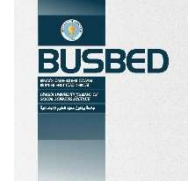


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EVALUATION OF THE 1950 TURKISH GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF SEAT MAXIMIZATION APPROACH

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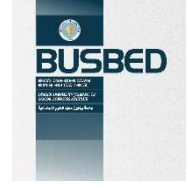
ABSTRACT

The 1950 elections in Turkey are of significant importance as they represent the first election in which the government changed hands through a democratic process. This study examines the 1950 elections in the context of the seat maximization approach. The study analyzes the decision taken by the ruling party at the time, the Republican People's Party (CHP), regarding the current electoral system, and the situation that arose as a result of the expectations related to this decision. The central argument of this study is that the decisions made by ruling parties to change or maintain the electoral system are shaped by the expectation of increasing their own representation. The study highlights the main issue that decisions taken by ruling parties within the framework of seat maximization may not always correspond with the resulting outcomes. In this study, the seat maximization approach is first introduced, followed by an analysis of the political and social structure of the period. Finally, the demands of political parties regarding the electoral system and the resulting outcomes are evaluated.

Keywords: Seat Maximization, Elections, Republican People's Party, Democrat Party

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1950 TÜRKİYE GENEL SEÇİMLERİNİN TEMSİLİYET MAKSİMİZASYONU YAKLAŞIMI BAĞLAMINDA DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

Hüseyin SEVİNÇ¹

ÖZ

Türkiye’de 1950 seçimleri, yönetimin demokratik süreç sonunda el değiştirdiği ilk seçim olması açısından önem arz etmektedir. Bu çalışma 1950 seçimlerini temsiliyet maksimizasyonu yaklaşımı bağlamında incelemektedir. Çalışmada dönemin iktidar partisi olan CHP’nin mevcut seçim sistemine ilişkin almış olduğu karar ve bu karara ilişkin beklentilerinin seçim sonucunda ortaya çıkarmış olduğu durum analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın temel argümanı, iktidarların seçim sistemi tercihine yönelik sistemi değiştirme veya muhafaza etme yönünde almış oldukları kararların kendi temsiliyetlerini artırma beklentisi çerçevesinde şekillendiği olgusudur. Üzerinde durulan temel husus ise iktidarların temsiliyet maksimizasyonu çerçevesinde almış oldukları kararların her zaman ortaya çıkan sonuçla örtüşmeyeceğidir. Bu çalışmada ilk olarak temsiliyet maksimizasyonu yaklaşımı sonraki bölümlerde ise dönemin siyasal ve toplumsal yapısı ele alınmıştır. Son bölümde ise siyasi partilerin seçim sistemine yönelik talepleri ve ortaya çıkan sonuçlar değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Temsiliyet Maksimizasyonu, Seçimler, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Demokrat Parti

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1. INTRODUCTION

May 14, 1950 election was a turning point in the sense that it was a truly transition from the one-party regime to multi-party regime. The twenty-seven-year-long single-party era ended with the 1950 elections, in which CHP became the opposition and DP came to power. The increasing dissatisfaction towards the government with the onset of World War II, the Land Crops Tax, Property Tax, National Protection Law, and the suppression of the people, disconnectedness of the elite ruling class from the people were factors that fueled the opposition against CHP. On the other hand, the widespread organization of the DP throughout the country, their success in bringing politics closer to the people and making it more accessible, and their integration with the public were the main factors that led to the DP's victory in the 1950 elections (Keskin, 2012, p. 51). The election of 1950 marks a more significant schism in Turkish political history than the more widely acknowledged formal collapse of the Ottoman empire and formation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Until 1950, Turkey's sociopolitical power structure remained unchanged from the Young Turk period. The election of 1950 marked the beginning of a new political era (Zürcher, 2000, pp. 316-317).

Elections hold a significant position in the determination of institutional structures at the governance level and the operation of democracy. In this context, the 1950 elections in Turkey are a turning point in the country's history, marking a turning point in the political life, the transition to a multiparty system, and most importantly, the transfer of power from the CHP (Republican People's Party), which had been ruling the country since 1923, to the DP (Democrat Party). One of the main factors contributing to the aforementioned transformation was the maintenance of the existing electoral system by the ruling party, the CHP, despite the demands of the DP prior to the 1946 elections and the MP (Nation Party) after the 1946 elections to switch from a majority electoral system to a proportional representation system.

