

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FRENCH LEFT AND RIGHT: THEIR
APPROACH TO “THE TREATY ESTABLISHING A CONSTITUTION FOR
EUROPE” AND “TURKEY’S ACCESSION TO THE EU”

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ABSTRACT

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Key Words: left-right dichotomy, French Socialist Party, Union for a Popular Movement, centralization, the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The traditional left-right dichotomy played a crucial role in the world politics for over two centuries. Within time, the content and the scope of this dichotomy evolved; the differentiation that began with discussions on the political regime was later carried to the religious realm, and then was transformed into a dichotomy involving class conflicts. However, in line with the collapse of communism and the rise of new capitalist world order, the validity of this dichotomy has been questioned. Regarding the French case, as a result of developments in the international arena, the change in the

statist structure of the French political tradition whose aim was to have state control in economics, was effective for the research of the blurring of the left-right dichotomy. While France was the birth-place of the dichotomy, at the same time it became the arena where this dichotomy has began to be questioned when the left and the right parties determining the political agenda began to converge to the centre. The positions and the changes experienced by the French Socialist Party and the Union for a Popular Movement as the two closest candidates to rule France gives important clues on the blurring of the left-right dichotomy. When the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe and Turkey's accession into the EU processes are evaluated, it is seen that the two leading parties in France were on the same side. These parties, while taking their positions on these two issues, rather than evaluating the situation at the European level, handled it in terms of its impact on the national level politics. These two parties' attitudes of disassociating Turkey's accession into the EU from the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe all throughout the Constitutional Treaty referendum process was based on the understanding that the subject of Turkey should not harm the political positions they had adopted. At this point the aim was not to disturb the French electorate and not to decrease these parties' voting shares, and thus in this issue pragmatism and actions to save the day were effective. For that matter, it will not be correct to speak of a certain left-right dichotomy. As a result, the left-right dichotomy is not kept alive by the two leading parties in the centre but by the parties radicalized in the political system, thereby the traditional left-right dichotomy left the scene to the centre-periphery dichotomy.

ÖZET

FRANSIZ SAĞI VE SOLU'NUN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ANALİZİ: “AVRUPA ANAYASASI SÖZLEŞMESİ” VE “TÜRKİYE’NİN AB KATILIMI”NA YAKLAŞIMLARI

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Anahtar Sözcükler: sol-sağ dikotomisi, Fransız Sosyalist Partisi, Halk Hareketi Birliği Partisi, merkezleşme, Avrupa Anayasası Antlaşması.

Geleneksel sol-sağ dikotomisi iki yüz yılı aşkın süredir dünya siyasetinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Süreç içerisinde bu dikotominin kapsamı ve içeriği evrilmiş; yönetim biçimine ilişkin tartışmalarla başlayan bu ayrım, dinsel boyuta taşınmış, sonrasında ise sınıfsal çatışmaları içeren bir ikililiğe dönüşmüştür. Ancak, komünist rejimlerin çökmesi ve kapitalist yenedünya düzeninin yükselişine bağlı olarak bu dikotominin geçerliliği sorgulanmaya başlanmıştır. Fransız politik geleneğinin ekonomide devlet kontrolünü esas alan devletçi yapısının uluslararası alandaki gelişmeler sonucu yaşadığı değişim, Fransa örneğinde, sol-sağ dikotomisinin bulanıklaşmasının araştırılmasında

etkin olmuştur. Fransa, dikotominin doğduğu yer olmakla birlikte, politik gündemi belirleyen sol ve sağ partilerinin merkeze yaklaşımlarıyla dikotominin sorgulandığı yer haline gelmiştir. Fransa'yı yönetmeye en yakın aday olan Fransız Sosyalist Partisi'nin ve Halk Hareketi Birliği Partisi'nin pozisyonları ve yaşadıkları değişimler, sol-sağ dikotomisinin bulanıklaşmasına ilişkin önemli ipuçları vermektedir. Avrupa Anayasası ve Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne katılım süreçlerine bakıldığında Fransa'daki lider iki partinin de aynı tarafta yer aldıklarını görmekteyiz. Bu partiler iki konuda da pozisyon alırken durumu Avrupa düzeyinde değerlendirmek yerine ulusal düzeyde yaratabileceği etkiler kapsamında değerlendirmişlerdir. Bu iki partinin Avrupa Anayasası referandum süreci boyunca Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne üyeliği konusunu Avrupa Anayasası sorunsalından ayırma çabaları, Türkiye konusunun, benimsedikleri siyasi pozisyona zarar vermemesi isteğindedir. Bu noktada referandum sürecinde Türkiye'ye olumsuz yaklaşan Fransız seçmenlerinin tedirgin edilmemesi ve bu partilerin oy oranlarına zarar verilmemesi amaçlanmış ve bu sorunsalda da pragmatizm, günü kurtarmaya yönelik yaklaşımlar etkili olmuştur ki bu noktada belli bir sol-sağ dikotomiden bahsetmek doğru olmayacaktır. Sonuç olarak artık sol-sağ dikotomisi merkezde yer alan iki lider parti tarafından değil siyasal sistem içerisinde radikalleştirilmiş partiler tarafından yaşatılmaya çalışılmaktadır ve geleneksel sol-sağ dikotomisinin yerini merkez-çevre ikiliği almıştır.

To my grandmother Pakize BILGEN

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INTRODUCTION

Framework, Aim and Method of the Research

After the dissolution of USSR and the breakdown of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, there has been an ongoing debate among political scientists on whether the traditional left-right dichotomy is becoming increasingly blurry or not. The left-right dichotomy could be analyzed from two opposing perspectives: on one side, the advocates of the survival of the traditional left-right dichotomy and on the other side, those who reject it. The proponents of the former such as Ronald Inglehart, Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Norberto Bobbio argue that despite the fact that meanings and social basis of left and right have changed over time, the concepts are still alive and maintain continuity. On the other hand, proponents of the latter such as Alain De Benoist in contrast, argue that mainstream left and right political parties increasingly define themselves closer to the center; in other words, parties are more likely to take a centrist

stance on traditional right-left issues. According to those who find the traditional left-right dichotomy meaningless, the main reasons for the convergence of the major left and right parties are the fall of the communist regimes in USSR and in Eastern Europe as well as the socioeconomic changes in Western Europe. These major breakdowns resulted in the reconstruction of both left and right discourses. On the one hand, the right lost its major enemy – communism-; on the other hand, the left learned how to make collaborations with its enemy –capitalism-.¹ It would not be a mistake to view these changes as signs of pragmatism. Thus, the reconciliation of left and right spectrum could as well be regarded as an example of *modus vivendi*, a Latin term which usually describes informal and temporary consensus of two opposite sides in political affairs.² This *modus vivendi* could be associated with the advent of European Community and European Union politics since this kind of a supranational structure influences and determines the national politics leading to decrease of inter-party policy conflicts.³

However, contrary to the attitudes of the political parties, as for the masses, Oddbjorn Knutsen argues that they are not less willingly placing themselves on the left-right scale as Alain De Benoist claims. In other words, according to Knutsen, there has been “a stability in recognition of left-right scale”⁴ by the masses, hence somehow left-right division persists and people still tag themselves as “left” or “right”.

The transformations facing the French political tradition within the context of the international developments in world politics in the recent decades had an important

¹ Rob Eisinga et al., “Convergence and Persistence of Left-Right Political Orientations in the Netherlands 1978–1995,” *Economic Institute Report of Erasmus University Rotterdam*, 1997. Available from publishing.eur.nl/ir/repub/asset/1417/eeb19960111120052.ps. Accessed 15 October, 2008, 3–8.

² Bekir Berat Özipek, *Muhafazakarlık*, (Ankara: Liberte Yayınları, 2004), 156.

³ Jocelyn Evans, “Europe and the French party system,” in *French Party System*, ed. Jocelyn Evans (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 155; Rob Eisinga and Philip Hans Franses, 8.

⁴ Oddbjorn Knutsen, “Europeans move towards the center: a comparative longitudinal study of left-right self-placement in Western Europe,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 10, no.4 (1998) Available from Oxford Journals <http://ijpor.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/10/4/292>. Accessed 15 October, 2008, 306.

impact on the choice of the French case regarding the blurring of left-right dichotomy. In this context, alongside the economic and political changes facing the world, France's 'exceptional destiny' underlined by Gaullism has also gone through many transformations. The idea of economic growth in a Gaullist perspective was directed by the French state and empowered by the public sector. Thus, a centralized state was designed to consolidate the national power further, to protect national sovereignty against the superpowers and to sustain social justice. Today, although the idea of economic growth remains central in the country, the state-led approach is not as dominant as it was in the past; nationalization has given way to privatization even under the Socialists. The new approach is associated with new determinants such as the market forces, global competition and economic rationalization. Thus, the 'distinctively' France projected in the Gaullist discourse converged with European and international norms, especially in the economic realm. In that respect John Girling in his book "France: Political and Social Change" argues that the French mainstream left and right came to a consensus as reflected by the blurring of their former ideological confrontations when viewed from the perspective of accommodating politics to the needs of economic rationalization.⁵

In terms of mainstream political parties' programs, behaviors or their elites' discourses, these parties act beyond their ideologies which inspired them for a long time. It is because either these ideologies became inapplicable or that they are now able to appeal to adequate number of electorates without mentioning these values.⁶

Considering the clerical-anticlerical split, anticlericalism has become less meaningful because of the rapid urbanization which led to a significant weakening of clericalism. Besides, the class struggle concept adopted by the Communist Party has also become less enforcing as a result of the growing middle-class. Thus, it is only the foreign-born workers who consider themselves as the most under privileged class among the workers and attach themselves to the radical-leftist ideology. However, they did not generate a significant electoral power or are not yet politically socialized. According to William Safran, the ideological split between the mainstream political

⁵ John Girling, *France: Political and Social Change*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 1-2.

⁶ William Safran, *The French Polity*, (New York: Addison Longman, Inc., 1998), 120.

parties defending liberalism and advocating interventionism was not a truly dichotomous split. Because mainstream parties on both sides of the political spectrum, from the UDF or UMP on the right to the PS on the left gave up the dirigisme on economy and embraced the neo-liberal values with emphasis on the benefits of the free market.⁷

In addition to considering the foreign policy, there is no longer a significant division between the PS and UMP or UDF in various cases such as the participation in NATO, the nuclear strike force, and the Arab-Israeli conflict and the EU project in large.⁸ According to Emmanuel Todd, the establishment of ideological structures in France took centuries; however, they were liquidated in five years. Although, this was an overstatement, the emphasis of “all the major parties have been emptied of their traditional ideological content in much the same way as churches have been emptied of warships” is widely agreed on.⁹ In that respect, French electorates had a difficulty to associate themselves with a major party due to the fact that these parties no longer have significant differences regarding the outstanding political issues.¹⁰

William Safran in his book “The French Polity” explains the developments which generated the ideologically non-descriptiveness of the major political parties in the past three decades in France. Firstly “the decline of the appeal of the Catholic church, which has drained the Right of its sociological substance; and [secondly] the decline of the “smoke-stack” industries, which has ended ‘the proletarian dream of the Left’”.¹¹ William Safran mentioned about the issues which provided an explanation for the growing irrelevance between the mainstream parties. Thus, he stated that beginning with the President Mitterand, the privatizations did not form a base for the left-right dichotomy. The major political parties embraced the free market in order to increase the French competitiveness in the global markets. In that respect, the basis was politicians’

⁷ Ibid., 120.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 121.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 121.

individual power positions and ambitions forging the controversy between the mainstream political parties. Moreover, Safran added that in major political issues during the early 1990's such as the Gulf War in 1991 and the ratification process of the Maastricht Treaty; the PS, the RPR and the UDF politicians took a similar position over the issues, albeit with some losses.¹²

It is now predictable that Europeanisation took the place of nationalization; besides the pluralist rather than a monist vision of the state, as well as the decentralization tendencies contrary to the centralization were embraced by the leading political parties.¹³

The conflictual politics which characterized the traditional French political culture has given way to a relatively more consensual politics in the contemporary setting since the increasing social mobility and the economic transformations have softened the political cleavages and rendered partisan positions unimportant.¹⁴

The political cohabitation between the mainstream left and right and its legacy gave rise to a new consensual politics and to new forms of collective participation in the political sphere. Joseph Szarka argues that for some this consensual politics has been observed as an example of soft consensus leading to a minor disagreement rather than a major trauma.¹⁵ Considering the left-right dichotomy this entire transformation process specific to the French case is an indicator that this dichotomy is increasingly becoming blurry.

According to the recent French Sofres polls, French people who find left-right split meaningless increased from 33% to 56% in a period of ten years from 1981 to

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 124.

¹⁴ Joseph Szarka, "the Parties of the French Plural Left: An Uneasy Complementarity," in *the Changing French Political System*, ed. Robert Elgie, (London: Routledge, 2000), 34.

¹⁵ Ibid., 34.

1991 while those for whom the split has still meaning decreased from 43% to 33%.¹⁶ These percentages are important because they indicate a discredit over the “left” and “right” notions and a conceptual transformation in a very short period of time. It should also be highlighted that this transformation, though it was a fact in all political circles, was experienced mostly by the left electorates.¹⁷

Concerning the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (CT), the ‘French left’ case stands out among others in the European countries since it faced the most notable party factionalization. Before the CT referendum in France in 2005, the mainstream opposition party, the French Socialist Party (PS), held an internal referendum to determine its political stance regarding the CT. Of the party members, 59% voted in favor of the ratification of CT and 31% voted against. Although the majority of the party members approved the CT and officially the ‘yes’ campaign, the outcome and the ‘no’ campaign within the party led by Laurent Fabius¹⁸ – the former Prime Minister of President Francois Mitterrand - was regarded as the indicator of the division within the Socialist Party. Due to the lack of strong leadership, the party did not discard the members of the ‘no’ camp nor did it censor them during the campaign. Ben Crum claims that factionalization is most likely to occur in opposition parties of a pro-European persuasion.¹⁹ Despite the formal commitment of the PS and its leaders to

¹⁶ Alain de Benoist, “End of Left-Right dichotomy: the French case,” *Telos*, Vol. 102, (1995), 73 – 74.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Laurent Fabius’ attitude can be viewed as a political investment for future presidential elections. Aware of the fact that potential candidates of the next presidential elections supported the ‘yes’ campaign, he knew that a ‘no’ outcome would assure his legitimacy by taking the majority of public support. (Jessica Pennet, “Bir Avrupa Sorununun Önlenebilirliği,” in *Seçim Zamanı-2*, ed. Necati Özkan and Gülen Çetin, (İstanbul: MediaCat, 2007), 92. Wolff and Mounier argue that Fabius tried to take advantage of the referendum “for his personal strategy within the PS since he tried to reposition himself as a more leftist leader” (Sarah Wolff and Gregory Mounier, “France: The Comeback of Political Parties.” *European Constitutional Law Review*, no.1, (2005). Available from Cambridge Journals. http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FECL%2FECL1_03%2FS1574019605003834a.pdf&code=8a83a68a371b337913924f0d065b8fde. Accessed on 1 November, 2008, 391).

¹⁹ Ben Crum, “Party Stances in the Referendums on the EU Constitution.” *European Union Politics*, Vol. 8, no. 1 (2007). Available from Sage Publications. London:Sage

adoption of the ‘yes’ position, due to the active opposition of the ‘no’ advocates, the party faced a serious internal dissent on the issue of CT. The internal dissent could be viewed as the sign of a transformation/reconstruction process since it indicates the discontent of some groups toward the discourse on European issues.²⁰ The fact that the PS was the only European Socialist Party to have split over the Treaty²¹ should be underlined as it shows the peculiarity of the French left’s standpoint. This factionalization within the PS is important in order to perceive the centrist stance taken by a camp within the party.

The Socialist Party, as a more pro-European party than the *Mouvement des Citoyens*²² and the far left, does not share the same degree of Euroscepticism. However, since this research is preoccupied with the PS and its dynamics, other left-wing parties would not be discussed in detail through the thesis. When the Socialist Party began to embrace liberalization and privatization policies in the aftermath of Francois Mitterrand’s presidency in 1981, some key figures of the party such as Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc Mélenchon²³ began to stand out in the party with their emphasis of Euroscepticism. The views of Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc Mélenchon camp in relation to EU enlargement process were contrasted with those of the party leadership and majority of its members. Contrary to Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc

Publications. <http://eup.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/8/1/61>. Accessed on 1 November, 2008, 67-73.

²⁰ Ibid, 67-73.

²¹ Wolff and Mounier, 391.

²² Le Centre d’Etudes, de Recherche et d’Education Socialiste (CERES) is one of the currents that led to the establishment of the Socialist Party during Epinay Congress in which Mitterrand became first secretary.. *Mouvement des Citoyens* is a successor to CERES and to the Socialisme et République current. It was founded by Jean-Pierre Chevènement in 1993, a key figure of CERES as well, after his resignation from PS. Chevènement severely criticized PS leader Lionel Jospin for being close to multinational business, Europe or both. This special stance of MDC enabled the party to attract voters from the far Right (Andrew Knapp and V. Wright, *The Government and Politics of France* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 205.

²³ Former chèvènementiste Jean Luc Mélenchon and former party treasurer Henri Emmanuelli were leaders of a traditional left-wing faction Nouveau Monde within the PS in opposition to Socialist majority (Knapp and Wright, 191.)

Mélénchon, the leading faction of PS approached favorably to the CT in order to maintain the forward march of Europe as did the Socialists in the past. For example, in contrast to the official position of the French left that approves Turkey's membership to EU, Hubert Védrine, a former foreign minister and a member of PS, has said that Turkey was not in Europe, but in Asia Minor. Hubert Védrine's approach is a good example in order to highlight the political rapprochement between the center-right and a part of the left-wing discourse.

In the 2007 presidential elections, the Socialist Party's discourse was reflected through the statements of Ségolène Royal, the deputy of Deux-Sèvres and the PS candidate. In a speech concerning the immigrants' issue, by pointing out to the failure of Nicholas Sarkozy's law-and-order policy, she declared that a much firmer policy was required. Antoine Lerougetel argues that "Royal's statements, signifying the PS's open abandonment of a social reform approach to the crisis facing youth in France's urban ghettos in favor of a policy of repression, have been widely recognized as a significant shift to the right".²⁴ The 1993 Reform which was realized by the socialist President Francois Mitterrand in the 5th Republic ended the automatic acquisition of French nationality by the children of immigrants at the age of majority. In this context, the Socialists have acted in an exclusionary direction regarding acquisition of French citizenship indicating a convergence of the mainstream left and the right political positions in this particular case.²⁵

The aim of the current study is to reveal a special characteristic of the French political system on the hypothesis that the approach and policies of the French left does not differ from the French right on certain 'key' EU values. This means that there is a convergence tendency in the mainstream French context. In the frame of this research, the 'approach to the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe' and 'Turkey's accession to EU' will be discussed. In other words, I will try to show that the left-right

²⁴ Antoine Lerougetel, "France: Likely Socialist Party presidential candidate wants unruly youth drafted into the military," World Socialist Web Site, 26 June 2006. Available from <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2006/jun2006/frsp-j26.shtml>. Accessed on 1 November, 2008.

²⁵ Alec G. Hargreaves, *Immigration, 'race' and ethnicity in contemporary France*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 161.

dichotomy has become blurry over the selected issues. The choice of the values is far from being random. Although it is expected that the left and the right adopt different approaches and policies on these issues, in the French context there is not a clear separation between the two wings in terms of attitudes. It should be considered that the French left is more likely to get closer to the French right concerning these issues. This distinctive aspect of the French left drove me to conduct a research on the similarities between the French left and right rather than their differences.

In order to limit the scope and to make a comparative and general analysis, the research will focus on two major parties; one from the left-wing, the Socialist Party (*PS*); one from the centre-right, Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*, *UMP*). However, it should be indicated that in the research, the Rally for the Republic (*Rassemblement pour la République*, *RPR*) will be mentioned as the antecedent of *UMP*, and their rival the Union for French Democracy (*Union pour la Démocratie Française*, *UDF*). Based on the early Republican experiments France is currently going through the 5th Republic, a period which started with President Charles de Gaulle and marked by strong leaders such as Georges Pompidou, Valéry Giscard D'Estaing and François Mitterrand. Although the 5th Republic was established in 1958, the focus will be on the late 1990's, the period in which the debates over the CT and the Turkish issue regarding her EU membership came to fore.

Following the literature review, the analysis will be based on the material acquired from the Charters of the chosen parties, their electoral campaign discourses, laws and regulations that they passed when they were in power as well as the polls conducted in France, and the regular surveys of EU.

Chapter I will begin with a brief historical background of the concepts of 'left' and 'right' in the French political discourse, and then it will comprise the history and structure of the parties in question, their historical evolution and structures. I will briefly touch upon the previous four republic attempts and will mention about the electoral system in France but I will especially focus on the main stream left and right parties' political evolution. In that respect, their doctrines, weakly institutionalized and highly centralized and personalized structures, their success in attracting members, the intra-party tensions and their relations with EU Institutions will be discussed in the first chapter of the research.

The second and the third chapter will focus on the approach to “the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” and to “Turkey’s accession to the EU” by the selected left-wing and right-wing parties respectively. These two key issues will be explained by using subheadings. The second chapter will focus on the CT and its perception by the PS and UMP. After giving a brief account of the content of CT, discussions will concentrate on PS’s attitude toward the CT regarding the intra-party divisions, UMP’s attitude toward the CT, the impact of 2007 Presidential elections on CT, and finally the impact of CT on the Lisbon Treaty which was widely perceived as a reform treaty. I have to mention that besides these discussions, the main problematic analyzed in this chapter is PS’s and UMP’s positions regarding the CT. In that respect their referendum campaigns, the discourses and speeches of the key figures of these parties, the internal divisions and the expectations from the CT in line with their respective positions will be discussed.

Chapter three will deal with the political attitudes of the selected parties on the left and the right toward Turkey’s EU accession process. In this chapter, besides explaining the official positions of the PS and the UMP, President Chirac’s and President Sarkozy’s approaches, the impact of the Armenian issue on Turkey’s EU membership, and President Sarkozy’s the ‘Union for the Mediterranean’ project will be analyzed.

In the forth chapter as a conclusion, a comparative analysis concerning these two issues will be presented in the light of collected information.

The main purpose of the research is to highlight the peculiarity of the French left by emphasizing its rapprochement to the French right on the defined EU matters and consequently to demonstrate the dilemma within the French left. It is hoped that this research will provide a credible information base to the future researchers on French politics concerning these issues.

