. 10-14) demonstrates that the pathologies of the Turkish Republic experiments are directly associated with the controversies of Rousseau's republican understanding which left a devastating effect. Absolute and indivisible popular sovereignty, which coincides with the state, sees dissent and pluralism as a sign of betrayal that paves the way for the crushing of all social and political opposition. The perspective towards the opposition shows the influence of Rousseau's thought over the Republican elite. It has been already intrinsic to the character of the Turkish people as shown at the beginning by Mardin (2008, pp. 177-194).

Due to its communitarian social structure and intolerance to the deviation, liberal ideas have never been in favor, and the positivist philosophical basis of secularism in Turkey determined the structure of liberalism in Turkey. After the emphasis on unity gained importance in the policies of the CUP, Turkish politics was mainly formed by this tendency. Since the appearance of a division of liberal wing and unionist wing among Young Turks in the 1902 Young Turks Congress, the positivist philosophy is the main determinant of the development of liberalism (Kadioğlu, 1999, pp. 73-75). Furthermore, the main concern of politicians from



Young Turks to Kemalists was to have progressed through protecting order and unity (Ünüvar, 2009, p. 142). However, the stress on unity causes the suppression of the opposition, the identification of it with treachery and secessionism. Intolerance to the opposition which is intrinsic to the Ottoman social and political structure is maintained in the Republican period by finding a theoretical basis in Rousseau.

If we turn back to the world of thought of the Young Turks as it is mentioned above, the division between them was revealed in 1902 in the First Young Turks Congress. It was between the positivist-unionist wing lead by Ahmet Rıza and the liberal wing lead by Prince Sabahaddin (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 78). As it is explained above, the emphasis upon unity by the unionist wing of the CUP and then the maintenance of it by the Kemalist regime eventually leads to the emergence of the political culture which accuses the opposition of betrayal and secessionism. Under this political context of intolerance to opposition and dissent; and this communitarian and controller structure of Turkish society, attention is directed towards the liberal wing which is accused of treachery and secessionism.

Prince Sabahaddin was among the leading the figures of the Young Turks. He led to the liberal wind of the Young Turks. During his political and intellectual activities, he was accused of betrayal and secessionism due to his political thought, particularly during the Second Constitutional Era. When the continuity of the political tradition of the Ottoman Empire in the Second Constitutional Period and the Republican era is considered, it is necessary to explore Prince Sabahaddin's perspective towards the opposition as an intellectual subjected to the accusations of betrayal and secessionism.

## CHAPTER 2

### PRINCE SABAHADDIN AS A LIBERAL

Prince Sabahaddin claims that he is not a liberal (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 247). Furthermore, Sabahaddin sees liberalism as an abstract theory which is on paper, and he ultimately rejects its practical value. In his view, theories of conservatism, liberalism and socialism are devoid of scientific analysis. If he refuses to be called a liberal, why do scholars and commentators describe him as a liberal? The main aim of this chapter is to answer this question.

Before explaining his refusal to be called liberal, the biography of Prince Sabahaddin is introduced in the first section of this chapter. The intellectual sources of Prince Sabahaddin, the prominent principles of his thought and the political context in which he engages, will be discussed in the second section. Then, the liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's thought will be explained in the third section of this chapter. An explanation is also provided for why the commentators describe him as a liberal. Finally, the last section includes the theoretical framework of this thesis.

#### 2.1 Biography and Intellectual Sources of Prince Sabahaddin

Mehmed Sabahaddin was born in 1887 in Istanbul, and he was known as Prince Sabahaddin because of his descent from the Ottoman dynasty. He was the nephew of Abdülhamit II. His father, Damat Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, was vizier at the age of twenty four and was minister of justice at the age of twenty five, but he did not abstain from criticizing the rule of Abdülhamit II and was very critical of the Sultan (Reyhan, 2008, p. 27). Berkes argues that Mehmed Sabahaddin used the appellation of Prince in order to earn a reputation in Europe (Berkes, 2013, p. 397).

After being taken into custody by Abdülhamit II due to the inclusion of his name in the Çırağan Palace Incident, Damat Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha fled to Paris in 1889. This event became a major turning point in Sabahaddin's personal and intellectual life (Kılıç, 2010, p. 3). Then he started to involve in the political activities through joining up with the Young Turks (Reyhan, 2009, p. 146).

During the first years of the reign of Abdülhamit II, the censorship was not prevalent, and bureaucrats, intellectuals and students could find the opportunity to express their opposition to the Sultan. The opposition triggered when the sultan attempted to reduce the staff of the ministries in order to balance the budget. The student who graduated from the schools which were expanded and ameliorated during the reign of Abdülhamit II constituted the basis of the opposition. Thus, the first opposition movement emerged with the anxiety of employment in the government. In the following years, the opposition gained more political character, and the liberals were opposing the regime of Abdülhamit II, which showed authoritarian tendencies (Shaw & Shaw, 2002, pp. 255-256).

The Young Turk movement was the common name of the opposition groups, which encompass the ulema, the bureaucrats, and the nationalists, towards Abdülhamit II. Their common ground was the resentment against the regime. The most important feature of this opposition movement was the absence of a common agenda. The other most important feature of this movement was the fact that they were striving for overthrowing Abdülhamit II and reinstatement of the constitution. The Union of Ottomans was the main organization of Young Turks which was founded by a group of medical students. The various opposition strands loosely collaborated under this organization (Hanioglu, 2008, pp. 144-145).

The Young Turks movement gained impetus with the flight of Damat Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha and his sons Sabahaddin and Lütfullah. Especially, Prince Sabahaddin, who received a decent education, was expected to lead the opposition movement in France against the despotism of Abdülhamit II because of his knowledge about socio-political problems (Durukan, 2009, p. 145).

The opposition movement of Young Turks was mainly composed of three factions in terms of the methodology. The first faction was led by Ahmed Rıza (1859-1930) who was a convinced Positivist. Ahmed Rıza was arguing for the constitutional regime in terms of the fact that it is the best regime which prevents the arbitrary governance. The other faction was headed by Mehmet Murad (1853-1912). He argued for the constitutional regime which was reconciled with Şariat's provisions. His primary objective was to limit the absolute authority of the Sultan using Şariat's provisions and to construct the confidence between the different ethnic elements of the Ottoman Empire. The accusations characterized the nature of the competition between these two factions. The former ridiculed the panislamism of the latter; the latter accused the former of non-attachment to Islam. On the other hand, the third faction was headed by the nephew of the Sultan, Prince Sabahaddin. He was the follower of the sociology of Le Play. It was the rival of the sociology of August Comte that Ahmed Rıza followed. Prince Sabahaddin was the first who was proposing a social reform program than the other Young Turks. The main aim of his program was to make the transition the Ottoman Empire from its communitarian social structure to the particularist social structure which Demolins, by whom Prince was affected much, explains the main reason for the superiority of Anglo-Saxons (Berkes, 1998, pp. 304-311).

Among these three leaders, Ahmed Rıza was the most conservative and moderate one. He was on the side of gradual development inaugurated by the sultan. He was expecting the sultan to democratize the regime and fight against the corruption in the bureaucracy. Like Ahmed Rıza, Mehmet Murat was advocating for peaceful change and unity of the Empire against the independence demands of the minorities. In contrast to Ahmed Rıza and Mehmet Murat, Sabahaddin, and his group was arguing for the use of the available means like revolution and foreign support (Shaw & Shaw, 2002, pp. 257-258). Furthermore, Prince Sabahaddin saw the individual as an engine for change and progress in contrast to Ahmet Rıza, who saw the state as the main engine for it (Zürcher, 2004, p. 88).

Young Turks gained a great strength and prestige with the arrival of royal rebels. Ahmet Rıza's leadership gained a more enduring rival; Prince Sabahaddin. In the First Young Turks Congress, which assembled on 4 February 1902 under the presidency of Prince Sabahaddin and was met for the unity of the dispersed opposition groups, cleared the cleavage between two factions of the movement (Lewis, 2002, pp. 201-202). In this Congress Prince Sabahaddin expresses that the required reforms must be in the name of all nationalities of the Ottoman Empire instead of advocating solely for the advantage of a single group (Reyhan, 2008, p. 34). In this Congress two issues were discussed; the inclusion of the armed forces in the revolutionary movement and the intervention of the Western powers. The cleavage developed on the issue of intervention. On the one hand, Armenian participants were in favor of intervention by the European powers about the reforms as a guarantee due to their anxiety derived from the massacres of 1894-6. On the other hand, Ahmed Rıza and many others in the CUP were against any intervention and were of the opinion that the problem was internal, and thus intervention from

outside would be unnecessary and harmful. Prince Sabahaddin agreed with the demands of the Armenians, and the opposition of Ahmed Rıza to intervention crystallized the difference between Turkish nationalism and Ottoman liberalism. Afterwards, Prince Sabahaddin established the Committee for Private Initiative and Decentralization (CPID) which set up branches in Anatolia and various parts of the Ottoman Empire (Lewis, 2002, pp. 202-203).

Petrosyan (1974, pp. 218-224) argues that Prince Sabahaddin was so inexperienced in politics that he thought that the European powers could intervene for just the purpose of helping the opposition to end the despotism of Abdülhamit II. Furthermore, he explains that the failure of Prince Sabahaddin's and his followers' initiative of coup d'état was the result of his inexperience in politics.

At the Second Congress of Young Turks in 1907, the unification of the opposition movements was attempted by the initiative of the Armenian Tashnag society. The focus of this Congress was on the practical decisions. Although the theoretical and ideological conflicts were left, the confirmation of the rights of the Caliphate and Sultanate was the only issue on which the nationalists and the liberals agreed (Lewis, 2002, p. 206).

The most important development was the merger between the Committee of Union and Progress and the Ottoman Society, which was a secret organization of opponent bureaucrats and officers in Salonica. This merger enabled the CUP to expand its effect in the military and thus, it gained the support of the army. The Ottoman Army was divided into the armed groups resembled with the national guerilla groups (Hanioglu, 2008, p. 147).

Between 1905 and 1907, both of the CUP and the CPID were increasing their propagation in Anatolia for the reestablishment of the Constitutional regime. The

main differences between these two committees were written down in their programs according to Petrosyan. Ahmed Rıza and his supporters were striving for a constitutional regime based on the centralized form of government. On the other hand, Prince Sabahaddin and his supporters argued for a constitutional regime based on the federal form of government. Petrosyan explains that the program of CPID was far from the reality because his program was reflecting the interests of the bourgeoisie and bureaucratic elite (Petrosyan, 1974, p. 251).

Finally, in 1908 the Young Turk officers staged a revolt in Salonica and Manastır with the demand for the restoration of the constitution and they got the support of the armies of the Sultan. The demands of the restoration of the constitution raised from the other provinces in Rumelia of the Empire. Sultan inevitably proclaimed that the Constitution was in force on 23 July 1908 (Lewis, 2002, p. 209). Although CUP emerged as a committee of the civilian members, the military influence increased within the committee as the opposition of Young Turks expanded its membership base to the military members whose influence became prominent progressively (Shaw & Shaw, 2002).

After the establishment of the Second Constitutional, Prince Sabahaddin came back to Turkey, and this return made the leading actors of the CUP anxious. The propagation of his thought and his opposing ideas endured, and the branch of the CPID was activated in Istanbul. Young Generation Club (Nesli Cedid) was also the follower of Prince Sabahaddin in the Second Constitutional period. Although he was not legally included in any political organization, political parties were established by his followers (Okan, 2008, pp. 482-483). The Ahrar Fırkası (Liberals Party) and the Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (Liberal Union) were opposition parties to the CUP. These opposition parties were openly adopted the Ottomanist-Islamic ideology and

the liberal views of Prince Sabahaddin. However, the CUP perceived their views as accelerating the disintegration of the Empire (Karpas, 2001, pp. 368- 367). The existence of the opposition parties meant the loss of the power for the CUP. It held elections in 1911 through making arbitrary amendments in the constitution. Herewith, it got the control of the House of Deputies. Although it lost the power in 1912 for a short period, it was able to come to power with the coup d'etat and stayed in power until 1918 (Karpas, 1959, pp. 17-18).

The post - revolutionary period was disappointment, because the CUP came to power with the hopes of establishing a liberal regime. Despite of the restoration of the constitutional regime, the despotism of the CUP emerged. The popularity of Prince Sabahaddin among people and the effect of his ideas on the Party of Ottoman Liberals (Ahrar Fırkası) disturbed the CUP government. Some journalists who were in favor of the CUP government, especially Hüseyin Cahit provoked the people that Prince Sabahaddin's idea of decentralization meant the independence of the nationalities in the Ottoman Empire. Finally, he is blamed for supporting the 31 March Incident (Durukan, 2009, pp. 147-148). Afterwards he was arrested, he was released; but he was sentenced to the death penalty due to the accusation of involving in the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Pasha in 1913 (Reyhan, 2008, pp. 53-54). He fled abroad again, and he maintained his political and scientific activities there until 1918 (Durukan, 2009, p. 148). When he was in Switzerland he tried to get the support of England with the letters he wrote to the British Monarchy. He maintained the opposition movement against the government of the CUP abroad (Reyhan, 2008, p. 55). Although he was an opponent of the CUP, he supported some policies of it that he accepts as beneficial for the country (Durukan, 2009, p. 148). He lived in France and Switzerland until the CUP lost power. When he returned, he established



the Committee of Science Sociale (İlm-i İçtima) with the young members of the New Generation. Although he gave support to the Independence War in Anatolia through letters and telegraphs, he was not active (Akkaya, 2005, p. 51). During that period his study ‘How Turkey can be released?’ which was banned during the rule of the CUP was republished. After the establishment of the Republic, he fled abroad again due to the law that ordered exile to the members of the dynasty. Then he left Turkey and lived in different countries in Europe between 1924 and 1948 (Durukan, 2009, p. 149). He maintained his studies over Science Sociale and he did not cut his relationship with the Profession of Society (Meslek-i İçtima) Committee (Akkaya, 2005, p. 51). He wrote articles about many subjects like the expansion of Soviet Russia, the evaluation of Truman Doctrine and the developments in Czechoslovakia and he died in 30 June 1948 in Sweden (Durukan, 2009, p. 149).

