

**SURVIVING TRIBES AS POLITICAL ACTORS:
THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL CLIENTELISM IN ŞANLIURFA**

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**SURVIVING TRIBES AS POLITICAL ACTORS:
THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL CLIENTELISM IN ŞANLIURFA**

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Ahmet Utku AKBIYIK, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
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ABSTRACT

Surviving Tribes as Political Actors:

The Evolution of Political Clientelism in Şanlıurfa

Tribes have been important political actors throughout the history of southeastern Turkey. What are the tools that tribe leaders still utilize to protect their scope of influence within the southeastern region of Turkey? This paper explores this question in the context of voting behavior and investigates the determinants of local tribes' success or failure in protecting their tribal influence and political power in the southeast of Turkey. I operationalized political power in the most direct manner as local tribes' authority over their subjects' political party choices, for tribes can manipulate and control their members' votes to some extent in this region. By controlling the votes of tribe members, some tribe leaders have fortified their positions in the political arena. However, the degree of this fortification was threatened by recently emerging factors, especially due to modernization, within the region. A mixed methodology was used to analyze how tribes could endure to such a threat wherein 400 people were surveyed and 20 were interviewed in-depth in Şanlıurfa. In the survey analysis, education and urbanization were found as telling pivots for the downturn in the perceived political power of local tribes over individuals; whereas economic conditions were not. Through in-depth interviews, I discuss how two political actors, namely the incumbent parties and tribe leaders, reorient their political/social strategies according to the emerging factors.

ÖZET

Siyasi Aktör Olarak Varlığını Sürdüren Aşiretler:

Siyasi Klientalizmin Şanlıurfadaki Gelişimi

Tarih boyunca Türkiye'nin güneydoğusunda aşiretler önemli siyasi aktörler olmuşlardır. Türkiye'nin Güneydoğu bölgesindeki etki alanlarını korumak için aşiret liderleri ne tür araçları hala kullanmaktadırlar? Bu çalışma bu soruyu oy davranışı açısından incelemekte ve yerel aşiretlerin siyasi etki ve güçlerini korumadaki başarı ve başarısızlıklarının altında yatan etmenleri araştırmaktadır. Bu bölgede aşiretler, bir düzeye kadar üyelerinin oylarını kontrol ve manipüle edebildiğinden bu çalışmanın kapsamı çerçevesinde siyasi güç, yerel aşiret otoritesinin, aşiret üyelerinin siyasi parti seçimi üzerindeki otoritesi olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bazı aşiret liderleri, aşiret üyelerinin oylarını kontrol ederek, siyasi alanda kendi pozisyonlarını güçlendirebilmiştir. Ne var ki, özellikle bölgede yaşanan modernleşmeyle birlikte gelişen yeni faktörler sayesinde tehlikeye girmiştir. Bu çalışmada, Şanlıurfa'da yürütülen 400 kişilik bir anket ve 20 kişilik derinlemesine röportaj üzerinden karma yöntem ile aşiretlerin bu tehlikeye karşı nasıl direndiği analiz edilmiştir. Anket analizinde, eğitim ve şehirleşme faktörlerinin aşiretlerin siyasi güçlerini kaybetmesinde önemli etkenler olduğu ortaya koyuldu. Bununla beraber, ekonomik koşulların anlamlı bir etkisine rastlanmadı. Derinlemesine röportajlar üzerinden, bölgedeki iki siyasi aktörün, yani yönetimdeki partilerin ve aşiret liderlerinin, siyasi ve sosyal stratejileri açısından bu yeni gelişmelere nasıl yanıt verdiği tartışıldı.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines how local tribes in Şanlıurfa could survive although some modern political approaches predict complete abolishment of traditional political systems, such as tribes, in face of modernization. This research addresses this issue by analyzing the tools that the local tribes in the southeastern provinces of Turkey have utilized in order to protect their scope of influence. Throughout this work, argumentation is developed as a response to the following questions: Why are tribe leaders powerful political actors although they are not a part of formal political system? What are the conditions and challenges of local traditional tribes in the 21st century? Why tribe leaders and the central governments compromise at some points and conflict at others?

I answer these questions through tracing the variation in local people's voting preferences and their attachment to tribes in Şanlıurfa, Turkey, in order to understand the evolution of tribes and their perceived political power by local people. The way people vote is an indicator of the strength or weakness of a tribe because tribe leaders always take a side in elections and ask their members to follow their decisions (Guida, 2013, p. 71; Uçar, 2016, pp. 178–182). Furthermore, in rural areas, disobedience to the decision of tribe leaders are rarely observed since tribes live and act collectively in such regions and any divergent voting can be discerned in the election results at the district level. Thus, divergence from the tribe's decision in the elections can be used as a metric to trace the change in the tribe leader's authority, which comprises one of the aims of this study.

Since Ottoman Empire, local tribal groups (Aşiret) have historically been key political and social actors in the eastern side of Turkey. These groups are defined with respect to “genealogical kinship relations, social belongingness and the notion of community” (Erhan, 1997, p. 513). Supportively, Ökten defines tribes as the following: “... A tribe is an introverted small world, a defensive organization, conservative institutions” (Ökten, 2009, p. 99). In their world, they are self-sufficient to some extent in taking care of each other. Uncertainties in daily lives are endured with the help and support of the interpersonal connections fostered by tribes. As a result of having such characteristics, they establish a local political mechanism, which might oppose to or collaborate with the central authority under certain conditions. That is why, power struggles between the central government of Ottoman Empire and local tribal groups had a dynamic and long-lasting history.

From time to time, Ottoman Sultans allowed these tribes to have a partial autonomy as a local authority, which was a strategy to control the region. In other words, the power of the local authority was constrained by the will of the central power, although the latter had never full control over the former. The strength and intensity of the central authority within the Ottoman Empire would determine the scope of local authority (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 192). If central authority was not able to surveillance the remote regions, the local leaders would act independently. That is why, the local authority of tribe leaders increased in strength when Ottoman Empire was weak, and it decreased in strength when Ottoman Empire was strong enough to intervene (Bruinessen, 1992, pp. 136–145).

After the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the collective political capital of the tribes was questioned and sometimes abolished by the central governments for they posed a threat for the central authority (Resmi_Gazete, 1934). As an

intermediary political actor between the central government and local people, tribes have been subjected to political exclusion or inclusion at different time periods. However, given the fact that the central governments needed intermediary actors to arrive at full control of the southeastern region, the former could not completely eliminate the latter. Thus, tribes sustained their presence and have been crucial for providing stability and political compliance even during the Republican era (Uçar, 2016).

Sustaining the balance between the central and local authorities has been very important in that the tension between them could lead to several serious insurgencies within the region. In such a dynamic political arena, throughout time, both political actors, the central governments and local tribe leaders have been striving to adapt themselves to the new characteristics as local circumstances have been changing in terms of education level, population and technological conditions through urbanization.

Following these considerations, this research aimed to reveal the determinants of how local tribes manage to stay in the political game via new tools. Some scholars argue that the pre-modern systems would disappear as a result of the modernization process: “traditional societies not only had to change their economies but also their values and social structures” (Harrison, 1995, p. 28). However, I argue for the possibility of traditional systems finding a place within the modern system without losing their characteristic features. Related to this, I argue that one of the reasons for the survival of local tribes is hidden in their ability to provide wealth to their members. The tribes can adapt and find new ways to be pertinent in the modernized system. To elaborate on the determinants of such a survival is the main research endeavor of this work.

In this work, a tribe's political power is focused and operationalized as its authority over its members' political party choices, for a tribe can manipulate and control its members' votes to some extent in this region.¹ By controlling the votes, some tribe leaders have fortified their positions in the political arena.

On one hand, the loyalty of tribal members is a strong tool that strengthens the persuasiveness tribes have whilst bargaining with the central governments. The votes would bring or prevent more jobs, more opportunities for children in respect to the magnitude of consensus provided within the tribes. On the other hand, the consideration of the central governments of tribe leaders as legitimate representatives of the region would strengthen the charisma of the leaders in the eyes of the local people. The people would become much more loyal to these leaders.

Practically speaking, in Turkey, if tribes can lead the votes of their subjects, it creates a political power for them through which they can be taken into consideration by the central governments as the latter needs those votes to remain in power.² Therefore, the agency of tribe leaders are crucial since they are active at lower (ground) level and higher (central politics) level as well.

To observe the perceived political power of tribes, in this study, a survey about the people's daily lives and their relation to the tribes is analyzed and in-depth interviews are conducted with local elite and members of various tribes. Such data are very useful especially when analyzed along with other controlled variables, such as education, urbanization and economic levels. Survey and in-depth interviews would include questions about the relationships among local people, their tribes and

¹ Although there may be a number of reasons affecting the voting behavior, the tribe leadership is one of the most important for the Şanlıurfa according to survey and in-depth interviews that are conducted for this research. Other possible variables are also controlled during the field work and would be mentioned at the discussion part.

² This can be argued for religious leaders within the region as well. Though it may be valid to some extent for the limited scope of this work, only tribe leaders would be considered.

central governments. More specifically, I try to understand how much effect the tribe leaders have on the decisions of local people in daily lives and elections as well.

One may argue that it is hard to observe an individual's political party choices in secret voting elections and it would create flaws in this work. At the first glance, it may be a challenging point. However, the voting procedure is not an obstacle but a revealing point for this research because of the unique characteristics of the region. It is hard to provide necessary conditions for secret voting within the region, especially in rural areas. People would be aware of each other's voting so that it would increase the possibility of peer pressure. People would not declare their voting decision directly, however, change in small rural area ballot boxes would be explanatory while considering the answers of the people to the questions about how they decide to vote.

The structure of the thesis will be as the following: In the literature review section, the depiction of political modernization about local tribes and political patronage are discussed in connection to two influential political actors of the region. The first actor, undoubtedly, the central government; whereas the second is the leadership of various local tribes. To what extent can the central government use its capabilities to reach and control people in remote areas? How can local non-state actors, namely tribal leaders, arrogate the political power when the government lacks resources within a specific region? How do the political dynamics among the aforementioned actors change living circumstances, especially survival strategies, of the population?

The methodology section consists of two sections to clarify the mixed methods of research described herein. First, the regression analysis based on a recently conducted survey querying the effects of tribes and other newly-emerging

social aspects over voting behavior is explained. Second, the qualitative part follows: how in-depth interviews were conducted, and which official governmental reports were accessed, as well as the logistical and practical limitations of this study. The former helped me to figure out fundamental changes within the region; whereas the latter allowed me to observe the political consequences of such change. In the historical background section, political bargaining of the tribes with the central governments in earlier decades will be cataloged to evaluate changes in their perceived political power over their subjects at present time. Then in the discussion section, I elaborate on the findings of this research, and discuss political power dynamics in the southeastern side of Turkey, especially in Şanlıurfa. The main discussion will revolve around the contemporary survival strategies of tribes .

A considerable amount of political literature has been dedicated to the interrelation of central and local actors, especially to investigating the determinative power of local authorities (Mann, 1984; Migdal, 1988). Yet, empowerment of the individual as a nascent actor in modern societies has challenged the arguments of these earlier works. There are instances in the modernization literature where the increase in the autonomy of individuals is noted from a modern individualistic perspective (Harrison, 1988, p. 30; Kaya, 2015). However, how the interrelation between the local and central powers respond to the strengthening of the individualistic perspective and how it affects the bargaining of power between these two actors are lacking in the current literature. This dearth becomes the most significant with regards to the southeastern side of Turkey since in the last several decades, the region has experienced a rapid urbanization process. This abrupt change could have affected the power struggle between the local and the central authorities

as well as the utility of the local powers as an intermediary actor in providing votes for the central authority.

The observation that derived from the field research can be summarized as the following: At the periphery, local tribes are still determinative actors. Therefore, an alliance between the central government and local tribes are much more likely to happen at the rural areas in order to gain local support in those regions where there is a shortage of urbanization and education factors. As different from earlier decades, bargaining power of tribe leaders are much lower because of the hardship of mobilizing voting behavior of their tribe members. Such findings are convenient with the modernization theory and its dichotomy of modern and traditional societies (Harrison, 1988).

Furthermore, tribe leaders still are looking for the ways to improve their influence within city centers and to restrain from the advance of urbanization. A new struggle of tribe leaders has emerged to integrate and to find a position based on familial ties within the new modern order. As a result of the mentioned endeavor, the survival methods of the tribes, which succeed to some extent, will be elaborated on in this work.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Aşiret” (tribe) is a word of Arabic that means “large relative groups” (Kaya, 2015, p. 65). Tribal communities have their basis in kinship and family relations. Members of a tribe live together and take care of each other. Tribes have a long-lasting self-sufficient and independent history in the pre-modern era. However, an advancement of social facts from outside, such as the expansion of modernization process, forced tribes to change their political and social forms in order to react and adapt to changing political, economic and martial conditions around them (Jabar & Dawod, 2003, p. 68). By doing so, they have strived to sustain their fundamental aim, which is to survive and improve living conditions as communities.

As a system based on locality and familial connections, most features of tribes would not be easily coherent with the modernization processes that have taken place all around the world. Therefore, local tribes have faced the transforming effects of modernization, which poses the following question: Are tribe leaders still effective political actors despite being subjected to modernization process within the southeastern region of Turkey?