Chapter I

The Historical Evolution of the PS and the UMP

1.1. Concepts of “Left” and “Right” in the French Political Discourse and Their Historical Evolution

The debate over left-right dichotomy in French case becomes more interesting once it is found out that the French political system has been characterized by the duality between left and right for two centuries and that these notions are inherent to French political landscape. In his article “End of Left-Right Dichotomy: the French Case”, Alain de Benoist who is the leading French new Right philosopher gives a detailed background information about the concepts and their evolution through time. According to the general view, these concepts were first introduced in France on August 28, 1789 during a debate over whether the king should have prerogatives over national sovereignty or not, and a right to veto or not. Those in favor of royal veto sat on the right of the speaker while their opponents sat on the left. So, the first left-right distinction which appears to be a topographical coincidence was made in France and

gradually expanded to Europe, then to the entire world.²⁶ However, Pierre Nora argues that it took a long time for the two concepts to be popularized. They became part of the daily language during the Third Republic.²⁷

To be able to evaluate the current split of the concepts, it is important to give the historical evolution and the transformations they went through. After the Revolution, there were three main camps: supporters of the Republic, of the constitutional monarchy and of monarchy by divine rights. The debate over the political regime –whether it should be republic or monarchy- came to an end with the establishment of universal suffrage in 1875 and the definitive installation of a republic. Rightists and monarchists such as Louis de Bonald, Joseph de Maistre and their successors were marginalized.²⁸ So, this first phase of the left-right split was concerned with the political regime. The second phase in the left-right split was related to religion. Followers of the Catholic Church were placed on the right while anti-clerical, pure seculars were associated with the left. This left-right division based on religious social order ended with the separation of the Church and the State in 1905.

The third phase started with the emergence of capitalism that led to the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. After an interruption due to First World War, the left-right division continued and from then on, to be leftist meant not only to be republican or secular but also to be socialist or communist.²⁹ So, meanings of left and right changed over time and finally came to be evaluated in classic-economic terms; the general division is based on “ownership of the means of production, distribution of income, and relative merits of the private versus the public sector”.³⁰ The traditional interpretation identifies left with support for the controlled economy by government and the idea of economic equality for all, contrary to the right which is

²⁶ De Benoist, 74; Ivan Ermakoff, *Ruling Oneself Out*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 82.

²⁷ Marcel Gauchet, “La Droite et la Gauche”, 1993 quoted by Alain de Benoist, 75.

²⁸ Özipek, 8.

²⁹ De Benoist, 76.

³⁰ Eisinga et al., 4.

identified with the support for a free market, privatization of industry, and continuity of economic inequality.

The general dimensions of the dichotomy –“states versus markets, social liberalism versus social conservatism and the needs of the many versus the rights of the individual”- maintained continuity through the mid-to late twentieth century.³¹ However, although the left established its *raison d'être* as the rejection of market economy and of private property by defending a planned, centralized and state-controlled economy, by the end of Thirty Glorious Years of capitalism after World War II, the working class had become more reformist and consumerist. In the 1970's the rise of the middle class reshaped the voting patterns, the salaried middle class tended to vote for the left contrary to the self-employed who voted for the right. So, the left- right split dynamics of 1960's – to be Catholic or to belong to working class- were not conformed to the 1970's context. The late 1970's witnessed the weakening of the sense of belonging to a social class. According to the opinion polls this was a fact that affected mostly the working class.

From 1980's onwards there was no significant difference between policies of the left and the right. The emphasis of right was relatively more on liberalism and free market economics and less on social programs while that of left was the opposite. For example, in the French case not only did the left accept the institutions of the 5th Republic and principles of nuclear deterrence but the right also compromised with the Left over the issues such as abortion, death penalty, models of authority in the family and society. In addition, they both chose to adopt the same policies once they came to power. Since 1981, they hardly embraced different policies over economic issues. Serge Latouche argues that both left and right “laid claim to the legacy of the Enlightenment”³², however they did embrace it partially. On the one hand, right sacralized progress, science and technology; it celebrated individual liberty and constant economic growth. On the other hand, left supported well-being for all. As Latouche puts

³¹ Eric D. Beinhocker, *The Origin of Wealth: Evolution, Complexity, and the Radical Remaking of Economics*, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2006), 416.

³² De Benoist, 79.

it, despite crisis and shocks “the modern state has achieved all that”.³³ From this point of view, we may say that left and right complement each other.

Besides their compromise over economic and social issues, political corruption of politicians representing the left and right poles, leaders’ empty promises during electoral campaigns, and the fact that political game turned into a media show also contributed to the cloudiness of left-right division in the eyes of general electorates. All these factors gradually alienated them from their political engagements and weakened their ties to the conventional left-right split.

1.2. Left-Right Dichotomy: Outdated or Still Alive?

The conventional left-right categories are going through some kind of crisis and in recent years the distinction between left and right has been questioned. In his book “Left and Right: The Significance of a Political Distinction”, Norberto Bobbio, while criticizing them, classifies various reasons of the opinion according to which left and right distinction had disappeared. According to him, this is due to “the so-called crisis of ideology”, which means that the era of ideologies has ended and hence, it is pointless to contrast the ideologies involved. However, Bobbio objects to this argument by indicating that the ideologies of the past have merely been replaced by others and that left and right are not only ideological expressions but also parts of everyday political activity. The second reason derives from the idea that two poles are not sufficient to divide the political space since a third one –the center–was introduced. Bobbio responds to this argument by underlining that the existence of a center does not mean the non-existence of two opposite poles, left and right. In other words, even they come closer to the center by positioning themselves in center-left or center-right, they are still on the opposite sides of the political spectrum, they are still labeled as close to left or right and preserve challenging differences. The third reason for rejecting the conventional left-

³³ Ibid.

right dichotomy is the idea that it is no longer descriptive because new political problems and movements have emerged since the creation of the dichotomy. Therefore it is impossible to categorize the new movements such as the Greens or to resolve the new problems such as the environmental issue in terms of the conventional division between left and right. Bobbio concludes his theory by stating that left and right notions are relative and that one can not exist without the other. In other words, the left constructs its identity over the existence of the right and vice versa. There are periods in history during which the right (or the left) gains more power; however, the empowering of one pole does not mean the disappearance of the other. For example, Bobbio, contrary to those who consider the collapse of Soviet system as the end of traditional right and left dichotomy, views it as simply the end of a left-wing movement over a specific historical period.³⁴

According to those who argue that traditional left-right dichotomy became antiquated after the end of Cold War, left and right should be redefined or new categories should be introduced. Instead of “Right against Left” discourse, De Benoist proposes to “think in terms of establishmentarian ‘center’ versus all anti-system forces on the ‘periphery’”.³⁵ In that respect, the major parties of both sides of the political spectrum came closer to the center and the extreme ones were pushed to the periphery. In other words, he argues that center-periphery dichotomy used in a political context seems to meet the needs of the current political landscape more than the left-right dichotomy.

Eric Beinhocker states that the left-right dichotomy survives, however he recognizes that the divide between two poles narrowed after the collapse of Berlin Wall. He marks the 1990’s as a defining moment since it was the period during which a third way was developed because both poles figured out that “extreme or purist implementations of their models simply do not work”. So, a pragmatic consensus was needed.³⁶

³⁴ Norberto Bobbio, *Left and Right: The Significance of a Political Distinction*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 3 - 16.

³⁵ Martin A. Lee, *The Beast Reawakens*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 318 – 319.

³⁶ Beinhocker, 417.

Oddbjorn Knutsen conducted a study about eight West European countries, including France, in which political experts placed the parties on the left-right scale in their respective countries in 1982 and 1993.³⁷ He makes a distinction between the new party families such as green and radical right parties and the old traditional parties. The results of his study indicate a stronger polarization between the new parties along the left-right scale and a stronger centralization of traditional parties. Given the latter trend being stronger than the former, Knutsen concludes that "... all in all party polarization weakened".³⁸ In line with these data, in order to understand the current political stance of both the PS and the UMP, a brief account of their historical evolution will give a valuable insight.

1.3. A Brief History of the PS and the UMP

The PS and UMP traditions in the French politics are the two major political forces determining the political sphere of the French society on the basis of mass political culture on the left and the right of the French political spectrum. Although these two main actors of the French political life generally have different approaches over the actualization of policies and embrace different preferences, they share a similar party structure.³⁹ They both are relatively new established parties.

The Socialist Party was founded in 1969, and the UMP in the period of 2002 Presidential elections. But, their impact on French politics has started long before these

³⁷ Knutsen, 295.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Robert Elgie and Steven Griggs, *French Politics: Debates and controversies*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 97-99.

dates. The French Socialist Party is the offspring of the 1905 French Section of the Workers' International (*Section française de l'internationale ouvrière – SFIO*). The right-wing UMP was rooted in the conservative RPR and the Gaullist traditions indicating the peculiarity of the French politics providing for political parties' easy dissolutions and reappearances with a new "name". These leading parties are weakly organized.⁴⁰ Lawson and Colette Ysmal argue that "the French political parties have never been strong agents of participatory linkage" leading to a low membership. Only the Communist Party achieved a million party members in 1945-1946, which also decreased to half a million in 1950's. In 2000's, only one percent of the eligible citizenry were party members. For that reason, French political parties look more like "cadre" parties than the mass parties.⁴¹

In relation with this weakly institutionalized and highly centralized structure, these major forces of the French political sphere are highly personalized. The key figures of these parties determine the "party opinion" to a great extent. The presidential nature of the political system in the 5th Republic was also effective in the establishment of a "personalized" culture. For example, President François Mitterrand was the leader of the PS for "nearly a quarter of a century" - from 1971 to 1995- as the first party secretary and then from 1981 to 1995 as the spiritual chief.⁴² Besides the previous features of the PS and UMP, these parties have usually been exposed to an internal factionalization which damaged their popular image. If these parties face lack of strong leaders such as Charles De Gaulle, Georges Pompidou or François Mitterrand, the leadership struggle emerges that complicates the adoption of a decision with consensus.⁴³ The key figures in these parties engage in attempts to use the leadership gap for their own benefits. For example, Laurent Fabius' attempts in PS during the Constitutional Treaty had been observed as a tactical move in order to acquire the PS leadership. Contrary to the party's official 'yes' position headed by François Hollande,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Colette Ysmal, "French Political Parties and Linkage," in *Political Parties and Political Systems: The Conception of Linkage Revisited*, ed. Andrea Römmele, David M. Farrell and Piero Ignazi (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 62-63.

⁴² Elgie and Griggs, 101.

⁴³ Ibid.

Laurent Fabius led the “no to the Constitutional Treaty” campaign which gave rise to a significant decrease in PS electorate’s support for the CT.⁴⁴

The so-called “parties occupation of the state” occurred in 1960’s and 1970’s but reached its peak point in 1980’s,⁴⁵ for instance the case of 1960’s UDR - state of President De Gaulle or the 1980’s PS - state of President Mitterrand. The party occupation of the state resembles to that of “The Party Government Model”. In that model, the party and the government were interlinked. The Presidents were always parties’ strong figures and during their presidential terms they “have been “*de facto*” or even “*de jure*” party leaders”.⁴⁶ As Laurent Fabius used the inter-party conflict on the CT issue in order to acquire the leadership position at PS, in a similar manner, as Ysmal argues, if the party leaders and sub leaders occupy the key party positions for their own benefits, they also tend to use the public resources to the benefit of their parties which is also directly related to their own interests.⁴⁷ That is why in 1960s, many people have been actively working for the party in order to acquire a significant appointment if the party reaches to rule the country.

1.3.1. The PS: From a Class-Based to a Nation-Based Party

Being the oldest existing mass party in the country the Socialist party was founded in 1905 under the name of French Section of the Workers’ International (*Section française de l’internationale ouvrière – SFIO*) with the aim of uniting four

⁴⁴ Wolff and Mounier, 391.

⁴⁵ Ysmal, “French Political”, 78.

⁴⁶ Elgie and Griggs, 114 -115.

⁴⁷ Ysmal, “French Political”, 78.

different approaches to socialism: utopian, syndicalist, revolutionary, and reformist.⁴⁸ Rather than merely being Europeanists, French Socialists defended internationalism “proudly claiming the heritage of Jean Jaures and the Second International”.⁴⁹ Although its orientation was democratic like the German SPD and the British Labor Party,⁵⁰ its socialist program was formulated in terms of doctrinaire Marxism;⁵¹ class struggle was its far most motivating principle and the party did not even hesitate to destroy capitalism.⁵² In this context, the party took strict measures against the infiltration of the electorate of the left-of-center middle-class parties.⁵³ However, when the 3rd French Republic seemed to be in danger it entered into coalitions with the bourgeois parties. For example, the party became part of the government in 1914 for the defense of France against Germany.⁵⁴

The Communist Party of France (FCP) was “founded in 1920 at the Congress of Tours held by French Section of the Workers’ International (*Section française de l’internationale ouvrière* / SFIO) when around three-quarters of the delegates decided to join the Third International” which had already been set up by the Russians after the Bolshevik Revolution.⁵⁵ Foundation of the French Communist Party (FCP) directly and negatively affected the SFIO in relation to its social basis which made it much more difficult for SFIO to only appeal to the working class. But it was still supported by the civil servants such as the teachers, and the people living on fixed income. Moreover, it

⁴⁸ Safran, 76.

⁴⁹ Alistair Cole, “The French Socialists,” in *Political parties and the European Union*, ed. John Gaffney (London and New York:Routledge, 1996), 71.

⁵⁰ Safran, 76.

⁵¹ Garbriel A. Almond, et al., *European Politics Today* (New York:Longman, 2002), 173.

⁵² Knapp and Wright, 186.

⁵³ Almond et. al, 173.

⁵⁴ Safran, 76.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 82.

had also some strongholds among the “wine-growers of the south, devotees of republican ideals, of anticlericalism, and of producers’ cooperatives”.⁵⁶

In 1936, SFIO, under the leadership of Leon Blum headed the antifascist “Popular Front” government which included bourgeois Radical Socialists. During the Second World War certain Socialist politicians allied with the non-Socialists in the lines of the Resistance against Germans.⁵⁷ In the aftermath of the Second World, in 1956, the SFIO leader, Guy Mollet, won the premiership with the discourse of reaching peace in Algeria. However, the war became intense when new conscripts were sent to fight. Due to fierce discussions within the party regarding the war in Algeria, sending conscripts to fight and the attitude toward the new constitution led to a split in the ranks of the party. A minority group left the party in September 1958 to form the *Parti Socialiste Autonome* which later united with other small groups to form *The Parti Socialiste Unifie* in 1960.⁵⁸ Concerning the European issue the Socialist-led government of Guy Mollet (1956-57) took an active role in the negotiation and ratification processes of the Treaty of Rome with the reservation that enough safeguards be added in order to limit the transfer of national sovereignty.⁵⁹ The economic advantages considering the free market economy envisaged by the Treaty of Rome disturbed SFIO’s Marxist discourse of defending the rights of the laboring classes.

SFIO began to experiment with different alliance strategies. SFIO made alliances with the anti-Gaullist central parties including the Christian Democrats. For example, in 1963 some SFIO politicians supported the presidential candidacy of Gaston Defferre, the anti-Communist mayor of Marseilles. When SFIO obtained only 5% of the votes in the presidential elections of 1969, and upon increasing internal strife, it was disbanded and was succeeded by the *Parti Socialiste* (PS).⁶⁰ The reawakening of the party in the

⁵⁶ Almond et. al., 173.

⁵⁷ Safran, 76.

⁵⁸ Knapp and Wright, 186 – 187.

⁵⁹ Cole, 72.

⁶⁰ Safran, 77 – 79.

French political sphere had begun with 1970's under the François Mitterrand leadership.⁶¹

With the Épinay Congress in June 1971, François Mitterrand became the first-Secretary of PS.⁶² Revival in the left began with François Mitterrand's leadership in PS. François Mitterrand was a pragmatic leader. In 1971, he organized a strategy called "the class front". It was aimed at the creation of an alliance between the middle class (employers, middle managers) and the working class. François Mitterrand's tactic was to attract more electorates and he succeeded in this within time.⁶³ Moreover, he aimed to get the votes of the different factions of the left.

François Mitterrand knew that in order to increase his power communist votes were a must. One year after his leadership, he signed a common program with the communists in order to get the support of the communist electorate. This successful attempt made it possible to attract three million of the total five million PCF votes.⁶⁴ Under François Mitterrand's leadership considering Guy Mollet's SFIO pro-EC policies, pro-Atlantic attitude were transformed to a tougher anti-Americanism and more reserved attitude towards the EC. This policy change was an indicator of reproaching the Gaullist foreign policy.⁶⁵

In 1974 presidential elections, François Mitterrand, by appealing to the united Left, was only 400.000 votes short to beat the right-win candidate Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.⁶⁶ François Mitterrand successfully united the leaders of the small parties of the non-Communist left, as well as the regionalists and the ecologists under the

⁶¹ Knapp and Wright, 189 – 190.

⁶² Knapp and Wright, 188.

⁶³ Ysmal, "The French Political", 67.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Cole, 72.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 188-189.

umbrella of PS and even got significant number of votes from the communists. His leadership traits to unite the left brought him the presidency in the elections of 1981.⁶⁷

François Mitterrand, by also dominating and directing the communists, filled the leadership gap in the left since Leon Blum. In the aftermath of the 1981 Presidential elections, in Pierre Mauroy's government under François Mitterrand presidency, four Communists were appointed as Ministers. Considering these appointments, the PS obtained the leadership of the left. Although the alliances between PS and the Communists succeeded to conquer the Presidency and the Premiership, some left-wingers took an abstention position or even dispersed towards the far-right Front National.⁶⁸

Since 1888, the PS has been divided into two factions; a left-wing minority and a mainstream majority. The mainstream has been dominated by the potential presidential candidates. During the 1980s, the PS won the presidential elections and was in government except the right-wing government between 1986 and 1988.⁶⁹ However, in the early 1990s, the mainstream majority's success began to erode. With the scandals and the ongoing recession, PS's votes came under 20 per cent; the PS lost the government and was damaged by the Prime Minister Pierre Beregovoy's committing suicide in 1993.⁷⁰

French Socialist Government's priority between 1981 and 1983 was to protect the national sovereignty. Like their British partners, the French Socialists were cautious over initiatives at the European Community level regarding the EC institutional reforms. For example, they had serious doubts and reservations about the EP's draft EU Treaty (TEU) of 1984 regarding the transfer of power from the national institutions to the EU. However, while Mitterrand embraced an intergovernmental model of EC decision-making as had the previous 5th Republic Presidents, he acted more willingly towards EC's institutional reforms. President Mitterrand's European model included

⁶⁷ Almond et. al., 174.

⁶⁸ Knapp and Wright, 189.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 189 – 191.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 187.

strong intergovernmental elements but he also welcomed the federalist developments if they promoted the French interests. President Mitterrand's ratification of the "European Central Bank" (ECB) could be observed as a noticeable step toward supranationalism.⁷¹ The establishment of an independent ECB with two basic dimensions of political and economic independence as one of the major reforms, as envisaged by TEU, led to the diminishing of national interference at the European level.⁷²

Although President Mitterrand was successful in unifying and dominating the left politics, there were also fierce debates regarding the ownership and management of the major enterprises in the country. During the 1970's and 1980's the great debate within PS was over "nationalization" versus "privatization" of enterprises. The PS agreed to the privatization of enterprises nationalized in 1981⁷³ and the Socialists recognized that it was impossible for France to compete in the global market while insisting on protectionism since there was no choice except integration with the global markets. Therefore, the national governments accepted the major principles of liberal economy; such as free circulation of goods and capital. The nation-states "must give up exchange controls, allow free competitive play between interest rates and must stabilize currencies". As the Gaullists did, the Left also applied these global market rules since 1983 by indicating specific reasons and excuses.⁷⁴

Contrary to the traditional socialist rhetoric, privatization increased its pace in France in the early 1980's. At the end of 1980's ideological contradictions and confusions on the party program within the party ranks began to come to the fore. The conflict was "between two 'cultures' within French socialism: (1) Jacobin, centralist, etatist, nationalist, and protectionist; and (2) decentralist, pluralist, regionalist, and European."⁷⁵ Due to the threat within the party and from its left-wing alliances,

⁷¹ Cole, 75 - 76.

⁷² Nigel M. Healey, "European Monetary Union: one money, one Europe?," in *Reforming the European Union from Maastricht to Amsterdam*, ed. Philip Lynch, Nanette Neuwahl and G. Wyn Rees, (London: Longman, 2000), 97 – 98.

⁷³ Safran, 102 – 103.

⁷⁴ Hincker, 115.

⁷⁵ Safran, 102 – 103.

President Mitterrand decided that it would be the best alternative to reconcile the free market economy with public management of the resources.⁷⁶

Unemployment had always been a concern for the French people. But this turned into an anxiety during the ratification of the Treaty of European Union. The French public had asserted its doubts regarding the gains to be obtained from the ratification of the European Monetary Union and the establishment of an independent European Central Bank due to the economic drawbacks for France. ⁷⁷ For instance, the falling value of Euro one year after its acceptance as a single European currency disturbed the French people and triggered the protests accusing the European Integration for the ills that the French economy would soon face.⁷⁸ The negative attitude of the French people toward the European Integration had an adverse impact on the PS.

The crises in the Socialist Party began to surface in the early 1990's when a significant number of former party supporters accused the party to have lost its dynamism and reformist attitude on the problems of immigration, student unrest and the problem of unemployment. The PS and the government began to lose their credibility due to various scandals involving the ministers, unethical business practices such as bribes, the transfusion of AIDS-contaminated blood. These problems did not only put the PS in a precarious situation, but also significantly decreased the public support given to President Mitterrand and his rating sunk to below 30 per cent.⁷⁹ It was not only the PS that lost votes during this period.

The PCF that had a key place in the French political sphere began to erode. In this context, Francois Hincker argued that by the late 1980's, the collapse of communism as an alternative to capitalism had adversely affected the FCP and the party could not benefit from the Socialists' crisis. The demise of the communist world order prevented

⁷⁶ Ysmal, "The French Political", 70 - 71.

⁷⁷ Martin A. Schain, "Politics in France", in *European Politics Today*, ed. Gabriel A. Almond, Russell J. Dalton and G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 2nd (London: Longman, 2001), 140.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Safran, 102. The distribution of HIV-contaminated blood to hemophiliacs has also adversely affected Laurent Fabius' candidacy in the 1995 presidential elections.

PCF to attract votes from the other left parties.⁸⁰ In addition to having difficulties to enlist new members, there was also a widespread despair within the party. During the crisis years, it was only the Green movements which asserted themselves to the French political sphere as a left alternative.