Unlike many intellectuals of his generation, the main concern of Prince Sabahaddin was the salvation of the state (Durukan, 2009, p. 150). The point upon which they were divided was their interpretation of the idea of recovering the state. On the one hand, leaders of the CUP aimed at recovering the state through making some modernization reforms within the Empire; on the other hand, Prince Sabahaddin imagined a new order through strongly criticizing the old order (Reyhan, 2009, p. 148).

Doctrines of Science Sociale constitute the foundational basis of Prince Sabahaddin’s thought. The followers of Le Play, Demolins, De Tourville and Descamps developed and contributed to this sociological approach (Durukan, 2009, p. 150). Prince Sabahaddin drew an analogy between France of Le Play and the social conditions of the Ottoman Empire in that era. Thus, he perceived these social techniques as the remedy to the political problems of the Ottoman Empire (Reyhan,

2009, p. 151). He was affected by the doctrines of the second generation of Science Sociale such that his thoughts were not a translation of the thoughts of Henri De Tourville and Edmond Demolins (Özavcı, 2011, p. 142). As explained above, there are two important concepts in the thought of Prince Sabahaddin; the private initiative and the decentralization as in the doctrines of Science Sociale.

Frederick Le Play led one of the preeminent streams of French social thought in the 19th century. He was the first social scientist who did monographic fieldwork; he gathered the required data for testing the hypothesis himself and carried out a systematic, comparative and inter-country study. Like Comte and Tocqueville, the main anxiety of Le Play was about the damages of the revolutions that somehow did not end in 19<sup>th</sup> century France. The social depressions and damages derived from the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 led him to find a scientific method to ameliorate the social problems. He firstly did fieldwork about worker families in France. He argued that the worsening economic conditions were caused by rapid social change derived from the revolutions; the constraint on their political participation, and their moral problems caused political problems overall. Thus he was skeptical about the industrialization and refused the rational and hedonistic individualism of capitalism, and argued for hierarchy and stability. The ideas of Le Play were far from being consistent. The tension between conservative and liberal ideas existed in his thought as well as conservative and liberal elements were intertwined (Özavcı, 2007, pp. 234-239).

The second generation of the school of Le Play that constituted Science Sociale, which generated the main thesis that control of political authority, could not only be provided with the constitutional and parliamentary regime. It could be best prevented through the transformation of society to the particularist structure. In

contrast to Le Play, although Tourville and Demolins accepted the worsening of the conditions of workers, they argued for the integration of workers to social change through starting from the studies of Rousier. The main thesis of his study was that the development of the workers and the employers would increase their self-sufficiency and so their independence would be guaranteed. The effects of social Darwinism, and the writers of the Victorian era, like George Craik and Samuel Smiles, who have liberal tendencies, can be seen in the social theories of this generation (Özavcı, 2011, pp. 143-144).

Demolins' book entitled *What are the Causes of the Superiority of Anglo-Saxons?* was the other study of this generation. It was influenced by the liberal thought of the Victorian Era in which character discourse was very often mentioned. Roughly speaking, the character discourse, which can be found in the thoughts of Samuel Smiles, Benjamin Franklin and Herbert Spencer, argued that society is the composition of individuals and civilization depends on the development of individuals. It can be ensured with the limitation of the intervention of the government as much as possible. Demolins' book also placed the character discourse, and he argued that the superiority of Anglo-Saxons derived from their particularist social structure. In particularist societies, the individual and private life preceded the community and public life. Thus, the compulsory and beneficial professions (agriculture, industry and commerce) also preceded the liberal and administrative professions. The individuals became independent in terms of their development, and independent individuals' self-autonomy was seen as the basis of social welfare. The moral, physical and professional development of the individual was mainly stressed. The superiority of Anglo-Saxons originated from growing individuals who are honest, conscious, attentive, self-sufficient and who have

independent minds. Thus, private initiative and decentralization arose as two important and complementary concepts. The private initiative has elitist roots in its essence. It was expected that the large land owners in the agricultural areas and the employers in the industrial areas care about wealth and the development of the peasants and employees as well as themselves (Özavcı, 2007, pp. 246-254).

According to Kansu, the main aim of the Science Sociale was to find out the causes of the backwardness of France in the imperial competition. Furthermore, the bureaucratic state structure of France and aristocratic social structure contributed to the centralization of the state and thus individuals were not encouraged to live and rule the colonies. Kansu also argues that Le Play and his followers, Science Sociale, wanted a return to the pre-1789 feudal order of France with private initiative (Kansu, 2009, p. 157).

On the other hand, according to Özavcı (2007, pp. 254-255) the doctrines of the Science Sociale are far from the argument of Kansu although Le Bonald was totally, and Le Play was partially conservative. The main issue for Science Sociale was social development, and thus the industrialization of the society was inevitable. Kansu draws attention to the link from De Bonald to Le Play and to the Science Sociale, although De Bonald saw individualism and even any kind of liberalism as harmful to society, and Le Play was skeptical about industrialization since it deprived the labor class. The doctrines of Science Sociale radically departed from their theses. The studies of Demolins and Tourville emphasized individualism. The requirement of change of the system in accordance with the new social order, the laissez-faire economy, representative government were advocated and in short, total economic and social understanding was represented as changed with a different perspective from starting the status of the individual against the society.

In addition, Kansu argues that decentralization means a return to the pre-1789 feudal order in France (Kansu, 2009, p. 157). In contrast, Özavcı (2007, pp. 255-256) demonstrates that decentralization in the doctrines of Science Sociale was presented as the system that encourages private initiative and accelerates social development. The main focal point of decentralization limits the intervention of the government in social life. The problem caused by over-centralization in France was the focal point of the members of Science Sociale. There was anxiety about the centralized government because it prevented the development of individuals and thus private initiative; It encouraged youth to be bureaucrats and prevented them from having a profession. The solution was a self-government system in the USA and the UK because it was accelerating social development.

Furthermore, private initiative and decentralization doctrines of Science Sociale were presented within the frame of social, political, moral and economic values. This frame of values was presented as a remedy for social and political unrest. The main aim of the members of Science Sociale was not to return to the pre-1789 period. Instead, it was to generate a political organization that create individuals who can adapt to the change in the social order, and who are masters of their values as in the UK and the USA. Neither liberal thought in the Victorian Era, nor the doctrines of Science Sociale includes religion as a primary factor in social life (Özavcı, 2007, pp. 256-257).

According to Prince Sabahaddin, the problems of the Ottoman Empire are not just political, they are also structural. As Demolins divides societies according to their structures; particularist and communitarian, Prince Sabahaddin initially determines the social structure of the Ottoman Empire. In communitarian societies like the Ottoman Empire, economic problems like working conditions, initiative and

having private property are solved through dependence on the state. People in communitarian societies demand and receive social welfare, initiative, and freedom from society rather than relying on themselves. Thus, a relation of dependence emerges and this dependence prevents the development of individual liberty. The individual views domination of the social institution as legitimate. The problem of the Ottoman Empire is not just about the regime; it is also about its communitarian social structure. The main step for the solution of this problem is education (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 60-63). The lack of education system, which liberalizes the individual towards the state, causes the domination of the state over its citizens and thus the line between public life and private life blurs. Public life dominates private life and the main aim should be to make private life dominant with reform in the education system and to create citizenship in the Western sense (Reyhan, 2008, pp. 65-66).

Another prominent characteristic of communitarian societies is static structure. Social development depends upon the ability of society to respond to practical needs in the modern world. Particularist societies are able to do that. Therefore, the transformation from a communitarian social structure to a particularist social structure is possible through the education system that liberalizes the individual from the state. The point that prevents the liberalization of the individual from the state in communitarian societies like the Ottoman Empire is the perception in society that accepts the state as the only respectful mechanism. The bureaucracy, which was constituted after the Tanzimat Era, neither contributed to create a particularist social structure nor liberalized the individual from the state. Furthermore, it established the link between its existence and state's survival and thus the political elite developed over time an approach to make reforms to political problems. Encouragement of youth to be bureaucrats, which guarantee reliance upon

the state, was maintained. The remedy was not encouraging people to depend merely on the state, instead people must be encouraged to be self-sufficient and they must depend upon themselves with their private initiative (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 64-68). Professions other than the bureaucracy could occur through supporting the private initiative with the protection of private property (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 85). In short, the principle of private initiative ensures the creation of a productive and dynamic society, with the transformation from the communitarian social structure to the particularist social structure. Thus, the most important point was the liberalization of the individual from a society which paves the way for the domination of private life over public life. It is the education system that encourages professions other than public servants and the protection of private property that guarantees the development of private initiative and increases productivity.

As for the second principle, decentralization is the main mechanism of the transformation of the communitarian social structure to the particularist one; because the existing social structure produces extremely bureaucratic systems, which, in Sabahaddin's view, is the cause of the many social and political problems (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 85). He supports a decentralized administrative system that prioritizes local democracy and contributes to the development of individualism. Although he was accused of accelerating the dissolution of the empire due to this principle, he argues that independence movements could be best prevented by means of decentralization. The individual, who attends to the local government and control it, sees himself as the participant of the central government and as the member who controls it. Thus, he feels an attachment to the state, and this contributes to the political unity of the central authority. The proportional disposition of responsibility, authority, and office paves the way for the practical and concrete control mechanism, and it is also

the most concrete guarantee of the political independence of the individual. The decentralized rule enables individuals to be a part of government; thus they feel belonging instead of demanding independence (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 103-105-4). As in the doctrines of Science Sociale, the principles of the private initiative and decentralization are interrelated. They envisage the dynamic social structure, in which private life dominates public life; the individual is liberated from the domination of social institutions.

## 2.2 Liberal Dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's Thought

Akkaya (2005, p. 59) argues that we can view Sabahaddin as a liberal since he puts a particular emphasis on individual enterprise and the rise of the individual from inside society in terms of socioeconomic dimensions. Durukan (2009, p. 154) explains that if a reference to the definition of liberalism is not made, he can be called a liberal because of his criticisms of the despotic and authoritarian tendencies of Abdülhamit II and the CUP. His stress upon private initiative and decentralization, and the importance he attributed to the Ottoman bourgeoisie are the other points that cause of interpreting him as a liberal. Kadioğlu (1999, p. 83) agrees with Durukan in terms of the interpreting his thought as liberal within the context of his opposition to the despotic rules of the CUP and Abdülhamit II.

According to Insel (2005, p. 557), Prince Sabahaddin symbolizes political liberalism in Turkey. Liberalism before Prince Sabahaddin was restricted to the economic sphere, but polarization among Young Turks in terms of the centralization and decentralization controversy included the political and sociological settlement areas exceeded the economic sphere. Thus, economic liberalism transitioned to political liberalism with the conflict about centralization supported by Ahmet Rıza and his followers and decentralization supported by Prince Sabahaddin and his



followers. Furthermore, he also argues that this conflict leads to the formation of political parties as rivals. The CPID whose members were the followers of Prince Sabahaddin emphasized the principles of individualism, liberalism, private initiative and decentralization in its coherent program. The Party of Ottoman Liberals (Ahrar Fırkası) adopted the same principles. İnsel argues that naming themselves as liberals means that they adopt these principles in order to create cosmopolitanism and equality. The economic and political dimensions of liberalism were clearly represented with the followers of Prince Sabahaddin through the programs of the Party of Ottoman Liberals and the CPID. However, political liberalism represented by Prince Sabahaddin and his followers was associated with the 31 March incident. It was the first opposition movement with a religious pattern in which the line between Islamist thinking and liberalism was not protected (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 79). Since the 31 March Incident, political liberalism is perceived as reactionist by the authoritarian reformist mentality (İnsel, 2005, p. 68).

On the other hand, Kansu argues, although Prince Sabahaddin's thought resembles liberalism at first glance, but his intellectual sources were mainly the archconservative and anti-revolutionary ideology in 19<sup>th</sup> century post-revolutionary France. Therefore, when his perspective is properly understood within this historical, political context, the superficiality of his thought and his diagnoses about social and political problems in Turkey can be clearly seen (Kansu, 2009, pp. 156-157). Özavcı (2007, pp. 254-255) refuses Kansu's argument and explains that the sources were not representative of the archconservative and anti-revolutionary ideology. Quite the contrary, the French authors were aware of the irrevocability of the pre-1789 period, and they just tried to find solutions for the adoption of capitalism in France and the social problems derived from the revolutions. Furthermore, they stress the

individualism and intervention of the state to social life in a way resembling the Victorian era's liberalism. According to him, naming Prince Sabahaddin as a liberal is a result of his dependence on the doctrines of Tourville and Demolins (Özavcı, 2011, p. 142).