Electoral systems play a significant role in shaping political life, and although they are the outcome of political preferences, political preferences are ultimately the outcome of social preferences. In other words, the rules and institutions governing electoral systems and the functioning of elections are shaped according to the expectations of politicians. In this context, the failure of CHP to win the 1950 elections has been analyzed within the framework of seat maximization. The dominant political party in Turkey prior to the 1950 elections, the CHP, attempted to maintain their power by preserving the majority voting system and disregarding calls for change towards a proportional representation system. This decision was made with the intention of preventing the formation of a potent opposition within the parliament by the DP. However, this approach was ultimately unsuccessful due to the party's failure to consider various factors such as socio-economic conditions, voter preferences, and disconnection from the general public.

The main scope of this study is to determine how the decision of the CHP to maintain the existing electoral system in the framework of seat maximization impacted the results of the 1950 election. The study will contribute to the literature on the role of electoral systems in shaping election outcomes by emphasizing the complexity of political behavior in democratic societies. This study aims to provide a framework for the interaction between political parties and electoral systems by considering elections in the context of social, political, and economic factors.

2. SEAT MAXIMIZATION APPROACH

Electoral systems, by nature, have significant impacts on the shaping of political life and are particularly important in two aspects. Firstly, electoral systems shape the nature of parties and party systems. Moreover, they also influence the behaviors of politicians and the strategies of voters. Secondly, electoral systems reveal certain tendencies regarding politicians' preferences. In other words, once an electoral system is selected, it shapes politicians' behavior in that direction and, for this reason, politicians have the opportunity to select a system that is more in line with their own preferences (Mainwaring, 1991, p. 21). In conclusion, politicians' choices regarding election legislation are related to how they perceive the system and the way it operates, as well as the political system.

In the 1970s, the question of how political institutions shape political strategies and influence political outcomes began to come to the fore in the literature (Díez, 2001, p. 4). In this context, one of the approaches that emerged, known as the rational choice analysis, can be considered as a framework that provides a comprehensive framework for approaches that assume that political actors make decisions based on an evaluation of costs and benefits (Collier & Norden, 1992, p. 229). The concept of rational choice, which is one of the approaches that emerged in this context, can be considered as a framework that provides a broad basis for approaches that assume that political actors make elections based on the evaluation of costs and benefits. Rational choice views choices as an external factor and therefore largely ignores the formation of choices. In this context, rational choice is actually concerned with choices at the level of assumptions. Accordingly, actors are rational and will always act to maximize their personal interests, with the assumption being paramount. According to the rational choice theory, politicians often act in a short-sighted manner, making decisions based on immediate calculations. In other words, politicians usually make institutional choices based on short-term election calculations, not taking into consideration or

understanding the potential long-term effects of their actions (Geddes, 1996, p. 33). The explanatory arguments in rational choice analysis vary according to the assumption of what the political actors' goals are in their actions and inaction. The seat maximization argument was used in this study. In the study, the concept of "seat maximization" has been translated into Turkish as "*temsiliyet maksimizasyonu*". Since it couldn't be found any study in the Turkish literature regarding the usage of this term, it has been deemed appropriate to use the term as stated. In future studies in this field, the use of alternative terms while translating the stated concept into Turkish would contribute to enriching the literature in this regard.

According to the seat maximization argument, election laws are the product of negotiations between ruling and opposition parties, each trying to maximize their representation in the legislature (Brady & Mo, 1992). Therefore, the demand for electoral reform stems from the side that aims to increase legislative representation. The claim that the electoral system is a product of the politics carried out by parties is primarily supported by three assumptions: the party is the primary actor in choosing the electoral system; each party is a single actor; all parties are motivated by a single primary goal of winning elections and increasing legislative representation. In this regard, the type of electoral system adopted in countries during democratic transition processes depends on the expectations that party leaders have of the electoral system (Ishiyama, 1997, p. 102).

The basic assumption of seat maximization is that the goal of political parties in choosing an electoral system is to increase their representation rates in the legislative body to the highest level. This assumption creates a structure that explains the changes or permanence of electoral systems. In this context, seat maximization can be summarized as follows: (Benoit, 2004, p. 373): Electoral systems result from the collective choices of political parties that link institutional alternatives to their electoral self-interest (in the form of maximizing their representation in the legislature). While choosing the electoral system, political parties calculate the number of seats they expect each alternative to bring to them in an election and rank the alternatives according to this situation. In this framework, each party will actively seek information sources that will allow it to estimate the expected vote share under alternative electoral systems. The information that mentioned includes information on the operation of alternative electoral systems to be used to convert the vote rate to seats, including the political party's information on the expected vote rate.