The rise of unemployment rates in the early 1990's, the unending party leadership struggles within the ranks of PS had a negative impact on the PS electorates and led to the mobilization of party members against the government during the Maastricht Treaty Referendum which in turn decreased the PS's popularity and credibility over its electorates.⁸¹ In the summer of 1992, it was expected that the President, the socialist leaders and the most of the conservative opposition would support the Treaty. It was also calculated that the referendum process would positively affect the Socialist Party's 1993 Legislative Election campaign and reverse the decreased support and popularity of the Socialist Party.⁸² However the PS, in alliance with the relatively small Left Radicals, had experienced one of the worse failures of its history then the numbers of seats decreased from 277 to 57.⁸³ The 1993 parliamentary election defeat led the PS to be in search of a "wider alliance" considering the French left. Especially from 1994, the PS aimed to form an alliance based on "common interests". The Green movements' best performances had occurred in the Socialists' ineffective years of 1992 and 1993.⁸⁴ The 1992 Referendum campaign on the Treaty of European Union, the dramatic decrease of parliamentary seats in 1993* and the loss of seats in 1994 European elections accelerated internal party rivalries. In 1995, the PS had difficulties in finding new

⁸⁰ François Hincker, "The French socialists. Towards post-republican values?," in *Looking Left: European socialism after the Cold War*, ed. Donald Sassoon (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1997), 109.

⁸¹ Schain, 175.

⁸² Ibid., 158.

⁸³ Safran, 229.

⁸⁴ Knapp and Wright, 189 – 190.

* According to the figures given by Safran (1998, 229), in 1988 Legislative Elections, the PS had together with the Left Radicals got 277 seats, however in 1993 Legislative Elections; together with the Left Radicals they could only preserve 57 of them.

members and the membership decreased to a hundred thousand.⁸⁵ The Greens benefited from the failures of the PS and increased their votes and popularity.

The PS's intentions forming "*gauche plurielle*" were to restore their dominance and leadership within the left. But, Lionel Jospin's attempt was different than that of Mitterrand's old union of the left which occurred in 1974. Mitterrand aimed to attract the Communists' electorates; however Lionel Jospin's attitude was to maintain the strength and the credibility of its allies as long as they remained in the tent. The 1994 "*gauche plurielle*" had also included small leftist groups; the Left Radicals - close allies of the Socialists since 1972 - and the *chevenmanist* "Movement des Citoyens" (MDC).⁸⁶

Toward the presidential elections of 1995 conflicts within the PS were still unresolved. There were internal factors which affected the PS's 1995 Presidential election candidate. The capability and popularity of the possible PS candidates were in question.⁸⁷ During the first term of Mitterrand's presidency, Lionel Jospin's unaltered loyalty to President Mitterrand strengthened his position within the party. Lionel Jospin's unaltered loyalty to President Mitterrand in the first term, the decrease of Michel Rocard⁸⁸ popularity after the 1994 European and Regional Elections defeats, Laurent Fabius⁸⁹ "contaminated blood transfer scandal", investigations against Henri

⁸⁵ Martin A. Schain, 175.

⁸⁶ Knapp and Wright, 189 – 190.

⁸⁷ Safran, 109.

⁸⁸ The *rocardiniens* under the leadership of Michel Rocard joined the PS three years after the historically important 1971 Epinay Congress. The *rocardiens* constituted "a moderate faction within the PS. They were skeptical about the alliance with the Communist's; mindful of the constraints imposed by the market economy and; less confident in the transforming possibilities of the Jacobin State and more aware of those within the civil society." Rocard was the prime-minister from 1988 to 1991 and first secretary from 1993 to 1994, but since the disastrous 1994 European Elections of the list which was formed by him, Rocard withdrew himself from the national level politics, (Knapp and Wright, 191 - 192.)

⁸⁹ Laurent Fabius was one of the President Mitterrand's young prime minister from 1984 to 1986, first secretary of the PS from 1992 to 1993, finances minister from 2000 to 2002. He was mistrusted within and outside the party as being too ambitious. "He was damaged by a scandal over the distribution of HIV-contaminated blood to haemophiliacs during his premiership. He was one of the main components of "no" to the European Constitution Treaty within the PS. (Ibid.)

Emmanuelli for corruption, and Jacques Delors' decision not to run for presidency were the factors increasing Lionel Jospin's chances for candidacy.⁹⁰ The weak performances of the PCF and the Greens' candidate Dominique Voynet in the 1995 Presidential elections contrary to Lionel Jospin's strong performance revived the Socialists' claim of being the leader of the left-wing coalition. The supporters of PCF and the other left parties, especially the Green movement, voted for Lionel Jospin in the second round of the 1995 presidential elections. The left compromised on a common candidate for the second round of the elections which indicated that in eyes of the electorate left-right dichotomy prevailed since in the second round, the runoff was between a Gaullist and a Socialist candidate.⁹¹

From its establishment in 1905 till the mid 1990's, the PS had undergone radical changes regarding its social basis as well as its ideological discourse and political stance in the French political sphere. At first it was a Marxist and internationalist working class based party, then it became an amalgamation of working class and middle class party with the emergence and development of FCP, then it formed alliances with the non-Gaullist central parties acting as the leading party of the Popular Front, then made alliances with the communists and other small left parties till it managed to be the governing party in the 1980's. The trajectory of the PS indicates that the party transformed itself from a working-class based party to a nation-based party. Anti-Germanism brought by the World Wars, the Algerian war and the process beginning with the Treaty of Rome as well as the collapse of Soviet Union were the cornerstones of this transformation. The changing political conjuncture in the world politics shaped the political stance of PS.

The convalescence of the French Left which began with the second round of 1995 Presidential elections led to an unexpected recovery in 1997 Parliamentary elections.⁹² Lionel Jospin's government interiorized sufficient elements in order to acquire other left-wing groups' supports. When Lionel Jospin came to power in June 1997, his economic policies were designed to respond to "the Socialists' campaign promises to

⁹⁰ Knapp and Wright, 194.

⁹¹ Safran, 111.

⁹² Hincker, 109.

reduce unemployment, to retain the essentials of the welfare state, and to make France ready to participate in the European monetary union.”⁹³ The PS’s discourse embraced “the 35-hour working in a week, better job opportunities for the young, change to the immigration laws passed by the right-wing government and a moratorium on the construction of new nuclear power stations.”⁹⁴ Among these, creation of 700,000 new jobs with half of them in the public sector, decreasing the workweek from 39 hours to 35 hours without lowering the wages, increasing the minimum wage for the lowest level wage earners by keeping most of the current socioeconomic rights were reiterated by Lionel Jospin government.⁹⁵ Especially the 35-hour working week could be seen as the most effective tool in embracing the left. The Civil Solidarity Pact served to increase Lionel Jospin government’s reputation and credibility as well as generating a convergent programme with the market. In many respects, the Lionel Jospin government had been successful. His struggle against “unemployment” was rewarded with the creation of a million new jobs in four years. The unemployment rate had decreased to just 9 per cent, which was over 12.5 percent in the mid-1990’s. All of this was quite in line with Lionel Jospin’s motto of “A market economy but not a market society!”⁹⁶

However, The Civil Solidarity Pack and the “revolutionary” 35-hour working week were somewhat populist policy tools cleverly formulated by the Lionel Jospin government. Too few benefits of the program reached the working class and the white-collar employees who were the reservoir of the Left. The 35-hour working week had negative repercussions for them due to having “less convenient working hours, tougher production targets and stagnant or falling purchasing power”.⁹⁷ When unemployment began to rise back after the mid-2001 and Lionel Jospin was not able to stop it, he began to focus on law and order in his campaigns which did not appeal to the working class voters of PS. His program began to target the center voters and the differences between

⁹³ Safran, 337.

⁹⁴ Knapp and Wright, 189 – 190.

⁹⁵ Safran, 337.

⁹⁶ Knapp and Wright, 197.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Lionel Jospin and Jacques Chirac programs were blurred. Besides, there were many other alternative candidates in the center each offering to do more regarding job protection and security from crime which led to “the dispersal of the left-wing votes” in the first round. Lionel Jospin could not get enough votes from the center either and was faced with elimination.⁹⁸

Toward the 2002 Presidential elections divergences between various leftist groups were increasing. Especially the “European Integration” and the “Capitalist Global Economy” constructed the two major issues of conflict. Therefore, each component of the “*gauche plurielle*” campaigned for its own candidates; Lionel Jospin for the PS, Hue for the Communists, Noel Mamere for the Greens, Chevenement for the MDC, three Trotskists; Languiller, Becancenot and Glukstein, and Christiane Taubira for the Left Radicals campaigned for the Élysee Palace. When put together, the total score of the eight candidates at the first ballot was close to 43 percent, but the fragmentation of the left prevented any left-wing candidate to run for the second round. With these abysmal results which led to Lionel Jospin’s unexpected withdrawal from politics,⁹⁹ the need for the left for a “*gauche plurielle*” became a must for the upcoming elections.¹⁰⁰ The sudden defeat and departure of Lionel Jospin did not create a leadership vacuum in the PS. This gap was filled with a politically skillful and capable socialist figure, François Hollande.¹⁰¹

François Hollande became famous as having patience, good humor and ability to consensus-building. His success was appreciated with the strong Socialist results at the 2004 regional and European elections. However, President Chirac’s announcement for a Referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe revealed the PS intra-party dissent. Although, the internal PS referendum results led to an official adoption of ‘yes’ position, the division over the CT would not be underestimated. The powerful PS figures such as Henri Emmanuelli, Jean-Luc Mélenchon and Laurent Fabius did not

⁹⁸ Ibid., 197 - 198.

⁹⁹ Knapp and Wright, 194.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 189 – 190.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 194.

approve the official position and resisted by continuing on the “no” campaign up to the polling day.¹⁰²

1.3.2. The UMP formation: A Gaullism without any clear references

According to Knapp & Wright, René Rémond argues that there were three different right-wing political traditions in the 19th century France. The first was the “*ultra right*” movement “which rejected all republican values and sought to restore the pre-revolutionary Bourbon Monarchy”. The “moderate right”- called the “*Orleanist Right*” - was the second tradition. The moderate right advocates were “ready to compromise with moderate republicans and attached ... to the British virtues of moderate constitutional monarchy and free-trade”. The last one was the “*Bonapartist Right*” which “stressed the virtues of strong leadership with direct links to the mass of people, a strong state and an assertive foreign policy”. Rémond also suggests that these 19th Century right-wing traditions had given rise to the successors in modern terms. These successors are: the non-Gaullist moderate right as the heirs of the “Orleanists”, the Gaullists as the inheritors of Bonapartist Right, and the ultra-right as the “others” like *Front National*. Rémond emphasized that the Christian Democracy in France was a less determinant factor than the one in Germany or Italy. Even though Christian Democracy in France has still an impact over the right-wing electorate, it could not place itself within a definite party formation.¹⁰³

Although De Gaulle placed himself as a power above the “left” or “right” wing parties, he formed a delicately organized right wing party named “The Union pour la

¹⁰²Knapp and Wright, 192.

¹⁰³ Knapp and Wright, 216.

Nouvelle Republic” (The Union for the New Republic - UNR). Among all the right-wing political parties, UNR, the first right-wing party in the 5th Republic, had a “clearly defined leadership” and “a more disciplined organization”.¹⁰⁴ With the establishment of the 5th Republic the Gaullist Party’s feature of embracing a broad coalition of groups and classes, including the working class, differentiated itself from the traditional conservative parties. Between 1958 and 1974, Gaullists retained both the presidency and the premiership.¹⁰⁵ As was the case with the PS-state under François Mitterrand presidency, from 60s till the early 70s a rapprochement between the Gaullist party and the state bureaucracy was observed. The Gaullist party members benefited from their strong alliance with the President. The party did not only conquer the premiership and most of the government portfolios, but the party members also captured the key positions in nationalized industrial firms and banks.¹⁰⁶

The period from the referendum in 1962 which made to directly elect the President and the parliamentary elections in the same year till the March 1973 Parliamentary elections, just before Georges Pompidou’s death, Gaullism lived its Golden Age. These glorious years of Gaullism and its dominance over the French people was never reached “under any French republican regime”. The proliferation of the Gaullist doctrines based on “the primacy of national unity and a denial of the Marxist notion of class struggle” took place during the period of 1962-1973. The Gaullist principles also included the preservation of a powerful French state while establishing a strong executive authority, the creation of a modern French industry and defending national independence in foreign policy.¹⁰⁷

Three years after the ratification of the Treaty of Rome, General De Gaulle held a press conference on the Construction of Europe where he stated that “[they] must not proceed on the basis of dreams, but on the basis of realities”, and he clearly defined the location of states in a new European order by stating that “to imagine that we can built

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 217 - 218.

¹⁰⁵ Schain, 168.

¹⁰⁶ Knapp and Wright, 219.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 218.

something above and beyond these States which will work effectively and enjoy popular support is an idle fancy.” In the same Speech he further expressed his inalterable belief that the nation states were the only legitimate sources of political authority which differentiated his approach from that of the supranationalist Jean-Monnet and Robert Schuman. According to Charles De Gaulle, the European Community could work over the “technical issues” as long as nation states remained as the main decision making mechanisms.¹⁰⁸

Although, it was widely argued that the Common Market initiative was a supranational expansion, it was only adopted by Charles de Gaulle to increase the French benefits notably for the farming sectors through the Common Agricultural Policy. Moreover, the idea behind fostering special relations with Germany was to acquire a leading role in the new European order. The national sovereignty and the self-determination were the main Gaullist policy objectives which could not be opened to negotiation. In this regard, “the resistance to the federal model of European Integration” had become a fundamental element of 1960’s Gaullism.¹⁰⁹ Thus, the ex-Premier Paul Reynaud’s critic of Charles de Gaulle’s foreign policy was significant. Paul Reynaud argued that “De Gaulle wanted France to be at the head of Europe whilst not wanting there to be a Europe”. However, his statement did not exactly reflect President de Gaulle’s European vision. Still conserving the French national sovereignty and nation-state authority, President Charles de Gaulle emphasized the need of constructing a non-federal powerful Europe which would emerge as a “third force” in world political sphere, independent from the United States and the Warsaw Pact.¹¹⁰

The Community level politics concerning the qualified majority voting demonstrated one more time the Gaullist resistance to the European institutions. The French boycott of the Council (the so-called “Empty Chair Crisis”) for six months ended with the Luxembourg Compromise of January 1966 which allowed France to

¹⁰⁸ James Shields, “The French Gaullists,” in *Political parties and the European Union*, ed. John Gaffney (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 86.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 86 - 87.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

keep the veto power in reserve where the French vital interests were imperiled¹¹¹ indicating the Gaullist reservations towards the Community level issues.

In 1966 Charles de Gaulle allowed his Prime Minister Georges Pompidou to become the party leader.¹¹² Georges Pompidou, as a successor of the charismatic leadership of Charles de Gaulle, endeavored to ensure “sans de Gaulle”, a Gaullism without de Gaulle. In this context he intended to create a better party structure and a central authority which carried the torch of Gaullist principles and ideals.¹¹³ The party membership has reached 160 thousand and was doubled by 1968 when compared to the early 1960’s. This increase was mainly due to two reasons: strengthening of the party organization and public reaction against the May 68 events.¹¹⁴

During Georges Pompidou’s leadership, relations with the United States were improved and the admission of Britain into European Community membership was actualized. These facts showed that Pompidou created a more accommodating statesman figure by maintaining the “self-determination” and the national sovereignty of France.¹¹⁵ However, in the parliamentary elections in March 1973 the party lost 2 million votes and over 100 of its deputies. As a result the party had become the largest component of a conservative coalition together with the Centrists and Giscard’s Républicains Indépendants.¹¹⁶ This was an indicator of the harm made to the unquestionable Gaullism in the eyes of the public. Chaban-Delmas who served as the prime minister during the Georges Pompidou presidency was seen as the heir due to Georges Pompidou’s illness. His poor performance opened the avenues for Valéry Giscard D’Estaing’s presidency.¹¹⁷ After the death of both Charles de Gaulle and

¹¹¹ Ibid., 88.

¹¹² Knapp and Wright, 220.

¹¹³ Schain, 168.

¹¹⁴ Knapp and Wright, 220.

¹¹⁵ Shields, 89.

¹¹⁶ Knapp and Wright, 221.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Georges Pompidou, in 1974, Valéry Giscard D'Estaing - a pro-European and more Atlanticist politician - became president with the elections. D'Estaing was a conservative but not a Gaullist.¹¹⁸ Valéry Giscard D'Estaing positioned himself as an alternative to both the Gaullists and the Left and got the support of the mainstream electorate. Upon succeeding in the first ballot, he developed a tactic by appealing to Gaullist voters with the motto of safeguarding the institutions of the 5th Republic and thus secured his election in the second round.¹¹⁹

Valéry Giscard D'Estaing's political leadership began with the Republican Party in 1962 and was strengthened with the establishment of the centre-right Union for French Democracy party (UDF). The Union for French Democracy (UDF) was the outcome of Valéry Giscard D'Estaing's 'The Republican Party' (RP). The RP came to surface in 1962 by the efforts of a few conservative deputies who were opposed to President De Gaulle's unfavorable vision of European unity and his referendum on direct elections for the presidency. When in 1974, Valéry Giscard D'Estaing became the President; he made an effort to unite the parties of the center and the right. As a result, in 1978, the Union for French Democracy emerged as an alternative center-right party which included "the Giscard's Republicans, remnants of a Catholic Party (CDS), the once militant anti-Catholic Radicals, and some of former Socialists". However, the UDF remained a party of notables and did not become a mass party and failed to establish an effective organizational party structure. Even two years after getting 207 seats in the parliament at the end of the 1993 Legislative elections, the UDF had still not more than 38.000 members.¹²⁰ Even if Valéry Giscard D'Estaing seemed to appeal to the centre, from the Leftist perspective they were not different at all than the Gaullists and positioned themselves in the right. Its electoral base composed of the "shopkeepers, farmers, professionals, middle and upper echelon white-collar employees and the pensioners".¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Schain, 168.

¹¹⁹ Safran, 92 - 93.

¹²⁰ Schain, 171 - 172.

¹²¹ Safran, 93.

During his presidency, the improved relations with the European Community had been internalized as a source of “threat” by the classical Gaullists. In June 1977, with the passage of the Bill in France that ratified direct elections to the European Assembly, Gaullist policy of cohesion on Europe got the first serious blow which indicated the obvious split over the Community affairs within the Gaullists. While some, such as Jacques Chaban-Delmas and Olivier Guichard, were opposing to any drift to supranationalism but favoring full participation in the Community, others led by Michel Debré - the chief architect of France’s Constitution and first prime minister of the Fifth Republic - believed that the direct elections to the European Assembly could damage the French national sovereignty and interests, and could harm France’s leadership role in the Community.¹²²

Gaullists having experienced big crises after the parliamentary elections of 1973 and the death of Georges Pompidou established a mass party to relaunch itself in 1976.¹²³ Jacques Chirac was such an energetic and ambitious personality that the excitement he created activated the Gaullist party. Jacques Chirac was elected in a Soviet-style way, receiving 96.5 per cent of the votes. After its establishment, RPR succeeded to become a centre of attraction by increasing its members to 550 thousand at the end of 1977 and then to 750 thousand in 1978, in a period of just one year. Since the Gaullists would not act with the SP and the Communists, they did not react against the UDF government under Valéry Giscard D’Estaing presidency.¹²⁴ The electorate formation of the RPR was more restricted than the old Gaullist party’s; it was in accord with the classic conservatism and also included the well-defined constituencies of the right.¹²⁵ During a trip to United States in 1983, President Chirac declared that “Gaullism is a pragmatic way of thinking, not a doctrine. It was changed with a changing world. No

¹²² Shields, 89 - 90.

¹²³ Knapp and Wright, 222.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Schain, 168.

one knows what General De Gaulle would say if he were here today, but I think he would say the same as I do”¹²⁶.

Jacques Chirac, in late 1970’s, in order to form a “power base” for the 1981 Presidential Elections, had taken a stance with the old-guards and asserted his doubts about the proposed European Parliament. Jacques Chirac was also against the Spanish and Portuguese application for EC membership “on the grounds that Iberian competition would destroy the fruit farming and wine growing south-west of France”.¹²⁷ Due to the powerful Mitterrand Presidency and the rise of the Socialist Party, the RPR was not able to set the political agenda. Jacques Chirac’s defeat in the Presidential Elections of 1988 against Mitterrand demonstrated Jacques Chirac’s and the RPR’s inadequacy to appeal the French electorate.

Till the mid of 1980s Chirac was a Eurosceptic, and was more attached to the national sovereignty and national issues, more dirigiste on economy and more authoritarian. With “The New Right Agenda” and the platform established with UDF in 1986, Chirac started the renovation process within the party and offered a new policy with major revisions in the Gaullist programme which included “privatization, business deregulation, law and order as well as a degree of support for the Atlantic alliance and Europe”.¹²⁸

In the late 1980’s Jacques Chirac renewed his severe and antipathetic discourse over the European Integration and became an advocate of the Integration. During the Maastricht Treaty Referendum process, Jacques Chirac was pushed to take a pro-European position. In the referendum process, Jacques Chirac wanted to legitimize his position within the party and to attain the party’s mainstream support for his candidacy in the presidential election thus he could take an opposing position in connection with the pro-European centre-right majority stance and he unenthusiastically supported the Treaty. He realized that anti-Europeanism would not be enough to form a presidential candidacy. Besides, having the support of the center, to demonstrate his loyalty to De

¹²⁶ Shields, 103.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 90 - 91.

¹²⁸ Knapp and Wright, 223.

Gaulle by giving references strengthened his position over the party members. That's why Jacques Chirac denounced that the Maastricht Treaty reflected the peak point of the General De Gaulle's European vision. That emphasis is notable because the RPR's key figures such as Jacques Chirac, in order to legitimize their moves, frequently gave references to De Gaulle. But, different factions within the party had different emphases on President De Gaulle's ideas. That's why, it is also possible to say that the Gaullist vision of Europe have become blurry and open to interpretations. For instance, in the same period and over the same issue - the Maastricht Treaty - Jacques Chirac's and Philippe Sequin's emphases of Gaullism differed from each other. While Jacques Chirac was referring to a constructive Gaullist vision of European Integration Philippe Séguin introduced De Gaulle's principles of national sovereignty and the "French state grandeur".¹²⁹

The 1981 Presidential Elections was a defeat for Valéry Giscard D'Estaing and opened the way for the Gaullist RPR to become the leading party in the right. When Valéry Giscard D'Estaing lost the second round of elections by 48.24% to François Mitterand's 51.76%, the non-Gaullist right-wing electorate accused Jacques Chirac of "premeditated treachery".¹³⁰ With the right-wing defeat in 1981 Presidential elections, the loss of the parliamentary majority to the Socialists, and the unexpected rise of the extreme nationalist and the far-right Front National under Jean-Marie Le Pen's leadership, the RPR and the UDF could not risk exclusion at the second ballot, and were thus obliged to cooperate in the elections at all levels.¹³¹ Created in 1972, the Le Pen movement was an amalgamation of nostalgic Vichy government defenders, neo-fascists, intellectuals and the Le Pen sympathizers. The aim of Front National was to pull the French extreme right back to the parliamentary arena.¹³²

¹²⁹ Shields, 95, 98 - 101.