Turkish political and social thought gained a different maneuver with Prince Sabahaddin because the individual was put forward instead of the concepts of political regimes, nation, and community. Thus, Prince Sabahaddin represents the different dimension of Turkish political and sociological thought (Özavcı, 2007, p. 232). Accordingly, Toker (2005, pp. 107-109) also emphasizes that the individual that Prince Sabahaddin mentioned, is the individual of classical liberalism. However, the problem with it is the fact that Prince Sabahaddin did not perceive the individual as a given fact. Instead, he mentioned being individual through means of education. In addition, Kadioğlu (1999, p. 85) also points out that his emphasis on private initiative signifies the fact that he argues for the individual in the sense of classical liberalism.

The absence of reference to the primary sources of liberalism (Reyhan, 2008, p. 132), and clear explanations of the concepts of liberalism (Akkaya, 2005, p. 113) is accepted as the main deficiency in terms of evaluating his thought as a liberal in the literature. Nevertheless, his stress on individualism (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 85), and (Toker, 2005, pp. 107-109), his criticism of the rules of Abdülhamit II, and the CUP are the focal points for the authors who interpret him as a liberal.

As it has been mentioned before, Prince Sabahaddin is reread as a liberal in this study. Therefore, his thought includes more liberal dimensions in contrast to the limited explanations in the literature. The liberal dimensions of his thought will be demonstrated with the focus on the studies of Kadioğlu, Mardin, and Ülken.

Private initiative and decentralization are the two main and interrelated concepts in Prince Sabahaddin's thought as explained before. The interaction between these concepts requires attention and this interaction reveals the liberal dimensions of his thought. There are four liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's thought; independence of the individual and self-development; progress, through social reform and economic progress; opposition to arbitrary government by means of representative government; and the close link between individual liberty and decentralization. Prince Sabahaddin's stress on these issues is an undeniable expression of his liberal perspective.

Prince Sabahaddin tried to find solutions to the problems of the Ottoman Empire through the principles of Science Sociale. According to Prince Sabahaddin, the social problems require scientific analysis. Unless a scientific investigation is not carried out, the reforms carried out by the statesmen will be short-lived and accelerate the collapse of the state.

Le Play determined the structural differences of societies due to geographical differences and family structures. After that, Demolins contributed to this study with the classification of societies as particularist and communitarian. According to this doctrine of Science Sociale, the societies in Asia, eastern and southeastern parts of Europe, Africa, Middle and South America are communitarian, and the societies in Western Europe and North America are particularist. Thus, Prince Sabahaddin starts with his resolution by determining the social structure of the Ottoman Empire because the main problem of the Ottoman Empire was not just political, but it was also social. Thus, he sees the reforms of Tanzimat Period as devoid of a suitable scientific method to the social structure of the Ottoman Empire. He argues that these reforms are unilateral and composed of artificial opinions because the elements of

the social structure were not changed. The problems of the Ottoman Empire could not be solved through overthrowing Abdülhamit II as the Unionists supposed (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 58-61). The main reason of the despotism is not changed after the end of the rule of Abdülhamit II and with the proclamation of the Second Constitutional (Ülken, 1979, p. 327). For the reforms to be successful, the sources of the reforms must be derived from society. Thus, the starting point must be a society (Reyhan, 2008, p. 81). It can be said that Prince Sabahaddin was strongly criticizing the reformist mentality and the belief that the political reforms would be the solution to every problem of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, he shows the shallowness of the Ottoman rulers' ideas with his criticisms.

Prince Sabahaddin starts with determining the social structure of the Ottoman Empire as Le Play and Demolins did. He finds out that the main problem of the Ottoman Empire is its communitarian social structure (Ülken, 1979, p. 327). In communitarian societies, the skills of the individual and individuality are less prominent (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 366). The Communitarian social structure, which is derived from the laxity of daily life and working conditions, subjects the individual, and it leads to consumption rather than production. The social skills and the character of the individual cannot develop. Thus, he becomes reliant on the family, the community, the party and finally the state. The individual becomes totally reliant on the other people rather than himself in terms of social welfare, initiative, and freedom. He anticipates that freedom is given to him without making an effort for it (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 62-63).

According to Çağla (1994, p. 32), the basis of both the state and society is the individual for Prince Sabahaddin. Individuals who are the basis of society in terms of survival of the society, do not exist for the society; instead, the society exists for the

individuals. The state must gravitate to the individuals because the state is the common success of them, and it must be organized according to the existing principles of the individuals. The main office of the state is to provide the happiness of the individual. The main aim of education and training is to raise individuals, and the state handles the security of them. The individual precedes whole social institutions and the state survives as much as the individuals are independent, successful, and strong. In short, the main actor for the resolution of Prince Sabahaddin is the individual. When social skills and the independence of the individual are not developed, the individual wants liberty to be bestowed by others, or by society. Under these circumstances, the individual accepts the tutelage of the social institutions over himself (Akkaya, 2005, p. 63). Thus, the line between private life and public life is blurred. The tyranny of the political authority over the subjects is established. Furthermore, the subjects contributed to this tyranny because they are incapable of constituting the legal mechanism which protects themselves (Reyhan, 2008, p. 65). He explains the despotism which is maintained by the CUP government with this reasoning. He argues that the despotic regime was replaced by the rule of the CUP after overthrowing Abdülhamit II. The main cause of this is the mentality of the CUP, which believed that the political reforms are enough and ignores the social dimension (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 232).

The education system that produces officers for the state and the communitarian social structure of the Ottoman Empire prevents the independence of the individual. To be an officer in the state is more prestigious for the people, and thus the opportunity for private property is restricted by them (Kadioğlu, 1999, p. 84). At the beginning of the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, tribalism was the most prominent social organization. The authority of the sultan was restricted by the

authority of the margraves that have almost the same power as the Sultan. This social organization changed with the start of the era of Mehmed the Conqueror and the state organization gained a theocratic and centralized structure. The legitimacy of the sultan was derived from God and tribalism. The legitimacy of the sultan's authority was also supported by the Ulema, who provided the ideological basis, and the belief. Thus, political activity was restricted to the Ottoman elite in the palace and coming to power meant being a Turk. Therefore, the Turks were a potential threat, and they were excluded from the political sphere (Reyhan, 1992, p. 122).

Prince Sabahaddin realized this deep-rooted social structure, and he diagnosed this as the main problem. According to Mardin (1989, pp. 210-216), this is the point which differentiates Prince Sabahaddin from other Young Turks; he was the only thinker who strongly criticized the social taboo of the Ottoman Empire among Young Turks. He recognized the tyranny of the bureaucracy, but this was the deep social criticism of the state in which all elites were mainly the bureaucrats of the state. Mardin argues that the criticism of Prince Sabahaddin by his opponents derived from this critique of him about the tyranny of the bureaucracy. He envisioned the restriction of the expansion of the bureaucracy, and this explains the accusations and the attacks on him by the leaders of the CUP, which was composed of the bureaucrats. The weakness of social life and thus the tyranny of the bureaucracy derive its sources from the education system which encourages being a bureaucrat. However, the future of Turkey depends upon the development of the social class of entrepreneurs (Sabahaddin, 2013, pp. 260-264). The existence of the despotic regime after Abdülhamit II can be clearly explained with the education system that causes this weakness. The solution for him is that young people must have the role of the gentlemen as in Anglo-Saxons through establishing the relations

of farm and committee among the youth and the peasants. He deals with sending students to Europe and criticizes the education system in high schools. He emphasizes the education of Ecole Des Roches. The change of this mentality that depends on the state in terms of living and reforms must start with reforms in mentality and social life. Private initiative is the key to social development, according to him (Ülken, 1979, p. 327).

In contrast to communitarian societies, which cause a personality structure that is negative, stable, and skeptical of change, particularist societies pave the way for the development. It develops both the individual himself, who is in a continuous struggle for life and the social skills of the individual. The individual is freed from the tutelage of the state, government, and the family. The social superiority of particularistic societies derives from their emphasis on the individual's skills and development of the individual (Akkaya, 2005, pp. 64-65). The particularist social structure paves the way for an effective production system in which the social skills of the individual can develop with private initiative and private property. Therefore, he criticizes the education system in the Ottoman Empire, which makes individuals depend upon the state and society and he praises the education system in particularistic societies which develop individual skills and independence of the individual by means of private property and the self-effort of the individual (Sabahaddin, 2013, pp. 244-249). Prince Sabahaddin also criticizes education within the family in the Ottoman Empire. The families also encourage their children to be a bureaucrat in the state and the official education system has already aimed at this. This understanding about private life reflects on public life as the fact that the individual suffered from the government and the society (Reyhan, 2008, p. 84).

Prince Sabahaddin deals with a form of ownership as a means that made the peasant, was the largest class depended on the state. The security of ownership is the main determinant of the social productivity and power. Therefore, the education system must indoctrinate private initiative and improve agricultural lands for further generations. In short, the transition from common ownership to private ownership is essential (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 402-404). According to Akkaya (2005, pp. 71-72), Prince Sabahaddin identified a radical observation by determining the ownership problem of peasants as the most important issue. Backwardness in agriculture cannot be explained by the ignorance of the peasants. He established the link between ownership and productivity. The future depended upon the existence of a social environment which develops relations of production with private initiative. This social environment can be reached with extensive land reform, particularly in villages. The existence of private ownership encourages productivity and thus leads to social order and security. Furthermore, private ownership will change the peasants' perspective on life with the change of the ownership in the Ottoman Empire. He criticizes the land order of the Ottoman Empire, which prevented both the acquisition of private property and the accumulation of capital. Private property is the most important factor that encourages the development of society, not only because it paves the way for intellectual development, but also because it frees the individual from social constraints. This land regime is the primary mechanism which subjects the individual to the state and social conformism.

Prince Sabahaddin aims at developing productivity through the independence of the individual, who can seek more productive professions through their private and creative initiatives, thereby avoiding becoming civil servants of the state. He recognized that the main motivation for private initiative and also the main



contributor to individualism was private property. According to Kadioğlu (1999, p. 85), his opinions about private initiative demonstrate that he supports individualism in the sense of classical liberalism. Individual liberty signifies the independence of the individual from the shadow of the state. In other words, to be individual means to be free and not be subjected to the state.

The third point which prevails in the thought of Prince Sabahaddin is his emphasis on representative government. In his Memorandum of the Turkish Liberals Relating to the Eastern Question, he deals with reforms inaugurated by Rashid Pasha during the rule of Abdülmecit and maintained by his successor. He named this the initiative of the government for development. Although these reforms could not get the support of both the Muslims and the Christians, he mentions that these reforms contributed to the methodological reorganization of public instruction. They also created a generation capable of understanding the necessities of modern times and guide public opinion in the same direction. In 1876, the constitutional charter based on national representation was promulgated through removing Abdülaziz, who was seen as the main set for the maintenance of the reforms. The Constitution of 1876 was guaranteeing the rights of the subject, and it also expands equality. Prince Sabahaddin claimed that Abdülhamit II was trying to undo these efforts through abrogating the Constitution. He strongly criticizes the despotic rule of Abdülhamit II, who suppressed the Constitutionals, all intellectual training and all opposed ideas to government. He uses the word tyranny for the rule of Abdülhamit II, and he argues for the Constitutional Government in contrast to obtaining reforms from Abdülhamit. Furthermore, he also argues for the Constitutional Government as a solution for the separatist demands of the minorities of Balkans in that memorandum (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 159-163).

The other point that Prince Sabahaddin deals with is the opposition to the arbitrary government. As explained, he strongly criticizes Abdülhamit II due to his abolishment of the First Constitutional and his suppression of the opponents to his tyranny. Therefore, Prince Sabahaddin seems to encourage people to rebel when they are subjected to tyranny. He praises the incidents in Kastamonu and Erzurum as revolts against the despotic regime of Abdülhamit II. He evaluates them as the result of the fact that the peasants began to understand their rights and offices (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 170). He gives the incidents in Kastamonu and Erzurum as examples for the other provinces. He tries to encourage people to have associations among themselves and to involve in actions instead of waiting for solutions to their problems from the sultan (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 183-183). It can be said that Prince Sabahaddin is aware of the irrevocability of the patriarchy, and he argues for representative government with a strong emphasis on the constitution. Furthermore, he reminds the subjects of the Ottoman Empire that they have the right to rebel when they are subjected to the arbitrary government. He also frequently turns back to the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the Ottoman Basic Law in terms of grounding his principle of decentralization. He interprets this clause on the basis of law (Akkaya, 2005, p. 91).

The last liberal dimension of Prince Sabahaddin's thought is his emphasis on individual liberty. It has been mentioned that he strongly criticizes the mentality which sees the state as a source of living and the communitarian social structure of the Ottoman Empire. He argues that the liberty of the individual is inhibited or even nonexistent. According to him, being a bureaucrat means being a slave of the state and, therefore, they blindly believe the state and they become the means of the despotic regime. Private initiative is the means for individual independence because individuals who do not depend upon the state can think and act independently from

the state. He sees the education system in state schools and families as the mechanism that creates slaves. According to him individual liberty is the basis of national liberty, and just governments exist in the societies in which private initiative is common. Furthermore, Prince Sabahaddin established the link between individual liberty and decentralization (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 190-194).