Similar to this dilemma between local and modern systems are well discussed within the literature (Harrison, 1995). The coexistence of the both, rather than persistent conflict, is also argued (Lu and Yang, 2006; Yin, 2003). The contribution of this work is the unique tools of the local tribes to survive within a modernized political system.

In this chapter, I will provide discussions from classic modernization theory and its depiction of tribes. Then, I will mention patronage client relations to

understand one of political strategies of tribes. Then, in the following chapters, by providing observations and evidence from actual lives of local people and their traditional political systems, I will explain why and how tribes are still crucial political actors within the region.

2.1 Modernization and traditional actors

Having acknowledged that modernization and its critics have been discussed plenty of time, there are some patterns in voting behavior in the southeast of Turkey that requires further study regarding the effects of tribe leaders.

The dichotomy between traditional and modern societies is one of the fundamental facts for classical modernization theorists to build up their approach. The traditional refers to particular local networks of exchange, ascribe-driven endowments and restricted administrative competence. The modern indicates the opposite features, such as universal understanding of the social structures, individualistic decisions, achievement-driven endowments. As foreseeable from these categories, “modernization” is a process, which defines the transition from traditional societies to modern ones (Leys, 1982).

Political modernization, as a part of the general modernization process, refers to the transformation within a political system of a region from traditional to modern aspects. It happens at two levels. It increases an individual’s ability and education to reach information from various sources at the lower level and it increases political organizations and diversification of political demands at the higher level (Goorha, 2017, 2). For this study, the higher level would refer to the conditions between central governments and local elites, whereas the lower level to the conditions between local elites and the local people within Şanlıurfa.

Political modernization is defined by Eisenstadt based on the following traits: “on the one hand continuous development of a high extent of differentiation, unification and centralization of the political system, and on the other hand, continuous development of a high extent of free-floating (i.e. noncommitted to any ascriptive groups) political power and resources” (Eisenstadt, 1964, p. 3). Unification and centralization of the political system are convenient for the modernization of political arena where people would not dominate the political resources forever. Otherwise, at some points, the allocation of resources can be under control of selective groups.

From Eisenstadt’s definition, it is easy to understand how political modernization supporters would approach to the local tribes. Tribes are pre-determined gatherings where individualistic preferences are neglected for the sake of total utility. However, the emancipation of individualistic preferences is an integral part of modernization. Therefore, political modernization is one of the threats to the political solidarity of tribes since individual preference differentiation would occur within a tribe’s members.

Another crucial part of the definition by Eisenstadt, the characteristic of the free-floating political power would enable citizens to choose independently. The political support and consent of the ruled ones would become important as a fundamental point of new political systems if political power would be given and taken away through the free will of the people. At this point, the ability of the people to come together and defend their interests, in other words “the articulation of political demands” (Eisenstadt, 1964, p. 5) is another important aspect of modern political regimes. If people are able to articulate their interests freely and gather

together for their preferences, such circumstances would provide necessary conditions for proper political discussions and exchange of ideas about policies.

Independent exchange of ideas would call for proper political participation. Hence, political modernization and political participation emerge simultaneously. The latter is defined by Joan M. Nelson as the “people who view government policies and programs as relevant to their interests, and further believe that their own actions, as individuals or jointly with others, can influence government decisions, will try to exert such influence (unless they are prevented by structural features of the political system” (Nelson, 1987, p. 107). Therefore, opportunities to observe various policies and to choose individually are significant for the fortification of political modernization and participation. Such opportunities would end up with an accumulation of political demands, rather than domination of one’s demands to the extent of others.

However, accumulating political demands in a proper manner is not an easy task for some of the countries since various intermediary actors or organizations may prevent individuals from declaring their decisions. The situation becomes harder if the prevailing social structure and institutions are based on primordial ties rather than an individualistic and modern decision mechanism. For example, tribe leaders are intermediary actors who hold the ways to access to information. They behave like a filter while transferring information to the local people. This is one of the points where traditional and modern political mechanisms experience various conflicts.

Even supposing modernization theory is a crucial contribution to the literature and increased political scientists’ understanding of the political world, the deterministic and clear distinction between the modern and the traditional should be reconsidered through empirical and local evidence. Particular development patterns

(Goorha, 2017) would challenge the western-biased and universal understanding of modernization theories. For example, Inglehart and Baker argue the persistence of traditional values in advance of modernization due to the path-dependence of the earlier traditional values (Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

In other words, the distinction between modern and tradition political systems is not unequivocal and is questioned by the critics of modernization. Despite the fact that modern and traditional mechanisms seem to neglect the other's existence, they do survive together under some circumstances as I discuss in this work.

Coexistence of modern and traditional systems are discussed at different fields and different focus points. For example, the bicultural self is argued for Taiwanese societies where people's daily lives are affected by modern and traditional factors (Lu & Yang, 2006, p. 172). Another work focuses on the similar point that how "traditional Chinese values still played an important role in shaping the mind and attitude of modern Chinese in Singapore and China" (Yin, 2003, p. 43).

Similar to the mentioned works, by showing ongoing local tribal connections within Şanlıurfa, I contribute the literature through revealing the unique tools of those local tribes to survive within a modern environment. Before elaborating on the tools of tribes, it would be beneficial to mention traditional political (i.e. local tribes) mechanisms within the region.

2.2 Local tribes

Local tribes are one of the political communities within the southeastern side of Turkey where tribe leaders can act like a political leader. Throughout the time, tribe leader could manage to stay in power via different tools.

Before the early Turkish Republic's sedentarization policy (Resmi_Gazete, 1934), most tribes were nomadic in Turkey, although they have lost their nomadic characteristics gradually in these days (Sencer, 1993, p. 142). Tribe members have traveled among plateaus following warmer weather conditions. Traveling for the most of their time prevented those people from establishing a well-structured social and political system. At that time, survival of people would not necessitate a complex political system, but only standing together.

However, the circumstances have changed when the local people were asked to settle down by the central government. In a nomadic life style, possession of commodities was limited as people were mobile and hold the things that were easy to carry; whereas the possession and distribution of wealth become an important point for people when they are located at a specific region. Living in a constant place increased the complexity of relations and a de facto political system emerged as a result. Adopting a sedentary life caused many tribes to internalize the agha system in which an agha holds an amount of land that peasants (others) work on it. The land was open to all for utilizing in nomadic life style. Nevertheless, the land has become a commodity owned by the agha, who usually were the elders of the communities, after settling down.

How did the central government react to such local social and political system while implementing the sedentarization policy? Actually, the central government is reluctant to allow local authorities as it is discussed in the parliament in the 1920s (Bayrak, 2013, pp. 94–95). However, while early Turkish governments asked people to settle down and to register as regular citizens in the southeastern side of the country, it was an unreachable goal considering the practical possibilities of those days. State apparatus was not powerful enough to control, observe and

intervene. At that point, the agha system helped people to easily adapt a sedentary life. Hence, at the beginning, tribes were themselves a result of social transformation for the survival of the people; they were complimentary organizations in places states could not reach to the populace properly.

After adopting a sedentary life, the social relations were not easy to regulate. For example, dispute resolution among the people was not an easy task in the absence of the proper central institutions, such as court, police. In the early periods of the Republic of Turkey, the local people from the east had to create their own local systems as the state was not visible enough. Tribe leaders (usually elder members) has taken on that task, willingly or unwillingly, to solve problems among the tribe members by putting themselves in nation-states' shoes (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 82). Furthermore, in addition to regulator characteristic of the tribe within its community, the tribe leaders sometimes intervene the conflicts between tribes as well. Deadly disputes have been solved through the compromise between the elder leaders between tribes (<https://www.haberler.com/asiretler-baristi-haberi/>, 2010). The influence of the official institutions was limited in those cases. Still, it does not mean that the tribes had no connections with the central official institutions. Tribe leaders were also responsible for representing his members towards to the central governments.

Therefore, tribe leaders have two different positions at two different levels. At a finer level, the lack of a state apparatus at the local level provided tribes with a powerful position in the daily life. As an employer and protector of people who are loyal to him, a tribe leader could arrogate the right to make decisions about the region. The lack of effective central authority is filled since a local and de facto authority of tribe leaders has emerged. At a broader level, the tribe leaders also

mediated the relations between the region and the central authority (i.e. central governments) (Kadirbeyoglu, 2008, p. 113; Yalman, 1971, p. 189). So, they have become the representatives and political actors of the region.

The prestige of the tribe leaders could emerge from any of these two levels and transferred to the other level. On the one hand, if the local people respect a person as their leader, the central governments would take him into consideration anyhow. On the other hand, if the central government accept one as the de facto leader of the region, he would become much more important in the eyes of the local people. So, it is a vicious cycle through which the tribe leaders acquire political power.

Having said that tribes were important for the survival of the local people in the newly emerging Republic, they were also contradicting the essence of a modern state. Migdal clarifies the perplexing new tension between tribes and the central state:

The strongmen (local authorities) have been wedded to state resources and personnel to maintain their local control and to gain new resources to enhance that control. Yet, their most basic purpose has been antithetical to modern norms of what a state should do. These norms have depicted the state as a mechanism to create a single jurisdiction- a rule of law in which the rules are the same from border to border; this is the desideratum of the modern state. (Migdal, 1988, p. 255)

Such ostensibly paradoxical facts triggered the questions of this paper and will be discussed in the further sections of this paper.

In the literature, it is argued that tribes are obsolete and subjected to disappear after the emergence of the modern state. Some scholars already argue that tribes have started to show a tendency to lose their intense solidarity by the death of their last

leaders in the last decades since there is no strong link to keep new generations under the umbrella of tribes (Kaya, 2015, p. 66).

Yet, others insisted that tribes are still powerful political actors at some locations (i.e. in Şanlıurfa), especially along the periphery (Özer, 1998, p. 114). This paper is a contribution to these discussions whether local tribe leaders are still powerful political actors or not under newly emerging modern circumstances.

To understand modernization theory's depiction of tribes, it would be beneficial to mention Anthony Giddens' work titled "The Consequences of Modernity" (Giddens, 1991). Giddens provides a pre-modern characterization of the tribes and asserts that the very image of tribes is kinship, which is a social way to provide reliance and trust within a society (Giddens, 1991, p. 101). This notion of maintaining reliance and trust is the striking commonality between the tribes and the modern state (Giddens, 1991, pp. 100–111). This common aim is helpful in understanding the conflict of interest between central authorities and local organizations, such as central governments and tribes. The tension between both is easily visible in Şanlıurfa as the former's representatives dominate the city center whereas the latter dominate peripheries. The city center represents trust based on official structures and formal institutions such as the judiciary and police stations. Along the periphery and in the villages, trust is based on tradition and collective security. In the former, an individual would have his own rights regardless of his family or other connections; whereas in the latter, one would be recognized through his connections to families and tribes.

Lerner's "The Grocer and The Chief: A Parable" text was also useful in describing the tension between the traditional and modern aspects of a society (Lerner & Pevsner, 1964). Lerner shared his perception of Balgat, a village close to

Ankara in two different time periods. In the first period, the chief (similar to an agha) controlled all flow of knowledge in the village; whereas as an outlier, the “city-dressed” grocer was critical of villagers’ parochial perspectives. As the grocer also had a direct connection to the outside, he could act as a conduit of knowledge, evading the chief’s influence.

Later, Lerner observed how things have changed as urbanization had taken place in the region. The chief no longer held the monopoly on outside knowledge for the villagers; the connection between the village and the outside had improved, significantly lessening the necessity of the chief.

Although the distinction between modern and traditional societies allow one to observe general circumstances, they obviously are not clear cut since we see that the influence of tribe leaders persists even after massive urbanization. Therefore, these passages of Giddens’ and Lerner’s work is not sufficient in evaluating this issue comprehensively. Where intersection of these two categories (modern and traditional) lie and how transition occurs between categories are still questions that need to be investigated. The fundamental aspects of the tribes and endurance of such characteristics in the modern society will be focused in this work.

Indeed, the transformation of Balgat by modern tools would be a possible scenario for the southeastern side of the country as well. However, the intensity of tribal characteristics in the region entails different dynamics as the local relations are much more intense than other sides of the country. For Balgat, the tribal power dynamic was not significant. The declining power of the chief was not so controversial and the urbanization process did not encounter insurmountable obstacles caused by local authorities. Conversely, the higher concentration of local

influence possessed by the tribes in Şanlıurfa would differentiate the case from Balgat.

To exemplify the circumstances in rural areas of Şanlıurfa, tribes discuss daily issues in an oda which is a room at the center of their village. The members of tribes go there and spend their time to talk about farming, weather, weddings and any other social issues. The tribe leader usually sits at the seat of honor and hosts his guests there. It is a kind of center for reaching other members of the tribe. The internal network of a tribe would diffuse from this oda. If somebody needs any help would go to the oda of his tribe. If there is an environmental disaster, the tribe would deal with it by discussing it in the oda.

These social systems are still valid, although the modern state apparatus is much more visible. The interview below is significantly important how the modern central state and local tribes are intertwined since the member of parliament act as the leader of a tribe.