According to the seat maximization approach, a change in electoral laws occurs when a political party or political party coalition has the power to bring in more seats than the current electoral system and actually affect the proposed alternative. However, the electoral system will not change if any political party or political party coalition that has the authority to adopt an alternative electoral system predicts that it will not win more seats (Benoit, 2004, p. 374).

By including the general approach of Bawn (1993), the seat maximization approach consists of the following assumptions (Benoit & Schiemann, 2001, p. 158):

- While each political party wants more representation in the legislature, it wants less representation of other parties.
- Political parties collect information about how the institutional rules regarding the electoral system turn the votes into representation in an election to be held and put forward opinions on this. However, they use all available information about voter preference to estimate vote and representation shares.
- As a result of the evaluations, the parties may make a proposal regarding the electoral system preference.
- Institutional decisions regarding the electoral system are taken unanimously. That is, all parties must agree on the preferred electoral system.
- All the assumptions mentioned are widely known and shared among the relevant political parties.

The seat maximization approach evaluates the changes in the electoral system through the expectations of the current government. In this case, the current government will adopt the new electoral system change if there is an electoral system that provides more benefits than the current electoral system. On the contrary, the current government will not want to change the electoral system. This approach basically acts on assumptions and considers electoral system change as an external factor. However, the seat maximization approach assumes that political actors are in a state of full knowledge. It should also be taken into account that there is a high level of uncertainty when it comes to the effects of the potential electoral system in general, even if complete information is exceptionally available (Colomer, 2004; Taagepera & Shugart, 1989). The uncertainty in the choice of electoral systems makes it difficult to take decisions on change preferences in electoral systems (Andrews & Jackman, 2005). In other words, although the current government has the ability to control the choice of law due to the lack of complete information available about the changes regarding the institutional rules, it does not have the opportunity to control the outcomes of the change. Because institutional arrangements are, after all, an output of social and political choices (Shvetsova, 2003, pp. 207-208).

To summarize, when the governments will make an institutional choice regarding the electoral system, the main motivation tool for the government is the fact of increasing its representation. However, every electoral system that has been changed or not for the purpose of increasing representation has not produced results in line with the expectations of the government. The main reason for this is that the government is not in the position of full knowledge and the environment of uncertainty. In concrete terms, even though governments may participate in election regulations that they expect to result in their favor, other political actors, voter preferences, socio-economic factors etc. are variables outside of the control of political actors. Therefore, the expected outcome and the actual outcome may not always align in terms of the change of electoral systems.

3. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE PERIOD

In practice, democracy today is a form of representative democracy that allows citizens who are eligible to vote to be governed by individuals they have elected with their own free will. The evolution of democracy into its current form was influenced by the industrialization that took place in Europe and America, the emergence of intellectual currents and ideologies, and the rise and expansion of the middle class (Karpas, 2010, p. 17). In the development and establishment of democracy in the West, the first-degree role-playing class was the middle class. The middle class is referred to as the bourgeoisie in the West and this class is actually the social outputs of capitalism and industrialization. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, it is not possible to talk about a bourgeoisie in the classical sense, as there was no developed industrialization (Karpas, 2010, p. 29). In the Ottoman Empire, although it is not the same as its Western meaning, there was a middle class based on the principle of property and composed of social groups such as ulema, sipahi families, retired soldiers, etc. This middle class existed during the Ottoman era and these classes continued to maintain their loyalty to the state until the end of the XVI. century (Karpas, 2010, p. 30). From the XVII. century, despite the Ottoman Empire's weakening, the middle class continued to develop. Despite the development of the middle class, it failed to produce results in social and political areas, which can be interpreted as a result of the detachment of the state structure from society and, parallel to this, the perception of its existence as above society (Karpas, 2010, p. 31).

In the late XVIII. century, market goods began to enter relatively developed regions of Anatolia outside the center, and in response, various notables with different origins and structures became increasingly interested in economic activities. In this context, the structure of the notables changed as well (Mardin, 2000, p. 88). Although it does not matter who governs the state from the point of view of the middle class developing in the new period, the main concern is to act according to market conditions and to ensure that the state complies with market conditions (Karpas, 2010, p. 35). The fundamental change in the structure of the notables was brought about by the desire of the notables, whose origin was in agriculture, to act according to the conditions of the market economy and the compliance of the state with this. However, the main point of contradiction is the desire of the notables to preserve their own social values in terms of sociological characteristics (traditional and cultural etc.), although they demand a market economy by taking the West as an example in economic terms (Karpas, 2010, p. 35). In addition to this contradiction between the past and the future, the detachment from society and top-down structure of the political power may also be the sociological explanation for why the DP was highly sought after by the masses of society, despite the fact that the DP was actually born from the CHP and shared the same ideological infrastructure.