Prince Sabahaddin recognizes that the education system in the public schools and the family which encourage the youth to be bureaucrats. In his view, this education system enslaves them and causes characters who do not question authority (Akkaya, 2005, p. 77). He praises the education system in L'Ecole des Roches due to its formation for the development of reasoning skill of the students (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 172).

The most important point to which Prince Sabahaddin pays attention is the fact that he is courageous enough to question the concept of the people's sovereignty which is accepted as unquestionable. He is equally critical of people's sovereignty and the rule of the monarch because of the centralized government formation. The change of the sovereign is not meaningful for the individual who is subjected to the rule of the group of people in the parliament or the monarch. The problem is the suppression of the individual by the centralized government. Therefore, he sees the centralized government depend upon the people's sovereignty same with the rule of the monarch in terms of both dominating individual liberty. He argues that both of them will inevitably result in despotism and corruption. (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 270). He argues for decentralization which he sees as inseparable from individual liberty (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 194). According to Kadioğlu (1999, p. 85), the administrative decentralization will provide the best environment for the development of

individuality and private initiative. He grounds his argument for decentralization on the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the Ottoman Basic Law (Akkaya, 2005, p. 91).

He supports decentralization because he believes that it is the most appropriate means for preventing arbitrary government and despotism. Prince Sabahaddin explains that the necessities of a region can be known by the inhabitants of that region, in contrast to the officers who are appointed by the centralized government. (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 140-141).

Decentralization means the expansion of the control of the government by the people through the establishment of councils in the provinces in addition to the Ottoman Parliament. The activities of the government must be controlled even in the provinces. He argues that the peasants should attend to the councils, and they must follow the usage of the taxes, which they pay, by the government. According to Sabahaddin decentralization, is not a totally new system and he explains that the Ottoman Basic Law has already brought this system with its 108<sup>th</sup> clause. However, it has not been properly implemented. Furthermore, he pays attention to the minority question in the Ottoman Empire and argues that their demands for independence can be best prevented by a decentralized form of government. Decentralization is also the most important factor for economic progress because it paves the way for private initiative and thus the development of individual liberty (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 262-266).

Decentralization means the empowerment of the governors (Vali) and other local administrators and the establishment of the councils in the provinces. In this way, the citizens can control the expenditures of the government financed with their taxes (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 276). Thus, Prince Sabahaddin draws attention to local participation in social and political life. His stress on the participation is an indication

of the extent to which he underlines the principles of self-government and democratic accountability through an extensive democratization of the government by means of local councils in the provinces.

To sum up, Prince Sabahaddin becomes prominent in terms of the liberal dimensions of his thought. Although his liberal stance is defined in terms of his oppositional stance towards the government of Abdülhamit II and the CUP, his thoughts have more profound liberal dimensions. Furthermore, his ideas remained on the opponent side even in the Republican era. His stress on the independence of the individual, progress through education and the guarantee of private property, representative government, constitutionalism, and individual liberty indicates classical liberalism. The difference of Prince Sabahaddin also comes from the fact that he frequently criticizes the mentality of Turkish society which he sees as the source of the despotism.

### 2.3 Situating Prince Sabahaddin in the Liberal Tradition

This thesis is based on a rereading of Prince Sabahaddin as a liberal. Furthermore, the liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin are explained in the previous section. His emphasis on independence and self-development of individual, social and economic progress by means of education and land reform, representative government, individual liberty, and opposition to arbitrary government has proximity with the thoughts of John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville. Therefore, this part is composed of their thoughts that have proximity with the liberal dimensions in the thought of Prince Sabahaddin.

Liberal political thought is a tradition of individualist thought that was formed around democracy ideals and arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century world in which the trade relations became prominent. It differentiates itself from former political

thoughts in terms of its emphasis on liberty (Tunçel, 2010, p. 37). As Heywood (2007, p. 23) explains, “The Latin *liber* referred to a class of free men; in other words, men who were neither serfs nor slaves. It has meant generous, as in liberal helpings of food and drink, or about social attitudes, it has implied openness and open-mindedness. It also comes to be increasingly associated with the ideas of freedom and choice.”

Liberalism is not older than the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the term liberal was firstly used in 1812 for a political movement when the Spanish party of *Liberales* adopted. Liberalism is distinctive and has competing sources in European Culture. It has changing features which can be understood with the crises of the modernity. The first crisis is the dissolution of the feudal order in Europe in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The second one is the results of French and American Revolutions in the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The others are democratic and socialist mass movements that emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the emergence of totalitarian governments (Gray, 1995, pp. 11-12). The main themes of liberalism are individual, individual liberty and human rights; constitutionalism and rule of law; limited government, neutral state and the market economy (Erdoğan, 2005, pp. 28-32).

Liberalism has a relatively short history when compared with other forms of thoughts. Liberty in the modern sense is highly different from pre-modern times. Gray stresses this distinction regarding liberal French writer Benjamin Constant. He asserts that the freedom of the ancient Greeks is to have a voice in a collective decision making. The difference is the fact that the modern liberal thought stresses the liberty of individual (Gray, 1995, p. 3). Gray clarifies the transition of the understanding of freedom as self-government through attending to collective decision making to individual liberty. The liberal dimensions of Prince Sabahaddin's

thoughts have references to classical liberalism. The thoughts of John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville have influenced Prince Sabahaddin's thoughts indirectly. Therefore, their thought will construct the theoretical framework for this thesis. However, the focus will be at the thought of Alexis de Tocqueville. His main contribution to liberal thought will be mentioned, and a detailed explanation will be given in the next chapter.

In *Two Treatises of Government*, John Locke made the central elements of the liberal outlook clear. He uses the explanation of the state of nature in order to criticize absolute and arbitrary authority (Zabc1, 2005, p. 164). He tries to generate an idea that explains limited and legitimate political authority. Thus, the first question that he tries to answer in his *Two Treatises of Government* is what are the sources and limits of legitimate political authority (Warburton, 2006, p. 86). Locke advocates for limited and legitimate political authority (Zabc1, 2005, p. 164) and he also establishes a link between the freedom of the individual and property. According to Locke, original and natural property is in the personality and labor of every man. Thus, the labor property in the body of men is the foundation of all other property in the state of nature (Goldwin, 1987, pp. 485-486). The establishment of civil society is derived from the need for the protection of the properties of humans; their lives, freedoms, and their possessions (Zabc1, 2005, p. 175). In order to guarantee the protection of life, liberty, and property, people leave the state of nature and they give up some of their rights; such as the right to punish the transgression of people in the state of nature through giving their consent. They construct an organized society through making a contract with one another. The individual or a group of people, which individuals trust is given the power of making and enforcing laws. In this way, the individual clearly agrees upon being bound with the decision of the majority.

Furthermore, because man has the right to property in the state of nature through giving labor to an uncultivated land, man has the right to the entitlement of that land. Thus, the aim of the state is the protection of life, liberty, and private property. Furthermore, he argues that the legitimacy of the government derives from the protection of the natural rights of men and if the government fails to act for the sake of the public good, the people also have the right to rise and overthrow the government. The government does not have absolute power over its citizens, and the limit of power is driven by the service of the government for the common good (Warburton, 2006, pp. 89-90).

There is a close affinity between the thought of Prince Sabahaddin and that of John Locke; because Prince makes an emphasis on representative government, individual rights, private property and citizens' right to resistance. Prince Sabahaddin argues for the representative government. He strongly criticizes Abdülhamit II, he strongly refuses the patriarchy and argues for the Constitutional government. Furthermore, he does not abstain from calling the citizens for resisting when they are subjected to the arbitrary rule. The other point on which Prince Sabahaddin make emphasis is the private property. He entitles the private property with the labor property in the body of men like John Locke. This same entitlement of Prince Sabahaddin and his emphasis on the right to property can be clearly seen in his argument about the land reform in the Ottoman Empire (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 404).

The main concept of Kant's philosophy is the notion of rationality and criticizes the rationality understanding of the naturalistic Enlightenment, which sees it as the slave of the passions. Instead, he argues that the reason must set our goals. Kant mainly argues that our actions must be governed by our reasons. The morality and the politics are interrelated, and the moral act is the act based upon the



conformism of our will with reason. The link between the reason and the law that Kant sees is the basis of the morality and acting morally means acting by (the moral) law (Taylor, 1984, pp. 103-104). The human being is distinctive with his capacity for moral choice and this capacity for moral choice is the basis of the political freedom in Kant (Adams & Dyson, 2007, p. 81).

The rational agents formulate their laws. The moral must be autonomous. Freedom is central to morality in his thought. The moral obligation of men exists in the political society, and it also signifies the common recognition and subjected to the common laws. The aim of the politics is the regulation of freedom for which state also exists (Taylor, 1984, pp. 107-115).

Each determines his moral law through the categorical imperative which means treating people as an end never as a means. In other words, every individual has a right to freedom and autonomy. The republican government is the best form of rule in a society of rational agents (Adams & Dyson, 2007, p. 81).

The most important point in the philosophy of Kant is his emphasis on the independence of the individual as a citizen of the Commonwealth. As a citizen, a person must be dependent upon just his will (Taylor, 1984, p. 117). They become more mature, responsible and rational with the republican government (Adams & Dyson, 2007, p. 82). Therefore, Kant determines that paternalism is unacceptable because it is established upon the principle of benevolence. In other words, this form of rule treats its subjects as immature, which means they cannot distinguish what is good or bad for themselves. Kant refuses this, and he firmly believes that humanity gradually develops a civilization which is inclined to Republican future. Furthermore, economic development will inevitably bring enlightened opinion, which forces the government to make gradual reforms (Taylor, 1984, pp. 116-119).

Prince Sabahaddin's emphasis on the independence of the individual shows similarity with Kant's emphasis on the individual as a citizen of the Commonwealth. The main focal point of Prince Sabahaddin is the bureaucratic formation of the government, which is accepted as the most prestigious occupation in the Ottoman Empire at the time. This occupation prevents the independence of the individual as a citizen as well as it enslaves him in terms of performing the edict of the sultan of the parliament. Therefore, he argues for the education system both in the public schools and in the families, which encourages the youth to have a different occupation with their initiative other than being bureaucrats. The citizens can be relied upon their free wills just through their private initiative. Prince also takes sides with the gradual development as Kant situates in his thought. According to Prince, the gradual development is inevitable. As the private initiative is encouraged with the administrative decentralized form of government.

Adam Smith also generated the most influential form of liberalism in his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Smith has three significant contributions to liberal thought. The first one is the fact that he perceives free-enterprise and the commercial system as the peak of human development of distinct stages. The second one is the relation between the economic system and the political system. He further argues that the liberty in economics derives from the constitutional order that guarantees civil and political liberties. The last contribution of his is the perception of the social institutions as the result of the individuals' actions; not as intentionally designed (Gray, 1995, pp. 24-25).

Adam Smith elaborates upon the principles of free enterprise, liberal capitalism, through deflection of political philosophy to economics. The borders between the governed and the governors are fused with democracy. In other words,

political life has given way to sociality and political authority is widely diffused. Therefore, morality is inseparable from political life. It must be lived and maintained by means of economic organization. The aim is to provide free, reasonable, comfortable, and tolerant life for the whole species. The annual national product is the modern sense of the wealth of a nation which is related to the welfare of it. The annual national product is determined by the productivity of the individuals which have the interest of increasing it as much as possible. They should be free for this maximization, and the competition will provide the check. The common interest appears when self-interest is allowed to convert into good for all. Therefore, there is a link between the prosperity of the individual and the prosperity of all which depends upon the division of labor. The class of merchants and manufacturers must be regulators of economic life, and the government should just perform the role of the referee which prevents the illiberal conflicts with others in society while promoting their productiveness. Labor generates annual addition to product and this contribution to output derives from the accumulation of capital with recognition of private property and capital. This system is named a system of natural liberty in which things were free to follow their natural course. Smith's capitalism perceives freedom as an existential condition for the individual as a moral being. Therefore, economic liberalism is a peaceful way for the people to exist as individual moral beings. Progress can be made by means of economics, which provides a peaceful life to human beings. The secure life is the main mechanism of progress which is made through technological developments in commerce and communication (Cropsey, 1987, pp. 635-654).

As Smith makes democracy speaks in the words of economics, Prince Sabahaddin imitatively focuses on the private initiative and the decentralization to

make the democracy in the Ottoman Empire make speak in the words of economics. Prince Sabahaddin proposes the increase of the productivity and so the wealth by means of encouraging the private initiative and arguing for the private property. He is aware that the economics is the peaceful way for the coexistence of the individuals despite their differences. He tries to encourage the trade in the Ottoman Empire in his writings, and he explains that the agricultural trade will be the starting point of the Ottoman Empire because of its undeveloped industry. For free trade and private initiative he supports the administrative decentralization. It prevents the encroachment of the government in the center to the provinces and provides the most practical form of government for the economic and social development. In short, Prince mainly argues for the economic liberalism which he sees as a means for progress.