One of İzol tribe's members explain the function of the oda as following:

We are making decision in here (oda) according to tribal tradition by having dialog with other members. When Our leader, Zülfikar İzol (member of the parliament and tribe leader.), comes, we get confirmation from him about our discussions. There are number of disputes between the villagers about land, borders of the lands, animals or farm regions. We are calling the conflicting people and make a peace among them. We are taking promises for attenuating the tension. We are arguing "What is the benefit in killing each other for a few acres of land. We are doing our best to prevent such conflicts. (Tekelioğlu, 2010)

In other words, oda is the location where the decision about the issues and conflicts in the village is taken place. In this example, there is no need to go to the official court, the issues among the villagers, namely the members of the tribe, are solved unofficially in the oda under the authority of the tribe leader who is at the

same time an official member of the parliament. The MP does not take the issue to official courts. Rather, he behaves like a judge as a tribe leader. De facto judicial arbitration and mediation aspects of tribe leaders still challenge the modern counterparts.

Having said these, the expansion of modernization process is still a threat for local social mechanisms. Centralization, as a result of the emergence of nation-states, can be thought as an outsider to these local social systems. So, the more authority exercised by the modern Turkish nation-state, the more tribes are faced with challenges where they seek to protect their unique heritage.

As a more specific example of lower level politics, kinship networks in Kurdish tribes and the challenges they dealt with were thoroughly discussed by Belge (2011). In her article, Belge attempted to show how the Turkish State aimed to control daily lives in the Kurdish region and how the locals reacted. The state tried to overcome kinship networks to forge a direct connection with its citizens. Investments in infrastructure were leveraged by the State as an attempt to disrupt local intratribal connections with the aim of advancing education there and integrating it with the rest of the state. However, the local traditionalists along with the local tribes did not embrace such a policy. The aim of the state to change Kurdish/tribal political culture by suppressing it caused the opposite outcome (Belge, 2011, p. 96). Any attempts at suppression have encountered a unified reaction in the early years of the Republic. Similarly, these policies also strengthened the Kurdish identity, according to Belge.

The main dilemma of state officials was that on the one hand, the state needed local leaders in order to implement the policies properly; on the other hand, the local leaders were asking for the protection of local tribe traditions along with the preservation of their scope of influence.

For Belge, local leaders (tribe leaders) had much more influence over even bureaucrats within the region. Low-level bureaucrats were eventually much more influenced by the local leaders, rather than the central government. Therefore, the local leaders proved to be an obstacle to state authority (Belge, 2011, p. 109).

Although this was the reality in earlier decades and Belge supported her argument properly, it should be reconsidered under new modern circumstances. In my work, rather than focusing on how the state seeks to control tribes, I actually focus on the agency of tribes itself in order to analyze how they adapt and strategize to stay in power.

In addition, analyzing the eastern side of Turkey as a unitary region cannot provide a complete account of the political mechanisms because the circumstances are subject to change as a function of the specific locations (i.e. provinces, districts). For example, findings in my research about Kurdish tribes in Şanlıurfa are parallel to first part of Belge's argumentation that ascribes the goal of disrupting local tribe connections to the state. Yet, the resistance against the state that comprises the second part of Belge's argumentation was not obvious in Şanlıurfa in recent years. What I observed was not a resistance per se, rather a struggle of tribe leaders to integrate and find a position based on familial ties within the new order. Local tribes could survive not by the conflicting way that Belge discusses, but by the reconciling ways. It was an understandable way to restrain the expansion of state apparatus.

Penetration of the state's influence to rural areas will be a crucial factor to discuss newly emerging conditions of local authorities through this work. Michael Mann discusses how technological advances have helped the state become much more autonomous through infrastructural power (Mann, 1984). Şanlıurfa experienced a similar situation to this. The central government can easily influence its populace

due to increased capacity after technological improvements, especially in the city center. Furthermore, such improvements are likely to erode the tribal powers which otherwise serve state-like functions like public good-providers and.

However, technological and infrastructural advance has not exclusively favored the state. Through technology, the sources of information varied so much that ordinary citizens also became able to reach alternative information rather than being only subjected to state's or a tribe leader's constrictions. In such an arena where new sources of information and communication become much more accessible, the political discussions among individuals, the central government and the local tribes should be reconsidered as actors' endowments have changed.

Even under the expansion of the central government, tribes have extensive influence on the people of Şanlıurfa's daily lives. If a visitor goes to a village far from the center of Şanlıurfa, most probably the one who welcomes and asks the purpose of his visit would be the agha (tribe's leader) himself while ordering preparation of a meal table. If one desires contact with the villagers (as was done for this research), one needs to, in a sense, pass the checkpoint of the leader because he seeks to exercise control over any flow of information into or out of his village (interviewee #14). As a critical connection between villagers and the city center, tribe leaders are still crucial actors.

Political modernization can be seen in Şanlıurfa through increasing urbanization and education levels, however, as opposite to the expectations of modernization theory, tribal connection and its patronage relation survived as well. During mentioned circumstances, one of the ways of local tribes to survive is political patronage. Local tribe leaders can strengthen their political power by dealing with higher authorities and provide fundamental goods to its members in

return. The bargaining between local tribe leaders and central authorities still take place in the form of "political patronage", as it is called in the literature.

2.3 Patron-client relations

Each relation within political arena does not provide an equal status to actors.

Various economic and power conditions disrupt the balance in the positions of actors (i.e. politicians, citizens). Endowments of actors may provide them with more options or may limit their movements while going after their political interests. Still, any political actor would be in the game unless s/he has nothing to offer, such as power, a number of votes, capital, etc. For this study, I focus on party politicians, local tribe leaders and citizens as actors in the political arena and try to understand relation among them.

Politicians may not choose public good provision to all but distribute goods selectively in an aim of rewarding loyal people. As a term related to such policy, clientelism is defined by Stokes as “the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution that the patron uses is simply: did you (will you) support me?” (Stokes, 2011, p. 2). So, it is a kind of exchange that each side offer his/her endowments to other side. The focus of Stokes on the material good is based on his argument that “clientelism is intimately linked to poverty and inequality” (Stokes, 2011, p. 20). At first glance, the lack of the people’s fundamental goods gives a way for clientelist politics since selling one’s right to vote is a way to acquire goods. Nevertheless, the direction of the relation is still a controversial topic.

From one perspective, Kitschelt argues “poor and uneducated citizens discount the future, rely on short causal chains, and prize instant advantages such that

the appeal of direct, clientelist exchanges always trumps that of indirect, programmatic linkages promising uncertain and distant rewards to voters” (Kitschelt, 2000, p. 857). By providing good in short term, the politicians can satisfy the people who have not much material. Therefore, poverty is likely to cause clientelist relationships.

From another perspective, the power holders may use clientelism as a way to control the people and prevent any proper development in the latter’s economic and living conditions. In the political clientelism, the people exchange their political support with material goods which also makes the people dependent on the patrons (Stokes, 2011, p. 15).

While discussing citizen-politician linkages, Kitschelt and Wilkinson define “patronage-based, voter-party linkage” as “based on direct material inducements targeted to individuals and small groups of citizens whom politicians know to be highly responsive to such side-payments and willing to surrender their vote for the right price” (Kitschelt, H., & Wilkinson, 2007, p. 10). The focus on direct “material” inducements is common for the mentioned scholars. So, one can easily observe how the political clientelism is considered with economic conditions in the literature. The cleavage in economic conditions of the politicians and citizens may result in the clientelist relations.

Boissevain (1969, p. 379) discusses an unbalanced relation between political actors as patron and client distinction: “Patronage is the use of resources by a person — the patron — to assist or protect some other person — his client — who does not control such resources. The difference between patron and client thus implies a difference in control over resources, thus a difference in power”. So, patronage is an unbalanced relationship where the powerful one delivers goods and resources, and

the other gives his/her political support in return. The former may be in charge of distribution of land, employment or infrastructural investments; whereas the latter might be an ordinary citizen.

Similarly, Scott similarly defines clientelist relationship as exchange between different socioeconomic status: “instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron” (Scott, 1972, p. 92; cited in Stokes, 2011, p. 3). The more economic difference between the higher status and the lower, the more votes become sellable goods.

Yet, such a power difference does not make the lower status totally dependent on the higher. The former may have a strong tool to use while competing with the political patrons, that is, the mobilization of political support. In other words, when political parties struggle to convince local people to maintain their power, local people have different options. So, the condition is not fully in favor of the patrons if the people could mobilize local people collectively. This is interestingly a quality of "modern society" definitions (Harrison, 1995, p. 20). This leads to another question: Does an individual living in a traditional structure have such an option as same as the modern society definitions articulate?

One of the collective organizations in Turkey is local tribes, although they are not based on individualistic decisions. At some points, the tribe leaders have become local patrons between the central authority and the local people. They would be most likely to related to the two levels. They would mobilize the local people at the lower level and would bargain with the central authorities at the higher level. Such a

mobilization has taken place in the southeastern side of Turkey through tribal connections. Tribes may act collectively under the control of tribe leaders as they prioritize their familial ties. In some cases, a tribe leader may carry block votes of local people to another party if he has any problem with the previous party (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 84). So, voting behavior is not generally based on ideological background or individual decisions, but familial bounds also matter, rendering tribe leaders strong political actors. Thus, tribe leaders can be also considered as local patrons who may link the local people to higher political levels. By doing so, tribe leaders become intermediary actors between central political parties and local people (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 69). Central political parties may provide resources to local people through tribe leaders if the latter can provide a significant amount of electoral power.

Political clientelism in the lower and higher levels that the local patrons connect is crucial for understanding the characteristics of the southeastern side of Turkey. For the finer level, one can argue that “in a clientelist society, one’s influence clearly depends on the number of one’s supporters” (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 70). If a tribe has strong familial connections and acts collectively, they would have a better position while bargaining with the central governments. To arrive at such a strong and solidaristic community, a tribe leader should find ways to provide fundamental necessities of his tribe members. As a job-, food-supplier, a tribe leader would be respected and obeyed commensurately to his success in providing wealth to the tribe.

For the higher level, one can discuss how local tribe leaders might talk and bargain with political parties to find ways for providing necessities like water, food, shelter and other infrastructural necessities. Local tribe-political party connections

actually operate on the ground of local endowments. So, it would not be extreme interpretation to argue that both levels are correlated. The more local patron, namely tribe leaders, can control and mobilize local people, the more he would be taken into consideration by political parties.

Therefore, not only within tribe relations, but the relation between political parties and local patrons is also crucial. Political patronage is well defined by Weingrod: “the ways in which party politicians distribute public jobs or special favors in exchange for electoral support” (Weingrod, 1968, p. 379). In the southeastern side of Turkey, the political parties, namely patrons try to distribute wealth to the local people, namely clients, through tribe leaders who become intermediary and strong actor within the political mechanism. By doing so, the political parties decrease the transaction cost by not contacting with each citizen individually such that convincing tribe leader would be enough to collect votes. Besides, tribe leaders increase their influence on the people as they become the sole addressee of the political parties.

For the case of Turkey, clientelism and patronage are extensively discussed in the literature (Çarkoğlu & Aytaç S . Erdem, 2015; Heper, 1998; Kemahlioğlu, 2012; Sayarı, 1977). Some argue that the advance of the multi-party system increased patron-client relationships as the political parties would depend more on people’s consent (see also, Çarkoğlu & Aytaç S . Erdem, 2015; Güneş-Ayata, 1994). For the southeastern side of Turkey, Fuat Uçar (2016) discusses how local tribe leaders and central authorities had patronage relations while regulating and controlling the southeastern side of Turkey in the 1950s. Additionally, Ayse Kudat articulates the difference between Eastern and Western Turkey:

In Eastern Turkey, contrasted with Western, elements of party-directed patronage are more visible. Fragmentation of political

power, ethnic and religious cleavages, widespread poverty and economic dependence of the population, inability of the state to reach the Eastern countryside all underline the great importance patrons rather than formal political organizations and parties receive in this region. (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 73)

A formal and modern political system would not be achieved without solving the mentioned problems. Specific characteristics of the region prevent the establishment of formal and modern political organizations. The embedded tribal system seems as one of such characteristics. However, the political parties in 1950s and 1960s did not struggle to eliminate the political power of local tribe leaders within the region. Instead, they had reconciled with the local tribe leaders to find a much more stable way to control the region. They shared the local authority with the tribe leaders by acknowledging them (Uçar, 2016). Having said that Ayşe Kudat has important studies on the patronage within Eastern side of Turkey in 1975, in this paper, I will elaborate on similar facts under much more recent conditions within the region.

The distinction between the formal political organizations based on modernization traits and traditional political organization based on usually familial ties is a controversial topic for various processes of building a nation-state throughout the world. While Gibbon and Higgins discuss Irish rural society's transformation, they define the dialectic between patronage-based tradition and modernization as follows: "Patronage as a phenomenon within complex societies has been ascribed to the survival in them of residual "traditional" elements, while its displacement... by horizontally-articulated forms of political mobilization, has been ascribed to the eradication of these elements by the modernization process" (Gibbon & Higgins, 1974, p. 27).