¹³⁰ Knapp and Wright, 222.

¹³¹ Schain, 172.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Nonna Mayer, "The French National Front," in *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, ed. Hans - Georg Betz and Stefan Immerfall (London: Macmillan, 1998), 12.

Jean-Marie Le Pen's move in the extreme right was seen as a threat to their dominance over the right-wing electorate. Thus, the RPR and the UDF could not stay neutral, and they decided to act in favor of a joint list for the 1984 European Elections. As a result, the joint UDF-RPR list under the Simone Veil leadership had got 42.9 percent of the votes and 41 seats in the parliament (UDF had 21 and RPR had 20 seats) against the 20.8 percent votes and 20 seats of the Socialists. Besides the relative success of the right, the 1984 European Elections demonstrated the need for alliances within the right wing parties for the future elections and the need for a renewal of the RPR.¹³³ The renovation of RPR could be viewed as a transformation in the highly centralized command structure of the party which could bring new chances for different tendencies and factions to form their own positions within the RPR.¹³⁴

The ascendancy of the National Front created confusion within the RPR and UDF. When Jean-Marie Le Pen got 14.5 per cent of the votes in the first round of the 1988 Presidential Elections, the political cadres in the right-political spectrum felt it like an earthquake. This revealed out the divisions in the rights. While some Gaullists aimed the Le Pen votes in the second round, some other Gaullists defended that they should have nothing to do with the extreme-right Front National. Besides the Gaullists, some UDF politicians even thought that President Mitterrand would be a better choice in preserving the national unity of France.¹³⁵ This shows that this initiative of Jean-Marie Le Pen which was ignored at the beginning of the elections by the right-wing majority had led to a serious division. The leaders in RPR and UDF began to face the dilemma of protecting their political stance or preserving their electorate base.

With the party's 1985-86 manifesto of *Le Renouveau*, RPR's 1979 European programme stressing the national sovereignty and the grandeur of French state has undergone a radical change. *Pacte RPR Pour La France* forming the basic framework of the manifesto touched upon the necessity of a European free-market, with special attention to "the consolidation of a real single market, the free movement of capital, the

¹³³ Shields, 94.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 97.

¹³⁵ Safran, 99.

emergence of economic policy, the strengthening of the European Monetary System and the harmonization of legislation.”¹³⁶

At the European level, after the 1984 European Elections, although the right-wing parties were going through a *rénovation* process and were questioning the needs for alliances, they faced a division during 1989 European Elections process. Except a joint UDF-RPR list under Valéry Giscard D’Estaing a centrist list under Simone Veil participated in elections.¹³⁷ However, it was not the Socialists who benefited from the center-right division. The Jean-Marie Le Pen’s list achieved a great success and won 10 seats in the European Parliament. In a political sphere where the two major right-wing parties acted as the strongest supporters of the European Community and the European Integration, it was only Jean-Marie Le Pen left to protect the French Identity and to act as the proponent of a Gaullist-style “Europe des patries”.¹³⁸

During the first years of 1990’s, the prominent division within the Gaullist RPR was about “European Integration”. The RPR, like its UNR and UDR predecessors, embodied different political leanings such as economic *dirigistes* and liberals, social conservatives and progressives.¹³⁹ Due to the emergence and flourishing of different groups and factions, and the lack of strong leadership, the post-Maastricht period was becoming problematic era for the RPR.¹⁴⁰

The RPR was encountered with a division during the Maastricht Treaty referendum process. Although the party leadership and the center supported the Treaty of European Union, the key figures such as Philippe Séguin and Charles Pasqua formed an alliance to form “*A Rally for No in the Referendum*” campaign over the Treaty issue. They shared a common vision over the dissonance between the European Integration and the preservation of national sovereignty. Philippe Séguin emerged as the defender

¹³⁶ Shields, 104.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 95.

¹³⁸ Mayer, 13; Shields, 95.

¹³⁹ Shields, 102.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 103.

of the Gaullist national sovereignty ideals, expressed the nation-states' roles as the guarantors for a perpetual peace in Europe. He found the Maastricht Treaty incompatible with the 5th Republic Constitution and strengthened his opposition to the '*l'Europe de Maëstricht*' which was denounced as "federalism on the cheap, fundamentally anti-democratic, falsely liberal, and technocratic through and through". Charles Pasqua's opposition to the Maastricht Treaty incorporated the more populist approaches and xenophobic sentiments when compared with Philippe Séguin. He was against a Europe without internal borders and voting rights for foreigners in French municipal elections.¹⁴¹

In the early 1990's, the irrepressible decline of the Socialist Party encouraged the right-wing parties, especially the RPR. As a result, the increase in the right-wing votes was determinative in the 1993 Parliamentary Elections and in the 1995 Presidential Election. Even the RPR had got 242 of the total 577 seats in the parliament; it was not the sole alternative for the right-wing electorates because the other right wing party-the UDF- had also won 207 seats in the elections.¹⁴² The 1995 Presidential Elections gave the chance to rebuild the RPR as the major right-wing party. However, due to the political crisis beginning just after the summer of 1995 and the tragic loss of seats in the 1997 Legislative elections exacerbated divisions within the party.¹⁴³ The sociological analysis of the electorate in the first ballot legislative elections of 1997 which was published by *Le Monde* in 5th of June 1997 demonstrated that the RPR's voters "were most likely to define themselves as being on the right, were most anti-left, were most positive toward business and parochial schools, were most likely to vote for personality rather than ideas, and were least supportive of woman's rightg to abortion".¹⁴⁴

Although the Gaullist myth viewed the institution of presidency as a structure above the parties, during both Charles De Gaulle and Georges Pompidou presidency, they continued to act as leaders ("locomotive") of the party. However, Jacques Chirac's

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁴² Schain, 170 - 171.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 168.

presidency was different than both Charles De Gaulle's and Georges Pompidou's. Philippe Séguin was elected party leader by RPR and with the support of the party members he did not act in accord with President Chirac. From 1997 till 1999, President Chirac tried to destabilize Philippe Séguin's leadership, a project in which he succeeded. Philippe Séguin resigned from the party membership in the middle of 1999 European Elections, then his secretary-general Nicolas Sarkozy – Édouard Balladur's budget minister and presidential campaign director- also resigned from the party after the poor results of 1999 European Elections. By the year's end, Michèle Alliot-Marie became the first woman in RPR's president position.¹⁴⁵ President Chirac's intention to preserve support of the party as well as his ambition of reelection in 2002 Presidential Elections led to the splits and damaged the party's organizational structure.

There were four reasons why two powerful parties of moderate right - the Gaullist RPR and the Valéry Giscard D'Estaing's UDF- did not merge into a single big right-wing party. The first reason was their different policy objectives on sovereignty, the role of the state in the economy and especially on European issues. It was not surprising that the RPR was the one which preserved the national sovereignty and more dirigisme on economy. Secondly, their organizational structures differentiated. The RPR intended to form a mass party and paid attention to the party membership. But, contrary to the RPR, the UDF showed a relatively more disorganized party structure, emphasizing a noble and elitist formation. Thirdly, they did not make concessions; they did not step back during the Presidential Elections and supported their own candidates rather than come up with a joint candidate. Lastly and the most simply, they did not expect a significant electoral benefit from merger. The French electoral system allowed them to form a second-round alliance when it was needed and led them to survive separately. By 2000, except the last one, these defined reasons' significance has diminished.¹⁴⁶

The decrease in right wing electorates toward the RPR and the incapability of the UDF and Démocratie Libérale (*Liberal Democracy* / DL) gave a momentum to the efforts initiated by the deputies - especially the younger members - of these right-wing parties in order to establish a new powerful right-wing power and to monopolize the

¹⁴⁵ Knapp and Wright, 225 – 226.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 233 - 234.

moderate right's share of public political finance. Although President Chirac stayed neutral toward the new party till the last minute, support of senior members of his staff for the initiative affected President Chirac's position on new project as well. In 2002 Presidential Elections first ballot results accelerated the project. Both the PS candidate Lionel Jospin and President Chirac's rivals in moderate right- François Bayrou and Alain Madelin- were defeated after the first ballot. The elimination of moderate right-wing figures at the first ballot justified the exigence of a new formation and thus the umbrella initiative named Union for a Popular Movement emerged.¹⁴⁷

The UMP, with President Chirac's reelection and under the Jean-Pierre Raffarin's leadership showed notable success in a very short period. As an umbrella formation, the UMP won 369 out of 577 seats in the parliament after the 2002 Parliamentary elections. These 369 seats consisted of the RPR's 205, UDF's 77 and DL's 57 seats. In addition, by November 2002, 166 of 321 Senators jointed the UDF ranks. The rise of the newly established UMP led to the dissolution of the RPR and DL. It was only the UDF which has survived as an independent party but never became a powerful choice for moderate right electorates.¹⁴⁸

The two basic problems of the right wing parties – the low membership and the institutional weakness- adversely affected the UMP. Besides these problems emerged a struggle for leadership. Alain Juppé, UMP's leader, was observed as President Chirac's "proxy". However, in 2004, Alain Juppé "was convicted for his role in financing RPR officials to the city of Paris payroll and banned from public office for 10 years. Although an appeal reduced the length of the penalty, Alain Juppé progressively withdrew from public political activities over the following year"¹⁴⁹. Therefore, in November 2004, Nicolas Sarkozy- the most popular minister in Jean-Pierre Raffarin government- won the UMP's leadership with 85 per cent support of party members. Knapp and Wright argued that Nicolas Sarkozy became popular in the party, impressed the younger members even the long standing activists by his "energy, gift for self-

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 234 - 235.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

publicity, talents as a media performer and relative youth”.¹⁵⁰ As a result, his aggressive leadership enabled him to be the most appropriate candidate for 2007 Presidential Elections; consequently he became the 6th President of the 5th Republic.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 235.

Chapter II

Attitude of the PS and the UMP to the Issue of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

Just after President Jacques Chirac declared that the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (CT) would be ratified in consultation with the French public with a national referendum, an era of intra-party divisions and the rise of rivalries between the French parties began. In France, the CT was not only perceived as a reform at the EU level, but was also seen as an issue in the domestic French political agenda. In addition, contrary to the leading parties' official positions - the governing UMP and the main opposition party PS - and their 'yes' campaigns, the unexpected 'no' results on 29 May 2005 led to a turmoil both at the national level and at the EU level politics. For that reason, discussion of CT's impacts on the French political agenda and the leading parties' strategies and expectations from the CT is significant. Moreover, the French referendum's specificity arose from its ratification process. For instance, the Dutch referendum which was held on 1 June 2005, just three days after the French referendum on the CT, resulted with a 'no' outcome as well. The distinction between the two was that while the 'no' outcome of the French referendum could kill the CT; the Dutch one could only increase the doubts over the ratification process. In other words, after the rejection of the CT, the Dutch government would still have the option to ratify the CT in

the Dutch parliament. Since the referendum was not legally binding. Thus, contrary to the French case there was the likelihood that the CT could be approved by the Netherlands.¹⁵¹

In this chapter, the two leading political parties' – the PS on the left and the UMP on the right- official campaigns, their leaders' and party key figures' discourses as well as the internal party divisions' causes and consequences will be discussed. Besides these, President Chirac's position, the major determinants of a 'no' vote in the French political context, the content and the intent of the CT and the CT's impact on the following Lisbon Treaty will be thoroughly analyzed.

2.1. The Path to and the Content of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

At the end of the Laeken Declaration which was announced in December 2001, the European Union had reached a turning point regarding three critical issues: the geographical scope of the future Union, its institutional-constitutional status, and its regulatory aspect on which the political justifications and legitimacy would be erected.¹⁵² Thus, the Convention on the Future of Europe which was convened in March 2002 in Brussels under the leadership of the former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing to address the key issues of distribution of power between the basic European

¹⁵¹ Daniel Keohane, "Don't forget the Dutch Referendum," Centre for European Reform: briefing note, 19 May 2005. Available from http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/briefing_dutch_ref_may05.pdf, Accessed on 9 February 2009, 1 - 2.

¹⁵² John Erik Fossum, "Still a Union of deep diversity? : The Convention and the Constitution for Europe" ARENA Working Paper 21/03. Available from Arena. Http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/working-papers2003/papers/wp03_21.pdf. Accessed on 5 November, 2008, 1.

Union (EU) institutions and the member states engaged in a hard work on the basis of these critical issues to lay the ground for a Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The Convention on the Future of Europe encouraged the development of a new foreign policy for Europe so that Europe acted more coherently in foreign policy matters. It focused on how to strengthen the Union's democratic legitimacy, and to redress the members towards of more integrated and unified Europe. The aim of the Convention was to develop a Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe to create a single document out of the four existing treaties. The draft was composed of four parts respectively: definition and objectives of the Union, EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the functioning and policies of the Union, and the general and final provisions.¹⁵³

In July 2003 the Convention came up with a draft treaty creating a basis document for IGC (*Intergovernmental Conference*). Then in October 2003 EU leaders met again for the IGC to give the final form to the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. An agreement was reached on most of the issues proposed on the draft treaty by December 2003. However, there was a dispute over the proposed voting rule changes. Poland and Spain were afraid that the simplified voting rules that the Convention proposed would favor the demographically larger member states, while the then valid weighted voting system favored the smaller and the medium-sized states. When Spain, under the new government, gave up its objection, Poland was alone and was forced to be more flexible. In June 2004, EU leaders gave its final form and signed it on 29 October, 2004 and set the target date of November 2006 to put the constitution into force.¹⁵⁴

To become a Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, the CT had to be ratified by all of the 25 member states either by parliamentary approval or by public

¹⁵³ Kristin Archick, "The European Union's Constitution," CRS Report for Congress. December 27, 2005. Order Code RS21618. Available from <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rs21618.pdf>. Accessed on 5 November, 2008, CRS 2 – 3.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

referendum.¹⁵⁵ At this point, due to the national referendums to be held in certain states, the ratification crises came into being. It became difficult to ratify the CT through the public referenda since the public was not well aware of the contents of the CT. The public had distrust towards their respective national governments, the opposition parties used the referenda opportunity as a tool for their election campaigns, and there was the fear from the bureaucratic structure of EU and finally the public's doubts on EU's enlargement policy, notably the case of Turkey's membership into EU. Although the Netherlands and France were the founding members of the European integration project, the outweighing 'no' vote cast in the public referenda brought EU into a crises situation. What were then the key provisions and the new policies envisaged by CT leading to criticisms and public opposition to the referenda?

In the 341 pages of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe text, the following key changes were proposed in order to create a more integrated and unified Europe:

- The current six-month rotating European Council presidency would be abolished. "The European Council shall elect its President, by a qualified majority, for a term of two and a half years, renewable once." The President "shall ensure the preparation and continuity of the work of the European Council"¹⁵⁶, and "shall not hold a national office."¹⁵⁷
- "The European Council, acting by a qualified majority, with the agreement of the President of the Commission, shall appoint the Union Minister

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ "Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe," *Official Journal of the European Union*, Vol. 47, (16 December 2004). Available from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML>. Accessed on 5 November, 2008, C 310/20.

¹⁵⁷ EUNavigator, "The Constitutional Treaty of 29 October 2004," Eunavigator, Available from EUNavigator www.ena.lu. Accessed on 15 January, 2009.

for Foreign Affairs.”¹⁵⁸ The task of the new EU Foreign Minister is to enhance “EU’s international visibility” by putting together the responsibilities of the Council’s High Representative for the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the External Relations Commissioner.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, “the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs shall preside over the Foreign Affairs Council... [and would be] one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission”.¹⁶⁰

- The “Commission shall consist of a number of members, including its President and the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs”.¹⁶¹ During the first Commission whose term is from the time the CT is approved till 2014, each member state will retain one Commissioner.¹⁶² Thereafter, in order to overcome gridlock, the number of Commission members will correspond to “two thirds of the number of Member States, unless the European Council, acting unanimously, decides to alter this number.”¹⁶³

- “The Union shall have legal personality.”¹⁶⁴

- “The European Parliament shall, jointly with the Council, exercise legislative and budgetary functions. It shall exercise functions of political control and consultation as laid down in the Constitution.” In many policy areas,

¹⁵⁸ “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe”, C 310/23.

¹⁵⁹ Archick, CRS 2 – 5.

¹⁶⁰ “The Constitutional Treaty of 29 October 2004”.

¹⁶¹ “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe”, C 310/22.

¹⁶² Archick, CRS-4.

¹⁶³ “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe”, C 310/22.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., C 310/13.

including home affairs and agriculture, this CT would increase the co-decision rights of the European Parliament with the Council of Ministers.¹⁶⁵

- “The Union shall recognize the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights”.¹⁶⁶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union within the CT did not only include the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms the Council of Europe adopted in 1950, but also economic and social rights.¹⁶⁷

- “A qualified majority shall be defined as at least 55 % of the members of the Council, comprising at least fifteen of them and representing Member States comprising at least 65 % of the population of the Union. A blocking minority must include at least four Council members ... When the Council does not act on a proposal from the Commission or from the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, the qualified majority shall be defined as at least 72 % of the members of the Council, representing Member States comprising at least 65 % of the population of the Union.”¹⁶⁸

- A ‘solidarity clause’ to be put into the CT to ensure that “the Union and its Member States shall act jointly if a Member State is the victim of a natural or man-made disaster, in particular terrorism”.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Archick, CRS-5.

¹⁶⁶ “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe”, C 310/13.

¹⁶⁷ “The Constitutional Treaty of 29 October 2004”.

¹⁶⁸ “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe,” C 310/21.

¹⁶⁹ “The Constitutional Treaty of 29 October 2004”.

Besides these new key provisions, considering several principles, the three respective competences - exclusive competence, shared competence and competence to carry out supporting, coordinating or complementary action - of the Union and the Member States would be determined by CT. These competences were governed by three principles: (a) the principle of conferral of competence at European level or at national level: the Union would have exclusive competence only in areas it is given authority by the Constitution; (b) the subsidiarity principle, where if and when the proposed action could not be achieved at the regional or national level, the Union would act; and (c) the principle of proportionality, where the Union's action should be adapted to the set objectives. Moreover, while putting the competences into action, the Union Law and the Constitution would have priority over the Member States' laws.¹⁷⁰

2.2. The Overall French Attitude towards the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

In 1972, the French people paved the way for British accession to the European Community. Then in 1991, the French again made a referendum for the founding treaty establishing the European Union - Maastricht Treaty – and approved it with a small margin, with 51.05 percent 'yes' to the Treaty.¹⁷¹ Even if the support to the EU increased significantly, the French people still had reservations in certain areas regarding the EU policies. On 29 May 2005, France again went to the referendum for the future of Europe. This time with the adverse impact of the domestic political

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Giles Ivaldi, "Beyond France's 2005 referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty: Second-order model, anti-Establishment attitudes and the end of the alternative European utopia," Available from http://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/09/02/33/PDF/Ivaldi_WEP2006.pdf. Accessed on 15 November, 2008, 1.

situation and by considering prospective negative consequences on the economic and social French models - anti-ultra liberal and anti-Anglo Saxon social market economy and the government safeguarding social justice for the French citizens in general - to be brought in with the acceptance of the Constitutional Treaty, the Treaty was rejected by the French citizens in the national referendum held on 29 May 2005.¹⁷²

In 2005, four of the total 25 members of the EU have gone to national referendum for the ratification of the CT. France was one of them. France decided to take the Treaty to a referendum in July 2004¹⁷³ with President Chirac's initiative. Although the Referendum was originally planned for the late 2005, the Spanish referendum's positive outcomes and the internal divisions in Socialist Party triggered the then President Chirac to move for 29 May 2005.¹⁷⁴

Participation of the French electorate into the 29 May referendum was high. At the date of the referendum there were 41,347,483 electorates, total votes cast were 28,836,358 (69.7%), valid votes cast were 28,108,671 (97.5%). Voters were asked the question of "Do you approve the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe?" While 45.1% of those voted were in favor of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, the remaining 54.9% voted against it.¹⁷⁵

According to Paul Taggart, there were four main reasons giving rise to the adoption of a referendum decision regarding the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. The first was President Chirac's attitude toward his rival Nicolas Sarkozy. President Chirac did not want to leave the floor to Nicolas Sarkozy for the proposition of a referendum and decided to act as the main decision maker. Secondly, President

¹⁷² Colette Ysmal, "France," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 45, Issue 7-8 (2006). Available from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118728724/PDFSTART>. Accessed on 5 November, 2008, 1104 – 1107.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1104 – 1107.

¹⁷⁴ Paul Taggart, "Questions of Europe: The Domestic Politics of the 2005 French and Dutch Referendums and their Challenge for the Study of European Integration," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 44, Issue s1 (2006). Available from <http://web.clas.ufl.edu/users/kreppel/jmwkshp2006/Taggart.pdf>. Accessed on 5 November, 2008, 7.

¹⁷⁵ Ysmal, "France", 1104.

Chirac realized that the referendum process would be difficult and could divide the PS. Thirdly, the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair decided to make a referendum in UK and this initiative domestically pressured President Chirac to the same in France. Finally, President Chirac thought that the ratification of Treaty by referendum would increase his popularity and the support for the government. The remarkable point of these reasons is that all of them are related to the domestic politics.¹⁷⁶

The debates over the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe were constituted by the issues of Turkey's accession to EU, the Bolkenstein Directive and the Economy which were widely discussed in the meetings, on the TVs and in the press. In these discussions Turkey's accession was effectively utilized by the right-wing *Mouvement pour la France* (MPF-Movement for France) party leader Philippe de Villiers. The right wing political leaders such as Philippe de Villiers and Jean-Marie Le Pen have correlated the constitutional campaign with Turkey's EU membership.¹⁷⁷

The Bolkenstein Directive, being a liberal policy formulation on the services sector and the domestic market and being evaluated by the French public as the culmination of the liberal policies for EU from an Anglo-Saxon economic perspective took into consideration the inflow of 'Polish Plumbers' into France.¹⁷⁸ In this context regarding the Bolkenstein Directive, Matt Qvortrup argued as follows:

“[The Bolkenstein Directive] aroused the fears about a threat of an influx of cheap laborers from Central and Eastern Europe. And while President Chirac ensured that the directive was withdrawn, the theme of the ‘Polish plumber’ remained an Achilles’ heel for the pro-constitutionalists- and a godsend for the anti-constitutionalists, who skillfully played on the voters’ fears.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Taggart, 6 - 7.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 7 - 8.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 7 - 8.