According to John Stuart Mill, the progress of society depends on the ideas of superior individuals who are moral and intellectual leaders. Liberty is the fundamental condition for the flourishing of superior individuals. Thus, progress is related to liberty. Magid states Mill's reasoning about progress;

“...The forwards movement of the society is actually produced by ideas, example, and moral and intellectual leadership of superior individuals. Superior individuals have flourished chiefly under conditions of liberty so that liberty becomes a necessary condition for progress. The argument is fairly simple: Progress depends on the emergence of new ideas; new ideas emerge only as challenges to old and accepted ideas, and then if there is only freedom to challenge the existing beliefs and to suggest alternatives....”

In the political thought of Mill, the individual who has a consciousness by means of education has the priority. The existential aim of the state is the preservation of order for the sake of achieving progress in society. Progress and order are two differing concepts. Therefore, good governance depends on the qualities of the human being and virtue, and intelligence of the individuals must be

developed. Individual development evolves from obedience to self-government (Magid, 1987, pp. 787-792).

For Mill, individual liberty is the basis for the development of the individual. Therefore, individuality is valued for its expression of the highest in human life and it is also valued for the promotion of the development of civilization. Mill assumes that the individual has privileged information about his desires and feeling as well as the interest of his well-being. Therefore, the limitation of individual liberty can be considerable in terms of differences in the self-regarding actions and the other-regarding actions (Hampsher-Monk, 2005, p. 377).

Through the progress of society, representative democracy emerges, and he deals with it as the best polity. Obedience determined human progress and worked in the early stages of development, the liberty determines the civilized period. When the division between the governed and the governor disappears, the representative forms of government in which the governors represent the interests of the governed emerge. Thus, this kind of polity does not guarantee the liberty of the individual. Further progress depends upon the protection of individual liberty in the representative form of government. He establishes a link between individual development and social progress (Magid, 1987, pp. 796-797).

Mill is aware of the danger that is imminent to the democratic government as Tocqueville. In the early periods, liberty was protected from arbitrary rule through representative bodies and claims of inviolable rights. The establishment of the democratic rule contains the tyranny of the majority. Thus, the protection of the individual against society as well as protection against the government is required. Society always has the potential to encroach on individual liberties. Thus, the concept of civil liberty which is composed of the freedom of conscience, opinion,

tasks, and preferences and freedom of union and association through ideas must be spread. It must be coded in the constitution. An opinion cannot be suppressed by society, even if it is perceived as harmful (Hampsher-Monk, 2005, p. 367).

The fear of Mill is not about the government; it is about the majority which has an intolerance to the anomalies in society and is ready to take under the minorities into control. The most important point is the fact that the liberal state requires liberal society (Sabine, 2000, p. 123). Thus, the main threat to liberty comes from a majority that is not tolerant to the unconventional and suspicious about divergent minorities. It is willing to suppress and control minorities through the weight of numbers and public opinion (Sabine & Thorson, 1973, p. 642).

As Mill turns his face to the society from the representative government, Sabahaddin turns his face to the society. He diagnoses that the main source of the political problems of the Ottoman Empire is its communitarian social structure. Thus, he sees the requirement of the transition to the particularist social structure. The main aim of this transition is to grow independent individual who relied on themselves in terms of living. Their independence in terms of living will inevitably give way to the economic development which is the basis of the intellectual development. This social structure is also the basis of the individual liberty.

Tocqueville is different from his predecessors in terms of his stress upon the imminent threat to liberty in a democracy. He realized that popular sovereignty is irreversible, and democracy should be more than just suffrage and equality of worth. He also emphasizes that democratic equality can be a threat to liberty because regional and national differences are blocked out for the sake of equality (Adams & Dyson, 2007, pp. 132-133).

Tocqueville distinguishes two aspects of democracy; social and political. While the political aspect is regime change, the social aspect requires some habits, mores and perceptions of citizens by another. Therefore, democratic equality for him is the internal motivation for action. To achieve equality which is the passion of democracy can be easily dissolved with the despotic regime and thus the suppression of liberty as in the French Revolution (Jeume, 2013, pp. 17-18).

Tocqueville figures out the fragility of liberty in a democracy. The French Revolution put forward equality in a way that undermines liberty. Thus, the political dimension of democracy must guarantee the liberty of both the individual and the group (Çağla, 2007, p. 238). Therefore, he tries to draw lessons from the American experience of democracy for France. America could be a suitable example for France, which is centralized and has political instability, in terms of self-government in the way of decentralization. Tocqueville and his friend Beaumont journeyed to America for research about a new type of prison in Philadelphia with these anxieties. Then he wrote *Democracy in America* from his observation about the social and political life in America (Siedentop, 1994, p. 13).

The equality of conditions, tyranny of the majority, federalism, checks and balances, local government, the relationship between religion and democracy, the freedoms of association and expression, and public opinion are the subjects with which Tocqueville deals in the first volume of *Democracy in America*. In the second volume, he pays attention to the imminent threats to democracy and criticizes exaggeration of people's sovereignty. He mentioned that Democracy does not always bring liberty. This statement is also emphasized in his other study; *Ancient Regime and Revolution*. He also deals with the relation between revolution and democracy (Çağla, 2007, pp. 3-4).

The thoughts of Tocqueville are not explained in this part of the thesis. The detailed explanation of his thought will be given in the next chapter of the thesis in order to make a comparison with the thought of Prince Sabahaddin. This comparison will elaborate the deepness of Prince Sabahaddin's thought. The thought of Prince Sabahaddin can be best situated in the dimension of liberalism on which Tocqueville sheds light.

In conclusion, Prince Sabahaddin's political thought has a close affinity with the thoughts of Locke, Kant, Smith, Mill and Tocqueville. The main problem is the fact that Prince Sabahaddin does not make any reference to these philosophers. However, these explained dimensions cannot be ignored. Therefore, the possibility of the fact that Prince Sabahaddin indirectly reached to these philosophers reveals. Probably, Prince Sabahaddin reached them by means of reading Demolins. Nevertheless, the affinity between the thoughts of Prince and that of Tocqueville is more prominent. This affinity can be originated from the fact that Demolins is from the generation that followed the systemic comparison of De Tocqueville.



## CHAPTER 3

### INDIVIDUALISM AND DECENTRALIZATION

This part of the thesis consists of the comparison of the thoughts of Tocqueville and Prince Sabahaddin. The main aim of this comparison is to reveal the deepness of the thought of Prince Sabahaddin, who is accepted and reread as a liberal thinker in this thesis. The main reason for this comparison is the fact that I think there is proximity between their thoughts. Siedentop (1994, p. 142) explains that Frederic Le Play is from the generation which was affected by Tocqueville's systematic comparison of two types of society. This supports my argument about the close affinity between their thoughts. Prince Sabahaddin seems that he reaches the main lines of Tocqueville's thought indirectly through reading Le Play and his successors.

This affinity is revealed with the points which both of them situated in their thoughts. Despotism, centralization, decentralization and local autonomy are the concepts with which both Prince Sabahaddin and Tocqueville deal. In addition, both of them used the same method for similar starting points which question the political context of their homeland. I argue that both thinkers perceived and interpreted democracy as a way of life, and they determined the change of mentality as a prerequisite for democracy. They did not think that institutional changes in the political sphere were sufficient for the consolidation of democracy. Political participation is the focal point for both of them.

Both Tocqueville and Prince Sabahaddin start with questioning the unstable political context of their homelands. Both of them questioned the unstable political context of their states which were formed after the Revolution of 1789 in France and

after the Revolution of 1908 in the Ottoman Empire. In France, after the Revolution of 1789 a despotic regime was established by Napoleon Bonaparte and the political context entered into prolonged and remittent instability. Similarly, the sultan was overthrown and the Second Constitutional was established in the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to democracy anticipations from regime change in the Ottoman Empire, the new regime gained a despotic character in a short period of the rule of the CUP government. In other words, the revolutions in both countries brought political instability and despotism in contrast to the anticipation of democracy. Furthermore, both countries witnessed the bloody assault on the opposition after the revolution for the sake of the establishment of political order.

The revolution of 1789 in France gave way to violence and terror. The Jacobins established a regime of terrorism after the revolution through suppressing the opposition which was disappointed in the revolution; because the land reform was not carried out, and political instability increased. The democratic regime which aimed at the Declaration of Rights of Men and Citizen was transformed to a terrorist regime. Political instability in France is followed by the despotism of Napoleon Bonaparte. France witnessed two more revolutions in 1830 and 1848 another dictatorship was established by Napoleon III (Sander, 1997, pp. 121-125). Political instability in France caused people to have a tendency to gather round one person.

As an aristocrat, Tocqueville felt the bourgeoisie's hatred and the specter of terror throughout his lifetime. In 1820, the early Restoration government could not endure, and the government of Villèle introduced bills which meant the restoration of the ancient regime to the liberal opposition. The great debate of the 1820s was formed around the efforts for the restoration of the ancient regime by the aristocrats on the one side and the liberals on the other side. The liberals were arguing that the

struggle was between the old and the new, between the ancient regime and the revolution, between aristocracy and democracy. Tocqueville followed this debate between the aristocrats and the liberals closely. The main focal points of this debate were the atomization of the society, centralization and the aristocracy and democracy struggle. These also constituted the main points of his thought. By the way, the institutional comparisons between England and France were started to be carried out by the liberals. While England succeeded the foundation of representative government, France had an absolutist monarchy. Furthermore, local autonomy was removed with the destruction of the aristocracy which was the intermediate institution between the center and the periphery. Therefore, the main political problem was redressing the balance between local autonomy and central power in the democratic society of France. Tocqueville was not satisfied with the comparisons between France and England because the aristocracy in France was destroyed. However, the aristocracy in England was still the most important political institution, and it was able to limit the monarch through collaborating with the Commons. Therefore, he turns to the other side of the Atlantic. He thought that America could be the best example for France in terms of its decentralized and democratic form of government. He realized that democratization in France just meant the centralized form of government. Tocqueville and his friend Beaumont went to America with the permission for investigating the penitentiary system in Philadelphia. However, their main aim was to reach the traditional basis of democracy in America (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 3-10).

Prince Sabahaddin starts his ideas with questioning political instability in his country like Tocqueville. The reformists in the Era of the Tanzimat introduced a series of reforms for the sake of modernization, but the reforms had not gotten

enough support from the people. The reforms which were brought by Gülhane Hatt-I Hümayunu and Islahat Fermanı aimed at providing equality between Christian and Muslim subjects. Neither Christian subjects, nor Muslim Subjects of the Ottoman Empire was content with these reforms. They were made through the press of the Western Powers, which could easily intervene in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire (Sander, 1997, pp. 227-232).

During the Great Debate of Restoration in France, the main difficulty for the liberal opposition is to demonstrate the impossibility of returning to the pre-1789 political and social order. For liberals, the French Revolution was just formalizing this change rather than being the starting point of it. They made the distinction between the social and the political and argued that the former had priority over the latter. There was the rise of the middle class which meant the progress of equality and bureaucratic formation of the state. The tyrannical administrative system of the Napoleonic state reached its peak in terms of centralization of power since the era of Louis XIV. The despotic regime emerged in this centralized form of state, though its democratization. The intermediate institutions between the state and the society were destructed, and the atomization of society ended with centralization which is the main threat to democracy. Social change was realized from aristocracy to democracy while the political change was realized through centralization. The caste system in society was dissolved, and development from the inequality of rights and conditions to the equality of rights and conditions was realized. Social equality could be maintained with the state which protected individual rights and democratic society. Therefore, *Democracy in America* was an attempt of Alexis de Tocqueville to demonstrate that centralization was not destined for democracy (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 20-40).

The unrest in Ottoman society gave way to independence demands of minorities, and the thoughts of Ottoman intellectuals are shaped by this political context. Therefore, the main anxiety for Ottoman intellectuals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the restoration of the state authority which was on the way to destruction due to independence movements of the minorities. Prince Sabahaddin, who had the same anxiety for the Empire, engaged in the opposition movement of Young Turks against Abdülhamit II. After the CUP had come to power with the revolution of 1908, he maintained his opposing stance against the despotic regime of it. Furthermore, he also strongly criticized the despotic regime derived from central power, and he situated individualism and decentralization in his thoughts for the establishment of democracy which cannot be sustained and consolidated merely through institutional transformation. Hence, he argues that despotism would be the destination of institutional changes unless the reformist mentality would not be changed.

In his article which was published in the '*Ottoman*' Journal and in which he deals with Young Turk opposition, Prince Sabahaddin tries to encourage the opposition movement through giving examples from Europe, although the rule was suppressing them. He gives examples of important European thinkers and scientists who had to keep their thoughts and opinions due to suppression. Furthermore, he deals with the fact that the era of Louis XIV sets the scene for the French Revolution. During the reign of Louis XIV, the government was highly centralized which prevented development and independence of thought. The thinkers and politicians in 18<sup>th</sup> century France made comparisons with England, which succeeded in limiting the monarchy. Therefore, he focuses on England as the French did before the Revolution. He argues that French people were rescued from the despotic regime of Louis XIV through revolution. They read Scottish intellectuals for the transformation

of the absolutist monarchy to the republic which Prince Sabahaddin describes as a rule which constitutes political liberty (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 53-69). From this article it can be concluded that the French investigated the causes of British success in terms of limiting the monarch and establishing a representative government and they were successful in overthrowing Louis XIV and democratized the government with the revolution. The French Revolution is the transformation of the regime from the despotism to democracy. He does not abstain from praising the French Revolution in this article because he has an admiration for it in terms of democratizing the government. It made political participation possible for the ordinary people. According to the Prince, the same transformation from the sultanate to popular sovereignty is an essential requirement of the Ottoman Empire.