Considering the sociological change in society, it can be stated that the DP is a product of the social structure that changed as a result of the policies implemented during the II. World War. When we look at the social base of the political power that was dominant in the single-party period, it can be said that this base is based on the partnership of the military-civil bureaucracy and the economically dominant classes (Timur, 1991, p. 18). After the establishment of the CHP, the country was governed by a one-party regime and the electoral system peculiar to the regime, as well as a coalition of military-civilian bureaucracy and social groups that can be called the metropolitan bourgeoisie. Even if the ground for conflict was formed between these groups, the conflict elements that emerged could be resolved by reconciliation. The economy policy implemented during the Second World War, which involved both inflationary measures and repressive and controlling measures, resulted in consequences that severely destabilized the social balance (Timur, 1991, p. 18). The economic policies implemented, resulted in the formation of black marketeering and subsequently the emergence of a clique of war profiteers who benefited from the black market and later from the conditions of the free market. The discomfort of the administrative cadre with this group emerging from the implemented economic policies and the search for ways to transfer their unjust gains to the Treasury through extraordinary taxes such as Capital Tax and Land Crops Tax have frightened the economically dominant classes and caused them to cool down from the CHP. As a result of these developments, the CHP, with its tax and repression policies, has already become estranged from the poor masses and, in addition, has distanced itself from the classes that form the notables, transformed into a bureaucratic structure, and become devoid of social roots (Timur, 1991, pp. 19-20).

In conclusion, the underlying factors behind the change in the social structure and the rise of the DP and subsequent popularity among the public are the economic dominance of certain classes and their dissatisfaction with the policies implemented by the CHP, the growing popularity of democratic regimes internationally, and the

requirement for Turkey to keep up with this trend, along with the discontent among the poor masses and a significant intellectual class towards the CHP (Timur, 1991, p. 22). It should be noted that the DP movement originally drew its social base from the trading bourgeoisie and large landowners, but to fully explain the success of this political party, emphasis must also be placed on its approach to engaging citizens in political struggle. Furthermore, the achievement of the DP in coming to power was made possible due to the widespread public movement. The political methods employed by the DP diverged from those used previously. In the past, members of parliament were viewed with reverence from a distance, but for the first time they approached the public and attempted to reach even the most remote corners to gather votes. With the implementation of direct elections, the connection between political power and the vote was concretized, and elections transformed from being a bogus game to a matter of public interest (Eroğul, 1990, p. 51).

The reason for DP receiving higher votes than CHP in the 1950 elections in the developed regions of Turkey can be explained by the general discontent of the rural population with the government that detached from society, or by the revolt of the notables against the land distribution law that the government wanted to implement in 1945 in the legislature (Mardin, 2000, p. 96). Another different viewpoint suggests that the rapid integration that took place among the larger and richer villages and towns in western Turkey, especially during World War II, is the source of DP's success in the developed regions of Turkey in the 1950 elections. During this process of integration, the impact of transportation, administration, and market was significant. In terms of transportation, a large part of western Turkey was connected to urban centers since the XIX. century through the railway, and this process continued with the republic. This process has resulted in the establishment of a potential new extensive market network. This market network especially gained momentum during World War II due to needs, and the government imposed strict controls in this area. As a result, the emergence of new bureaucratic mechanisms for the functioning of the market, and the necessity for local merchants to establish relationships with the government, obtain credit, etc. have arisen (Mardin, 2000, p. 97). Increased control and regulation of the government in social and economic matters, particularly due to the impact of World War II, and the critical elements being under government supervision, has heightened the importance of relationships with the government to an unprecedented degree. In this context, the disconnection of the center from the periphery and the fact that the activities towards the periphery remained at a discursive level, has led to the search for alternatives in western Turkey, where rural and urban integration was accelerated. Additionally, the emergence of the DP coincided with a period when rural residents and the elites started engaging in economic activities. The party's emphasis on a market economy and its focus on reducing bureaucratic control and dependence made it appealing to those who were feeling oppressed by these factors, and saw it as a suitable means for their needs (Mardin, 2000, p. 97).