Similarly, Huntington argues “parties and party systems are clientelist, patronage oriented, and localist in early stages of modernization but become more programmatic and institutionalized with progression development” (Kitschelt, 2000, p. 856). So, political parties should have been evolved to much more formal types and get rid of traditional connections. as the modernization takes place. Nevertheless, whether modernization process can completely eliminate traditional ties is a questionable point. Although one has to admit that patronage relations are under threat of modernization process as the latter is focused on individualistic interests rather than collective group tendencies, it is not clear whether deterministic modernization process would capture each aspect of social relations. To better discuss the reaction of Şanlıurfa local tribes to this modernization process, in the following section, I turn to the data of the survey and interviews.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will elaborate on how I decided to focus on the tribes in Şanlıurfa and how I collect the indicators for the political power of local tribes through the mixed methodology. The details of the data would reveal the political conditions within the southeastern side of Turkey. The section would end with the limits of this work.

3.1 The scope of the fieldwork

The regional scope of this research is limited to Şanlıurfa. Like other provinces in the southeastern side of Turkey, Şanlıurfa is composed of different ethnicities, such as Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish, among others. Besides, it is a relatively unique case in the region as it has recently become a metropolitan municipality in 2012, which precipitated its urbanization and development process. The political behavior of the citizens of Şanlıurfa varies as they are exposed to urbanization at different levels, therefore my selected indicators of voting behavior have enough variability in this province to analyze.

Local tribes are an important characteristic of the region when one considers the political environment of the region. Different tribes may support different political parties and may be influential enough to vote the party they support into the parliament at some points. Some of the known tribes of the region can be listed as following: Picanlı, Ketikanlı, Seddadi, Seyhanlı, Dinayı Milli, Karakecili, Tirkan, Bini Hamat, Bini Ubiyt, İzollu, Bucaklı (Kaya, 2015, 109-110).

These tribes become much more famous during the election processes. Each tribe

declare their support for one of the political parties and the political atmosphere would become really competitive in Şanlıurfa. The declaration of tribes as well as their attitudes toward politicians become crucial for everyone in the region. Tribe leaders may change their political decisions from one election to another. It was much more common in 1950s and 1960s. For example, in 1954, Democrat Party could get 8 of 9 member of the parliament from the Şanlıurfa by dealing with the tribe leaders. However, in the election of 1957, the tribes have decided to move Republican Party and Republican Party could win 9 of 9 member of the parliament from the region (Kaya, 2015, 114). Such a political atmosphere is a good location to understand how tribes are crucial and could survive until now.

Those tribes are also mentioned in the interviews. Most are described as the communities of local people through which people take care of each other. The question of “Whom are you belong to” is one of the famous characteristics of the region. This question is asked when a person introduce himself to others. By doing so, the sides can categorize tribally each other and continue their communication accordingly. Having talked with the known tribes’ members in the interviews, I try to understand general conditions of tribe leaders in terms of politics.

Tirkan tribe is focused for survey. It is located in such a place that a part of the tribe is exposed a huge urbanization, whereas the other part lives in a rural area. So, any change within the tribe members would allow me to elaborate on accordingly. The tribe is known for his support for the recent incumbent party (AKP). The tribe leader lives in the village and the members of the tribe are spread out the rural areas as well as the district center. Focusing on one tribe help me to understand the changes within a tribe as a response to changing condition such as urbanization, education, economic opportunities, etc.

Considering regional and traditional similarities within the eastern side of Turkey, metropolitan Şanlıurfa leads me to search for factors why vote shares of political parties and independent candidates in the province change a lot according to the districts where the voting takes place. Is there a plausible reason for such variation among voting decisions of villages and districts, instead of random distribution all around Şanlıurfa? To answer this question, I focus on the local tribes of Şanlıurfa, their locations and their political positioning with respect to the political parties. How important and influential are tribe leaders when it comes to providing political support, and what do they get in return?

3.2 Research design methodology

In the literature, the tribes in the Middle East generally are taken under consideration according to their ethnic characteristics regardless of their location (Bruinessen, 1992; Jabar & Dawod, 2003; Özok, 1990), but some works also include categorization at a national level (Khazeni, 2009; Khoury & Kostiner, 1990). Even though such approaches also contribute to the literature, working at the municipality level has some benefits over and above these approaches for the following reasons.

First, it is difficult to consolidate dozens of tribes as a unitary organization under ethnic categorizations. Each tribe has its own unique environment, which shapes them differently in terms of their consolidation and relations with outsiders such as the state itself. For example, the Kurdish tribes in Şanlıurfa observed in this research have different attitudes about the centralization of the government when one compares with ones from Diyarbakır which are observed in Belge's article (2011) .

The local conditions, such as access to information, fundamental goods and the ability of the government's public good provision would affect the local people's

political attitude regardless of their ethnicity. To exemplify, having a member of parliament and accessing public goods are why Bucak tribe and PKK (Kurdish rebellious group) had tension and deadly conflicts between each other, although they both have Kurdish origins (Medyaurfa, 2015).

Second, groups that are categorized under the same ethnicity might have different traditions and customs. Since tribes have unique characteristics and might reside in nearby locations, we should deepen our study into the district level as the unit of analysis. Such an analysis would be beneficial to understand the common factors among Şanlıurfa tribes that transform the political relations among local people, central governments and tribes.

In this part, I will elaborate on the mixed methodology that I used to observe the change in the political power of local tribes. Using quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods through “Triangulation Design: Validating Quantitative Data Model” of a mixed methodological understanding (Creswell & Clark, 2006, p. 63) accompanied me to articulate the issue properly. I compared and contrasted the results of two different analysis. The quantitative method asserted the political behavior of people and the political power of tribes; whereas the qualitative research asserted how the central government and local tribe leaders apply different policies to deal with such new circumstances.

3.2.1 Quantitative analysis

I analyze a survey conducted in the summer of 2016 in Şanlıurfa (Kaymakci, 2018). While analyzing the survey, econometric models were utilized to observe significant relations between different variables and their effects on voting behavior. 400 local people were sampled from the very same Turkish tribe known as Tirkan. The

participants were individually queried to control for possible influence from any other person.

This Turkish tribe was selected with the aim of showing that divergence from voting for specific parties from the same ethnic background is possible even though they were incumbent. Unlike in earlier decades, other ethnically defined parties could get votes from a Turkish tribe because of new factors mentioned in this research.

The location of Tirkan tribe inhibits the means of transportation until 2000. “The transportation was limited in the Karacadag region where the most members of Tirkan tribe are settled. There was a long distance between the center of the city and the tribe members. After 2000, the region has improved its connection with district Siverek and Diyarbakir by enhancing the district roads. After that point introverted tribe has started to have interactions with the city” (Kaymakci, 2018, p. 38). So, the tribe has been subjected to external effects more intensely after 2000 what make this specific tribe much more valuable for this research

Furthermore, the integration of the tribe to the political atmosphere also has increased. “The tribe was confined with weather conditions and lack of proper infrastructure in Karacadag region. However, after a while, political parties have seen the region as a vote store as a result of improving infrastructure and roads. Furthermore, the last regulation on metropolitan municipalities has converted villages to districts which enable the tribe to select a mayor of metropolitan municipality as well as a mayor of district. Therefore, most of political parties are eager to have much more condensed relations with the tribe” (Kaymakci, 2018, p. 42). The law of metropolitan municipality for Şanlıurfa will be discussed under the title of “Becoming a Metropolitan Municipality” separately. Besides, the quotation is important to show that the selected tribe has political bargains with the political

parties. This study aims to understand how local people and local tribe leaders behave under such newly emerging conditions under modernization process.

The descriptive statistics of the survey can be found below (table 1). Most of the variables are ordinal variables as it is hard to code exact measures from the rural areas. For example, age is categorized as 18-24, 25-35, 36-55, 56+. Asking the exact age would be useless because the local people in the rural areas cannot know it. They usually give a few numbers to you, so it would be much proper to create a range categorization. For the coding of education, illiterate, literate, primary graduate, high school, bachelor and graduate levels are ordinaly listed.

Table 1 - Descriptive Statistics

| Variable | Observation | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------|-----------|-----|-----|
| How to decide voting | 400 | 2.055 | 0.6951 | 1 | 3 |
| The purpose of voting | 400 | 0.4025 | 0.4910 | 0 | 1 |
| Question of independent candidate | 393 | 0.1781 | 0.3831 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 400 | 2.3875 | 1.0560 | 1 | 4 |
| Gender | 400 | 0.7275 | 0.4458 | 0 | 1 |
| Education | 400 | 2.9775 | 1.3971 | 1 | 7 |
| Location | 400 | 1.9 | 0.7852 | 1 | 3 |
| Possession of land | 400 | 1.735 | 1.2014 | 0 | 6 |
| Income (yearly) | 400 | 2.46 | 1.1276 | 1 | 12 |
| Unemployment | 400 | 0.2025 | 0.4023 | 0 | 1 |
| Political knowledge | 400 | 2.78 | 1.7448 | 0 | 5 |
| Media effect | 400 | 2.655 | 0.9451 | 1 | 4 |

As previously stated, the political power of tribes is dependent on how much a tribe can influence the voting behavior of its subjects. In the survey, three different

questions query what and why people voted for and those are considered to be dependent variables.

In model 1, the surveyor asks how the respondent decided which way to vote. The three choices available were: alone, with a family, or with a tribe. Ordinal regression was executed to see the effects on such response. Solitary decisions are given more ranking in an ordinal schema. If the respondent believes he could do his decision individually, the variable gets 3; whereas if he is dependent on family or a tribe leader, the variable gets 2 and 1 respectively. The more away from the one himself, the lower the variable coding is.

In model 2, the purpose of voting was queried and the resulting data analyzed with a logit regression. The various answers are categorized as individual reasoning and collective ones. The individual reasoning is coded as 1; whereas tribal connections as 0 in order to create a dependent variable for this logit regression.

The dependent variable for model 3 is determined by answers given to how participants would vote if a member of the same tribe ran as an independent candidate. Although there were several answer choices, they fell within two categories: "I vote according to my party preferences," which are coded as 1 and "I vote according to my relative," which are coded as 0. By creating three different dependent variables, I aimed to prove the consistency among the answers of each individual to the survey. The chosen questions all approach the issue from different perspectives but give a sign for the extent of political loyalty of the local people to their tribes.

The independent variables were also taken from the very same survey and determined as follows: The effects of each participant's level of education on their voting behavior and of their loyalty to a tribe were analyzed through coding

education levels as primary, high school, university, graduate programs. The participant's location was another crucial independent variable through which how much a person was exposed to urbanization could be observed. Three survey sites, a remote village, a close village and a district center (Siverek), were selected to see this possible differentiation. The names of the locations are hidden in order to protect the private information of the people. Instead, they are coded as 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The different distances to the district center and the different levels of communication networks are considered while choosing the villages. Both villages have intermediate schools, but not high schools. The location 1 is the place where tribe leader lives and very influential. From both villages, there are shuttle ring between the district center and the villages per twice a day. The survey was conducted to 145 people from the remote village, 150 people from the close village and 105 people from the district center (Kaymakci, 2018, pp. 46–47).

Economic conditions were other possible independents to understand the diversification how local people perceive their tribal connections in terms of a collective political stand. Un/employment, possession of land and annual income are important determinants for being docile or obstreperous to one's tribe. Age and gender within the region as well as how much one followed media programs are also included as confounding variables.

Through such variables, the following hypotheses are tested.

H1: More educated people are less willing to decide their vote under influence of the decision of their tribes. The more sources of information and different perspectives are available, the less they are aligned with their tribes.

One of the reasons to obey tribe leaders is the lack of knowledge and education. It is much easier and less risky to follow the decisions of a tribe leader if

there is no other source of information. As a provider of the trust and daily information within the region, a tribe leader has also de facto right to determine which option is the best.

H2: Urbanization decreases the connection between local people and their tribe leaders as well as the latter's decisions. Therefore, the more urbanized and integrated with the rest of the country the region, the less visibility of the tribes' political power.

In urban areas, tribe leaders could not control its subjects and the ballot boxes. Population and various social networks increase significantly in the city center which decreases the importance of local connections. So, people become much more individualistic rather than behaving collectively.

H3: Economic wealth would also bring political freedom. The more one would be independent economically from his/her tribal connections, the more s/he would make his/her own decisions.

One may argue that an advantage of tribal connection is economic. Income, possession of land or a state of employment signifies how a person's economic situation is. The fewer goods one has, the more s/he would be dependent on the tribe. For example, unemployment may cause economic dependence on one's tribe through which unemployed people would be more eager to listen to their tribe's decisions. Whoever can provide a means of survival to these people has the power to influence such people's decision-making. Without any proper employment, land or regular income, one would be under control of their tribe leaders as the latter is the closest authority who can provide daily unofficial works or enough supplements to survive. However, as people are wealthier, their dependence on their tribes diminishes.

3.2.2 Qualitative analysis

Through qualitative analysis, I aim to find out how central governments and local tribe leaders react to such change. While political modernization has taken place, how does political patronage between central governments and local tribes evolved? How does traditional political mechanism react to political modernization?

For this aim, a fieldwork was carried out in Şanlıurfa in 2017. Semi-structured interviews were utilized to collect qualitative data (Appendix A). These interviews in Şanlıurfa are conducted just two weeks after the controversial 2017 referendum, and the political atmosphere was still experiencing aftershocks. People were eager to talk about their decisions which created a good opportunity to observe them. The length of time taken by each interview was between one to two hours, largely determined by the willingness of the interviewee to talk. The questions were mostly about voting behavior and reasons behind their political choices, as these are key indicators to operationalize the political power of tribes. To what degree the lead of their tribe leaders was followed shows how influential and powerful tribes are in a political manner.