Although I argue that there is a close affinity between the thoughts of Tocqueville and Prince Sabahaddin, Tocqueville has a critical stance towards popular sovereignty and reveals the imminent threat to it. He is skeptical towards the concept of revolution which resulted in terrorism in France, and he takes sides with gradual development. Tocqueville believes that democracy is not just about universal suffrage and the ballot box; instead he insists that it be about the mentality and mores of society.

Prince Sabahaddin is too optimistic to anticipate democracy from a revolution which just overthrows the sultan and establishes the Second Constitutional in a way which resembles the French Revolution at the beginning of his opposition towards Abdülhamit II with Young Turks. Then the implementation of the Second Constitutional under the rule of the CUP formed his thought about democracy as the issue of mentality and mores.

The first common ground between the thoughts of Tocqueville and Prince Sabahaddin is the link that they establish a centralized form of government and despotism. The institutional transformation for democratization is not enough for the consolidation of it. Democracy is the issue of mentality and mores. The experiences both in France after the Revolution of 1789 and in the Ottoman Empire after the 1908 Revolution showed that the transition from patriarchy to a representative form of government is highly compatible with despotism because democratization is realized with the centralization of the government. Therefore, centralization means despotism for both of them.

Class conflicts in post-revolutionary France led to over-centralization which meant the destruction of local autonomy. Tocqueville investigates the socio-political structure of America to display that centralization is not destined for democracy. Furthermore, centralization cannot be just prevented by the representative form of government in a democratic society in which the aristocracy no longer exists as the holder of local power. Thus, America is the example of a decentralized future for a democratic society (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 40-44).

The approach of Tocqueville explores the two dimensions of democracy in America: the social and the political dimensions. In terms of the social dimension of democracy, he means that democracy requires certain mores and habits as well as institutional changes. Democracy for Tocqueville is both a way of life and a regime based on popular sovereignty. Furthermore, he was aware that democracy is compatible with popular sovereignty and despotic regime (Jeume, 2013, pp. 17-18). The same anxiety appears at the thought of Prince Sabahaddin. Regime change is not enough to prevent the possibility of despotism and arbitrary government. He is aware

that despotism can be maintained through the parliaments. Thus, it is a matter of mentality. He writes that

“... Constitutional Monarchy depends on centralization or decentralization. The opinion of private initiative and individual freedom, which make Anglo-Saxon practice different, constituted the decentralization in England and the gradual development of it constituted the Constitutional Monarchy. Other European countries imitated England when they decided to implement the Constitutional form of government. However, because of the fact that they did not realize the main reason which endures the Constitutional Monarchy, even in the Republican regimes, the despotism of the monarch is followed by the despotism of the parliaments as well as the arbitrary governance of them could not be totally tempered...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 140-141)

He also goes on his argument in the other paragraphs “...This regime is implemented either by one person, the monarch or by a group of people, the parliament, both result in despotism. The change is not about the arbitrariness; it is about the quantity” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 141). In both of these paragraphs, Sabahaddin is aware that democracy is compatible with despotism as Tocqueville elaborates. Therefore, he argues that despotism does not end with the change of political institutions. The centralized form of government is despotic because bureaucrats blindly implement the commands of the sultan and most of the time they become instruments of his policies. He implies this in the following passage; “The ultimate aim and happiness is to be one of its great officers or rather to be one of its public executioners through wheedling and to try to be happy as causing the disasters of others after abiding to various disasters. Take pity on; what can emerge in this country other than despotism?” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 192)

Tocqueville indicates that the republican form of government was not enough for warranting democracy and its consolidation. The problem was about whether the Republic is liberal or despotic. Popular sovereignty was implemented in America much earlier than France. Popular sovereignty in America is respectful of private



property and closed to anarchy and despotism, and there is rule of law. He determines that these are the requirements of France (Çağla, 2007, pp. 19-20).

Tocqueville makes a comparison of France with America to explain what constitutes democracy in America. The first thing that attracts his attention is the equality of conditions which signify the social dimension. He argues that the change of mentality is an essential requirement of democracy for the consolidation of it (Tocqueville, 2004, pp. 3-17).

The equality of conditions is the primary fact which directly influences the public spirit. Equality is, first of all, political, but it is also social, legal, economic and intellectual for Tocqueville. Most importantly, it is related to the mores (Schleifer, 2012, pp. 56-57). The approach of Tocqueville reveals two aspects of democracy, the political, and the social. This distinction is the liberal distinction of society from the government. Furthermore, modern democracy heavily depends upon certain mores, manners. Therefore, democracy is a way of life and a regime based on the sovereignty of the people (Jeume, 2013, pp. 17-18). For a society to function well, its laws should be suitable to the mores (Schleifer, 2012, p. 63).

According to Ortaylı (1974, pp. 235-237) the Ottoman reforms of the 19<sup>th</sup> century aimed at establishing rule based on law which protected the security of life and property. More importantly, it aimed at bringing economic and financial amelioration rather than aiming at transformation to a democratic system by means of implementations which resemble the local government. Furthermore, the pressure of the center became a tradition and the rule of the First and Second Constitutional empowered the center. This centralized rule of the CUP during the Second Constitutional was maintained in the Republican era. Prince Sabahaddin was aware that the main issue with these reforms was their superficiality due to their

inefficiency for democratizing the regime. It can be argued that Prince Sabahaddin was able to see the decentralized form of government as the starting point for people to learn the habit of self-government in the Ottoman Empire whose Muslim subjects was removed from any political activity.

Like Tocqueville, Prince Sabahaddin sees centralization as the source of the despotic regime. He states that

“... The centralization is the heart of the despotism. It is the lack of initiative in the public and the over-centralization of administration which does not allow the development of the local life in any place of the provinces; which centralizes all of the executive power in one city and then in one’s hands in this great empire established over three continents of the world and which finally cause the bad gangrene, contagious corruption which actually erodes the national existence...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 141)

His focus on the decentralized form of government made him and his followers on the opposition side against the Unionists which perceived that decentralization would accelerate the dissolution of the state. Prince Sabahaddin tries to examine the disadvantages of a centralized form of government (2005, pp. 89-90).

The emphasis on habits can be seen in the imaginary of Prince Sabahaddin as Tocqueville. His emphasis can be obviously seen in his dealing with the Ottoman Basic Law. He states that;

“... Although there are not any signs of the graves of the patriots who established the Ottoman Basic Law thirty years before, we can just see the name of this law on the pages of yearbooks! However, if the Ottoman Basic Law would not be only emerged from the ideals of a few great statesmen, if it would be also emerged from the intellectual tendency, from its traditions, the sultan who could dissolve it would face with a community which deals with this!” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 202)

Democracy means more than just institutional changes for Prince Sabahaddin like Tocqueville. Democracy requires public participation in political affairs in order to prevent arbitrary governance. He states that “... Constitutional is the form of government, which the citizens check. If the Constitutional does not exist, the citizens do not have the right to control the state rule. Again the despotism emerges.

Then the despotism passes from one person to a group of people. The form of government which we propose is the transfer of the right to control the government to the provinces...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 263).

Another sign of his treatment of democracy as a way of life can be seen in the following paragraph: “... For example a carpenter, a tailor, a farmer need to know his stuff in order to earn a living; a community needs to know that lifestyle to live with liberty and self-esteem. We are not free when the government said that it gives us freedom. To be free does not rest with the government; it rests with us...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 213)

There is also another paragraph from him, which explains the importance of tradition in terms of becoming self-governing people;

“... Moreover, the people can benefit from the decentralization about their skills of association. If their associational skills are low, the executive power falls into the hands of a few despots and people become subjects of the despots who come from both inside or outside even their laws are free” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 221).

Like Tocqueville, Prince Sabahaddin argues that a centralized form of government leads to the alienation of the people from public affairs. They become alienated from public affairs, and he explains that in order to resist the tyranny of the government, we must learn to be a self-governing people; we must learn to be citizens. He states that:

“It is essential to show our existence to Abdülhamit II while he is alive, to show our existence as brothers as Christians and Muslims to all our citizens, to generate the power which provides the just and civil rule after Abdülhamit II and to try to constitute our existence in the provinces rather than the center.... Therefore, the provinces do not exist for the center; the center exists for the provinces! However, the provinces are not different from the herd in the eyes of the capital city. Here it is the consequence of the centralization which is the result of the lack of private initiative and which means the delegation of all powers to the center instead of administrating their local affairs by means of the officers and the parliaments which are subjected to their elections. Our appealing to the officers and the Sultan is same with the appealing of sheep to the butcher. To get rid of the butcher, we need to be differentiated ourselves from being sheep. The government suppresses us

with its governance, in order not be suppressed, we should generate same governance.” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 215)

He seems to be suggesting that people must stop being mere subjects, and they must become citizens, not just on the basis of law, but on the basis of mentality. Instead of appealing to the officers and to the sultan for governing, the subjects must learn to be citizens and to be self-governing people. We can best learn to be citizens through a decentralized form of government. As Tocqueville argues that popular sovereignty which begins in the provinces then reaches to the center. He also generates a form of government, which does not refer to any discrimination either based on religion or nationality.

### 3.1 Individualism

Tocqueville determines that over-centralization has a companion in society, individualism. It is the chief weakness of democracy. While democratization encourages equality in society, it also encourages individualism which meant that the bonds between the people disappear when the intermediate institutions like aristocracy which deal with people and the government are destroyed. As the people become equal, they stand alone in terms of subsistence. On the one hand, civil equality brings individual rights and on the other hand it requires a competitive mind which serves private goals. Thus, focusing on private goals inevitably brings withdrawal from public affairs. In short, the alliance between centralization and individualism emerges; the bureaucratic form of state begins to exploit the withdrawal of the individual from public affairs (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 86-89).

Prince Sabahaddin supports pursuing individual interests because he assumes that the interest of each constitutes the public interest. He also criticizes the assumption that sees the individual interest, as the opposite of the public interest. In

his paragraph below it seems that he tries to prevent individual interest from over-exaggeration of public interest imitatively with the theory of concentric interests of Tocqueville. He states that

“The private initiative is the fact that the each individual of a community directly depends upon himself in terms of living as seen in Europeans and particularly in English and in Americans, in contrast to us, depending on the family, relatives and the government and is seeking the prosperity with his initiative... The individuals’ interests are the components of their public interests because they increase their states’ welfare with their labor. In contrast, we usually see the individual interest, as the opposite of the public interest, because we pursue our interests through being an instrument of suppression and tyranny instead of pursuing it with agriculture, industry and commerce which are three sources of the welfare...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 213)

To be an independent individual is essential for resisting despotism according to Prince Sabahaddin. Education in the family and schools does not grow independent individuals. In contrast, they grow up slaves who are instruments of tyranny and despotism of the state. He clearly summarizes his solution in this paragraph; “Unless we do not have an education which make us rely on ourselves and make us free with our labor, we cannot prevent our state from tyranny whose natural result is a foreign invasion whatever we have just laws. In order to be free, we must base the family life which is the basis of the society and the education in schools on the private initiative until we reach it...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 214).

Prince Sabahaddin looks at the social and political dimensions of democracy as Tocqueville did. Therefore, the first focal point of his criticisms is the education system which contributes to the bureaucratic and centralized form of government. Prince Sabahaddin criticizes the education system both in public schools and in the family. He explains that it raises people who aim at being bureaucrat which means being a slave of the state for him. Therefore, the bureaucratic form of government feeds despotism. The requirement is independent individuals in the sense of both material and non-material (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 191-192).

Individualism for Prince Sabahaddin has the meaning of being self-reliant in terms of subsistence. Individuals must conduct their lives on their private initiative which make them conscious in terms of defending their rights. Thus, they can be able to resist despotism. Furthermore, as the number of entrepreneurs increases within society, a just system will also emerge because the happiness of the people derives from their efforts and gains. He sees that a just system in society as a natural outcome of the private initiative (Arslan, 2015, pp. 121-125). Similarly, Prince Sabahaddin tries to change the perception of the individual interest, as contradicting with the public interest in the Ottoman Empire. He argues that the public interest is the composition of the individuals' interests. They are not contradictory (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 213).

As distinct from Prince Sabahaddin, Tocqueville saw that the passion for wealth could easily become the enemy of democracy. The love of wealth can create the tendency of need in order among people at the risk of liberty. This is the start of despotism because the reluctance to public participation can occur for the sake of material gains and comfort (Schleifer, 2012, pp. 74-75).

### 3.2 Decentralization

In the second chapter of the first volume of *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville (2004, pp. 33-44) argues that America has singular features. The first one is the absence of class conflicts. There was not a ruling class like the aristocracy in Europe, Americans are self-governing people. Therefore, their institutions can be instructive for France, which has a highly divided society and class conflict. He figures out three factors which form the self-governing social conditions of Americans; the physical circumstances, the mores of the original settlers and the role

of positive laws. America is composed of huge fertile lands. They have the habits of meeting, discussing and settling. In short Americans were used to dealing with public requirements when they emerge. As the third factor, Tocqueville deals with positive laws in terms of equal distribution of property among children. The most important one among these factors is the mores according to Tocqueville because the mores constitute the basis of being Americans as self-governing people. The mores of Americans made them self-governing people (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 51-55).