During the transition to a multi-party system and until the 1950 elections, the CHP administration, which was in power, maintained a governance approach that detached from society and instead of focusing on actions, pursued a social engineering based on ideology to shape society. The emergence of the DP and the widespread support it received from the masses can be seen as a reaction against the CHP's governance approach that was detached from society, rather than support for the DP itself. This is because the DP originated from within the CHP and there are no fundamental differences between the two parties in terms of ideology. Despite the fact that the policies and political program of the DP were not well known by the general public, and despite all the differences in interest, the DP was able to attract all the groups opposed to the CHP (Karpat, 2010, p. 252). According to Sayari (1978, pp. 40-43), who argues that there was no ideological difference between parties during the transition to a multi-party system, the transition to a multi-party system took place as a result of internal elite conflicts within parties rather than social segregation in national politics. From this perspective, Turkey's democratization process differs from the early Western European democracy experience. In fact, the democratization movement in Turkey started in 1945 with President İsmet İnönü's permission to establish opposition parties. When examining the process of democratization, the transition can be described as a sudden and independent process, taking into consideration the lack of mass movements aimed at expanding the right to vote, the relative absence of social differences, and the lack of a class-based social division (Sayari, 1978, pp. 40-41). In the process of transition to multiparty system in Turkey, the emergence of opposition party movements resulted from the conflict among existing political elites. The increasing division among party elites and the division that took shape as CHP and DP led to a rapid spread of politicization from the center to the periphery. In the transition to multi-party system in Turkey, social division began to become politically pronounced. At the same time, the center-periphery and elite-mass division inherited from the Ottoman Empire and reinforced by the elitist approach of the Kemalist regime formed the main strategy of the DP to mobilize its rural voters during the process (Sayari, 1978, p. 41). The support of the opposition party by the majority of the society transformed a political movement into a social movement, and the pressure of the social structures supporting the party led to the DP being within a political process aimed at taking power directly, even before it matured.

The concrete issues raised by DP mainly include inflation, restriction of liberties, corruption and undemocratic laws. In addition, there is no comprehensive study on the social and economic problems of DP. DP's main strategy during the process was to blame the ruling party for the shortcomings and dissatisfaction with policies that emerged

during revolutions and war years, but there was no expectation among the people to assess the real value of these criticisms. The reason for this is that the public has been given the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction for the first time. Therefore, the identity of the opposition is not particularly important; what is important is that the opportunity to vote against the CHP has been obtained (Karpaz, 2010). As a matter of fact, during the process, DP separated the concepts of party and state and effectively used the citizens' complaints about the past, emphasizing that nothing would change if İsmet Pasha continued to lead the country. As a result, the process carried out by the DP was successful. Because İsmet İnönü has become a hateful symbol of the one-party regime in the eyes of the public (Ahmad, 1977, p. 30; 2012, p. 132).

4. DEMANDS REGARDING THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Regarding the demands of the DP on the electoral system, it can be said that the party emphasized proportional representation before the 1946 elections; however, it can be said that it did not insist on proportional representation before the 1950 elections because of the expectation of being in power. In fact, before the 1946 elections, Adnan Menderes pointed out that a significant deficiency in the election draft was that proportional representation was not considered as a guarantee for minority parties that would remain in the minority (Koçak, 2012, p. 416). In the same period, Sadık Aldoğan, who was the deputy in the VIII. term, defended the proportional representation system with these words:

"In general, we can say that conducting all elections by means of majority vote and majority of votes does not result in anything other than the rule of cliques and individuals, and the true representation of the nation's will in the [Grand National] Assembly of Turkey is not possible." (...) An election held with absolute majority of votes is completely contrary to democracy and this method will not result in anything other than a one-party dictatorship, and the real representation of the people will never be established. (...) In this way, oligarchy and closed dictatorship would not be left unchecked. (...) One of the benefits of an election conducted through the proportional representation system is that the election result will not be so destructive as to eliminate any party from the scene." (Koçak, 2012, p. 416).

Before the 1946 elections, the DP prioritized fair election oversight by the courts in their demands for changes to the election law. Despite the DP's request for a change from the majority system to a proportional representation system, some members within the CHP argued that this was against the traditional majority system in place in Turkey, where there was no class differentiation (Karpaz, 2010, p. 246). Reşat Şemsettin Sırer, who was Sivas deputy, referred to the current debate on the issue and mentioned Adnan Menderes's expression of the proportional representation system, stating that proportional representation system is used to promote compromise in societies where there are class divisions. He also stated that there is no reason to accept the system, as Turkey does not have a fragmented structure in terms of class (Sırer, 1946).