Snowball and spatial sampling were two techniques used. For snowball sampling, the representatives of political parties who got the most votes were contacted and they lead me to other officials and influential people in the region as well as institutions organized by the youth. By doing so I could reach dissident and hard-to-reach perspectives as well (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). For spatial sampling, ordinary people from different local districts and villages were interviewed (Appendix B). That enabled me to observe potential differences within various locations.

As an outcome of the sampling methods, the political elites in Şanlıurfa, such as tribe leaders and political parties are reached for this purpose. Furthermore, local people are reached as well. Those helped me to observe the higher level, the conditions between central government and local elites, and the lower level, the conditions between local elites and the local people, within Şanlıurfa.

Qualitative interviews as a data gathering method are not useful to check facts but it gives us a good understanding of people's perceptions. Such methodology, therefore, is a good way to search for my argumentation as the hypothesis addresses people's perception about tribes.

Twenty interviews were conducted. Among the interviewees were the municipality chairs of political parties, regional agricultural project officials, brothers of tribe leaders and a member of the parliament, local lawyers, peasants, the municipality deputy chairman and university academicians and students. Kurdish, Turkish and Arabic tribe members are included in the interviewee list. All declared their relation to various tribes themselves as a part of their identification. It is said to be a rare situation to find someone who does not affiliate himself with a tribe in Şanlıurfa. Nevertheless, several interviewees could be found from this dissent perspective as well. The interviewees were from different districts of Şanlıurfa, so all sides of Şanlıurfa could be heard from. Even so, one should bear in mind that those people were not real attained representative of any tribes, but belong to one of the tribes. So, their word cannot be taken as general approach of tribes, but rather their own opinions which were the information sought.

The interviews were semi-structured which included all of the major questions and possible follow-up questions. The interview followed where an interviewee took to the issues which he had given a much prior thought about tribes.

It helped me to observe points which were not possible to see beforehand about tribes. The interviews also helped me to observe how the local people construct social and political reality about the tribe system, and how they see the future of them as the method aims to reveal (Jones, 2004, p. 258).

3.2.3 Limits of the study

The limitation of my research stems from the fact that in the qualitative part, I could only talk with men for interviews, as political issues are exclusively under their control in this region. On several occasions, I tried to reach women in villages, but, having a long conversation with the women without the interference of others was really hard when one thinks about the local tradition. Actually, such a limitation also includes signs of how the local politics maintain. The lack of women would reveal the patriarchic conditions in the region. As a part of society, the women mostly do not have free access to information, various perspectives but have to listen to tribe leaders who are always men, specifically in the rural areas.

As another limit, this work only aims to understand local people's opinion about tribes and their relationship with the central government. I have asked the opinions about the local tribes and their relations with central governments. The people shared their own ideas about the local political systems and issues. Although those are relevant and specific comment about the politics of the region, they are not concrete measures of the power of the tribes. Measuring the real power of the tribes is beyond the scope of this work and these methodologies.

Having pointed out the limits, both methods still strengthened the power of the research to explain conditions within Şanlıurfa. They provided me with valuable

observation and significant results. Before moving the recent findings about the political power of tribes in the southeastern side of Turkey, it would be beneficial to point out how was the situation in the past. By doing so, the change within the political power of tribes would be much more visible.

CHAPTER 4

THE POLITICAL POWER OF LOCAL TRIBES

To elaborate on the uniqueness created by tribes when compared to Lerner's Balgat case, the historical background of the Eastern region will be summarized. Lack of alternative sources of information for people indigenous to these regions impeded deliberation on other possibilities rather than following powerful local authorities. Until the last couple of decades, people within the region have exhibited passive attitudes toward political decisions; whereas the government and the tribe leaders were the real actors.

Since the founding of the Republic, policy choice of political parties, namely the Republican People's Party (RPP) and the Democrat Party (DP), as well as the political system itself was influential on the relation between the central authority of the nation-state and local tribes. There were two policies were implemented by the central governments of Turkey in the eastern side of contemporary Turkey: Firstly, during the one-party state period between 1923 and 1939, the state elites have had diminishing interest in communicating with local leaders and listening to the demands of the local population. During this period, the Members of Parliament (MPs) appointed for this region usually had their roots from outside of the region. For example, in 1923 elections, 3 of 6 MPs of Şanlıurfa were born in this location; whereas the others were from Edirne, Hezargard, Uskup. The 2 of 6 MPs in 1927 elections and the 2 of 7 MPs in 1931 elections were born in Şanlıurfa. Ratios for the rest of the elections doesn't change significantly 1939 (so, not from tribes or any other local entity)³.

³ See The Turkish Republic General Assembly Albums, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/TBMM_Album/Yeni%20klas%C3%B6r/Cilt1.pdf, accessed by 04.07.2016

Secondly, after the advance of the multi-party system in 1946, there was a new competition between political parties. To be elected from the region, the political parties had to convince local de facto authorities. Consequently, the ration of local leaders in MP seats increased compared to one-party system, since, because of this system change, an attempt at compromise with tribes (local de facto authorities) had taken place by allowing them to create their own relative hegemony and to become representatives of their regions (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 192).

4.1 One-party system

The official reports are useful in clarifying the tension between the central government and tribes in early days of the Republic. Abdülhalik Renda was one of the influential state elites who wrote an official report to the Parliament about this issue in 1925. He eventually became the Minister of National Defense on 2 November 1927 until 25 December 1930. In his report, he suggested the deportation of specific Kurd tribes from the region and settlement of Turkish immigrants as a solution to the instability of the region. It seems like a brute way of providing order but there was some concrete relative reasoning behind it as well. For instance, Renda mentioned that some local people fear punishment by local leaders (tribes) because they were not getting involved in the revolts. Instead of state officials, local tribe leaders had the tools for rewarding or punishing the local people. So, Renda problematized the lack of state control in the region as a reason for the insecurity (Bayrak, 2013, pp. 94–95).

In later years, the government took serious actions to prevent tribes in the region from gaining power including the 1934 Turkish Resettlement Law (Resmi_Gazete, 1934, p. Law no:2510. Number:2733). This law has caused the

migration of 5.074 families including 25.831 local people from southern provinces to the west (Tekeli, 1990, p. 74).

Furthermore, this law, especially clause 10, reveals the contention between tribe leaders and the central government: “The law does not recognize tribes as a legal entity.” It was the first time the parliament officially refused the tribes and their political culture in a law. The titles of “sheik, agha, bey, reis” were degraded. Some “agitators”, who were deemed threats to security and public order were ordered to relocate to other western locations of the country.

Another crucial point in this clause is the transportation of such ‘agitators’ was ordered to be done dispersedly. By doing so, the central government did not only aim to send the tribes away from the region but aimed to destroy the collective identity of the tribes. If this law could be implemented properly, family ties would have been broken so that the central government would not have been obliged to bargain with the tribe leaders.

Yet, such aim could not be accomplished. Although political rights of the region were neglected by appointing non-local MPs to the region and forced migration had taken place under the single-party regime, the tribes were able to sustain their local influence. These external MPs failed to understand their conscripted constituents and to provide necessities for the region. Lack of ability to integrate the region to the central authority entailed local riots and insurgencies in the region until the Second World War (Kaynak_Yayınları, 2011). These insurgencies were not successful but were indicators of local reaction to the central authority.

The reactions of the local communities had been silenced during the Second World War. Nevertheless, the silence did not mean the acknowledgement of the defeat by local tribes. Suppression was not enough to break off the family ties. With

the earliest opportunity, the retreated local tribes would be visible and active again. The failure of the first policy to control the region by pressure became apparent by the advance of the multi-party system in 1946. Such a political system change has enabled the local tribe leaders to raise their voices since newly-established political parties (i.e. Democrat Party, DP) were more inclined to cooperate with the local tribe leaders, rather than neglecting them.

4.2 Multi-party system

The strict policy of the central governments changed during the transition to the multi-party system in the 1950s. The multi-party system forced political parties to obtain consent from the local people and the latter was still loyal to the tribes' leaders. Furthermore, RPP was not alone in the political system anymore so that it had to convince the people to get itself elected. However, the resulting competition between RPP and DP did not call for focusing on individuals. Rather, the political parties preferred to compromise with tribe leaders.

As Bruinessen points out "Each province elects its own members of parliament... Some provinces are so small that the personal following of some aghas or sheiks, or else of a coalition of aghas, may be sufficient to vote them into parliament" (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 192). In other words, local tribe leaders' influence was sufficient to gather enough votes for becoming MPs. So, they are profound actors in the political arena since the advance of the multi-party system. Therefore, through the intermediary role of tribes, one political party could win the election in a region very easily, possibly increasing its members in the Parliament. For this purpose, political parties included the local tribe leaders or their close relatives in their candidate's lists as the latter had already enough votes to be elected. Then, the

local leader, in return, used his charisma and authority to collect support to this party. Such a patronage-client relation increased the power of DP in the 1950s (Sunar, 1990).

As a supporting quotation for the policies of the political parties, Bruinessen also argues that “The officials (...) find that the only easy way to maintain a sufficient degree of law and order is to use some aghas and even sheiks again as intermediaries” (Bruinessen, 1992, p. 191). The DP benefited from local votes, whereas local tribe leaders in return strengthened their positions and provided the necessities for the local population. By doing so, local tribe leaders have become much more significant actors in the eyes of the local people at the lower level and in the eyes of the politicians at the higher level.

As a policy example, the law which was passed in 1951 supports the presence of co-optation between DP and the local tribes as well (Resmi_Gazete, 1951 p. Sayı:7880, Kanun no:5826). By this law, the Kurdish people who were settled in the Western side of Turkey with 1934 Resettlement Law were allowed to come back with the law in 1951. Through the clause 1 in the law, the power of the official military in the region was constrained and connected to the council of ministers in the chain of command. It meant there was a limitation on the military operations in the region. This law which was passed during DP period had an ice-breaking effect between DP party and local elites.

Such laws and policies also entailed that the only connection between the central government and the local people were the tribe leaders. Villagers, like those in the first period written about Balgat by Lerner, had to rely exclusively on their chief as a connection to the outside. As it was illustrated, the State apparatus could not reach the local people who were spread out in villages along the southeastern

side of Turkey without the help of the local political formation of tribes. For political parties, it was easier and less costly to reach those people via the local tribe leaders.

The multi-party system was a new advantage for tribe leaders from two different angles. Firstly, they have become more powerful actors while bargaining with the central political parties as they have backed up with a considerable amount of vote. Secondly, they have also become much more powerful leaders in the eyes of their members as they were respected by the central authorities. They have been much more esteemed from the lower and the higher levels (Beşikçi, 1970, pp. 327–28).

Universal suffrage counterintuitively empowered the local elite. Ayşe Kudat defines how the universal suffrage disguised in a different form within the region:

The goals of universal suffrage were achieved with an indirect system of election whereby, given the system, clients and junior members of families went along with preference of their patrons and seniors, respectively. Through these patron-client structures and large lineages parties were able to involve and to mobilize the peasant masses. (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 74)

Another important evidence for the political power of tribe leaders comes from the 1965 elections and 1969 elections. In both, the independent candidates from the eastern side of Turkey were more successful to be elected. Kudat points out:

An examination of provincial patterns in the 1969 elections indicates that of the seventeen provinces casting more than one-eighth of their total vote for independent candidates, fifteen were in the eastern Turkey... A more striking manifestation was that Gaziantep, Urfa, Maraş, Van, Elazığ, Tunceli, Bingöl, Mus, Hakkari, Mardin, Adıyaman, Hatay, Gümüşhane, Diyarbakır, and Malatya gave over twenty percent of all votes cast for independent candidates while this percentage was only 5.6 for the country (and obviously much lower when the above provinces are excluded.) (Ayşe Kudat, 1975, pp. 82–83)

Nermin Abadan (1966; see also, Ayşe Kudat, 1975, p. 83) discusses similar conditions for the 1965 elections. More independent candidates are visible from the Eastern Turkey. Those candidates have significant support from their tribal connections as a small number of votes was enough to be elected in those days.

Those points are sufficient to argue how important the tribes were for the stability and political environment of the region. In in-depth interviews, it is clearly mentioned that most tribes of Şanlıurfa were politically united until recently. They were capable of doing what they wanted collectively. They became a part of the political system by becoming members of the parliament after the multi-party system was established.

Having said these, it remains a relevant question of whether or not the political inclusion of tribes provides democratization in the region, because internal issues of tribes were not evaluated from this point of view. Bargaining with local authorities would not improve democratic institutions within the region, as the individuals could not make their own decisions individually as such decisions were contingent upon the collective will of their tribes. Members of tribes could not deviate from the decisions of the tribe much. That is why, they were described as unitary actors in Bruinessen (1992) and Uçar's (2016) work as well.

Nevertheless, as the modernization process has taken place in the region, another question has risen: are tribes in the process of losing their unitary aspects? Therefore, a re-evaluation of the political power of tribes is needed.