The mores and traditions recognize the popular sovereignty, and the laws proclaim it in America and it is not hidden as Tocqueville observes. Popular sovereignty in America emerges from the towns and reaches to the government. It can be practiced on a daily basis in America. Political power is respectively concentrated in three centers; the town, the county and the state. Tocqueville explains that to establish and to defend the local independence is difficult. Thus, local independence is highly related to a nation's mores (Tocqueville, 2004, pp. 62-68).

Tocqueville finds that the balance between local autonomy and central government is found through the township system in America. He distinguished 'governmental' centralization from 'administrative' centralization, and he explains that governmental centralization does not require administrative centralization (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 56-57). In contrast to France, popular sovereignty works from the bottom up. Citizens directly participate in the meetings, and they deliberate on daily issues (Jeume, 2013, p. 24). Therefore, Tocqueville clarifies that the local institutions are the sources of liberty. He states that "Yet it is at the local level that the strength of a free people lies. Local institutions are to liberty what elementary schools are to knowledge; they bring it within reach of the people allow them to rely

on it. Without local institutions, a nation may give itself a free government, but it will not have a free spirit” (Tocqueville, 2004, p. 68).

The township model is the most important way to resist the encroachment of the central government. Administrative power is centered in the towns, and the people constitute a body which supervises the annually elected selectmen that carry out the will of the people. For example, the tax collectors are appointed by the state to the communes in France. In contrast, the officials in towns perform this duty. Because of participating in the administration of their towns, Americans in New England are self-governing. Through participation, people become aware of the public interests, and they exercise their power directly (Tocqueville, 2004, pp. 66-78).

In addition to the township system, the jury is the other important institution that makes Americans self-governing. It enables people to learn how to judge without claiming hierarchy. In other words, Americans learn executing general laws, and they gain political virtue through handling their acts. Judging is a way of moderating the sovereignty of the people. It is also the best practical way that makes them learn that their sovereignty is limited and must be expressed by law (Mansfield, 2010, pp. 21-24).

The American township model provided the individual an opportunity to both pursue his interests and be aware of the claims of the others. In other words, this theory of concentric interests which is the intermediate between the Benthamite utilitarianism and Rousseau’s public interest is the mid way of individual claims and the aggregate claims of all. Furthermore, the township system makes people have a sense of justice and it both educates and moralizes the citizens (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 57-58). Therefore, the primary source of liberty for Tocqueville is public



participation. The functioning of democracy heavily depends upon the habits of liberty rather than the art of liberty which is the legal framework provided by constitution makers. The enduring one is liberty related to the mores. Political and civil rights provide the framework, but participation saves the real meaning of liberty. The habits formation effect of laws can be seen in the long run (Schleifer, 2012, pp. 64-68).

The township model enables people to have the habits of discussion and cooperation as a result of being involved in public life. Thus political liberty, public participation, is the main obstacle for the tyranny of the majority. This tyranny of the majority arises due to the over-empowerment of the judicial power in the name of the parliament. It is highly subject to public opinion, which stipulates unlimited authority of popular sovereignty. Thus, the town system in New England is a highly effective way of restraining the majority in addition to an independent judiciary and a bicameral legislature (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 60-63).

In short, Tocqueville points out that centralized form of government creates apathy in society regarding public affairs. Therefore, the township system in America is the key to explaining Americans as self-governing. Administrative decentralization of the township system in America is an important institution which makes them self-governing. Furthermore, most importantly, they have helped develop the habits of discussion, association, and cooperation. They are free in the full sense of the word because they actively participate in public affairs, and so they are aware of the needs of others and they do not see themselves as aliens to administrative issues. Americans are democratic since they immigrated, and they habituated democracy as a way of life for Tocqueville. The same focus on democracy as a way of life can be seen in the political imaginary of Prince Sabahaddin. Democracy is a way of life and

an issue of mentality for both of them. In the rest of this thesis, I will explain Prince Sabahaddin's imaginary for the decentralized form of government, and I will discuss whether he imagines the prevention of the tyranny of the majority.

According to Akkaya (2005, pp. 90-91), Prince Sabahaddin and his followers explain decentralization in terms of defining the inefficiencies of the centralized form of government in the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, decentralization is discussed in terms of independence demands of minorities in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, he was frequently accused of secessionism. Decentralization was perceived as an accelerator of the dissolution of the Empire.

Prince Sabahaddin explains that there are two forms of decentralization; political and administrative. Political decentralization is autonomy, and he explains this form of decentralization with the example of Canada. He clarifies this in the paragraph below;

“What is decentralization? Decentralization has two forms. The first one is the political decentralization which means autonomy like Canada and England. Canada has autonomy. It politically depends on England, but it is independent in terms of making trade agreements with foreign states. This is known as the political decentralization. The administrative decentralization is also available, and its limits are definite...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 263)

In this paragraph, Prince Sabahaddin also explains that the Parliament in the capital city is not enough for the participation of the people in public affairs. He also signifies that the parliament in the provinces must be opened in addition to the parliament in the capital city.

He deals with the provincial councils in a similar way with Tocqueville. He tries to explain the decentralized form of government, which he advocates with the principle of ‘distribution of authority’ (tevs-i mezuniyet). He argues that this form of government is already written in the Ottoman Basic Law. The 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the

constitution already mentioned, this form of government, but it has not been implemented according to him. He states that:

“Expansion of authority does not mean anything other than the decentralization. How will we implement this in the provinces? This form of government already existed before.

The provinces have the requirement of an agreement to form provincial councils in the province annually other than the assembly. However, this right has not been implemented for thirty years as the other laws of the people. The provincial councils have been nullified like the Constitution. The provincial councils must be established in the provinces together with the First Parliament. Naturally, the state cannot execute its right to supervise with an assembly that is to be found in İstanbul. The Constitutional will just belong to the governor in the provinces due to the centralization. The rule of the government must be supervised even in the provinces. This is the only way for the establishment of the perfect rule...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 263)

It is obvious that the perfect form of government is the decentralized one for him because it encourages people to participate in public affairs and supervise the rule of the government in the capital city.

He also complains about the inefficiency of the bureaucratic form of state. According to him, the bureaucratic procedures which take the time to undermine economic efficiency. He states this inefficiency;

“If the Constitution is the formation of the right to supervise in the center by means of the First Parliament, the administrative decentralization certainly means the implementation of the same law in the provinces through provincial councils. In the states who have the centralized rule -like us-, if the requirement of the construction of bridge, road, school and hospital, which meets the local necessities, within a province, the application of the province to the capital city, of the capital city to the ministry of the interior, of the ministry of interior to the ministry of public works, of the ministry of public works to the grand vizier and of the grand vizier to the palace is needed sequentially. The economic life of the state is wasted in the unending official procedure...” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 275)

Furthermore, he explains that different regions of the Empire have different needs. The officers that the Center appointed to the province as the governors do not know the needs of the inhabitants of that region. He states his concern as “... For example, there are huge differences between the inhabitants of Yemen and Salonika

in terms of their subsistence! The ones, who can see them up close and perceive the real needs of both provinces, are not the officers who live in Istanbul; they are the inhabitants of Yemen and Salonika;...” (Sabahaddin, 2013, p. 276).

Prince Sabahaddin also deals with decentralization as a way for the protection of the unity of the Ottoman Empire. He argues that decentralization will make the minorities bind to the Ottoman Empire by giving them the right to supervise the government by means of the provincial councils in the provinces. Decentralization is the only way for the prevention of the independence demands of minorities. He also explains that the political center will be more powerful with administrative decentralization (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 295).

### 3.3 Political or Administrative Decentralization

Prince Sabahaddin is frequently subjected to the accusation of contributing to the independence demands of the minorities by the Unionists. He tries to explain that decentralization has two forms, political and administrative. He argues for administrative decentralization which is also coded in the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the constitution (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 286). The administrative decentralization for which he argues, are composed of ‘distribution of authority’ (tevs-i mezuniyet) and ‘distinction of tasks’ (tefrik-i vezayif). In other words, the administrative decentralization means the empowerment of the governors and the officers, and establishment of the provincial councils which provide the people to supervise the ways in which the taxes that they pay are used. He clearly explains in this paragraph;

“... The reform under the name of the administrative decentralization that we have been demanding all along is to empower the governors and the other officers, to open the provincial councils and to make the citizens used to determine how the taxes that they pay is used and to supervise this usage by the government locally. Therefore, we always depend upon the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the constitution in the broadcasting about the decentralization; in fact we try to explain the importance of this clause to the public opinion in our

publications and we also embrace the clause of the CUP which is based on the same essence. Now then, the decentralization is not anything other than ‘distribution of authority’ and ‘distinction of tasks’; but ‘distribution of authority’ is not the name of the decentralization, it is the description of it.” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 276)

Prince Sabahaddin tries to explain in detail that he argues for administrative decentralization concerning the Bill of Province Law (Vilayat Kanunu Layihası). He makes references to several clauses of the Bill, and he tries to explain the structure of the administrative decentralization. According to him less development of the provinces cannot be explained by making the governors and the administrative officers responsible for it. He complains that the main cause is the fact that they have no authority to execute administrative affairs. This Bill is planned to donate the governors and the administrative officers with the authority of administrating the public works in the provinces. The first clause of the Bill explains that the rule of the province depends upon the distribution of authority and the distinction of tasks. This Bill also aims at empowerment of the governors and the administrative officers in terms of executing public works, like construction of roads, transportation and allowing the establishment of factories and manufacturing shops within the provinces, borrowing in proportion to one third of its annual income and paying it within five years maximum. Furthermore, the proconsuls are to be authorized for surveillance and declaring war, and they are to be consulted in terms of appointment of the governor (Mutasarrıf) and the sub-governor (Kaymakam) by the center. The provinces are also to have their budget for the executing of the administrative issues explained above. This budget will be composed of the taxes that the inhabitants pay and the annual rent income from transportation. Therefore, the provinces will not be dependent on the center in terms of income and administrating themselves, and so the pace of development will increase according to Prince Sabahaddin. The pace of development among the provinces will cause competition among them, which will

give way to civilization with administrative decentralization which paves the way for local development (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 366-367).

According to Kadioğlu (1999, p. 85) Prince Sabahaddin advocates administrative decentralization for the transformation of society from the communitarian structure to the particularist. Furthermore, she clarifies that he criticizes the inefficient bureaucratic system of the centralized government so he proposes an administrative decentralized form of government, which will contribute to political unification through providing the best environment for the development of individual independence and private entrepreneurship.

Similarly Arslan (2015, pp. 110-120) argues that Prince Sabahaddin criticizes the incompatibility of the decentralized form of government with local needs. She asserts that decentralization means local democracy in the modern sense for Prince Sabahaddin. Çağla (1994, p. 33) argues that Prince Sabahaddin highlights administrative decentralization which prevents monopolism and being dependent on the center.

On the contrary, Reyhan (2008, pp. 71-73) argues that when Prince Sabahaddin's idea of decentralization is evaluated with second, third and fourth clauses of the program of CPID, he actually deals with the federal state structure. The program of the Committee elaborates that the provincial councils are to be given full authority in terms of foreign policy, military, and customs. The program also envisions that the provincial councils will elect the deputies in the Ottoman Parliament among themselves, and, therefore, the deputies in the first parliament represent the provincial councils, not the people. The center will be under strict supervision of the province. In other words, the aim of Prince Sabahaddin with decentralization is to limit the effect of government above the local within the

framework of the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of the Ottoman Basic Law. Thus, he equates decentralization with the principles of ‘distribution of authority’ and ‘distinction of tasks’. Reyhan (2008, pp. 140-142) also adds that Prince Sabahaddin does not take into account the role of the Western powers in terms of the independence demands of the minorities. According to Reyhan, the reforms in the Ottoman Social structure about ethnic and geographical autonomy did not prevent the independence demands of the minorities and Prince was ignoring the interventions of the Western Powers in these implementations. Administrative decentralization will inevitably have a tendency towards political decentralization due to the independence demands of the minorities. He argues that the program of the CPID and Prince Sabahaddin’s principle of decentralization are clearly constituted federalism.

Akkaya (2005, pp. 101-102) also states that Sabahaddin’s decentralization principle are the main cause of accusations about him, although he frequently explains that he argues for administrative decentralization. She also admits that his proposition of this principle is the sign of participatory democracy. He does not make any references to discrimination and he sees every nationality as the brothers and the citizens of the Ottoman Empire and he tries to unite all of them under the Ottoman identity without rejecting the plural religious and national identity. She also interprets that the link between the Ottoman identity and the decentralization that he established is not a contradiction instead it can be said that it is too optimistic when it is evaluated within the political context of that era. Like Reyhan, Akkaya also indicates that his effort of uniting the minorities under the Ottoman identity seems hard to reach when the interventions of the Western Powers to the minority policy of the Ottoman Empire are considered.