In the 1946 general elections, before the elections, a change was made in the electoral law and the "single degree electoral system" was adopted. In this context, in the elections held, voters directly exercised their right to vote to the candidates. Before the 1946 elections, the DP demanded changes to the election law, including the adoption of proportional representation system, the introduction of secret ballot, the open counting principle, and the judicial control of elections. These demands were not accepted by CHP. The 1946 elections were held without judicial control, with open voting, secret counting and based on the majority system (Demirel, 2014, p. 313).

During the second major congress of the DP, which was held between June 20-25, 1949, the most emphasized issue was the electoral system. The main topic that the delegates emphasized in this congress was the demand for the supervision of elections to be handed over to the courts (Çufalı, 2012, p. 19). On February 16, 1950, significant changes were made regarding the elections. The Nation Party voted against the changes due to their rejection of the proportional representation system. As a result, the elections will be conducted based on the single degree, general, equal, secret ballot, and open counting principles. Furthermore, the majority system was adopted as the electoral system and judicial guarantees were introduced to the elections (Çufalı, 2012, pp. 23-24; Vatan, 1950).

As stated above, proportional representation is a known phenomenon at this time and calls have been made for its implementation. Indeed, some proposals have been made to the Science Committee that prepared the electoral system draft in this direction, and the proposals have been rejected by the commission within the following headings (as cited in Abadan 1966; Cop, 2018, p. 123);

- Political party programs and differences between political parties are not yet distinguishable. Citizens and individuals have not yet matured to the point where they can vote for political party programs instead of individuals.
- The proportional representation system will not allow a single party to have a majority in the parliament, and therefore the formation of coalitions will also be difficult.
- Since the power to dissolve the parliament is not granted to the President in the Constitution, it will become impossible to resolve political crises that may arise.

- The majority system will provide stability in government and, as a result, economic development.

According to the Cumhuriyet newspaper, the Science Committee acknowledges that proportional representation is a more democratic electoral system in terms of representation, but due to the recent transition to a democratic system in Turkey, it stated that this system would cause more harm than good. According to the Committee, the advantages provided by the proportional representation system will allow parties to be established through bargaining and unknown organizations will have the opportunity to develop. In addition, the system will cause party inflation (Cumhuriyet, 1949, pp. 1-3).

5. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTIES IN CHOOSING THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND THE ELECTION RESULTS

As the 1950 elections approached, there was a prevailing hope that the CHP would actually remain in power, and therefore, while preserving the existing electoral system, only lightening the pressure on the opposition, no institutional arrangements were made to separate the party-state integration. For example, the 50. article of the Press Law, which allowed the government to shut down newspapers, and the 18. article of the Police Duties and Powers Law, which gave extraordinary powers to governors, continued to be implemented (İncioğlu, 2000, p. 213). The reason CHP wanted to preserve the current electoral system while DP demanded the proportional representation system can be explained as follows: DP was doubtful that they could secure a majority in the parliament with the current electoral system. Therefore, at least the proportional representation system could ensure the formation of a strong opposition in the parliament. The main concern of Nihat Erim, who represented CHP in discussions on the electoral system and election law, was actually the formation of a strong opposition against CHP. For this reason, demands for the proportional representation system were not accepted (Toker, 1991, p. 25). As a result of this move, Nihat Erim was heavily criticized after the elections. It is estimated that if the 1950 elections were conducted based on the proportional representation system, the results shown in the table below would have occurred (Toker, 1991, p. 26).

Political Party	Deputy Number
DP	261
CHP	195
MP	15
Independent Deputy	16
Sum	487

Before the 1950 elections, CHP acted with such confidence that it would win the election that it used a cartoon on the cover of the last issue of the Karagöz Magazine, where two people, one being a communist and the other being a reactionist, are riding a donkey and leaving the front of Ankara Castle, and placed the text "Losers side by side in this election!" under the cartoon (Cumhuriyet, 1950, p. 3). The relevant issue of Karagöz that was collected from the market on May 16th clearly showed that the communist was the DP and the reactionist was the MP.

According to Asım Us, a writer for the Vakit newspaper who attributes the reason for the loss in the elections to the economy; the problems that arose during the war years continued after the end of the war, foreign trade closed and military expenses continued to grow, resulting in increased cost of living. As a result of all these factors, CHP lost the election due to an economic environment that was impossible to overcome (Us, 1950, p. 1). According to another study explaining the DP's victory in the 1950 elections, it is stated that economic factors have a first-degree importance in the voter's tendency to vote (Bulutay & Yıldırım, 1968, p. 21).