After discussing the tension between the central governments and tribes, it is now time to go into detail on the internal aspects of tribes at present through our survey and in-depth interview analysis. Owing to the advance of technological improvements and urbanization, the unitary characteristic of tribes has become

questionable. In the following sections, I show how new social and political facts have redefined this relation and how both the government and tribes re-positioned themselves accordingly.

CHAPTER 5

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: LOCAL POWER NOW?

The survey subsumed different locations in Siverek district of Şanlıurfa and focused on only one tribe's members which is Tirkan Tribe. The origin of this tribe is Turkish. However, because of intense interaction with Kurdish tribes within the region, The Tirkan Tribe have started to speak Kurdish throughout the time. In any kind of election, the leader of this specific tribe was always in favor of AKP openly, the incumbent Turkish party who defines itself as conservative democrat (interviewee #20).

The survey was conducted at three regions coded as the district center (location 3), a close village (location 2) and a remote village (location 1). Such a dispersion is done in order to see the effects of urbanization. The tribe leader lives in location 1 and the last referendum results at 16th April 2017 are telling for the village⁴.

In this referendum, the government was in favor of “yes” and the Tirkan Tribe also supported “yes”. The official results for the locations that are focused is below (table 2). In the village, where the tribe leader lives, almost all votes were “yes”. As the location gets larger and much more urbanized, the distribution of votes changes towards the middle.

⁴ See <https://sonuc.ysk.gov.tr/module/GirisEkrani.jsf> for official results.

Table 2 - Referendum Results

| Location | Number of Constituent | YES | NO | Not voting | invalid voting | YES percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Remote Village (location 1) | 477 | 470 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 98.53% |
| Close Village (location 2) | 2517 | 1356 | 759 | 402 | 67 | 53.87% |
| District center (location 3) | 130148 | 64962 | 35887 | 29299 | 2073 | 49.91% |

Undoubtedly the district center did not only consist of the Tirkan tribe, however the villages mostly did (Kaymakci, 2018, p. 46). The remote village (location 1) where the surveyed also was conducted did not vote anything but yes since it was the demand of the tribe leader as well. So, one can argue sensibly, if not naively, that the tribe leader was charismatic enough to influence people's political decisions in its local and rural territory and was not able to sway votes in that level in more complicated and crowded locations, such as district center, or even the village close to that district. Of course, more research is needed for such a conclusion.

Similar to these results, the survey sample shows the same positive tendency towards to incumbent party while controlling for locations. In the village, almost all people are declared that they are voting in favor of the incumbent party. However, when one considers the close village and the district center, the distribution of votes changes.

In other words, our survey sample has the similar breakpoint that implies a decline in power of tribe leader at the outside of the village for previous general elections held in 2015 (table 3). As there is only one tribe within the villages, tribal relations could control each constituent during the voting procedure (interviewee #20). The political consensus in the remote village is the result of the charisma of the tribe leader. At the first look, a decrease in guided votes can be seen easily as the location comes closer to the city center.

Table 3 –Votes (Sample)

| Location | Sample size | Declared Sample Votes | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-----|-----|------------|-------------------|
| | | AKP | CHP | MHP | Not voting | % incumbent party |
| Remote Village (location 1) | 145 | 144 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 99.31% |
| Close Village (location 2) | 150 | 137 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 91.33% |
| District center (location 3) | 105 | 47 | 1 | 57 | 0 | 44.76% |
| Total | 400 | 328 | 1 | 70 | 1 | |

The following regression models are based on the questions within the same survey. As a first attempt to analyze the survey, I estimate the following model:

$$P(\text{How to decide vote} = 1 | X) = \beta_1 \text{age} + \beta_2 \text{gender} + \beta_4 \text{education} + \beta_4 \text{location} + \beta_5 \text{possession of land} + \beta_6 \text{income} + \beta_7 \text{unemployment} + \varepsilon$$

Then, I have changed the dependent variable in the following models as it is explained in the research design methodology chapter. All of the dependent variables are related questions to how a person decides to vote and to what extent tribe leaders are influential on one's decisions. I am interested in to understand the connection between an individual and his tribe leaders while making a political decision. What kind of factors may affect the intensity of such connection?

Having said these, statistical results are discussed below (table 4). Age and gender did not cause a significant systemic change to poll respondents. If a person gets older, it does not make any significant change about the influence of the tribal connections on his/her individual voting decisions. Similar, being a man or woman does not make any significant change in the one's individual decision process.

Whereas, a positive correlation was found between the education level and individualization of voting behavior. The people with higher education levels are significantly more likely to vote according to their individual party preferences rather

than tribal connections. Hence, this finding supports hypothesis 1 that more educated people are less willing to decide their vote under influence of the decision of their tribes.

Another important finding was that the location of the respondents is also statistically significant. If people live in more urbanized locations, such as a city center instead of a district or in a district instead of a remote village, they are less connected to their tribal relations. Being connected to the other regions increases one's delinking from his/her tribe. Introverted characteristic of tribes has been wiped away as a result of modernization and its diffusion effects. This finding supports hypothesis 2.

One unanticipated finding was that economic variables did not provide expected results. Income level is not significant. Having a wealthier condition does not imply that one would prioritize their own decisions over tribe relations. Having economic wealth does not necessarily entail the individual freedom about political decisions.

Unemployment did not give a significant result as well. Unemployed people tended to blame the government or the tribe itself because of their situation. However, the survey does not have a detailed information about this. So, one cannot argue that unemployment makes people more likely to align with one of the options. Therefore, hypothesis 3 could not be defended as the related results are not statistically significant. Such unexpected findings are elaborated through qualitative methods below.

Furthermore, the possession of land variable has become negatively significant in the first two models. Having an amount of land makes people much

more linked to their tribes according to these results. This is a sign for how tribes can survive and gather attention from the local members.

Therefore, one possible explanation for these unexpected results about economic wealth might be that a person does not necessarily delink his/her tribal connections, especially if one's wealth may be a result of his tribal connections.

Additionally, for robustness, other survey questions were used as well. Five different basic political questions were asked in order to evaluate a respondent's political knowledge: What is a democracy? What is laicism? Whom does the parliament represent? Who is the current prime minister? Who is the current mayor of Şanlıurfa? If an answer is correct, it is coded as 1, otherwise 0. Then, all answers are added up and divided by the total number of the questions in order to have a variable to check what affected the respondents' political knowledge. As independent variables, the previous ones are used, yet media effect is also added. The media effect variable is derived from the survey question that determined how often one watched political tv shows. This was neglected in the previous analysis as it did not capture which programs were watched. Nevertheless, it is useful to see whether it influences political knowledge or not. Education and location have a significant effect on an increase in political knowledge, as it is expected.

Besides, being a man is also seen as significant for an increase in political knowledge index. It also gives a characteristic of the region which implies how women are excluded from the political arena.

The media is also crucial in influencing and decreasing people's political knowledge. What is surprising is that the variable for the media effect has resulted in negatively and significantly correlated with the political knowledge. The crucial part of this specific finding for this work is that it did not increase the political knowledge

as expected in common sense. This inconsistency with common sense may be due to what kind of channels are watched and it necessitates more research. The channels may be filled with the propaganda of the central governments who is a potential alliance of the tribes at some points may increase one's loyalty to his/her tribe.

As a general result of statistical analysis, an increase in education and urbanization increase the political knowledge of the people, they also sharpen the focus on individualistic preferences and decision making instead of trusting tribal connections.

Table 4 - Regression Tables

| Variables | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| age | -0.0514 (0.114) | -0.0771 (0.147) | -0.0813 (0.198) | -0.115 (0.0754) | -0.138* (0.0757) |
| gender | -0.240 (0.264) | 0.577* (0.349) | -0.306 (0.383) | 0.940*** (0.159) | 0.716*** (0.177) |
| education | 0.434*** (0.1000) | 0.589*** (0.126) | 0.717*** (0.160) | 0.619*** (0.0592) | 0.553*** (0.0633) |
| location | 1.329*** (0.184) | 1.122*** (0.174) | 1.996*** (0.325) | 0.262*** (0.0900) | 0.204** (0.0898) |
| possess land | -0.243** (0.105) | -0.239* (0.136) | -0.161 (0.165) | 0.0501 (0.0690) | 0.0309 (0.0682) |
| income (yearly) | 0.138 (0.110) | 0.207 (0.133) | 0.0605 (0.131) | -0.0585 (0.0545) | -0.0478 (0.0576) |
| unemployment | 0.0288 (0.247) | -0.0129 (0.287) | -0.0353 (0.385) | -0.0158 (0.177) | -0.0242 (0.175) |
| Media Effect | | | | | -0.277*** (0.0911) |
| constant | | -4.741*** (0.724) | -7.988*** (1.081) | 0.0902 (0.317) | 1.360** (0.530) |
| /cut1 | 1.603*** (0.499) | | | | |
| /cut2 | 4.750*** (0.548) | | | | |
| R2 | 0.200 | 0.254 | 0.402 | 0.441 | 0.454 |
| Observations | 400 | 400 | 393 | 400 | 400 |

* p<.1 ** p<.05 *** p<.01

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Dependent variable for model 1: How do you decide which way to vote?

Dependent variable for model 2: What is the purpose of your voting?

Dependent variable for model 3: How would you vote if a member from your tribe ran as an independent candidate?

Dependent variable for model 4-5: political knowledge.

CHAPTER 6

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT VOTING BEHAVIOR

In the previous chapter, I show the points where the modernization theory is valid and revealing. Education and urbanization have significant effects on individualization of the political behaviors of the local people in Şanlıurfa. So, the local people in Şanlıurfa would become much more autonomous and self-interest oriented if their education and urbanization levels increase. Such findings are a bad sign for the future of tribes as tribes had an important role as intermediary actors between the central government and the local people.

In this chapter, the in-depth interviews are analyzed. At first, how the modernization is experienced by the local leader and tribal leadership are focused on. The statistical findings are mostly observed on the ground.

Then, the further pages of this chapter elaborate on the lingering effect of local tribes and more importantly how the local tribal power still operates on the ground. In other words, even though there is a significant decline in the political power of local tribes, how local tribes still garner political power are discussed.

6.1 The effects of urbanization over voting behavior

A more urbanized location has a positive impact on the individualization of voting behavior according to the quantitative analyses. The in-depth interviews also bolster this finding as following.

“Television and electricity ruined us.” said one of the Arabic tribe leaders (interviewee #6) who was also the chairman of official Tradesmen and Craftsmen Foundation in Harran district. He smiled helplessly while explaining what he meant

with this sentence. The television and electricity have brought them a totally new and different life styles. Their tradition has seemed obsolete by the young generations. The elders cannot control where the youth is going, what they are thinking, how they are thinking. Similar to the chief in Balgat, he also feels despairingly against the challenge of modernization. Actually, the diffusion of information ruined their control over the information resources. How diffusion of information would transform traditional societies is already covered in the modernization theory (Lerner & Pevsner, 1964). So, this quotation shows the extent of modernization theory that is acknowledged in my research.

In the historical background section, the importance of the pivotal role of a tribe leader to be the only link of his villagers to the rest of the world was clarified. When the quoted interviewee (#6) was a young man in 1950s, the first radio and most probably the only one in the village was in the oda of the village. As it was the tool carrying the news to the village, the flow of information was limited and under control of the tribe leader. That is why the interviewee (#6) was critical about the television and the smartphone as the leader of tribe recently. After the advance of television, nobody needs to ask anything to the tribe leader. This is a symbolic example of the destructive part of urbanization on the local political systems.

From another perspective, an economy department instructor (interviewee #3) from Harran University pointed out the double-movement effects of urban improvements. Through technology, governmentally supported tribes are much more effectively served. Irrigation and electricity facilities are provided easily in return for collective electoral support of tribe members to the incumbent party. The capability of the central governments to provide goods has increased which also increased the

charisma of the tribe leaders if the transition happens through them. Broadly speaking, it can be seen as an advantage for both central government and local tribes.

However, through this increased accessibility of technology and urbanization, information all around the world became easier to acquire, which makes the local people more independent from both the tribe relations and the central government in the present. Technological improvements have not only changed the endowments of tribe leaders and governments, but integrated a new actor much more intensely to the political arena which is the individual himself/herself.

A young member (interviewee #16) of Kurdish Cevheri Tribe whose uncle is an MP drew a similar conclusion: “The state gets stronger in this region. This is true. On the other hand, the technology is stronger as well.” He explained what he meant afterward. Although the state uses various new technological apparatuses to control the region and it has infrastructural tools (Mann, 1984) for it, technology also comes with alternative information sources. Urbanization through technology strengthens both state control in specific cases, but it also weakens it in other areas as well. Technology bequeaths its advantages impartially. Hence, the state is not the only one deriving benefit. Each individual is capable of using information-spreading devices such as smartphones, laptops and televisions. What is certain about the improvement of urbanization and technology is that tribes lose their grip on people as they are no longer the exclusive source of information.

Urbanization goes along with rural transformation (Berdegué, Rosada, & Bebbington, 2014). Roads are renovated, public transportation is optimized and new mass-housing projects are constructed. The more the state apparatus urbanizes rural areas, the less area and scope of influence tribes have. They essentially become trapped in ever-shrinking rural pockets along the shrinking peripheries of growing

metropolitan centers. Tribes, in return, become increasingly dependent on the central governments to satisfy their people's growing needs such as enhancements and upgrades to existing infrastructure and as well as electricity.