I agree with Reyhan and Akkaya in terms of the fact that the independence demands of the minorities would not be prevented when the interventions of the Western Powers and the strength of the nationalist movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were taken into account. However, the participation in public affairs must be the most important focal point of this thesis. When the intolerant character of Turkish people to differences, the suppression of the opposition due to the claim of its illegitimacy, the deviation of Turkish Republic through closing the government to the participation of the citizens, the social engineering potential of every elected government and the perception of democracy as a ballot box and elections are considered, the thought of Prince Sabahaddin gives clues which are prospective such that they are valid even today. The decentralization for which he argues aims at providing the practical form of government in terms of meeting local interests. Furthermore, he implies the local administration in the modern sense through focusing on political participation.

Apart from the debates about political or administrative decentralization, it is clear that the decentralized form of government has plural meanings for Sabahaddin like Tocqueville. It is explained that Tocqueville sees the decentralized form of government, particularly the township system in America, as a school of citizenship. Prince Sabahaddin does the same emphasis through implying that the citizens must follow the expenses of the government, which depend upon the taxes that they pay. This emphasis on the habit of following the expenses of the government implies that the citizens must be used to follow, learn and be aware of the public affairs. In other words, they must pass from being mere subjects to citizens. The citizens can learn to be citizens through participating in public affairs. The participation in public affairs can be best provided with the decentralized form of government. Their participation



also contribute to the independence of the citizens by means of providing the perfect environment for private entrepreneurship. It can conclude that he imagines a society as a separate body from the state and lets the society determine itself with decentralization. It can also be argued that decentralized form of government is a school of citizenship, in which Muslims can learn to be self-governing people as Christians learned. He frequently implies that decentralization is already written in the Ottoman Basic Law and he interprets the 108<sup>th</sup> clause of it to make a clear explanation. He asserts that Christians benefit from the decentralization in terms of tax, courts and education (Arslan, 2015, p. 115).

In the Tanzimat era, an important step towards secularism was taken. Although the reforms weakened the *millet* system in the Ottoman Empire, the understanding of the equality among the communities on the basis of religion was maintained. The communities maintained their privileged status and began to show the characteristics of the individual nations. The Christian population began to show its existence, particularly after the Royal Edict of Reform in 1856. For example, the Armenian community gained its constitution and its national parliament in 1863. However, Muslims did not benefit from those privileges (Ahmad, 2010, pp. 41-44). Although the Tanzimat period charged all the citizens with the military office, then they had the choice of paying the military office as a tax (Bedel-i Askeri) instead of performing it (Arslan, 2015, p. 114). The most important point about the taxes is the collection of them. Christians collect taxes in proportion to their wealth among themselves. They can protect the poor with this taxation system. On the other hand, Muslims have to pay the taxes in equal amount without taking inequality of their financial power into account.

Another privilege of Christians related to the courts. They had the privilege of dealing with civil law cases themselves, and they can also appeal to the courts of the Ottoman Empire in terms of injustices. They also have their private schools and their education system to which the government rarely intervenes. They are also engaged in different occupations that provide them wealth. In contrast, Muslims do not have those privileges, and they are so suppressed by the central government, such that they cannot compete with Christians (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 185-188). Therefore, Prince Sabahaddin aims at the expansion of these privileges which are given to Christians as a community and to Muslims through decentralizing the government. They must learn to be citizens through participation in public affairs which is provided by local administrations. They must be aware of and defend their rights.

As the second dimension of the decentralization principle of Sabahaddin is that he proposes it as a solution for the dissolution of minorities. Similarly, Tocqueville demonstrated that people become aware of the needs and the interests of others through participating in public affairs which creates the public spirit which is the sense of belonging. Therefore, popular sovereignty is realized from the bottom to up. Although Prince Sabahaddin does not give a detailed explanation of the public spirit like Tocqueville, yet he deals with the citizens eventually feeling themselves as the part of the governance. In Prince's view, The decentralized form of government, which is open to all minorities and communities in the Ottoman Empire will eventually create the sense of belonging which prevents their demands of independence.

The third point that is proposed about the decentralization principle of Prince Sabahaddin is that he donates local government with the mission of building bridges among the minorities for dialogue. As it has been mentioned before, the different

implementations in terms of the tax system, courts and education created the atomization of the communities based on the *millet* system in the Ottoman Empire. This system makes the minorities deal with their issues as separate communities which are organized on an ethnic and religious basis (Arslan, 2015, pp. 115-119).

Prince deals with the disintegration between the minorities and Muslims mainly Turks. Although, transportation technology is developed, the state does not reach to the minorities, and he relates the independence demands with this. He states this; “Since we are unaware of industry and the commerce, we do not have contact with the minorities in our country. Almost all of the minorities, Muslims and Christians, who we supposed as Ottomans, raised their dissents and antagonism to us in the day, which the general situation of people changed with the great development of the transportation.” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 190)

The local government will ease the borders among the minorities of the Ottoman Empire by making them associated with each other even in the smallest residential area. They become aware of their needs and through associating with the local government, they gain the habit of discussion, and they will eventually gain the habit of making resolutions in a deliberative way. The essential requirement is social communication in political institutions which directly affect the formation of the habits of democracy. He is very optimistic about this expectation. He states that “We begin to see that the unification of the suppressed people of Turkey, which becomes progressively conscious, signifies the beginning of a new era in terms of development of our common country.” (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 88)

### 3.4 The Concept of Liberty

The major political problem for Tocqueville is to find a balance between central power and local autonomy. He does not deal with the basis of political obligation as the 17<sup>th</sup> century liberal thinkers. Instead, the most important political problem of democratic society is finding the balance between central power and local autonomy (Siedentop, 1994, pp. 37-38). Prince Sabahaddin seems that he follows this new path in political science in terms of arguing that the despotism of the central power can be prevented by the independence of the individual and the decentralized form of government which provides practicing this independence. Both of them are interested in the nature of democracy rather than the legitimacy issue. They interpret democracy as a way of life which is directly related to the mentality of the people. To be democratic means to attend to public affairs and to be self-governing people for them in contrast to the fashion of central power that alienates people to public affairs.

The concept of liberty has a similar meaning for both thinkers. First of all, liberty means political participation for Tocqueville in addition to the constitutional and legal arrangements. Although laws are required for shaping the mores about political participation, in the long run, the habits are more powerful in the sense of maintaining democratic order. He deals with the suffrage, local self-government, the fundamental rights to speak, associate and assemble, freedom of press, jury system, and separation of church and state are fundamental for the citizenship. Public participation becomes possible by means of them. Furthermore, to participate in public affairs on a daily life basis encourages people to gain the habit of liberty (Schleifer, 2012, pp. 64-67).

The same focal point appears in the thought of Prince Sabahaddin. Although he does not articulate fundamental freedoms as Tocqueville, his emphasis on public

participation in the local government reveals that liberty is primarily about active citizenship for Prince Sabahaddin. He writes that "... The meaning of getting rid of the centralization is that everyone is his master of his house under the general rule of a common policy." (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 87)

They try to redress the balance between public interest and individual interest. Siedentop (1994, p. 58) states that "The New England township also enabled Tocqueville to demonstrate both the practical and moral benefits of sustaining local autonomy in a political system. One major practical benefit was the emergence of a new theory of interests in the United States. In Europe, when Tocqueville wrote, there were two competing theories of interests –one, dominated by Benthamite utilitarianism, interests while the other, associated with Rousseau, postulated an objective public interest knowable apart from the de facto preferences of individuals." The model American township provides the citizens with a sense of justice, which prevents pursuing just self-interests conflicting with the public interest. They become sensitive to the public interest by means of participation.

Finally, democracy means a way of life for both thinkers. Tocqueville clearly explains that democracy in America, mainly has three important focal points. First, the decentralized form of government as was previously mentioned. It is the basic political institution for the preservation of liberty and thus the participation in public affairs. The second most important focal point is the theory of concentric interests which enables citizens to pursue their interests while being aware of common interests. The most important focal point of Tocqueville is the associational activity in America. Americans have associations that represent diverse objectives out of habit. They have the freedom to associate both the sense of political and civil. The freedom of expression, freedom to write and assemble developed in relation to this

habit of establishing deliberative units for political as well as civil issues. This creates the environment for the spread of divergent opinions by means of the newspapers, and thus the people stay in touch with others in terms of finding an expression of their ideas. They are capable to resist the moral power of the majority (Schleifer, 2012, pp. 105-108).

I think that like Tocqueville Prince Sabahaddin acknowledges the relevance of the habits of association with democracy. He frequently calls Ottoman citizens to unification which means the differentiation of the people of the Ottoman state (Sabahaddin, 2007, pp. 210-211). He supports that the citizens of the Ottoman Empire must establish small associations, and they must be in contact with each other by means of them. He aims at closing citizens to each other through associations that they establish. He clearly explains this in the following paragraph: "... The citizens who form the habit of the noble soul in districts, townships and provinces must establish small associations among themselves and must be in contact with each other through these associations..." (Sabahaddin, 2007, p. 184).

Decentralization is aimed at the creation of participatory culture in the Ottoman Empire. Arslan (2015, p. 125) explains that Prince Sabahaddin's approach aims at encouraging people to constitute associations. She states that "Sabahaddin's approach was that in the face of injustice, people should constitute associations among them. Everyone, illiterate or literate, poor or rich, could serve these associations to the extent of one's strength. Accordingly, those who were materially and morally stronger were certainly obliged to contribute relatively more to the associations. Thus, the establishment of associations appeared as the embodiment of the unison of individual initiatives."

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

A reformist mentality shapes the Turkish political structure since the beginning of the Tanzimat era. Modernization is perceived as economic and technical development, the political dimension of it mainly ignored. The reformist mentality is so consolidated that the early Republican period sets the scene for the biggest social engineering project of the nation building process. During this process, the Turkish republican experience deviated from its Western origins with closing the political arena to the citizens.

The intolerant characteristic of the Turkish political culture towards any deviation created the tradition of accusation towards any opposition movement with separatism and treachery. As Kadiođlu explains, the emphasis on the unification by the Unionists constitutes the backbone of Turkish politics. The claims of the opposition are always accused of treachery and separatism and treated as illegitimate.

Prince Sabahaddin was the outsider in the opposition movement against Abdülhamit II and his outsider stance inspired the opposition movements to the CUP and the RPP respectively. The main research question of this thesis is whether Prince Sabahaddin, who was named as a liberal, formed a political thought that accepts the legitimacy of the claims of opposition in contrast to the Unionist attitude. Furthermore, his thought signifies important points which resemble the thought of Tocqueville.

Prince Sabahaddin is distinctive from other Young Turks in terms of non-engaging in any official post in the state, and he always tries to define himself through remaining at bay the state. Although, his ideas influenced the people, he

maintained his stance as a thinker rather than as a politician. Nevertheless, he did not abstain from propagating his ideas.

His liberal stance is generally attributed to his criticisms of the despotism of Abdülhamit II, and the CUP government, it is a widely accepted assumption that his thought does not include any reference to the classical sources of liberalism. Therefore, calling him a liberal becomes possible when the definition of Western liberalism is not fixed. Prince Sabahaddin is reread as a liberal in this thesis because his thought has many liberal dimensions. It can be concluded that his focus on the minimal state, individual liberty, private initiative and the decentralized form of government are the main points for rereading him as a liberal.

His emphasis on individual independence and self-development, the link he establishes between education, land reform, which recognizes private property, and progress, struggle for the representative government in terms of the constitutionalism and the prevention of arbitrary government, and the importance that he attributes to the individual liberty and its inseparability from decentralization signify that calling him a liberal has concrete demonstrations. The most important focal point of this thesis is the contrast he sees between local participation and despotism. He demonstrates that participation in public affair at the local level constitutes the backbone of the democratic form of government. Furthermore, his thought has the seeds from the thoughts of John Locke, Kant, Adam Smith, Mill and Tocqueville as explained in the second chapter of the thesis. Therefore, the theoretical framework is constructed with their thoughts.

The comparison of thoughts of Tocqueville and Sabahaddin reveals the close affinity between their thoughts. From this comparison, it can be concluded that, they perceive democracy as a way of life which is directly related to the habits and



mentality of the people. Both of them propose decentralized form of government as the most appropriate political institution for becoming accustomed to the habit of democracy. Apart from the proximity of their thoughts, unlike Tocqueville Prince Sabahaddin is not able to make detailed explanations. Although Prince Sabahaddin reaches the main points of the thought of Tocqueville, he does not make any references to Tocqueville. The absence of the references supports the idea that he reaches them in an indirect way. As it is mentioned in the literature on Prince Sabahaddin, the main problem of his studies is the absence of references to the primary sources to support his arguments. This probably derives from the anxiety of recovering the authority of the Ottoman Empire as other Young Turks did.

When the political context of the beginning of the 20th century is considered, the fact that the thought of Prince Sabahaddin could not find support from state officials can be explained by the rise of Turkish nationalism. The nationalist tendencies became much stronger and radical in the 1930s. Furthermore, apart from the Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire, democracy was not consolidated on a wide basis. Although Prince Sabahaddin aims at the transformation of the society for the democracy, the fact that Muslims do not have the habits of democracy and the increasing harsh political environment constituted the main obstacles for his thought to gain support from people.

The perception of politics since the Tanzimat period is considered, it is obvious that Prince Sabahaddin proposes a program of political and social transformation. The fact that his solutions were not implemented in the Second Constitutional Era and the 1920s does not mean that his thought does not propose solutions that are valid today. In contrast, his stress on decentralization and

participation in public affairs gives the most important clues about the problems of contemporary Turkish politics.

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