¹⁷⁹ Matt Qvortrup, “The Three Referendums on the European Constitution Treaty in 2005,” *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No.1, (January-March 2006). Available from Blackwell Synergy. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118620599/PDFSTART>. Accessed on 12 November, 2008, 92.

Thus, the ‘no’ camp focused on the possibility of future job losses of the French workers. They claimed that the Anglo-Saxon model, with its free trade principles, would pave the way for “an ultraliberal Europe”.¹⁸⁰ It was thought that an ultraliberal Europe would damage French national sovereignty.

The current economic problems and the future direction of the French economy was the third major issue in the debates where especially the adverse impact of rising unemployment was a serious concern discussed widely in the campaigns.¹⁸¹ These three highly controversial and debated issues damaged President Chirac’s presidential popularity and the credibility of Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin’s UMP government.

EU was losing its international competitiveness with the rise of China and India as the new international competitors and the new dynamics of the world economy turning its way to Asia. With the creation, deepening and development of a powerful European market, EU would go a step forward in strengthening its international economic competitiveness. Acceptance of the Treaty with liberal overtones would pave the way to this aim. Thus, with this Treaty the strengthening European interests would directly enhance the national interests of the member countries. At this point, national leaders got the initiative for the acceptance of the CT. For instance, President Chirac, in support of a ‘yes’ to the Treaty, made a trip to Barcelona and delivered a speech on 11 February 2005,¹⁸² long before the referendum in France. Back at home, the attitude of the French

¹⁸⁰ Paul Hainsworth, “France Says No: The 29 May 2005 Referendum on the European Constitution,” *Parliamentary Affairs* Vol. 59 No. 1, (2006). Available from Oxford Journals <http://pa.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/gsj015v2>. Accessed on 12 November, 2008, 104.

¹⁸¹ Taggart, 7 - 8.

¹⁸² Official Website of the Office of the French President, “Statement to the French by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic,” Official Website of the Office of the French President, 31 May 2005. Available from http://www.elysee.fr/elysee/elysee.fr/anglais_archives/speeches_and_documents/2005/referendum_on_the_european_constitution_statement_to_the_french_by_m_jacques_chirac_president_of_the_republic.30886.html. Accessed on 21 January, 2009.

electorate toward the CT was turning from an inclination to a ‘yes’ to an inclination toward a ‘no’ as the time for the referendum was getting closer and closer. The results of the polls conducted by CSA in 1-2 October 2003 gave 67 per cent ‘yes’ and 33 per cent ‘no’ and this picture turned around to be 48 per cent and 52 per cent respectively on 26-27 May 2005, just two days prior to the referendum. According to Henry Millner the opponents of CT claimed that the ratification of CT would accelerate social damping and that the low-paid Polish plumbers would take the jobs of the French tradesmen.¹⁸³ Thus, it seems that the people had the instinctive fear that the burden to be brought by the new treaty would directly be born by them and that their living standards would decline. The problem was who would bear the burden of the transition phase and how it would be achieved. So the leaders, and President Chirac in the case of France, took the risk by taking the referendum to public vote. In this context, a ‘yes’ in Spain would be a convincing example for the French public relieving them of their fears. However, this trip together with the confusion of the public regarding the pros and cons of the Treaty for the French national interests, gave rise to a division of the public opinion into two major camps: the ‘yes’ and the ‘no’, making the official position on the Treaty irrelevant.

With President Chirac’s initiative the French people got the opportunity to directly decide on the nature and future of the EU. This leap forward by President Chirac and the choice between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ regarding the CT changed the course of the left versus right dichotomy. While there were certain splits in the right the major and the surprising division was in the PS ranks.¹⁸⁴

The advocates of ‘yes’ campaign in France were mainly directed by three camps: the UDF, the majority of UMP and the majority of PS. Their common argument was that this EU Charter would make the EU more democratic.¹⁸⁵ Kalpyso Nicolaidis argued

¹⁸³ Henry Millner, “YES to the Europe I want; NO to this one.” Some Reflections on France’s Rejection of the EU Constitution,” *PS April*, Vol. 39. Issue 2, (2006). Available from Cambridge Journals http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FPSC%2FPSC39_02%2FS1049096506060392a.pdf&code=f7febdba407927eb0e7fa9d615b280fd. Accessed on 15 December, 2008, 258 – 259.

¹⁸⁴ Ysmal, “France”, 1104 – 1107.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1107.

that the ‘yes’ campaign got a wide and diverse support from “the mayors, artists, intellectuals, trade unionists, socialist leaders, and heads of states.”¹⁸⁶ Even President Chirac made an emotional speech on the TV assuring the French citizens that the Constitutional Treaty was “the daughter of 1789”.¹⁸⁷ The ‘no’ camp was composed of the National Front, Philippe de Villiers and a part of UMP. The main argument of the ‘no’ camp was safeguarding the sovereignty, which included “*la grandeur de France*”, and the protection of the French national interests. However, beside these right formations there was a strange Leftist coalition within the ‘no’ camp. This diverse Left spectrum covered the Trotskyite extreme left, the dissenting socialists, the Communist Party and the leftists’ anti-capitalist movement. The Leftist ‘no’ camp was defending a mythical plan to replace the CT which would lead to a wild capitalism that would put the welfare system in Europe at risk.¹⁸⁸ This Leftist ‘no’ coalition worked hard and in a very organized manner effecting the decision of the electorates. According to CSA Polls while 60% of the electorates preferred to say ‘yes’, in February, with this successful campaign the percentage of voters favoring ‘yes’ decreased to 49% in the middle of March. In the change of the behavior of the electorate people’s dissatisfaction toward the Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin government and President Chirac also played an important role. There was the fear among the French public that this Treaty would facilitate the enlargement process and that this would in turn decrease their living standards. Besides, they felt the threat that with the CT, the traditional state intervention in economic, social and cultural domains would be damaged. Although President Chirac led this referendum to increase his popularity and credibility, the outcome was a disaster.¹⁸⁹ But the worst defeat was the PS’s defeat: over half of those voted for a ‘no’ rejecting their party’s position. In addition, 81% of the blue-collar workers, one of the main constructs of PS, voted ‘no’.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Kalpyso Nicolaidis, “The Struggle for Europe,” *Dissent*, (Fall 2005). Available from <http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/ext/knicolaidis/struggleEUrope.pdf>. Accessed on 12 December, 2008, 13.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Ysmal, “France”, 1107.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 1108 – 1109.

¹⁹⁰ Millner, 260.

As until 2007, there would not be another election, the French electorate saw the opportunity to express their protests to both the Prime Minister and the President. The pessimism related to the persistence on high unemployment rates, and the low popularity of both President Chirac and the government formed the basis of that kind of a protest.¹⁹¹

A detailed analysis of the Eurobarometer post-referendum survey in France regarding the result of the referendum reveals out the following in terms of occupation: 48% of the self-employees, 45% of the employees, 24% of the manual workers, and 50% of those without professional activity voted for a 'yes'.¹⁹² Hence, the manual workers had the lowest rate of approval for the Constitutional Treaty. This was the group which felt itself to be the most victimized. It is very likely that they believed that this Treaty would facilitate the EU enlargement process which would decrease their living standards due to the possible waves of cheap labor from the new members.

According to Sylvain Brouard and Vincent Tiberj, there were four hypotheses which explained the results of the referendum. Firstly, considering the incompetence of the governments and the lack of political elites' responsiveness, the French people, similar to the 2002 Presidential Elections, expressed one more time their dissatisfaction with the current political elites. It meant that the public, while rejecting the CT, also rejected the political elites. Second was the anti-European hypothesis: It is argued that the cleavage on Europe was different than the traditional left-right division. In addition, it was only among the highly educated, younger generations, and upper class who

¹⁹¹ Sally Marthaler, "The French Referendum on Ratification of the Constitutional Treaty: 29 May 2005," Referendum Briefing Paper No 12. EPERN European Parties Elections and Referendums Network. Available from http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/documents/epern_rb_france_2005.pdf. Accessed on 12 December, 2008, 2.

¹⁹² Eurobarometer, "Flash EB171: The European Constitution Post-referendum survey in France," European Commission, (June 2005). Available from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl171_en.pdf. Accessed on 21 January 2009, 13.

favoured the concepts of “multiculturalism, toward immigrant populations and other minorities, and European integration”.¹⁹³

Thus, the French electorate also rejected this sort of a European integration. It would not be true to relate the CT with an anti-European stance only. The European level initiatives like the Bolkenstein Directive which was perceived as an ultra-liberal Anglo-Saxon model was criticized by the French electorate which meant that the French voter did not totally reject the idea of EU but criticized some EU level policies which formed the third hypothesis as “the EU-criticism hypothesis”. The last hypothesis was associated with Chirac’s Presidency. President Chirac’s unpopularity and the government’s inability to solve the problems formed the fourth hypothesis called “the executive popularity hypothesis”.¹⁹⁴ While considering the ‘no’ outcome and the conflicting attitudes of the two main actors, PS on the left and UMP on the right, these hypothesis should be kept in mind.

Paul Taggart argued that there were three major aspects of the outcomes of the Referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. First, the Referendum campaigns demonstrated “the nature of the party competition both in and between parties”¹⁹⁵, second, the ‘no’ campaigns in different political parties and groups were diverged from each other which meant that the ‘no’ to the ratification supporters stayed in different spectrums constituted different perceptions over the CT and European integration. Third, the ‘no’ camps within these diverged parties on the French political scale emphasized different objectives for the Treaty. The left opposition accentuated “a defense of a vision of a ‘Social Europe’; however the right-wing opposition focused “on

¹⁹³ Sylvain Brouard and Vincent Tiberj, ”The French Referendum: The Not So Simple Act of Saying Nay,” *Political Science & Politics*, Vol. 39, Issue 2, (April 2006). Available from Cambridge Journals http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FPSC%2FPSC39_02%2FS1049096506060409a.pdf&code=e598965208708f5150aadcbedad50cd. Accessed on 14 December, 2008, 261.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 261 - 262.

¹⁹⁵ Taggart, 7.

the themes of sovereignty and fears about French identity, as well as an embrace of anti-globalization themes by some”.¹⁹⁶

The ‘no’ outcome in the French referendum may give the reader the impression that there was a strong Eurosceptic trend in France. Beginning with the rejection of the European Defense Treaty in 1954 by the French National Assembly, then the “empty chair crisis” under General De Gaulle Presidency, the narrow pass of the Maastricht Treaty referendum were the basic examples which indicated the French cautious stance over the European integration. For that reason, the revival of the French Euroscepticism was not a new phenomenon during the CT referendum campaigns.¹⁹⁷ The traditional French vision of European integration was based on the intention of controlling and directing the trajectory of the European project. As stated by Paul Hainsworth some of the French electorate who voted against the Treaty also emphasized that France should reveal its pivotal role on the European integration.¹⁹⁸ For that reason, the situation in France is rather different than the traditional Eurosceptic perception.

According to Markus Wagner, as Paul Taggart divided the Euroscepticism into two, the “soft” and the “hard” one, France faced the “soft” tide meaning that Eurosceptics were not against “the very idea of European integration and as a consequence [to] the EU”¹⁹⁹, but that they had concerns on the current EU political forms and were in harmony with the pro-European sentiments. The “soft” Euroscepticism is further divided into two, the “policy” and “national-interest” Euroscepticism. “Policy Eurosceptics oppose specific areas of integration, while national-interest Eurosceptics oppose certain aspects of the EU because membership is seen as a limitation on sovereignty. Policy and national-interest Euroscepticism are not mutually exclusive categories.”²⁰⁰ The ‘no’ wing of France adopting the “soft”

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Hainsworth, 112 - 113.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 116 - 117.

¹⁹⁹ Markus Wagner, “Debating Europe in the French Socialist Party: The 2004 Internal Referendum on the EU Constitution”, *French Politics*, Vol. 6, Number 3, (September 2008), 258 - 259.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 258 - 259.

Euroscepticism was not against the idea of an integrated Europe, but was against the current CT and the integrated Europe it envisaged.

The 'no' result at the end of the national referendum in France forced President Chirac to change Jean-Pierre Raffarin's premiership. Just after the polls closed, President Chirac delivered a speech on the TV to the French electorate due to their 'concerns and worries' where he emphasized the need for a renewed impetus in the government. The next day the Jean-Pierre Raffarin government resigned and on 31 May it was replaced by Dominique de Villepin.²⁰¹ The resignation was announced by a statement to the French by President Chirac in Paris on the same day when he evaluated the referendum results and gave a future prospectus to the French people. In this statement he said that the 'no' vote did not mean the rejection of the European ideal, but that it called for action regarding the major problems facing the French citizens such as unemployment, decreasing purchasing power and the threat facing the French social model. His message was that in order to safeguard this French model, France had to be more active, had to involve herself by playing her full role in Europe rather than isolating the country and turning inward. The model that France would struggle for within Europe was not an Anglo-Saxon model. It was a model "founded on dynamism and individual initiative, on solidarity and social dialogue."²⁰² Considering that model the new government used the 2004 slogan- "the social cohesion." The new cabinet was also formed by UMP politicians as only one ministry was appointed from the UDF who did not embrace the UDF party principles at all.²⁰³

According to the *Le Monde*, TNS-Sofres polls conducted in France on 29 May 2005 regarding the "winners and losers" of the referendum, within the left, Laurent Fabius was the one of the least beneficiaries from the winning 'no' campaign. On the other hand, for many other observers, on the right political spectrum Nicolas Sarkozy

²⁰¹ Marc G. Pufong, "France and Netherlands 'no' Votes: Prospects for a Constitution for Europe", Georgia Political Science Association Conference Proceedings, 2006, Available from <http://a-s.clayton.edu/trachtenberg/2006%20Proceedings%20Pufong.pdf>. Accessed on 20 December, 2008, 18 - 22.

²⁰² "Statement to the French by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic", 1 - 2.

²⁰³ Ysmal, "France", 1108.

was the most beneficiary of the referendum results. Since he became the Interior Minister and also continued to lead the UMP.²⁰⁴ Even though the governing UMP's political position was not embraced by the people in general, Nicolas Sarkozy came out of the referendum with the gain of these two titles. While not decreasing his credibility, these two titles have indeed increased his popularity.

2.3. Attitude of the PS towards the Issue of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

In the left-wing spectrum, the different approaches on the Treaty created intra-party divisions. Although the PS established an official 'yes' position after having an internal referendum, there were powerful elements of opposition. Besides the PS, the Greens also officially supported the Treaty while having a significant number of intra-party opposition. In the left, the opposition was formed by the PS number two Laurent Fabius, the mainstream Chèvenement's Mouvement Républicain et Citoyens and as well as the Parti Communist Français, the Trotskyiste Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and Lutte Ouvrière. This designated the split over the CT in both parts of the political spectrum where the left and the right "did so both at the center and periphery".²⁰⁵

The left-wing opponents of the treaty argued that a 'no' vote would be the declaration of hope for a kind of Europe that France wanted. For example, the Communist Party pamphlet prepared for the campaign stated this very clearly: "*le NON: Un vote d'espoir.*" (NO: A vote for hope). In this flier prepared and distributed by the Communist Party inviting those interested to a public discussion at the Sorbonne

²⁰⁴ Pufong, 10.

²⁰⁵ Taggart, 7.

University on May 14, it is stated that rejecting the treaty “is the condition of a new start of cooperation among states and peoples on a truly democratic foundation and freed of ideological fantasies but abandoning not at all the goal of Europe as a space of prosperity and a multinational collectivity carrying its weight in shaping the world’s destiny”.²⁰⁶ From the title of the pamphlet it is understood that the Communist Party was carrying a ‘no’ campaign to reject the kind of Europe that the treaty was intending. Saying ‘no’ in this referendum would create a new hope for the creation of a new treaty that would lay the foundation for a democratic Europe as a new multicultural entity which would be an example to the rest of the world for a more democratic and egalitarian system. By rejecting the current treaty the wild capitalist European project would be cursed. A democratic union of states and people at the European level would become a possibility which would be taken as a reference point by the world’s leftist circles. As a result, 98% of the communists voted ‘no’ in the national referendum.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, 60% of the members of the Greens (*Le Parti Vert*) voted ‘no’,²⁰⁸ not rejecting the idea of the union of Europe, but rather rejecting the Europe envisaged by this Treaty. The high 40% ‘yes’ was an indicator of confusion, but the main struggle was within the PS due to share of votes, popularity and the role in national decision-making.

The only party within the European mainstream left that lived such a big division on the CT issue was the French PS. The opponents to the CT demanded an internal referendum within the party. For the first time since the Épinay Congress, the PS had made an internal referendum among its 120,000 members²⁰⁹ in 1 December 2004 to evaluate the party members’ support for the CT. 83.2 percent of the PS members participated to the internal referendum. As a result, 58.6 per cent voted ‘yes’. The internal referendum came after meetings and internal discussions, including 400 local meetings, in order to create a definite Socialist party position.²¹⁰ Even if they had been

²⁰⁶ Millner, 258.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 260.

²⁰⁸ Pufong, 19.

²⁰⁹ Nicolaidis, 13.

²¹⁰ Wagner, 258.

defeated within the internal referendum at a rate of 58.6 %, the opponents still continued their ‘no’ campaign during the national referendum. The ‘yes’ side was led by the party secretary François Hollande and the former prime minister Lionel Jospin.²¹¹ The long rival of Laurent Fabius – the former Prime Minister Lionel Jospin - took the party’s official position and tried to influence the ‘yes’ position by organizing speeches in the national media. Similar to Laurent Fabius’ intentions for a ‘no’ campaign, Lionel Jospin’s move was considered as a step to reveal party majority support for his candidacy in 2007 Presidential elections. However, he did not return to the politics.²¹²

The high turnout of 83% participation in the PS internal referendum regarding the CT was never seen in the history of Socialist Party, congress or designation, and the party had not reached this level of commitment from members ever before. Although François Hollande respected the 41% ‘no’ outcome in the internal referendum, he felt the need to emphasize the unity of the party with a single voice and stated as follows: “In a democratic organization as Socialist Party, we can only have one response because if there were two this would be strange. It is necessary to carry out a campaign for the idea that brings us together. Today what brings us together is the Treaty.”²¹³ Thus, by this the socialist party leader called on the PS supporters to be on the side of the ‘yes’.

The PS’s one of the major organizational characteristics is to maintain different factions. Due to this feature of the PS, it can be predicted that when the lack of a strong leadership emerged, it became very difficult to keep these factions together.²¹⁴ In Dijon in May 2003, in the last congress before the internal referendum, the radical wings of the PS were formed by Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s ‘New World’ won 16.3 percent and Vincent Peillon, Arnaud Montebourg, Benoît Hamon and Julien Dray’s ‘*New Socialist Party (NPS)*’ groups won 16.9 per cent in the national congress.

²¹¹ Nicolaidis, 13.

²¹² Ivaldi, 4.

²¹³ Partie Socialiste Official Web Site, “Conférence de presse de François Hollande,” Partie Socialiste Official Web Site, (14 February 2004). Available from <http://discours.parti-socialiste.fr/2005/02/14/conference-de-presse-de-francois-hollande-14-fevrier-05/#more-93>. Accessed on 7 January, 2009.

²¹⁴ Wagner, 261.

Contrary to these attempts, François Hollande had his motion passed with 61.4 per cent majority.²¹⁵

When the motions presented in the 2003 Dijon Congress are analyzed, it will be seen that there were five major motions proposed. Among these, only one of them -the motion A- led by party leader François Hollande was in favor of “the European integration on the current model”.²¹⁶ Of the motions, the motion A demonstrated François Hollande’s federalist and integrationist vision of Europe. However, the other motions presented by a few party members were relatively smaller than the first motion and were based on the Eurosceptic sentiments. The motion C identified the European integration as “a Trojan horse of capitalism”, the motion D defined EU as a mere “ free-trade area without political or diplomatic power, without a social project”; and motion E denounced that they do not want that kind of Europe which were controlled by José Maria Aznar, Tony Blair or Silvio Berlusconi.²¹⁷ Hence, although the different factions intensified the internal democracy within the party, they reflected different ideologies and provided chances for different approaches to actualize, but this situation also led to the split on key issues such as the Constitutional Treaty.

Among the above motions, while only one of them –Motion A that favored yes- was given by those within the majority group in the party, no motion was given by Laurent Fabius -the PS number two - or other opponent figures within the majority group. The interesting point here is that Laurent Fabius did not give any motion in the Dijon congress, but after a short while he thought of acting as the leader of the opponent groups. When the analysis and the attitudes of the advocates of different motions are taken into consideration, Laurent Fabius’ ‘no’ attitude led to suspicion and ambiguities regarding the source and intent of his attitude.

The party was divided into three different camps on the CT: the minority factions, opponents of the Constitution within the majority *faction* and supporters of the

²¹⁵ Ivaldi, 4 - 5.

²¹⁶ Wagner, 261.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 261.

Constitution.²¹⁸ The ‘no’ campaign within the majority was carried out under the guidance of the key figure of the party, Laurent Fabius, who was ambitious to become the PS candidate for the presidential elections. His policy objectives considering the CT’s threat over French social insurance system did not only appeal to the socialists, but the French public in general.²¹⁹ Besides the personal ambitions of Laurent Fabius and François Hollande, there was a deeper social divide on the part of the French citizenry. While one part was the beneficiary of globalization and economic liberalization the other part was excluded from its benefits.²²⁰ Laurent Fabius formed an independent and a powerful group named *Ambition socialiste pour Europe* as an opposition to the ratification of the Treaty within the majority group. Laurent Fabius’ *présidentiable* character had played a significant role on the establishment of the opposition group within the majority.²²¹

Just one week before the internal referendum in PS, the leader of the ‘no’ camp within the party, Laurent Fabius, was interviewed by the daily French newspaper *Liberation*. In this interview Laurent Fabius explained why it was, in principle, necessary for him to say ‘no’ to the referendum by criticizing and interpreting various debatable articles of CT regarding the objectives of the Union.

Article I-3: (ex Articles 2 TEU, 2 TEC)

The Union's objectives

....

2. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, and an internal market where competition is free and undistorted.