Another important fact for urbanization is that Şanlıurfa became a metropolitan municipality in 2012 which robustly accelerated urbanization and gathering around city centers. Becoming a metropolitan municipality integrates small districts around Şanlıurfa to the center so that the governing of small districts has become an issue of the central mayor. Such a fact also decreased the ability of tribe leaders to control alone within the small districts. As the scope of voting regions expands, the leading ability of the tribe leaders decrease.

Furthermore, Transportation Coordination Center has established as a new institution of the metropolitan municipality which increased the connection between the rural areas and the center (<http://www.balikligol.com>, 2012 accessed in 27.05.2018). The rural areas have become the parts of the center.

Implicitly, becoming a metropolitan also has a huge impact on the people's voting behavior. TUIK data⁵ shows how the population of Urfa in the city center increases more than in the villages. In 1990, the population of Şanlıurfa was recorded at just over 1 million, whereas in 2000, it rose to over 1.4 million, a significant increase of over 40% in just the span of a decade. In contrast, the surrounding villages experienced a population growth rate of just 29%. Such rapid increases in the city population have had a critical influence over the voting behavior of the people. In villages, ballot boxes include a small number of votes and not properly protected. Besides, each village usually includes only one tribe. So, voters are easily distinguishable which undermines the secret voting procedure.

⁵ <https://biruni.tuik.gov.tr/nufus90app/idari.zul> accessed in 27.05.2018

An interviewee (#15) shares his voting experience in the last referendum 2017:

In our village, my tribe decided to vote for yes. They also knew that we, 20-30 young people, would vote for “no”. So, they told us not to come to vote. Most of my friend could not go to vote. What I did was different. I took my voting location to the center and could vote. They cannot follow what I vote in the center. Even though 20-30 young people did not go to vote, the tribe leaders voted instead of them as yes.

Voting stations in Turkey are determined according to one’s official accommodation location. If a person wants to change it, s/he are allowed to do so. The interviewee took his voting location to another place where there are various people and out of the tribe leader’s monitoring scope. This dramatic account shows how influential tribes are in determining the outcome of elections held in their villages. State control fell short in ensuring a stable and fair election in this instance. A critical question to ask regarding this is whether or not the state is eager to change this situation.

What would happen if someone in a similar situation as interviewee #15 goes on and votes for his decision anyway, despite his tribe’s wishes? The answer comes from another interviewee (#19) from another village: “I insisted and voted no in the referendum in contrast to our agha’s decision. When my village learned about it, they did not allow me to use local district-village shuttle. So, I had to walk 15 km to the village. But I did not give up and walked.”

Kaya also share a comment of one of his interviewees in his book. An artisan related to a tribe argues how his life has changed when he moved to the city center: “We had never seen the votes in the villages. Tribe leader and soldiers had decided whom to vote instead of us. In the city, it was the first time we see my voting. It was

the first time, we see the party logos. Nowadays, we are voting who we like to vote” (Kaya, 2015, p. 133).

The ballot boxes are controlled by the tribes in most of the villages in Şanlıurfa, similar to the village that this survey took place. This effectively creates voting blocs, or “block votes” as this was the term used to refer to the phenomena by several interviewees (#5, #1, #2, #12, #16, #17). The prolific nature of this reference throughout the qualitative sample indicates that this is not a secret. In each village, there are only several hundred votes so, it is not hard to control them. If, by chance, there are several dissident votes in the ballot boxes, it would not be very difficult to find out who the dissidents are and punish them. Anonymity simply does not exist when the ballot box is in a village. In the city center, on the other hand, anonymity is possible because the ballot boxes there contain a lot more votes which are cast by a diverse electorate hailing from a plethora of groups and tribes. Indeed, it would be a daunting challenge, costing considerable resources, to determine who voted for what. Therefore, as the population density increases in the city center, the tribe leaders can no longer monitor votes. They effectively lose their ability to single out individual voters resulting in the weakening of a tribe’s hand in dealing with incumbent governments. This contemporary urbanization and the ensuing effects on tribal power contrasts sharply with how things were done in the past.

Tribe leaders always live in villages. So, they are not a part of the metropolitan municipality. Their lack of visibility lessens their influence on city dwellers as well. In urban daily life, people start to neglect their leaders’ decisions and orders. There is no influence of tribes to punish the ones’ behavior in the cities. For example, one of the interviewees (#18) has left his village and settled in the town as a result of a quarrel. He shares his relationship with his tribe:

They wanted to limit me. When I objected to their limitations, they threatened me by exclusion. However, it was not a deterrent punishment for me. I, myself, decided to leave the tribe and came to here. Here, I have no contact with them. They cannot damage me here as they are not providing my food or shelter. If they do, they would have a power on me. Then, they would intervene my decisions and life style. I do not even think about them here.

Having said these, one may think that as the number of block votes decreases in the city center, it is harder for tribe leaders to exercise their decreasing political power over the central government in order to bargain with them. Yet, this is only partially correct. After becoming a metropolitan municipality, the votes of villagers were added to municipal elections and therefore counted. Before this change, only the city center voted in mayoral contests. So, the political power of tribe leaders is still valid but partially effective as they cannot select a representative themselves but can be a part of a huge political party. With Şanlıurfa being a metropolitan, it was harder to vote independent candidates to the parliament, but tribes still have leverage over political parties because of the votes that count in municipal and general elections. In other words, they are effective as long as they become a part of strong political parties and provide a contribution to winning of a political party in elections.

Becoming a metropolitan has also changed the electoral process in districts. For example, in 2009, an independent candidate could become a chair of the central municipality by getting 77,921 of the 238,753 votes cast. However, only in 5 years, the population of that electorate increased to 934.894 because all of the peripheral districts were included in the election after becoming a metropolitan municipality. Thus, it has become much harder for anyone to be elected independently. Furthermore, the voting power of the surrounding villages pales in comparison to that of the metropolitan municipality, Şanlıurfa. The political power of tribes could

not deal with such huge numbers. So, they decided to join various parties in order to protect their influence over their subjects, at least in the villages.

Concurrently, the parties have chosen the easier way by bargaining with the local tribe leaders in order to collect votes from the villages. Although the old bargaining systems based on the political power of tribe leaders are no longer effective in urbanized areas, such political power has not totally diminished in rural areas but has taken a different shape. Tribe leaders maintained their political characteristic at a lower level as a minor supporter of strong political parties.

For MP elections, the same increase in necessary votes to be elected is valid. As the city became a metropolitan center and the number of voters tripled, the viability of an independent candidate from tribes has diminished significantly. It is in light of this finding that Bruinessen's argument (1992, p. 192) that small provinces would be a chance for tribe leadership to be chosen is not valid because they have adapted to support political parties and accept smaller advantages in return.

Through urbanization, the direct pressure of local tribes on the voters has been diminished. The local tribes have mostly lost their ability to choose their representative independently. Instead, they have become the supporters of the strong parties and maintained to collect goods in return for their members' votes. So, the political parties gained advantages in the political clientelist system since the political power of local tribes has diminished as much as the individuals have become much more independent. Yet, the political power of the tribes has survived since most of the individuals are still connected to their tribes who are still partially in the game. How they achieved to stay in the political game will be discussed under the chapter of "the Tools of local tribes for Survival in the City."

6.2 Education

Along with the effects of urbanization, an increase in education level has a significant effect on individualization of the voting behavior of tribe members according to my survey analysis. Such a fact is also confirmed by interview results.

A point that was frequently noted in the interviews was the increase in the education level within the region. However, there was no consensus about whether it is a positive fact or an insidious one. Education was described by some interviewees as a tool for becoming self-conscious; others blamed it for the destruction of local tradition. Fourteen of twenty interviewees mentioned education while talking about tribes. Out of these, none came out directly against education per se, but a few did complain about the “unexpected” consequences of education.

One of the Arabic tribe leaders (Interviewee #6) spoke about how they thought of educated people when they were young; they believed that the educated ones were not aware of the realities of the life, that they were not in tune with nature enough. They held firm to the opinion that books alone were not enough to understand the world. So, this interviewee and his friends associated educated people with naïveté while growing up.

He then sadly recounted how his son, who was educated in the city center, openly objected to his decisions. His son was not loyal to him and it was a shock for the interviewee. This was understood by the latter as the deterioration of their culture. Throughout his personal experiences, what the interviewee believed is that modern law and education undermines their tradition and social institutions, like tribes. Such social institutions were binding elements of the society. If someone

sweeps them away, they would damage the essentials of the society. Therefore, the interviewee openly refuted the life styles related with the modern societies.

His understanding of the social conflicts within the region also approves the modernization theory and its clear distinction between the modern and the traditional. He believes the education based on western values has separated his mindset from his son's. He would never go against his elders and did not feel any problem with it. It is encouraging to compare this interview with what was discussed by Harrison (1995, pp. 29–30): “In many respects, modernity and tradition were regarded as antithetical. People, values, institutions and societies were either traditional or modern. They could not be both, and when the two came together there would inevitably be some kind of social disturbance.” This quotation well defines the disturbance feeling of the interviewee while comparing the old times and the new times.

From the other side of the coin, three relatively younger interviewees (#14 #15 #18) were all in favor of education. They were enthusiastic to share their experiences in the schools, such as how they met with the people from other tribes and origins. At some point, they expressed their indignation against their families, in their words, who try to limit them. Especially, one of them (#18) was overwhelmed with the tribal limitations and argued that education is a way of destroying the traditional introverted system. He said “I am tired of that hierarchy and ignorance. Reading will change the whole area. In our village, nobody reads. The youth is getting together and reading in this bahçe (garden)⁶.”

⁶ “Bahçe” (garden) is a modest tea house at the city center. The young, especially who are not welcome by their own families come together there. Each has a different story, but the common point of most is that they do not feel affiliated with their *aşirets* and excluded from it because of that. How they see *aşirets* system, in their words feudal system, would give signs of change.

One of the descriptions of an interviewee (#14) was unexpected and suggests the importance of the education clearly. The interviewee, who is a student at Harran University made a critical comparison between his village and their neighbor village. By chance, an idealist teacher from the municipality visited his village 20 years ago, and asked to bring a few children to the municipality and enroll them in schools. He does not remember the details, but somehow a few families agreed to send their children with him which was a breaking point for the whole village. After that, some other people also sent their children to school in the municipality. Although the agha was not happy about it and forced the local people to send their children to farms, not to school; some people acted against the agha. In the interviewee's words, "Once the peasant sees that the educated ones are becoming teachers and even lawyers, then there is a demand for education afterward." Once the introverted aspect of the village has broken, people has noticed how less the agha was offering to them.

However, it was totally different for his neighbor village. There was no encounter with education over there. The people there were still firmly under the control of their agha. Any encounter with the outside would make a shocking effect on the people from this village. Once, the interviewee took two people from his neighbor village to the municipality to buy supplies. While shopping, the two repeatedly mentioned their agha's name. They thought it would help them to get a discount. Yet, the shoppers did not know their agha's name. The two were totally perplexed and could not believe how it was possible to not to know their agha? The interviewee (#14) told this story in order to illustrate how myopic their perspective was. He clarified the situation by asserting that: the interviewee was a student in a social science department at Harran University and the other two were illiterate.

According to the interviewee, the people in his village do not care much about their agha as much as they did in the past; whereas in their neighbor village people are still respectful to their agha more than necessary. The limit between villages prevents the former to change the latter anyhow.

To clarify, I asked whether there could be any other reason for the difference between the two villages. He says “No, we all do the same thing, same work in the same region, they are our neighbor. The only difference is the coming of the teacher into our village.”

A small cleft started the change in the interviewee’s village and this effect has resulted in a decline of the power of the agha through time. The agha and the goods that he provides in the village could not satisfy the villager after a point. He could have protected his prestige by utilizing new tools that would be valid in the municipalities and districts. This is how other counterparts have survived and will be discussed in the section of “The Tools of Tribes for Survival in the City”.

6.3 Economic conditions

In contrast to Hypothesis 3, some economic variables in the regression models are insignificant and others are negatively correlated with the dependent variables. The reason for this can be derived from the in-depth interviews. Through the interviews, one can easily observe that the tribe leaders are still an important job and land-giver within the region. So, having a better income, employment does not necessarily lead people to behave more independently as their various possessions may be a result of being aligned with the tribe connections. Besides, the possession of land is a significant variable to affect the individualization of voting behavior negatively.

Through urbanization, changes in economic conditions also occurred and became a constitutive factor for people and their relationship with tribes for tribes became influential only in a limited scope when it comes to economic enhancement of its people. Although urbanization circumscribes the economic advantages of being loyal to a tribe, there is still a valid connection between local people and tribes in terms of economic production. For example, the local people, especially for the young people, felt strongly connected to their tribes if they were dependent on their tribes economically. In other words, if one could find a job through his tribal relations, then he showed his loyalty. If one's tribe was strong enough, such as including an MP, to appoint one into small official occupations, then people would proudly gather together around their tribes; if otherwise, they would pursue their own interests. For an example, a young interviewee (#15) expressed his discomfort caused by his cousins' loyalty to their tribes. He argues that they do not object any decision of their tribes because they want to benefit from the tribe ties. "They are able to get into jobs by only giving the name of the tribe leader" the interviewee says.