In the loss of the CHP in the election, rather than economic and social reasons, Nihat Erim, who is believed to be the largest culprit of conceding to the opposition by some party members as mentioned above, became the main factor. Similarly, Nihat Erim is held responsible for insisting on the majority electoral system which unexpectedly lost deputies to the CHP (Toker, 1991, p. 26). During the 1950 elections, Faik Ahmet Barutçu, a deputy from the CHP list in Trabzon, stated that the election results could not be predicted by the CHP and that, if they could have been, the CHP could have considered transitioning to proportional representation. Additionally, İnönü stated to him that the fundamental mistake was the feeling of trust in the government, whereas on the contrary, the DP found a way to get the source of power by getting the inside track (Barutçu, 2001, pp. 1021-1022).

Turan Güneş, who analyzed the 1950 elections, states that the CHP was based on local notables and bureaucrats during its formation stage, and that these two classes were the closest to westernization during the process. Güneş lists the characteristics of the CHP during the single-party era and argues that these characteristics actually form the reasons for the CHP's defeat in the 1950 elections as follows Güneş (1996, pp. 76-80):

- During the single-party period, political life was in the hands of a small segment of society. The large majority of society that was outside of political life also had the impression that they were excluded from social life as well.
- During the period that formed the transition from single-party to multi-party, the country has seen social and economic developments. During this process, the young revolutionary cadre, including the top leadership of the CHP, has aged and become a conservative structure. This conservative structure has also extended to the parliament.
- Contrary to the conservative structure, the new generation that grew up in the Republic era, unable to find a place for themselves within the political cadre, have not had the opportunity to participate in a movement that could reach out to the people, as their only way of having an impact on society was to be part of the state organization or bureaucracy.
- As the political cadre of the CHP aged, its local organization also grew old and failed to adapt to the new structure of the countryside. The economic development starting with the Republic and the inflation caused by World War II created new local notables candidates. However, these new local notables were unable to secure a political position proportional to their power. At the same time, the influence of the classical notables on society has decreased due to the impact of revolutions and social developments.
- As a result of all the mentioned reasons, when the transition to a multiparty system took place, there was a disconnection between CHP and the public. In other words, the elite class organized by the single party to carry out revolutions had aged and taken on a structure that could not integrate with society and encompass it. Thus, the ruling elite has become seen as a "state aristocracy" in the eyes of the public due to the reasons mentioned above.
- Turan Güneş argues that with the introduction of general suffrage, the masses now have the opportunity to express their discontent with the government politically, and this opportunity is represented by the Democrat Party. With the materialization of the connection between political power and voting, citizens and social classes who have social, economic, and political demands and grievances have directed themselves intensely towards the DP. The following demands and grievances can be listed like that (Güneş, 1996, pp. 83-88; Uyar, 2008, p. 16):
- With the acquisition of the right to vote, the populations and social classes who were previously resigned to their fate in economically underdeveloped Turkey have begun to express complaints and make demands towards political power.
- In the eyes of these masses considered to be ignorant by CHP, CHP is perceived as a bureaucratic and notables party detached from the society
- The implementation of reforms also constitutes one of the reasons for the public's reaction against the social structure established by CHP. In fact, the contrast between the transition to Western civilization and Islamic values has caused hostility among some segments of society. The symbol of the revolution, the CHP's six arrows, has been presented to the citizens by the DP as the cause of their lack of freedom and poverty, being not free. As a response to the DP's criticism of the reforms, the Seventh Great Congress of CHP in 1947 adopted the principle of "evolutionism" instead of "revolutionism", (Heper, 1999, p. 173) but this did not receive any response from the public. This is because the criticism towards CHP is not temporal, but directed towards its entire past.
- The groups discussed as being in opposition to the interests of large landowners and the newly emerging commercial bourgeoisie supported the DP during the single-party period of the CHP, and were also present within the party due to the statism politics implemented by the CHP during this time. Before the formation of the party, the first resistance against the attitude of CHP, led by Adnan Menderes, was given within the framework of the Land Distribution Law. After the party was established, the economic policies outlined in the party's program aligned with the interests of the aforementioned class. The party program emphasized the prioritization of the agriculture sector and the reliance on private enterprise. The priority given to agriculture meant that the large landholders would have access to credit, equipment, etc. at a reasonable price, while the emphasis on private enterprise would provide great advantages to the trade bourgeoisie. (Eroğul, 1990, p. 49). In conclusion, the emerging new classes expect that the DP will reduce state intervention. The new wealthy people and merchants in rural areas have joined the DP due to the aforementioned economic expectations and the aim of obtaining political positions. The masses have felt themselves closer to the new wealthy people and notables rather than the existing CHP notables (Güneş, 1996, pp. 83-88).
- In conclusion, the newly emerging dynamic and educated personnel naturally turned towards the DP during the Republic period due to the conservatism and closedness of the CHP cadres.