3. The Union shall work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment. It shall promote scientific and technological advance.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 262.

²¹⁹ Nicolaidis, 13.

²²⁰ Ibid., 13 - 14.

²²¹ Wagner, 261 - 262.

It shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child.²²²

....

His evaluation and criticism of the CT and particularly article I-3 was as follows:

“This article juxtaposes objectives that don’t have much in common, such as price stability and child rights. Even the following can conflict each other during their implementation: between free competition and enduring development; between social market economy and search for high competitiveness. The third part of the text gives the key: competition is reinforced and the market is praised; what refers to solidarity and development is underestimated. The expressions of “social economy of market” and “full employment” appear once in the text, “competition” 27 times and “market” 78 times. In order to “attract” social democrat electorate, social objectives are granted; however, concerning concrete policies liberalism is engraved in detail all over the text.”²²³

With the above interpretation and by resorting to a leftist discourse, Laurent Fabius criticized this Treaty since it did not adequately emphasize the social market model and the realization of full employment. With its current form the CT was engraved with liberalism all over.

Laurent Fabius, besides criticizing the new provisions of CT, also associated his ‘no’ campaign with the national level policies. He argued that saying ‘yes’ to the Treaty would mean to support President Chirac’s policies. Like the 2002 Presidential Elections, the PS supported President Chirac in the second ballot of the Presidential elections

²²² “The EU Constitution,” (The Reader-Friendly Edition by Jens-Peter Bonde), Part I, Title I, Article I-3. Available from www.EUobserver.com. Accessed on 8 January 2009, 14 - 15.

²²³ Official Website of Laurent Fabius, « Pourquoi il faut dire non à la Constitution européenne (Why We Must Say No to the European Constitution) », (23 November 2004). Available from Official Website of Laurent Fabius http://www.laurent-fabius.net/article108.html?var_recherche=23+Novembre+2004. Accessed on 5 January, 2009.

against Jean-Marie Le Pen. Laurent Fabius argued that favoring the ‘yes’ camp would mean to support President Chirac for one more time. With using that kind of a rhetoric, Laurent Fabius tried to attract the PS electorates to the ‘no’ camp.²²⁴ In other words, the opposition with the PS accused the advocates of ‘yes’ campaign of being in the same line with the right wing government. The insistence on and execution of the ‘no’ campaign within the ranks of PS was an indicator of setting aside the party discipline and acting against the party’s official position. Although the results could be observed as a clear victory for the ‘yes’ supporters, after the internal referendum, the division within the PS over the CT had increased further. The debate giving rise to the split brought to light the type and extent of Euroscepticism within the party. However, the PS Euroscepticism which played a significant role in the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is not a “hard” Euroscepticism. The opponents of the CT within the Socialists are compatible with the EU integration rather than being against it.²²⁵

In order to have the French electorate to support the ‘yes’ campaign, in a press conference held on 14 February 2005, the leader of the ‘yes’ camp within PS, François Hollande, addressed the public as follows: “The French socialists’ campaign should be an intimate, clear and a socialist yes campaign. This is an intimate yes, because when associated with the CT, this ‘yes’ includes a development and progress for the European construction, and this permits all the French women and men to pronounce themselves.” He also added that for the socialists, the only issue in the referendum is the CT. No discussion should be carried out over Turkey or any other EU candidate.²²⁶

In the same press conference François Hollande, to create consent and enforce the ‘yes’ campaign, had delivered speech to the French public:

“Will there be a future for the Constitutional Treaty in Europe or not? If it won’t have a future due to the French rejection or due to the other countries which have not given their consent, then we will be ending up with a limited European

²²⁴ Marthaler, 4.

²²⁵ Wagner, 257 - 259.

²²⁶ “Conférence de presse de François Hollande”.

vision, limited by the Nice Treaty. This will be a Europe, broken down, a Europe in crises with no real future.” He further added that “a ‘yes’ vote will create a new European dynamics. On the other hand, a ‘no’ vote will only create a crisis whose outcome is quite unpredictable.”²²⁷

Contrary to the ‘yes’ rhetoric of François Hollande, as mentioned above, the split within the PS continued till the national referendum day of 29 May 2005 and was conducted by Laurent Fabius’ group and representatives of the minority factions. The intra-party divisions had a direct impact on the popular rejection of the CT meaning that the 56 percent of the PS supporters who had voted no in the national referendum formed 30 percent of the country-wide rejection.²²⁸

2.4. Attitude of the UMP towards the Issue of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe

The main supporters of the CT from the right-wing political parties were UMP and UDF. In line with their traditional Eurosceptic positions and their deep concern for member state sovereignty, opposition to the CT in right-wing political spectrum came from the dissidents within the UMP such as Nicolas Dupont-Aignan’s faction named *Debout la République* (Stand up Republic), Le Pen’s *Front National* (National Front), Philippe de Villiers’s *Mouvement Pour la France* (MPF), the *Mouvement National Républicain* (National Republican Movement /MNR), led by ex-FN number two Bruno Mégret, and Charles Pasqua’s *Rassemblement pour la France* (Rally for France (RPF)),

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Wagner, 271; Hainsworth, 100.

as well as a lobbying group named *Chasse, Pêche, Nature et Traditions* (Hunting, Fishing, Nature and Traditions/CNPT).²²⁹

The indisputable rising unpopularity of both the Prime Minister and the President started in early 2003. The public discontent with the government had been embodied in 2004 regional and European elections which meant great electoral losses for UMP. In addition, according to BVA-L'Express survey conducted in 20 May 2005, a week before the CT referendum day, the government popularity reached its lowest levels ever since 2002 with a 39 per cent of positive ratings for President Chirac and 21 per cent for Jean Pierre Raffarin's government.²³⁰ Although during the CT ratification process, the UMP was located in a 'yes' stance²³¹ asserting that "the charter would make the EU more democratic"²³² which was contrasted to the Eurosceptic position of the former Gaullist PRP tradition, it was significant that the UMP supporters showed a high level of loyalty to the party decision and to unpopular President Chirac.²³³

In order to gain public support to his 'yes' campaign and to announce his vision of Europe, The UMP leader Nicolas Sarkozy delivered a speech in Palais des Sports – Porte de Versailles – Paris on 12 May 2005, just two weeks before the national referendum. An excerpt from this speech is an indicator of his attitude toward the European project in a French style using very appealing concepts such as fraternity, civilization and a new cycle of prosperity:

Saying 'yes' to Europe is to demand on behalf of youth in this very beginning of 21st century the right to a future of peace, of exchange, opening-up and thus a future of fraternity.

²²⁹ Taggart, 7.

²³⁰ Ivaldi, 3.

²³¹ Ibid., 6.

²³² Ysmal, "France", 1107.

²³³ Ivaldi, 6.

The core of European message is that of the desire for fraternity between peoples (nations) of the same continent who confronted each other in different ways throughout history.

Europe, a fraternity project
Europe, an idea for a civilization
Europe which was a dream and which is a reality today
Europe deserves our most determined commitment.
Europe is a great chance, a chance for a new cycle of prosperity, for a new impulse for our country.²³⁴

With this announcement at Palais des Sports Nicolas Sarkozy especially emphasized that Europe was a fraternity project, that it was a visionary idea for the foundation of a new and civilized Europe, that they were struggling to create a new Europe for the European youth and a prosperous Europe in peace for all the states and citizens of Europe.

There were opposing groups within UMP. The ‘no’ camp within the party argued that the CT would threaten the national sovereignty of the member states.²³⁵ The CT was mainly opposed by a minority group within the Eurosceptics composed of those organizing themselves under the slogan of “New Gaullists” headed by Nicolas Dupont-Aignan who was the Deputy and President of the organization formed a sovereigntist faction called “Stand Up Republic” (*Debout la République*) defending the “republican, social, national and Gaullist ideals”²³⁶, Senator Philippe Marini and Deputy Jacques Myard who was the President of the “Nation and Republic” (CNR). CNR was a political club formed with the support of Georges Pompidou’s former Prime Minister Pierre Messmer who was the leader of the *Presence and Gaullist Action* association. However, although there were many such factions, on 6 March 2005 the national council of the party supported Nicolas Sarkozy’s motion considering a ‘yes’ to the CT with the

²³⁴ UMP Official Website, “Intervention de M. Nicolas Sarkozy,” UMP Official Website, (May 2005). Available from http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/discours/reunion_publicque_au_palais_des_sports_de_paris_le_12_mai_2005. Accessed on 5 January, 2009.

²³⁵ Ysmal, 1107.

²³⁶ Hainsworth, 100.

approval of 90.8 percent of the party members.²³⁷ In his speech At the National Council of UMP delivered on the same day, Nicolas Sarkozy, with the slogan “*L’Europe Merite un Oui*” (Europe Deserves a Yes) declared his support of the ratification of the EU CT with a ‘yes’ campaign.²³⁸

Contrary to the various left-wing groups’ oppositions to the CT as emphasizing “the threat to the French social model and the competition for French jobs which would result from social and fiscal dumping, the UMP dissident Dupont-Aignan criticized the Constitutional Treaty for being undemocratic”.²³⁹ One of the main arguments of the sovereigntist and Far Right opposition to the CT was based on opposition to Turkey’s EU membership. Even though Nicolas Sarkozy was also against Turkey’s EU membership, in a similar manner with President Chirac he tried to separate Turkey’s accession to EU from the CT. To prevent dissent and to ensure unity within the party Nicolas Sarkozy actively participated in various meetings.

The personality-based competition between President Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy showed itself during the CT ratification process.²⁴⁰ However, this leadership struggle did not prevent Nicolas Sarkozy to directly support President Chirac’s idea to ratify the Treaty with a national referendum. He was well aware of the risks and difficulties he would face during the referendum and to convince the French public for a ‘yes’. In the same speech he emphasized that with the referendum France got the opportunity to democratically decide on issues regarding the future of Europe which was a milestone in construction of Europe anew on democratic and transparent basis.²⁴¹

Nicolas Sarkozy, in seeing the split in the ranks of the PS regarding the ratification process, giving up his hopes for a ‘yes’ from the far left and the far right,

²³⁷ Ivaldi, 6 - 7; Marthaler, 4; Hainsworth, 100.

²³⁸ EU Navigator, “Statement by Sarkozy at the National Council of the UMP (6 March 2005),” The Constitutional Treaty of October 2004. Available from www.ena.lu. Accessed on 15 January, 2009.

²³⁹ Marthaler, 6.

²⁴⁰ Ivaldi, 4.

²⁴¹ “ Intervention de M. Nicolas Sarkozy ”.

and in order to clarify his own campaign and UMP party position adopted more precise and on-the-spot elements in his messages such as the emphasis on the future of French children and the future of France:

Voilà. It is told. Our political message is clear.
We want the best for the future of our children.
We want the best for the future of France.
We want the best for the new Europe.
Europe deserves a ‘yes’ and we will vote Yes on May
29.²⁴²

It was expected that besides UMP, the stance of the other important right wing party UDF would be taken into consideration by the mainstream right wing electorate. However, the process did not develop as the pro-European center-right *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (UDF - the Union for French Democracy) leader François Bayrou planned it. Despite the UDF leader François Bayrou’s criticism of the government’s national policies since 2002, the traditionally pro-European and federalist UDF supported UMP in the ‘yes’ campaign. Nicolas Sarkozy’s leadership of the UMP and President Chirac’s reputation as becoming the “best spokesman” for the CT led the public to undermine François Bayrou’s impact as a strong defender of the CT.²⁴³ This showed that when both the president and the head of UMP adopted a ‘yes’ stand regarding CT, not much room was left to François Bayrou’s pro-European discourse and this did not elevate the effectiveness of his campaign in the eyes of the public.

Besides UDF, the conservative MPF, lead by Philippe De Villiers, successfully placed itself in the ‘no’ camp of the CT by emphasizing the “national sovereignty” issue. During his ‘no’ campaign, Philippe De Villiers focused on the immigration and Turkey’s accession to the EU points and gained considerable popularity.²⁴⁴

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ivaldi, 7.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 7.

According to Ipsos poll results, in the period of the Maastricht Treaty establishing the EU the electorate of RPR, the ancestor of UMP, gave a 59.2 % 'no' vote. In May 2005 referendum, this time those saying 'yes' were 80% of the total UMP electorates.²⁴⁵ Although UMP made its decisions in loyalty to its own party official position, dissatisfaction with President Chirac and Prime Minister Raffarin's UMP government was evident. For that reason, President Chirac, considering the discontent of this right-wing electorate, deemed it appropriate to have a new government and the resignation of Jean-Pierre Raffarin took place a day after the referendum.

After the resignation of Jean-Pierre Raffarin's UMP government, the new Dominique de Villepin government's policies which were established two days after the rejection of the CT tried to create a new enthusiasm. This new right-wing government got the message of the French electorate regarding their dissatisfaction over the economic situation. At this point, its priority was to overcome unemployment. However, the "unemployment" issue led to a division within the UMP between the "liberals" led by Nicolas Sarkozy and President Chirac's supporters who were more confident to the role of state on economy.

After the failure of CT, it is seen that France's influence on European integration diminished. Therefore, in order to restore French dominance on European-level politics and as a way out of the constitutional deadlock, the UMP leader and the French presidential candidate Nicolas Sarkozy, at a meeting in Brussels on 7-8 September 2006, proposed a "mini treaty". Nicolas Sarkozy aimed to adopt the text during the German EU presidency in 2007 and to ratify it during the French [hopefully his] presidency in 2008.²⁴⁶ However, Nicolas Sarkozy's suggestion of a "mini treaty" was only embraced by the British government, and thus the initiative was given up.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ IPSOS Polls, « 29 May 2005 Referendum : Ballot Box (Referendum 29 Mai 2005 : Le sondage des urnes), » Available from IPSOS Polls <http://www.ipsos.fr/canalipsos/poll/8074.asp#01>. Accessed on 14 January, 2009.

²⁴⁶ Euroactiv, "Sarkozy proposes 'Mini-Treaty', new Convention and a 'Non' to Turkey," (Friday 8 September 2006) Updated: Wednesday 20 September 2006. Available from Euroactiv <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/sarkozy-proposes-mini-treaty-new-convention-non-turkey/article-157674>. Accessed on 20 January, 2009.

²⁴⁷ Laloum and Rasmussen, 3.

Nicolas Sarkozy's EU advisor Alain Lamassoure defined the "mini-treaty" as an initiative which aimed to sustain the legal innovations achieved since the Treaty of Nice (2001) and which gave powers to the EU institutions in order for them to operate more effectively. Alain Lamassoure further indicated that "this text will be drawn up with scissors, not with a pen".²⁴⁸ He suggested that this mini treaty be curtailed down to 130 articles from 448 and be preferably adopted by the national parliaments.²⁴⁹ That statement was important since the European CT ratification process brought tremendous debates within the EU member states, especially in France. Hence the new mini treaty was seen as an opportunity to restore both France's dominance on EU and the Treaty of Nice.

Nicolas Sarkozy's four of the eight-point proposals within the "simple treaty" were about the decision-making procedures. The noticeable step was to change the unanimity voting system in certain areas and to enhance the qualified majority voting, co-decision and double-majority voting accordingly. The change in the voting system intended to prevent EU's inefficiency when member states had disagreed over certain issues. In that respect, Nicolas Sarkozy's plan brought "a more stable" European Council presidency rather than the six-month rotation. It introduced a European Minister of Foreign Affairs in order to strengthen EU's power and credibility on the global scene.²⁵⁰ The mini treaty also envisaged that the Charter of Fundamental Rights would be binding certain countries such as France and Germany, and would not be binding some others such as UK.²⁵¹

The mini-treaty's ratification process in France has reminded the failure of CT. The treaty was ratified by the parliament without taking it to national referendum. Moreover, the French European Commissioner Jacques Barrot and even the socialist

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Lucia Kubosova, "France wants to save major part of EU constitution, Sarkozy aide says," (08.05.2007). Available from Euroobserver <http://euobserver.com/9/24015/?rk=1>. Accessed on 19 January, 2009.

²⁵⁰ Laloum and Rasmussen, 3 - 4.

²⁵¹ Kubosova.

former Minister of Foreign Affairs Hubert Védrine supported the “limited ratification strategy”, for the ratification process.²⁵²

France went through two years of inaction and crisis after the ‘no’ to the CT. In addition to this, and the passivism of President Chirac removed France from being a decision-making center in Europe. This period changed with the election of Nicolas Sarkozy as the president. Just after the presidential election results on Sunday 6 May 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy addressed the French people with the following motto: “France is back in Europe”.²⁵³ Since he had already made a move with his proposal of a ‘mini treaty’, upon his election as the president his popularity increased considerably at the EU level.

President Sarkozy tried to influence the EU decision making processes and intended to restore French power at the EU level. He thought that a politically and militarily strong Europe would be best for the French interests in the global level. For that reason, on August 27, 2007 President Sarkozy argued that “the construction of Europe will remain the absolute priority of [French] foreign policy. France is not strong without Europe, just as Europe is not strong without France.”²⁵⁴ Thus it should be remembered that President Sarkozy resorted to his earlier rhetoric on strong France within a strong Europe that he mentioned in his speeches such as the one in Palais des Sports – Porte de Versailles – Paris on 12 May 2005 as part of his CT campaigns.

²⁵² Laloum and Rasmussen, 4.

²⁵³ Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, “Sarkozy’s Foreign Policy: Substance or Style?”, *The International Spectator*, Vol. 43, No. 1, (March 2008). Available from http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/262977_758064766_791276150.pdf. Accessed on 28 December, 2008, 15.

²⁵⁴ Tsilla Hershco, “France, the European Union and the Middle East in the Sarkozy Era”, *Perspectives Paper*, No. 39, (February 27, 2008). Available from <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/perspectives39.html>. Accessed on 29 December, 2008.

2.5. From CT to Treaty of Lisbon

On 23 July 2007 the twenty-seven member states of EU convened the Intergovernmental Conference in Lisbon to create a Reform Treaty. It was decided that a new treaty be prepared to take the place of CT. On 4 October 2007, the final version was completed by the legal experts and was submitted for the “concluding sessions of the foreign ministers and prime ministers”.²⁵⁵ Final agreement on the Reform Treaty was reached by the European Council in the summit held in Lisbon on 18-19 October 2007.²⁵⁶ During the negotiations process to create the Reform Treaty, the European Commission and Parliament were also involved.²⁵⁷ However, according to Jens-Peter Bonde, who is a European Parliament’s Constitutional Affairs Committee member, and being one of those given the task of following the meetings and engaging in technical work, claimed that the public, experts and officers like him were all deprived of getting information on the meetings and the contents of the discussion.²⁵⁸ So it was ready for a nice approval by the head of 27 European democracies on 13 December 2007. The ratification of the Treaty by the member governments was targeted to be done by 1 January 2009, some months before the European Parliament elections.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ Jens-Peter Bonde, “From EU Constitution to Lisbon Treaty,” Foundation for EU Democracy and the EU Democrats in cooperation with Group for Independence and Democracy in the European Parliament, Available from http://www.indemgroup.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/groupdocs/Research_publication/From_EU_Constitution_to_Lisbon_Treaty_april_2008.pdf. Accessed on 28 December, 2008, 21.

²⁵⁶ Pippa Knott. “European Constitution/Lisbon Treaty”. CIVITAS (Institute for the Study of Civil Society) EU Facts. (14/08/08). Available from <http://www.civitas.org.uk/eufacts/FSTREAT/TR6.htm>. Accessed on 19 January, 2009, 1 - 2.

²⁵⁷ EU Official Portal Site, “Treaty of Lisbon: Taking Europe into the 21st century,” EU Official Portal Site. Available from http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/take/index_en.htm. Accessed on 19 January, 2009.

²⁵⁸ Knott, 1 - 2.

²⁵⁹ “Treaty of Lisbon: Taking Europe into the 21st century”.

The aim of Lisbon Treaty was to create a supranational power at the EU level mainly regarding the areas of human rights and judicial and foreign policy matters and also to affirm EU's independence by making it a legal personality for a further integrated Europe.²⁶⁰ In that respect Treaty of Lisbon was containing new provisions. The Treaty first of all aimed to create a more democratic and transparent Europe. The European Parliament's role was strengthened by increasing the co-decision procedure in policy making. The increase of national parliaments' involvement in the EU work led to a stronger voice for citizens²⁶¹ whereby "not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of member states may take the initiative of inviting the European Commission... to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties."²⁶² The right to withdraw from the union is given by the Treaty. Its second aim was to create a more efficient Europe with the creation of a more efficient decision-making mechanism. In that respect, arrangements in the Council considering the qualified majority voting and the creation of the president of the European Council for two and a half years were intended. Thirdly, the Charter of Fundamental Rights became binding. Lastly, in order to create a powerful Europe on the global level, a legal personality for the Union was provided, and a new High Representative for the Union in Foreign Affairs and Security Policy were put in place.²⁶³

The new provisions brought by the Reform Treaty were considered to be the same as CT in its essence. The current Finnish minister of foreign affairs, Alexander Stubb, said that the Lisbon Treaty was 99 per cent similar to CT and the former French

²⁶⁰ Knott, 1 - 2.

²⁶¹ EU Official Portal Site, "Treaty of Lisbon: Taking Europe into the 21st century. The Treaty at a glance," EU Official Portal Site. Available from http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/glance/index_en.htm. Accessed on 19 January, 2009.

²⁶² "Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 December 2007," *Official Journal of the European Union*, Article 8 B, p. C 306/15, , Volume 50, (17 December 2007). Available from http://bookshop.europa.eu/eubookshop/download.action?fileName=FXAC07306ENC_002.pdf&eubphfUid=534817&catalogNbr=FX-AC-07-306-EN-C. Accessed on 19 January, 2009.

²⁶³ "Treaty of Lisbon: Taking Europe into the 21st century. The Treaty at a glance".

President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as the chairman of the Convention on the Constitution pointed out that the Lisbon Treaty is the same as the rejected CT and the format was changed to avoid referendums.²⁶⁴

By avoiding the referendums during the ratification process of the Lisbon Treaty and by calling it a Reform Treaty the member states were able to cope with the crises arising from the failure to ratify CT by all the member states, especially France. This indicates that the fierce discussions and debates during the CT campaigns, the 'no' attitude of different sorts of parties from the left to the right, the internal party debates, the unexpected 'no' outcome within the PS, division of France almost into two camps, the final rejection of CT by France and its determinative adverse impact on integration at the EU level had shaken the EU project from its roots. The results of the referendum brought a failure for major parties on both sides of the French political sphere; the PS on the left and the UMP on the right. That is why a deeper and closer analysis of the French political parties' attitude towards CT will provide us very valuable outlook regarding the future of European integration.

The CT created a tremendous impact in French political sphere just after President Chirac declared that the CT would be ratified in consultation with a national referendum. The CT was not only considered as a reform project at the EU level politics but was also perceived as a national issue which would directly affect the domestic level politics. Both the leading parties on the left and right tried to overcome the issue successfully without irritating the electorate and to strengthen their positions within the course of the ratification process and thereafter. Besides the CT's impact on the French political agenda, the result of the French referendum would have irreversible repercussions on the future of the European Integration and, contrary to the Dutch referendum, the French referendum could kill the CT opening the way for a problematic era for Europe. In that respect, it was necessary to analyze the causes and consequences of the discourses of the leading figures of the mainstream political parties- the PS and the UMP- their campaigns, the intra-party rivalries and the presidential statements and speeches during the referendum.

²⁶⁴ Bonde, 26.

Although the leading left and right parties on the French political sphere positioned themselves to a great extent for a 'yes' outcome, the CT was rejected by the French electorate with 54.9 per cent 'no' vote deserving a detailed study of the issue. Besides, what also made the current study meaningful were the confrontations and divisions within the party ranks, especially within the PS.

The French Socialist Party was the only mainstream leftist party which was faced with such a deep intra-party division on the CT among other Socialist parties in Europe. Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc Mélenchon opposed the CT by proposing the sovereigntist arguments and by criticizing the CT for being an ultra-liberal treaty confronting the French economic model. Besides, Laurent Fabius' 'no' campaign generated the most effective opposition within PS. His attempt was observed as a tactic to acquire the party leadership. Weakening of François Hollande's position within the PS could have paved the way for Laurent Fabius' party leadership. Hence, the CT was used as a political tool in the rivalry between François Hollande and Laurent Fabius for the party leadership and at this point it became rather difficult to speak of the socialist values and ideologies. On the other hand, in the UMP ranks, it was mainly Nicolas Dupont-Aignan who formed a 'no' campaign by defending the republican, social, national and Gaullist ideals. But still, the majority of the party members had shown strong loyalty to the party decision. At this point, the party center took advantage of holding the power and positioned its electorate in favor of a 'yes' to the CT.

Finally, the CT referendum process developed in a context of inter-intra party power struggles rather than inter party politics and party ideologies. On the mainstream left, within the PS, Laurent Fabius used the CT as a political tool to acquire the leadership. On the mainstream right, the aim of Jacques Chirac was to increase his popularity and to push Nicholas Sarkozy to a secondary position. Hence, regarding the CT referendum, instead of the classical left-right dichotomy, power struggles between the leading politicians both in the PS and the UMP became the norm and their pragmatic rather than ideological attitudes were observed.

Chapter III

Attitude of the PS and the UMP towards the “Turkish Issue”: a Narrative Approach

In the recent French political agenda, one of the major issues is Turkey’s EU accession process. French politicians’ discourses generate fierce debates and in turn impacts Turkey’s membership. In this chapter besides discussing the leading French political parties’ approaches – *Partie Socialiste* (the French Socialist Party / PS) on the left and *Union pour a Mouvement Populaire* (the Union for a Popular Movement / UMP) on the right- towards Turkey and especially on her accession to the EU, the Presidential level declarations on Turkey’s membership, Turkey’s impact on the campaign strategies during the 2005 CT referendum process, the effects of Armenian question towards Turkey-EU membership and the “Union for the Mediterranean” initiative will also be described narratively.

3.1. Turkey's EU Membership: A Challenging Political Issue in French Political Discourse

France, since the Post-World War II era, has associated herself with the European Project as being the “driving force” and the leader of the European project and idea. However, today France has strong doubts about her dominance over the project. Since the late 1960's, Europe was faced with successful enlargement attempts, strengthened supranational institutions, and a salient economic domination of Germany after the unification. In other words, France is “no longer “*la reine des nations*” [*the queen of the nations*]”.²⁶⁵ These developments undoubtedly gave rise to a new Europe and disturbed France without any doubt. For France who aimed to regenerate her dominant position amid other EU countries, Turkey's EU membership process has become an important political issue and the Turkish issue began to play a noticeable role in the political discussions and attitudes of PS and UMP toward Turkey's possible EU membership.

In December 1999, Turkey was officially recognized as an EU candidate and in December 2002 the European Council declared that if Turkey by the end of the 2004 accomplished the political Copenhagen Criteria, the negotiations would begin without any delay. Hence, considering the goal of acquiring the EU membership, the Turkish government put into action many political reforms which have strengthened democratization, human rights covering the minority rights and also promoted “the civilian control of the military”.²⁶⁶ In October 2005, the accession negotiations have

²⁶⁵ Beyza Çagatay Tekin, “The construction of Turkey's possible EU membership in French political discourse”, *Discourse & Society*, (2008); Vol. 19, Issue 6. Available from <http://das.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/19/6/727>. Accessed on 10 January, 2009, 729.

²⁶⁶ Kirsty Hughes, “Turkey and the European Union: Just Another Enlargement?: Exploring the Implications of Turkish Accession,” A Friends of Europe working paper,

started and since then one chapter was provisionally closed which was the chapter on Science and Research in June 2006. Moreover, EU opened negotiations on Enterprise and Industry in March 2007, Financial Control and Statistics in June 2007, Trans-European Networks and Consumer and health protection in December 2007 and also Intellectual property and Company Law in June 2008. In addition, the European Council approved a revised Accession Partnership with Turkey on 18 February 2008.²⁶⁷ Although, Turkey's accession process into EU advances slowly, it preserves continuity.

During the December 1999 European Council Helsinki Summit, when the European leaders decided to take into consideration Turkey's EU candidacy, the issue did not have a significant place in the French national parliament or the public debates in the French political context and President Jacques Chirac decided alone on the issue without consulting with his party.²⁶⁸ This personal move of French President was later criticized by the different parties, especially by the UMP.

The political debates in France revived at the end of 2002 with the former French President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing's explanations. In an interview in *Le Monde* on 8 November 2002, he declared that "Turkey is close to Europe, an important country, which has a true elite but she is not a European country" and he added that "her capital is not in Europe, her 95 per cent of population does not live in Europe, and she is not a European country".²⁶⁹

(June 2004). Available from http://www.cdu.de/en/doc/Friends_of_Europe_Turkey.pdf. Accessed on 20 January, 2009, i.

²⁶⁷ The European Commission Website, "EU-Turkey Relations 'European Commission: Enlargement'," The European Commission Website. Available from http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/eu_turkey_relations_en.htm. Accessed on 28 January, 2009.

²⁶⁸ Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, "Marcus Aurelius' Foot: Looking for Turkey's Project in the EU. An Interpretation of the French Debate on Turkey," in *Talking Turkey in Europe: Towards a Differentiated Communication Strategy*, ed. Nathalie Tocci, IAI-TEPAV Project, No. 13, (December 2008). Available from http://www.iai.it/pdf/Quaderni/Quaderni_E_13.pdf. Accessed on 18 January, 2009, 121.

²⁶⁹ Arnaud Leparmentier and Laurent Zecchini, "Pour ou contre l'adhésion de la Turquie à l'Union européenne (For or against Turkey's accession to European Union), » *Le Monde*, (08.11.2002). Available from

In France, besides the former President D'Estaing's explanations, the negative attitudes of the French citizens over Turkey's EU membership have increased just after Sarkozy's election as the leader of the governing UMP. Nicolas Sarkozy, during his leadership of the UMP and his candidacy for the Presidential elections, has consistently declared his opposition towards Turkey's EU membership and positioned himself as the major opponent of the issue. President Chirac who was also not very enthusiastic over Turkey's membership declared that the possibility of a "third way" which meant a special partnership for Turkey could be taken into consideration and suggested a national referendum for Turkey few weeks before the December 2004 European Council Summit. However, besides several adverse effects and the lack of enthusiasm on the part of some EU countries and the majority of the EU public regarding Turkey's EU membership, the 16-17 December European Council Summit was a significant step for Turkey. Hence, in the Summit while presenting some conditions, it was declared that negotiations with Turkey could be opened on 3 October 2005.²⁷⁰

While supporting the accession of Romania and Bulgaria into EU, Nicolas Sarkozy, the French Interior Minister and also the leader of UMP at that time, stood against the accession of Turkey not because of its religious identity but in terms of its geographical position. In other words, he argued that Turkey could not become a member of EU not because of its Muslim population but because it was mostly located in Asia Minor, except the little part situated in Thrace.²⁷¹ Moreover, in an interview on

http://www.lemonde.fr/web/imprimer_element/0,40-0@2-3210,50-297386,0.html.
Accessed on 23 January, 2009.

²⁷⁰ Nuria Font, "Why the European Union Gave Turkey the Green Light," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol:14, No: 2, (2006). Available from http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/903082_758064766_758327478.pdf. Accessed on 25 January, 2009, 210.

²⁷¹ Nicolas Demorand, "Nicolas Sarkozy sur France - Inter (Nicolas Sarkozy on France - Inter)," (20 September 2006). Available from UMP Official Web Page http://www.ump.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/interviews/nicolas_sarkozy_sur_france_inter__1. Accessed on 24 January, 2009.

16 July 2006 Nicolas Sarkozy insisted on a Europe without Turkey. He declared that “Turkey, as part of Asia Minor, does not have a place in Europe”.²⁷²

3.2. The Impact of the “Turkish Issue” on the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe Referendum in France

President Jacques Chirac’s declaration according to which the national referendum would be the condition for the ratification of the CT paved the way for a period of fierce debates. The political parties tried to adopt the best strategy for them without losing any electorates. The governing party UMP supported the ratification of the Treaty and positioned itself for a ‘yes’ campaign and was not faced with a significant division within the party members. However, the French Socialist Party (PS) was confronted with conflicts during the referendum campaign process. After having an internal referendum, the party asserted itself to support the ‘yes’ position. But, the turmoil among the socialists was far from coming to an end. Besides, the official ‘yes’ position announced by the PS leader François Hollande, certain key figures of the party such as Laurent Fabius advocated the ‘no’ and forged an opposition campaign for the ratification of the Treaty which brought a dual campaign in one and the same party.

During the referendum campaigns, these two leading rival parties that were situating themselves on the opposite sides of the left-right political axis tried to influence the French electorates and composed strategies of their own to strengthen their respective positions. In that respect, Turkey found herself on the center of the debates. As the majority of the French electorate was doubtful about Turkey, the mainstream political parties -the PS and the UMP- tried to explain that to say ‘yes’ to

²⁷²Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, “Nicolas Sarkozy sur Europe 1 (Nicolas Sarkozy on Europe 1),” (16 July 2006). Available from UMP Official Web Page http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/interviews/nicolas_sarkozy_sur_europe_1__1. Accessed on 26 January 2009.

the Treaty did not mean to support Turkey's accession into EU and tried not to relate the Turkish issue with the CT.

François Hollande, the leader of the PS and the defender of the 'yes' vote for the ratification of the CT, in a press conference held on 14 February 2005 criticized those who associated the CT with Turkey's EU accession and indicated that PS's official 'yes' campaign was clear and did not allow for any confusions. In that respect, for François Hollande, the sole subject of the referendum was the Treaty and without any doubt Turkey or another candidate country should not have been associated with it.²⁷³ With this explanation, François Hollande devised a clever policy to comfort his electorates opposing to Turkey's EU membership and also aimed to get their support for the referendum.

Just one week before the internal referendum of the PS, the leader of the 'no' camp within the party, Laurent Fabius, was interviewed by the daily French newspaper Liberation. In this interview, Laurent Fabius explained why in principle it was necessary for him to say 'no' to the referendum by criticizing and interpreting various debatable articles of CT regarding the objectives of the Union.²⁷⁴ In his explanation, Laurent Fabius indicated that the Turkish issue was among the reasons for a 'no'. At this point he criticized the proposed CT articles such as Article I-25.

Article I-25 regarding the qualified majority in the European Council and the Council is:

Article I-25: *(ex Article 205(2) TEC)*

A qualified majority shall be defined as at least 55% of the members of the Council, comprising at least fifteen of them and representing

Member States comprising at least 65% of the population of the Union. (...). By way of derogation from paragraph 1, when the Council does not act on a proposal from the Commission or from the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, the

²⁷³ "Conférence de presse de François Hollande".

²⁷⁴ Laurent Fabius website.

qualified majority shall be defined as at least 72% of the members of the Council, representing Member States comprising at least 65% of the population of the Union. (...)²⁷⁵

His evaluation and criticism of article I-25 was as follows:

The influence of a state over the Council will depend more directly than before on its demographic weight. This rule simplifies situations and it will not be necessary to review it for each enlargement, but it is necessary to keep in mind that “if Turkey becomes member of the Union, it will be the most influential country in the Council.”²⁷⁶ Like many politicians in France, Laurent Fabius, by referring to the demographic structure of Turkey, implicated that with Turkey’s EU membership France’s power share and privileged position in EU institutions would be seriously damaged.

However, the Eurobarometer “the European Constitution: Post-Referendum France” survey demonstrated that the efforts of both the PS and the UMP leaders that advocated ‘yes’ to the CT succeeded in keeping the CT away from Turkey’s EU membership issue. Only 6 per cent of the French electorates who voted for a ‘no’ indicated that they did not want Turkey in the European Union as the main reason.²⁷⁷

France’s opposition to Turkey’s EU membership was also strengthened by the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (CT) referendum results of 29 May 2005. The CT which aimed to reform the EU institutions and asserted to shape the future of the European Integration was rejected by the French people. Jean-Pierre Raffarin government’s resignation and the creation of Dominique de Villepin government was the first action led by President Chirac. As Turkey was used as a reason to explain the “no” vote during the CT referendum campaigns by the opponents, President Chirac and

²⁷⁵ The EU Constitution.

²⁷⁶ Laurent Fabius website.

²⁷⁷ Flash Eurobarometer 171, 17.

the newly elected Dominique de Villepin tried to appease the French public opinion that they were not actually in favor of Turkey's EU membership.²⁷⁸

During a debate in the National Assembly before the session in which the European Council would discuss the opening and the conditions of the negotiations of Turkey's accession into EU, Jean-Pierre Raffarin, as the spokesperson of UMP, declared that "neither Europe nor Turkey are ready for the accession" (*Ni l'Europe ni la Turquie ne sont prêtes à l'adhésion*). According to Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Turkey's integration contained risks for Europe in demographic and cultural terms. He spoke of the risk of demographic imbalance and also of integration problems due to the difference between two cultures; in his words "two worlds" were separate from each other. However, in the same speech Jean-Pierre Raffarin also highlighted the advantages of Turkey's accession to EU. He argued that a stable, modern and democratic Turkey would be beneficial to France as well as to Europe and that it would be a reference point for its neighbor countries. Despite the fact that he recognized Turkey's improvement, he expressed that time was needed and that the process of decision and dialogue would be long.²⁷⁹ By this way Jean-Pierre Raffarin who was one of the accused during the referendum on CT spelled out a softer 'no' by not directly contradicting Turkey, but politely stating that the two sides were not yet ready for Turkey's EU membership.

President Chirac, considering the French citizens' fears towards the future EU enlargement waves, put a new clause in Article 88(5) of the French Constitution to provide for an automatic referendum for the candidate countries beginning with the year of 2007. That was a significant initiative because while excluding the referendum for Bulgaria, Romania or Croatia, the clause made sure to stipulate Turkey's membership to a national referendum. Hence President Chirac aimed to disassociate Turkey's EU

²⁷⁸ Heinz Kramer, "Turkey's EU Accession Negotiations at the Mercy of Conflicting Interests," *SWP Comments*, 43 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2005), 4.

²⁷⁹ Jean-Pierre Raffarin, « Debate in National Assembly on Turkey's European Union candidacy (Débat à l'Assemblée nationale sur la candidature de la Turquie à l'Union européenne), » (14 October 2004). Available from UMP Official Web Page http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/discours/debat_a_l_assemblee_nationale_sur_la_candidature_de_la_turquie_a_l_union_europeenne_jeudi_14_octobre_2004. Accessed on 25 January, 2009.

accession issue from the CT referendum debates and tried to win the French electorate who opposed to the CT on the pretext that the Treaty would facilitate Turkey's EU membership.²⁸⁰

Due to the demographical reasons, Turkey's EU membership could change member states' power shares in the EU institutions. By 2020, together with Germany, Turkey would be one of the most populated countries in Europe. Hence, large countries such as France would share their power with Turkey which would damage their privileged positions and decrease their power shares.²⁸¹ Besides other reasons, because of the demographical concerns, the French politicians have got doubts over Turkey's EU membership.

Turkey's population is predicted to be 82.4 million in 2015; 87 million in 2025; and 97 million in 2050. This population is not convergeable with its economic power. Europe's demographically larger countries are Germany, France, Italy and the U.K. But, they also administer the largest European economies. However, in the Turkish case, the situation is not the same.²⁸² For that reason, it could be assumed that Turkey could change the dynamics in the European Parliament due to its size, could exploit Union's economic capability and could harm the Union citizens' standard of living. This controversial demographic and economic situation of Turkey is used by various French politicians like the PS deputy Jean-Michel Boucheron in the parliaments.

In his speech, Jean-Michel Boucheron, the PS deputy of Ille-et-Vilaine, focused on the arguments of the opponents of Turkey's accession to EU. He argued that neither the geographic nor the political criteria could be used as factors preventing Turkey's accession to EU by underlining that the number of Turks in Europe is greater than that of Greeks and that Turkey has been a secular country for more than eighty years. According to Boucheron, the religious issue could not either be accepted because this perspective would harm the integration discourse directed to the Muslims in France. To accept these arguments would be a humiliating rejection, in other words it would mean

²⁸⁰ Wolff and Mounier, 390.

²⁸¹ Font, 200.

²⁸² Hughes, i, 8.

“You are not a part of us” (*Vous n’êtes pas des nôtres*). Instead, the integration of a country like Turkey with its 80 million habitants as well as its current institutions and budgets should be questioned. He considered these factors to be the only reason behind the impossibility of Turkey’s accession. However, he further stated that Turkey needed Europe as well as Europe needed Turkey. For that reason, the rapprochement with Turkey could not be suspended forever. In twenty years it will be vital to constitute a third pole that includes Europe, Mediterranean region and the Middle-East as a block against the almost homogeneous American bloc and the dominant Chinese bloc. In this third pole Turkey is given the key role.²⁸³ With this explanation Jean-Michel Boucheron emphasized the strategic importance of Turkey within and/or outside EU even if there are other factors on the contrary. Shortly, it would rather be very difficult and a big mistake to ignore Turkey.

The French political parties which oppose Turkey’s membership into EU avoid to give references to Turkey’s being an Islamic country, because that sort of a Christian-club rhetoric and an anti-Islamic discourse could damage the integration process of the Muslims within France, especially the North African Muslim immigrants. That is why the emphasis was made on economic, demographic, geographic and political reasons for the rejection of Turkey’s EU membership. For instance, an UMP deputy Dominique Paillé, in his speech at the National Assembly on 14 October 2004 emphasized the specific and distinct civilization of Turkey without humiliating her and that for that reason Turkey should not be an EU member.²⁸⁴

In the same session François Baroin, the general secretariat delegate of UMP, argued in a debate on Turkey’s candidature to EU in the National Assembly that Turkey’s position differed from that of Poland, Slovakia as well as the other ten countries. There had been a number of issues such as the situation of the Union once Turkey with its population that would approach 100 million in ten or fifteen years would be integrated and would have the largest number of deputy seats in the European

²⁸³ Boucheron Jean-Michel. « Débat Parlementaire Sur Les Négociations D’adhésion De La Turquie Dans L’U.E (The Parliamentary Debate for the Accession Negotiations of Turkey into EU), » (14 October 2004). Available from <http://www.deputes-socialistes.fr/article.php?id=308>. Accessed on 17 January, 2009.

²⁸⁴ Tekin, 755.

Parliament or the adaptation of the Union to the Turkish Islam. Besides these questions, the political as well as geographical limits (borders) of Europe were questioned too. The probable cost of Turkey's integration on EU budget was another concern. In this context, UMP proposed a privileged partnership rather than a complete and full membership. "No to Turkey as a member State; yes to a partnership reinforced" (*Non à la Turquie comme Etat membre ; oui à un partenariat renforcé*).²⁸⁵ Thus, a privileged partnership formulation is proposed for Turkey without directly offending her.

Although most of the French politicians disagreed on Turkey's EU membership, there were some politicians who expressed positive arguments over Turkey's EU membership. Michel Rocard, an effective member of the Socialist Party and a member of the Ahtisaari Commission, advocated Turkey's membership. Michel Rocard in his book titled *Oui à la Turquie* (Yes to Turkey), gave a detailed account of Turkey's reform initiatives and steps and the gains of EU when and if Turkey became a member.²⁸⁶ However, this approach of Michel Rocard did not have a significant place in the French political discourse.

In addition to those who argued that Turkey's accession should be left to time, there were others within the PS ranks who, while recognizing the inadequacy of Turkey's economic and democratic conditions, pointed out to the failure of the method applied for the successive enlargements. In that respect, Valls Manuel - deputy of Essonne – declared that Turkey should not be perceived as the sole scapegoat and that European leaders were also incapable of determining a clear vision and developing a

²⁸⁵ François Baroin, « Debate in National Assembly on Turkey's European Union candidacy (Débat à l'Assemblée nationale sur la candidature de la Turquie à l'Union européenne), » (14 October 2004). Available from UMP Official Web Page http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/discours/debat_a_l_assemblee_nationale_sur_la_candidature_de_la_turquie_a_l_union_europeenne_jeudi_14_octobre_2004__2. Accessed on 23 January, 2009.

²⁸⁶ Le Gloannec, 124; Le Gloannec, "Conditionality, Impact and Prejudice in EU-Turkey Relations: A View from France", in *Conditionality, Impact and Prejudice in EU-Turkey Relations*, ed. Nathalie Tocci, IAI-TEPAV Project, Available from http://www.iai.it/pdf/Quaderni/Quaderni_E_09.pdf. Accessed on 25 January, 2009, 79.

coherent project concerning the future of the Union.²⁸⁷ From this perspective, it can be said that the lack of a clear vision concerning the enlargement issue was viewed by certain PS deputies as an obstacle for Turkey's accession to the EU.