Finally, it can be said that the rise of the Democrat Party to power in the 1950 elections brought up the issue of the choice of the electoral system as well. In fact, before the 1946 elections, the DP, as a newly established party, had demanded the proportional representation system at least for the purpose of creating an effective

opposition. However, the ruling CHP, which did not want the formation of an effective opposition in the parliament, maintained the existing system. In terms of seat maximization, the conditions of the era and the fact that the DP was newly established and not fully organized led to the electoral system working in favor of CHP. When considering the 1950 elections, the CHP believed that the existing electoral system would benefit them again, and therefore took a negative stance against the proportional representation system. However, after the 1946 elections, the DP was no longer insistent on the electoral system being proportional. The main reason for this was that the DP was able to reach the people and the emerging socio-economic conditions favored the DP. In the case of the CHP, although maintaining the electoral system unchanged was a consistent stance in terms of seat maximization, the resulting uncertainty caused the majority system that the CHP maintained to lead to the loss of its own power. The main source of uncertainty here is the CHP's failure to fully perceive elements such as voter preferences, the country's socio-economic conditions, and the image of the CHP in the eyes of the citizens. As summarized by Karpat (2010, p. 328), regarding the mentioned situation, the democrats won the 1950 elections due to the accumulated dissatisfaction against the People's Party. This dissatisfaction had not disappeared, but had only decreased. If the elections had been held at an earlier date (1947-1948), the CHP would have probably received half of the votes it received in the 1950 elections.

6. CONCLUSION

With the peaceful transfer of power in Turkey through the 1950 elections, the process of transition to a multiparty system was completed. Although opposition parties had emerged during the single-party period, they were closed down as soon as they posed a potential threat to the regime. DP, on the other hand, was able to maintain its existence and peacefully take over the government by differentiating itself from the previous opposition parties. It can be argued that there were two ways for the DP to achieve success in taking over the government. Firstly, it was necessary not to touch upon the major prohibitions of the Republic. Secondly, it was essential not to appear to the public as a puppet opposition party established by the government (Eroğul, 1990, p. 47). DP was able to use both of the mentioned situations very well. On the one hand, it managed to keep the different social groups it harbored within the regime's line, and on the other hand, despite entering into opposition with the permission of the government, it was able to conduct the strongest opposition to the government without going outside the regime's boundaries.

Before the elections, despite İsmet İnönü's efforts to start a comprehensive political and economic liberalization to prevent DP's success, the memories of the oppressive years, of which he was a symbol, had an impact on the voters and the new image of CHP was not considered credible by the voters (Zürcher, 2000, p. 317). In the end, the disconnected nature of the elite class during the single-party period had severed the bond between the state and the people. The main factor that brought the DP to power in 1950 elections was the concretization of the bond between the vote and the political power for the newly developing bureaucratic class, notables and the people who were overwhelmed by repression policies of government.

The 1950 elections are a good example of how the choices of the ruling parties to change or maintain the electoral systems in order to increase their own representation may not always coincide with the outcome. The main aim of CHP to preserve the current electoral system in the 1950 elections was to preserve its own current position and prevent the DP from forming an effective opposition in the parliament. However, CHP's expectations in this direction did not produce the desired result due to uncertainty and lack of full information. As detailed in the relevant section, CHP was unable to achieve the desired result in the election because it was unable to fully analyze factors such as voter preferences, socio-economic developments, and the public's attitude towards CHP, and these processes occurred outside of its control.

In general, seat maximization is the determining approach in electoral system choices for those in power. Governments will not act towards changing electoral systems as long as the systems that brought them to power benefit them. Electoral system change demands are only considered by those in power if they provide greater benefits than the current situation and only then will electoral systems be changed. However, the choices of those in power in the framework of seat maximization do not always coincide with the outcome. The main reason for this is the existence of facts that are beyond the control of the governments and that they can never provide full information.

The study conducted has analyzed the 1950 elections within the framework of seat maximization. The study presents a broad perspective on how the decisions made by the government on changes or preservation of the electoral system have affected the functioning of political life. Finally, the decision made by the government to maintain the existing system led to the first change in the existing system and the elimination of the government in Turkey.

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