3.3. Nicolas Sarkozy in Élysee Palace

The 2007 French Presidential Elections were considered as an important step both at the national level as well as at the European level. In the second round of the elections, on 6 May 2007, a classical left-right contest had been revealed out between the socialist presidential candidate Ségolène Royal and the Gaullist centre-right candidate Nicolas Sarkozy.²⁸⁸ Although attitudes of these two candidates towards Turkey seemed to be different from each other in the first instance, there was not a significant difference between them. Nicolas Sarkozy's position was quite clear since he directly opposed Turkey's EU membership. However, Ségolène Royal on the other hand, like the most PS deputies, while not ignoring Turkey's membership, was not unconditionally supportive of it at all. By leaving Turkey's EU membership to time her attitude was approaching to Nicolas Sarkozy's.

²⁸⁷Manuel Valls, "Débat Parlementaire : Discours sur les négociations d'adhésion de la Turquie dans l' U.E (The Parliamentary Debate : Speech on the Accession Negotiations of Turkey into EU),"(14 October 2004), Available from <http://www.deputes-socialistes.fr/article.php?cat=EUROPE&id=73&idd=30&cat=EUROPE>, Accessed on 22 February 2009.

²⁸⁸ Emmanuelle Laloum and Stine Rasmussen, "Shaping French Foreign Policy for the Next 5 Years: Ségolène Royal vs. Nicolas Sarkozy," Policy Paper, Institute of International Relations, (May 2007). Available from se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=10&fileid=923EF97F-D3CB-DD9E-D542-B57EF3F9389F&lng=en. Accessed on 16 January, 2009, 1.

With regard to Turkey's EU membership, none of the actors wanted to take the responsibility of not having consulted the French citizens. Ségolène Royal, during her campaign in 2007 did not express a different view on the matter either.²⁸⁹ Thus, all throughout the election period, by emphasizing her need to consult to the public, she avoided taking the risk of losing the electorate opposing to Turkey's EU membership.

Nicolas Sarkozy, after being elected as President, has softened his tone and position over Turkey's accession process, never thought of concealing his opinion that Turkey was not a European country. Although his predecessor Jacques Chirac was seen as a French President who was temperate in Turkey's EU membership, in actuality there were not concrete differences between these two Presidents. President Chirac's policies were full of ambiguity, he advocated Turkey's EU membership and declared it many times; however, at the same time, he defined the need for a national referendum for all enlargement waves after Croatia's entry.²⁹⁰

Patrick Devedjian, a political adviser and former minister, criticized those in French left who considered Nicolas Sarkozy as "*petit Bush français*" (little French Bush) or "*caniche de Bush*" (kanesh of Bush) in an interview by underlining that Nicolas Sarkozy was the only one who had said to Mr. Bush that Turkey is none of his business and that it was up to the Europeans.²⁹¹ Patrick Devedjian used the Turkish example in order to refute the French left position that Nicolas Sarkozy was closely affiliated with Georges Bush and his government's policies. Thus, Turkey was present in the French political agenda not only with its future EU membership possibility, but also as a means in the political discussions between the left and right in French politics.

²⁸⁹ Le Gloannec, "Marcus Aurelius", 123.

²⁹⁰ Le Gloannec, "Sarkozy's Foreign Policy", 19.

²⁹¹ UMP Official Website, "Nicolas Sarkozy, le seul à avoir dit à Georges Bush que la Turquie, c'est l'affaire des Européens (Nicholas Sarkozy, the only one who said to Georges Bush that Turkey is a European Affair)," (20 September 2006).. Available from UMP Official Web Page http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/ump/s_informer/interviews/nicolas_sarkozy_le_seul_a_avoir_dit_a_georges_bush_que_la_turquie_c_est_l_affaire_des_europeens. Accessed on 25 January, 2009.

After becoming the President, Nicolas Sarkozy continued to be against Turkey's accession to EU. He defended his argument by saying that EU was also a geographical concept and that Turkey did not have a place in it. Besides ruling out Turkey's EU membership, he offered Turkey to accept the "privileged partnership" approach with Europe which was first used by Valéry Giscard D'Estaing - the former French President and the European Convention President during the preparation of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.²⁹²

3.4. The Socialist *Protégé* over the Armenian Question

The French National Assembly has accepted a new bill proposed by a small group within the PS ranks, on 12 October 2006, where the denial of the Armenian genocide is defined as a crime. This was a complementary law of the French Law of 29 January 2001 that recognized the Armenian genocide. For the political groups opposing to CT, the future membership of Turkey to EU was a golden opportunity to be exploited and the issue of Armenian genocide was put forward as an argument to clarify their 'no' attitude towards CT. Even Nicolas Sarkozy, who declared many times that Turkey's EU membership should not be related to the CT, stated that Turkey's recognition of the Armenian genocide was a must for its EU membership.²⁹³ More than Nicolas Sarkozy's

²⁹² Euroactiv, «EU-Turkey relations: EU - European Information on Enlargement & Neighbours,” (8 July 2008). Available from <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations/article-129678>. Accessed on 20 January, 2009, 4.

²⁹³ Dilaver Arkan Açar and İnan Rüma, “External Pressure and Turkish Discourse on 'Recognition of the Armenian Genocide’,” Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, Vol. 7, No.3 (2007). Available from http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/553080_758064766_781851481.pdf. Accessed on 18 January, 2009, 451 – 452.

UMP, it was the PS which had the most pressure on Turkey regarding the Armenian issue.

Le Roux Bruno, a member of the Law Commission in the French National Assembly and a member of the PS, declared, “the Armenian genocide is a[n] [established] fact. What we are missing is that the judicial instruments permit negation of its condemnation tomorrow. The Armenian genocide is not a debate: it is a tragedy that left its mark on a people that can not be denied by anybody.”²⁹⁴

For PS, the UMP support was significant for the Armenian issue which directly affected relations with Turkey. Jean-Marc Ayrault, the group leader of the French Socialist Party in the National Assembly, invited the UMP deputies to vote the bill proposed by the PS which forbade the negation of the Armenian genocide. Jean-Marc Ayrault asked how the UMP deputies would act especially after the statements of Jacques Chirac in Armenia. In the speech he gave in Armenia, Jacques Chirac had declared that the recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey should be a precondition for her accession to EU. Interesting enough, Nicolas Sarkozy had the same opinion and attitude.²⁹⁵ Ayrault also added that he would stay engaged to this debate on behalf of the socialist group.²⁹⁶ These remarks indicate that the Armenian issue was at the center of the PS attitudes towards Turkey.

The Armenian French electorate had developed a two-fold relationship with the political parties. On the one hand, they had established close relationship with the

²⁹⁴ Le Roux Bruno, “Reconnaissance du génocide arménien de 1915 : Explication de Vote 12 Octobre 2006 (Recognition of the Armenian genocide 1915 : Explanation of the 12 October 2006 Vote),” Available from French Socialist Deputies Website <http://www.deputes-socialistes.fr/article.php?cat=QUESTION%20DE%20SOCIETE&id=499&idd=70&cat=QUESTION%20DE%20SOCIETE>. Accessed on 21 January, 2009.

²⁹⁵ Açar and Rūma, 451 - 452.

²⁹⁶ Jean-Marc Ayrault, « Reconnaissance du génocide arménien de 1915 : On Verra Ce Que Feront Les Députés UMP (Recognition of the Armenian genocide 1915 : We will see what the UMP deputies will do),” (03/10/06). Available from French Socialist Deputies Website <http://www.deputes-socialistes.fr/article.php?cat=QUESTION%20DE%20SOCIETE&id=422&idd=70&cat=QUESTION%20DE%20SOCIETE>. Accessed on 21 January, 2009.

Dashnak Party - Armenian Revolutionary Federation – and with the left-wing parties such as the Communist Party and the PS, and on the other hand even if their numbers were not much they have formed well-organized vocal communities in small election regions around Paris, Lyon or Marseille.²⁹⁷ The continual close relationship between PS and the Armenian Dashnak Party affected PS's approach to Turkey regarding Turkey's EU membership. Moreover, the bill that forbade the denial of Armenian genocide submitted by a small group within PS was used by the different opponents of Turkey's membership to EU both in the left and the right political spectrum.

3.5. The Approach of the PS and the UMP to an alternative: “Union for the Mediterranean”

Since the end of the Cold War, there were many initiatives for the Mediterranean; however none of them came closer to the expected objectives as the “Union for the Mediterranean” Project. In order to bring stability and peace to the Mediterranean region, the European Community and later on the European Union came with several initiatives. The ‘1972 Global Mediterranean Policy’, the ‘1990 Renovated Mediterranean Policy’, the ‘Euro-Mediterranean Partnership’ “within the framework of the Barcelona Process in 1995” and the ‘2003 New European Neighborhood Policy’ were the main projects prior to this one.²⁹⁸

The European Council's decision during the 13-14 March 2008 meetings which approved the principle of a Mediterranean Union could be seen as a turning point for the

²⁹⁷ Le Gloannec, “Marcus Aurelius”, 125.

²⁹⁸ Roberto Aliboni, et al., “Putting the Mediterranean Union in Perspective,” EuroMesco Paper, No. 68, (June 2008). Available from <http://www.euromesco.net/images/paper68eng.pdf>. Accessed on 22 January, 2009, 4.

European politics.²⁹⁹ The “Union for the Mediterranean” Project was a model for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which was actuated in Barcelona in 1995 and barely restored by the 2003 European Neighborhood Policy.³⁰⁰ The Project was first spelled out by Nicolas Sarkozy in February 2007 during his candidacy campaign for the French Presidency. Just after his election as the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy declared that France had come back to Europe, but it could be understood that his foreign policy objectives were wider than the borders of the European Union, spreading throughout the Mediterranean.

Although there were serious objections, during the French Presidential term and with the initiative of Nicolas Sarkozy, 43 Heads of States and governments with 12 International Organizations held a summit for the Mediterranean issue in Paris on 13 July 2008.³⁰¹ The summit ended with a joint declaration. The preface of the declaration underlined the need for “peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity” in the Mediterranean³⁰² and gave references to the Barcelona process stating certain objectives like “the building of peace, democracy, the non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the promotion of human rights and the establishment of a Free Trade Area in the Mediterranean”.³⁰³ In addition, the draft declaration brought new impulses to the Barcelona Process “by upgrading the political level of the EU's relationship with its Mediterranean partners; by providing for further co-ownership to [Europe's]our

²⁹⁹ Richard Gillespie, “A ‘Union for the Mediterranean’ . . . or for the EU?,” *Mediterranean Politics*, July 2008, Vol. 13, No. 2, Available from http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/198807_731199036_794318151.pdf. Accessed on 22 January, 2009, 277 – 278.

³⁰⁰ Le Gloannec, “Sarkozy's Foreign Policy”, 20.

³⁰¹ Mahjoob Zweiri and Nicola Pantaleo, “Will the Union for the Mediterranean Learn from the Barcelona Process?,” Research Paper No. 124, (September 2008), Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS). Available from http://www.euromesco.net/images/promo_10_09.pdf. Accessed on 26 January, 2009, 8.

³⁰² French Presidency Official Website, “Draft Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean,” (13 July 2008). Available from French Presidency Official Website http://www.elysee.fr/documents/index.php?mode=cvview&cat_id=7&press_id=1597&lang=fr. Accessed on: 26 January, 2009, 9.

³⁰³ Zweiri and Pantaleo, 8.

multilateral relations; and by making these relations more concrete and visible through additional regional and sub regional projects, relevant for the citizens of the region.”³⁰⁴

However, the French Socialist Party had certain reservations regarding this meeting. François Hollande, the leader of the main French opposition party, and the Socialists criticized the timing of the summit and declared that the presence of dictators such as the Syrian president Bashar el-Assad was inappropriate on the 14th of July, a day when the human rights were celebrated in France. Besides, it was a humiliating scene for the French military to witness that its soldiers had to parade before Bashar el-Assad.³⁰⁵ In that respect the socialists criticized the timing of the meeting without opposing its intent and the content.

President Sarkozy’s project of a Mediterranean Union to which he attached so much importance could be seen as an initiative to keep Turkey out of the EU and besides to provide practical solutions for the questions such as migration, terrorism, energy security, trade and investments.³⁰⁶ From this move of Nicolas Sarkozy regarding EU’s enlargement process and the formation of a “Union for the Mediterranean” it became more and more evident that enlargement was used as a foreign policy tool by EU and that Turkey, together with the Mediterranean countries, would have a pivotal role in this policy. What was also very specific about Turkey was that it was a country in-between the core EU countries and the civilizations in the periphery of Europe. By this project EU would be able to position Turkey as a cushion for the development of a future European project within the context of CT as well as offering her a privileged partnership. By this way Turkey would play the role of a catalyst between Europe and its periphery.

³⁰⁴ French Presidency Official Website, “Draft Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean,” 15.

³⁰⁵ Steven Erlanger and Katrin Bennhold, “Bold Mediterranean summit opens diplomatic doors”. *International Herald Tribune*, (13 July, 2008). Available from <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/07/13/europe/summit.php>, Accessed on 27 January, 2009.

³⁰⁶ Le Gloannec, “Sarkozy's Foreign Policy”, 20.

The centre-left and the centre-right parties as well as their political leaders are preoccupied with Turkey's accession to the EU. The UMP's response to the issue derives from its Gaullist republican tradition and in that perspective; its negative approach towards Turkey accession to the EU could be perceived as part of its distant position toward EU enlargement. However, the decline in the UMP's Eurosceptic discourse and the new role that it took as the initiator of the EU integration as well as its support toward Croatia's accession drives us to question the negative attitude towards Turkey. As for the PS, it did not show a high level of support towards Turkey's accession, contrary to what was expected from it as a socialist party. Emphasizing the need to leave it to time, the PS's discourse concerning the issue was highly unenthusiastic. These developments demonstrate that these centre parties both on the left and on the right adopts the negative perception of French electorates over Turkey's EU membership. In other words, power seeking centre parties in order to avoid the possible conflicts with their electorates act pragmatically and take a distant position towards Turkey's accession to the EU.

Conclusion

The long-prevailing left-right dichotomy determining the political agenda is increasingly becoming blurry and questionable today. In that respect, contrary to those who argue that the existence of the traditional left-right dichotomy became blurry and inadequate to explain the recent political reality without solving the new problems such as the environmental concerns, others advocated that the biggest dichotomy of the political sphere which began with a simple topographical matter in France on 28 August 1789 still affects the world politics and maintains its significance. In this context, I assume that the content and the intent of the dichotomy have changed considerably. For that reason, I agree with the right-wing French philosopher Alain de Benoist who argued that the left and the right have both learned how to live with the other. The right began to touch more upon the social issues and the social harmony, and the left learned how to collaborate with capitalism and the free market economy. They both benefit from this collaborative process and come closer to the “center”. It means that the *modus vivendi* which forges the reconciliation between the two opposite political attitudes is expressive for today’s political discourses of the parties. That kind of reconciliation could well be observed as a sign of pragmatism. The political elites on the left and the right are no longer blindly dependent on their respective ideologies as the determinant factors of their survival.

France, where both this left-right dichotomy historically emerged and continues to prevail in various forms makes her more attractive for such a research. Besides France's internal dynamics, the international developments led to the transformations of the French political tradition regarding the blurring of the left-right dichotomy. In other words, the economic and political changes facing the world, especially the European Integration process, had an impact on the changes in the Gaullist republican values of the mainstream right and the class-based politics of the mainstream left. Today, due to the increasing impact of the major determinants such as the market forces, global competition and economic rationalization, the idea of a centralized state and the state-led approach was given up in France, even by the Socialists. In that respect, in order to enhance the French competitiveness, the European and international norms took the place of monist and the statist policies. Thus, it became more and more difficult for the classical ideological stances to find a place for themselves in the contemporary political arena. Hence, the changes in the world order considering the neo-liberal approach mostly affected the mainstream political parties to change their classical discourses.

In France, both the PS and the UMP abandoned the dirigisme on economy and adopted the free market economy principles in order to accommodate themselves to the new world order. The disappearing of the ever important clerical-anticlerical split and the related controversies between the left and the right, the ending of the worker-capitalist and class-oriented political confrontation between the left and the right parties with the rise of the middle class and integration of the working class with the capitalist system in France, the left-right dichotomy began to lose ground.

Within the French context, the PS's and the UMP's discourses are very noticeable for the sake of analysis since, being the cornerstones of the French political spectrum; they determine and direct the French political agenda. Their analysis gives conclusive evidence regarding the left-right dichotomy debate within the French context.

Furthermore, in order to limit the scope of the study, I preferred to examine the ratification process of the CT and the "Turkish case" as two significant indicators of the selected parties' approaches towards EU integration and Turkey's EU accession at the national and the European level politics.

The CT process was indicative of emergence of pragmatism within the French political spectrum which could be seen as the modification of the left-right dichotomy where these parties supported the ratification of the CT as a party policy. However, it should be observed that although the CT was the single issue consulted by the referendum, the domestic concerns such as the leadership struggles within these parties, the unexpected attitudes of the key party members, the referendum results revealing out key political issues, disputes, debates, and profiteering policy making marked the French political agenda. In this context, the referendum process was full of pragmatism which should not be evaluated solely from the perspective of classical party ideologies.

The PS' division on the ratification process which was not the case in any of the mainstream European Socialist Parties needed explanation. Some advocates of the 'no' to the ratification of the CT within the party such as Henri Emmanuelli and Jean-Luc Mélenchon were carrying out their campaigns by emphasizing the "sovereignty" concerns which was generally defended by the right-wing parties. By underlining the "grandeur of French state", France's preferences and the supremacy of the French law over the European law they adopted a nationalistic discourse over the CT. However, Laurent Fabius' 'no' campaign was the most important one with deep pragmatic overtones. Laurent Fabius' campaign for a 'no' to the CT was mainly based on a policy to take over the party leadership which was beyond the realm of ideological differences.

On the mainstream right, the governing UMP, under the leadership of Nicolas Sarkozy, supported the ratification of the CT. It is highly probable that the 'yes' campaign initiated by UMP-based President Chirac triggered UMP to vote 'yes' as well. Only a minority group within the UMP opposed to the CT. The defenders of the 'no' campaign such as Nicolas Dupont- Aignan and Pierre Messmer formed different sovereignist factions by asserting the republican, social, national and the Gaullist ideals but still the support given by the party members to these initiatives remained low.

Despite the fact that President Chirac was unpopular among the French citizens, and the support for Jean-Pierre Raffarin government was very low, contrary to the Socialist Party electorates, the UMP electorates showed a high level of loyalty to their party decision and adopted the 'yes' position with a great majority. These developments give us a clue about the division between the government and the opposition. I assume that the PS electorates under the name of PS opposition have punished the UMP

government and President Chirac even if their party as a policy supported the CT. On the other hand, in the UMP, due to the advantage of holding the power, the electorates positioned themselves in favor of a ‘yes’ to the CT with a majority of 80 per cent. Meaning that, if the PS was in the place of UMP it would likewise face a very similar situation and vice versa. In short, the CT has never been solely perceived as a future-oriented EU integration project in France. Through the CT, inter- and intra-party conflicts regarding the key domestic issues in French politics came to fore.

The essential point towards the “Turkish issue” during the CT referendum campaigns was that both PS and UMP tried to not associate the CT with Turkey’s accession to EU. In that respect, leaders of these parties announced that the only issue which was consulted by the referendum was the CT itself and Turkey’s accession to the EU had no relation at all with the content or intent of the CT. Even President Chirac put a new clause in Article 88 (5) of the French Constitution which opened the avenue for an automatic referendum for the candidate countries beginning with the year 2007.³⁰⁷ Thus, both sides of the French mainstream political spectrum acknowledged French citizens’ fears from the future enlargement waves and especially towards Turkey and acted accordingly.

Considering Turkey’s EU accession, the real confusion was within the ranks of the PS. Although the PS deputies and the key party members emphasized that Turkey is a very valuable, great and strategically important country, they suggested that the “Turkish issue” should be left to time. The main factor pushing the PS to act in this direction was the reluctance of the PS electorate. In this context, the risk of adopting a policy against the will of the supports could not be taken since the majority of the French electorate was already against Turkey’s EU membership at the time.

Both the PS and the UMP avoided highlighting the religious identity of Turkey because by referring to Turkey’s religious belonging, the Muslim minority in France would be offended. Instead the demographic, cultural, civilizational and economic criteria and concerns were discussed and addressed. Affiliation and association of the French left with the Armenian Dashnak Party and getting support from the Armenian diaspora had an adverse impact on Turkey’s EU accession process. Besides, President

³⁰⁷ Wolff and Mounier, 390.

Sarkozy's "Union for the Mediterranean" initiative, while placing Turkey as a catalyst between the West and the East, aimed to implicitly exclude Turkey from EU membership by offering a privileged partnership. The attitude towards the 'Turkish issue' on both sides was mainly determined by the daily pragmatic political agenda.

When both the PS and the UMP are analyzed from the perspective of their attitudes towards the CT and the "Turkish issue", it will be observed that they shared a similar tendency and their policies converged to each other. While both had a 'yes' position regarding the CT, they were both reluctant towards Turkey's accession to the EU.

Regarding the "Turkish issue" we do not see any serious internal strife, leadership struggles and big divisions such as the one seen on the left in the case of the attitude toward the CT referendum. If the Turkish issue had been related to the CT referendum, it would have damaged their 'yes' position. Thus, both the PS and the UMP explicitly separated the two issues in order to not come into conflict with their voters in the CT referendum. As the power-seeker mainstream parties in French political arena, being the best-fit candidates for the government, both the PS and the UMP test the waters very well in general. IPSOS polls during the CT referendum process indicate that around 76 per cent of the young French electorate did not favor Turkey's accession to the EU³⁰⁸ which makes it very meaningful on the part of both the PS and the UMP to separate the two issues. Thus, these two leading parties on the left and the right center of the political spectrum set their policies with reference to the real politics rather than ideological party positions.

Finally, both the mainstream left and the right occasionally resorted to the other's discourses while maintaining their positions in the center. The left, while touching more upon the social issues such as social justice and equality, also supported the liberal and capitalist policies. The right, on the other hand, while emphasizing liberalism more, also touched upon the basic social issues. In that respect both the centre-left and the centre-right maintained their political positions without losing their respective electorate power bases. The aim of both parties then becomes to spread their objectives and to reach to

³⁰⁸ IPSOS Polls, "La Banque des Sondages (Data Bank)," Available from IPSOS Polls <http://www.ipsos.fr/CanalIpsos/poll/8341.asp>. Accessed on 20 February, 2009.

the maximum number of electorates possible to come to power. At this point the ideological differences between the centre left and the centre right become blurred.

Hence, the classical left-right dichotomy is giving rise to a new dichotomy between the centre and the periphery. While both in the left and the right spectrum the mainstream parties are coming closer to the center, the parties excluded from the centre are pushed to the extremes where the dichotomy now manifests itself as a confrontation between the centre and the periphery on both the left and the right spectrums.

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