This internal patronage-client relationship is much more prevalent in villages. People in villages are disempowered as they are not well trained to find jobs as much as the ones in the city center. The only path to official occupations, such as, employment as cleaners or officers in official buildings is through their tribal connections. While tribe leaders derived their influence and prestige by handing out employment opportunities in agriculture in decades past, they are now able to reward loyalty by appointing villagers to minor official jobs in their close district. Such reality impedes the hypothesis three to be significant in which economic conditions are seen as a way to independence from tribal connections.

That is why the possession land is negatively significant at model 1 and model 2 in quantitative analyses. Tribes can lead the local members' decision as much as they provide land to them. A young interviewee (#18) points out how his tribe leader distribute the land to the loyal members. The interviewee argues the land holders cannot go against the tribe leader because of the fear of losing their land. Land has become a tool of local tribe leaders to protect the link between some local tribe members and the leaders.

To sum up the economic conditions part, the source of economic wealth is unclear in the region. It may be a result of hard working or training, but it also may be a result of tribal connections. So, it is hard to argue that the more economic wealth one has, the freer s/he would be to decide on political manners. If one's economic wealth is based on his familial or tribal connections, s/he would not go against the decision of the tribe, but the opposite, s/he would struggle to sustain the political power of his/her tribe since his/her wealth is also dependent on the tribe's survival.

Therefore, although education and urbanization are effective and explanatory than economic variables in shaping voting behavior and the political power of tribes, economic conditions also have fundamental effect on the individualization of voting behavior.

Economic conditions may be an outcome of tribe connections, rather than an independent effect on it. As a tribal connection is a possible reason for economic wealth, the hypothesis 3 becomes a flawed one. Inverse causality should be questioned at this point. Similar points can be made for land possession and income level as well. The direction of their relationship with a tribal connection is elusive.

So far, there has been the discussion on how the expansion of city centers limits the control tribes have over its subjects, followed by further discussion on how

population growth has disrupted tribes' voting power, particularly when voting for independent candidates. What follows now is the discussion on how incumbent governments are leveraging the state apparatus to capitalize on this deadlocked situation to maintain continued support for their elected officials. Under newly-emerged circumstances, tribe leaders have no much options but to deal with the central government in order to survive and to be respected by local peoples.

6.4 Centralization of the state

As an outcome of modernization and nation-state; centralization of state apparatus and bureaucracy have taken place in Turkey for a long time. Such a condition pushed the political actors to change their political strategies according to new circumstances. Without a doubt, one of the most impressive locations in Turkey was southeastern side as its political system have been based on traditional connections. To clarify the changes that have occurred in terms of unique tribe characteristics, firstly, I offer several anecdotal accounts. Then, I discuss possible causes of these changes in this part.

Interviewee (#7), who is relatively wealthy and a member of a known tribe, pointed out, “Tribes were a social protection of people. ...If one of my cousins’ house has burnt, all other members of our tribe should have come together. And the agha would say, Ahmet you will give that amount of money, Mehmet you will give that amount... Then the house would be built again immediately.” Unexpected circumstances were overcome by the help of the belonged tribes. This mutual aid has been a kind of duty within the tribes (Maffesoli, 1996, p. 141).

Furthermore, tribes were not a problem-solver entity only within the tribes but among tribes as well. Another relatively older interviewee, (#10) who is the

former chairman Tradesmen and Craftsmen Foundation in Şanlıurfa, argued that “In old times, the state was not able to reach these areas that much. There was no judge, no police officers. So, we had to find a way to deal with our problems. If there was a fight between two tribes, the third one would get involved as an afra (a de facto judge). If both sides are okay to accept the conviction of this judge at the beginning, his decision cannot be demurred.”

During the interview, he also added that even in these days, people sometimes prefer to go the tribes to solve their problem because they believe official judiciary system is too slow. Nevertheless, it is much less observable. In the urbanized province, tribes cannot find their problem-solving position properly as other institutions took their places through urbanization (Kaya, 2015). In the previous two examples, there was no mention of any state apparatus available to solve regional problems. So, local organizations emerged in order to provide solutions to the people’s general obstacles. Yet, the state has been much more visible recently. So, the discussion about who is in charge on the ground caused the evolution of local political and judicial system.

In this work, I did not argue that local people have no proper political, social and economic system before the arrival of modern state apparatus. Instead, I argue that there was another local system based usually on kinship and tribal connections and such a system is challenged by the arrival of the modern state.

Having mentioned the earlier decades, one of the critical challenges that tribes are presently facing is urbanization of Şanlıurfa as a visible indicator of an increase in state centralization. The state has used its power to transform Şanlıurfa through huge construction and urbanization projects. Connected with the previous

facts, urbanization is a social process which encompasses the regions controlled by tribes.

Better roads, along with the increased availability of telecommunication and education are all signs of the expanding state capacity enveloping the region, ultimately and fundamentally transforming it. These phenomena have rapidly posed substantial challenges to the authority of tribe leadership. As recently as the 1990s, for example, there was no local court that had jurisdiction over conflicts that would arise in the villages of Harran. Interviewee (#4) shared a story to explain how the tribe leader was an important character in his childhood before coming to the city center.

“There was a fight between two people in our village. It got bigger, so soldiers had arrived at our village. I was excited to see them. I was observing them. They directly went to the oda in which the tribe leader was waiting for them. The military official, probably he was a sergeant, talked with our tribe leader. Our leader promised to take care of the issue. Then, the soldiers left. The sergeant did not even see the fighters. There was no official questioning or any other attempt to solve the problem done by the soldiers. That was the point when I started to hesitate from the power of our leader as a child. He was the symbol of authority in our village. There was no state but the tribe leader. I could not challenge him until I came to the center. Here, I realize his power is limited.”

Lack of state capacity to rule, adjudicate and enforce created a power vacuum that the tribes readily filled. If state treated tribe leaders as important characters of the region, the villagers had no choice but to acknowledge this fact.

Until the 21st century, communication beyond the village was quite limited and the village leaders were highly respected by the locals. By offering several advantages to the leader, a party could easily bargain with tribes, leaving the concerns of the people to their leader. On the other hand, because of political power based on the quantity of votes, tribes would threaten the incumbent party with

unwelcome changes in their political positioning, as it occurred in the RPP and DP periods and afterward. Interviewee (#16) points out how his grandfather entertained offers from various parties in the 1960s. He argued the parties were after the votes of our tribe members. His grandfather had a meeting with important people in his tribe and then choose one of the offers. In the 1960s, tribes had political options.

As it can be understood from the points of the interviewee (#16) such political positioning was not because of ideological reasoning. Instead, the tribe leaders got aligned with the political parties according to economic and political best and cost analysis. If a political party can satisfy the necessities of a tribe, especially the tribe leader; then it would get political support in return. As it is mentioned above, local tribes had had options to support in the 1950s and 1960s.

However, centralization of the state has changed this, as both sides are now aware that the tribes' political power is relatively limited and largely confined to the villages along the rural periphery. An increase in the ability to controlling the region from the center has enabled the central government to reward and punish the tribes much more efficiently. This development has strengthened the hand of the incumbent government. Interviewee (#9) pointed out that “it is hard to go against the state because the state strengthens the ones who obey. For example, civil servants cannot vote no in our village even they wish to do so.” The situation is similar for tribe leaders as well, for anyone in this group who failed to toe the line saw reductions in public funding (interviewee #14 #15 #18).

One may argue that the state would also punish in the earlier periods as the number of military operations has taken place in the region. So, the punishment ability of the state is not a new condition within the region. Although this argument is valid to some extent that the state could punish in the first decades of the Republic,

the cost of punishment to the state has been much larger after the multi-party system where the votes of a tribe's member were also much more important. That is why, DP governments would not prefer to punish but to compromise with the local tribes in the 1950s. During the earlier periods of the multi-party system, the punishment by the state was much less important in the old days as the tribes were sufficient to take care of themselves. However, in these days, the demands of the local people have increased a lot. Furthermore, the monitoring and providing capability of the tribes has decreased because of increasing number of the members and interaction with the rest of the country. Those put the tribe leaders in a more vulnerable position.

Therefore, incumbent political parties can use their power to strengthen allied tribes as well as to weaken dissident tribes. A previous local chair of the incumbent party (interviewee #10) revealed this important fact by saying that: "When we visit villages, we do not only shake hands with the leaders anymore but with sharecroppers as well. We are giving an identity to those people. So, they are feeling freer. By doing that we are preventing the block votes." Then, as a follow-up question, I asked him which locations they visit. He said, they went to Siverek and Viranşehir. These local districts were important because these are the locations where the opposition party has gotten the highest votes.

Later in the interview, he acknowledged again the reality of the block votes and smugly added "but they are not important because they are voting for us." In other words, this anecdote shows how a member of the incumbent party neglected the block votes when the situation is in favor of them; whereas they fought against it in the local municipalities where the opposition party had higher votes.

As it is mentioned above, the centralization of the state shows itself as infrastructural development projects as well. However, those projects are not the only

economic tool incumbent governments use to influence daily lives. The local socialization areas have been also becoming under control of the state and the central governments.

One of the traditions indigenous to the area is the house of condolence, which is a place where relatives of a dead person accept the condolences of other people. These places are usually funded by villagers and have been independent of any official regulations. However, the state started to establish and fund these houses as a social service. In the end, this independent social institution was constructed and appropriated by the State. Interviewee (#4) asserted how the incumbent governments used this as an opportunity: “The municipality sends tents for the condolence programs if the village votes in favor of them.” An important aspect of daily life on the ground there has been connected to the state through economic aid. The state apparatus eventually started to exercise control over the details of the traditions of tribes through economics. Michael Mann (1984) calls such a policy “infrastructural power” and Belge also quotes him as “to penetrate and centrally coordinate the activities of civil society through its own infrastructure” (Belge, 2011, p. 99).

The interviewees claimed to feel the influence of the state in their daily lives more and more; whereas the tribes are not visible in the city centers. Yet, there is a struggle to evoke the tribes in the public area of the city centers as well. Although several factors have circumscribed tribes to a limited political area, the tribe leaders would struggle to enlarge their influence by new methods and to sustain their devoted people. A local political actor who is exposed to new conditions would not only accept the defeat, but seek alternative ways to protect his power as I will give several examples below.

6.5 The tools of tribes for survival in the city

The modernization process is perceived as a very strong force as if no social relation could resist its transforming impact. However, it would be futile to think there would be no challenge to the penetration of a modern life style. Older traditional systems seem to pose such a challenge in that they strive to find ways to protect their circumstances. They either reject the modern life style as a whole, or find ways to sustain some components of their traditional structure within the modern system itself. Due to this potential of entanglement between the modern and the traditional, a clear-cut distinction between these systems can hardly be made. Furthermore, not only a traditional tribal connection can survive under the umbrella of a modern political system, but it can also functionally use certain modern tools to fortify its connections, which only adds to the vagueness of the distinction between the modern and the traditional.

The transformation of tribes during the modernization process is sometimes described as “the modernization of tribes” (Kaya, 2015). It is certain that the transformation includes modern elements, however, such a notion does not capture the process in its whole. Tribes are still social networks based on old traditional ties but they utilize new methods to protect their traditional system. Therefore, the tribes do not go through a complete transformation, rather, they make use of the modern tools in order to protect the essence of tribes, such as familial altruistic ties and solidarity.

A Kurdish saying points out how crucial the number of members is for a tribe to sustain its power: “The valiant is the one who has more relatives” (Gökalp, 1992, p. 35). Three different modern practices help tribes maintain their solidarity against

modernization. First, tribes carry the oda culture to the city center by means of derneks (i.e., foundations). Second, job-givers in the rural areas are mainly tribe leaders. Third, tribal endowments are corporatized, which protects economic wealth within a tribe. I elaborate on the specific functions of these practices in maintaining the solidarity of the tribe in the following sections.

6.5.1 Tribal derneks

In earlier chapters, I argued that local tribes and their traditional bonds were in danger because of newly-emerging social circumstances. Although there is a remarkable threat that the tribes are confronted with, expecting no resistance from the traditional communities would be underestimating the power of the tribes to think that the traditional communities would not resist it. Considering the longstanding history of the local political system that has been established around tribal connections, eliminating it from the political arena is not a simple task.

As the central government became much stronger in terms of control over the operations within the region, local tribes started to create their own protective systems. One of the great examples for such countermovement is tribal Derneks, which are usually located at the city center. The modern city structures do not provide much opportunities for individuals to stay in solidarity with mutual benefit, rather, it forces them to focus to their nuclear family alone. Yet, inherent to the notion of tribes is the sense of inclusion to a community that is greater than one's self. Therefore, the tribes should find -ways to gather relatives together since even seeing each other once a week would maintain a basal sense of inclusion in the members of their tribes. Derneks provide a solution to the problem of a common place for the members of a tribe. Their primary aim is to sustain the tribal

connections within the city center. In this vein, such derneks can be considered as a modern variant of the odas in the villages. Members of the tribe are invited to the dernek for discussing issues that matter for the tribe and for other social organizations such as weddings, funerals etc.

A former chairman of the Tradesmen and Craftsmen Foundation in Şanlıurfa (Interviewee #10) acknowledged the increasing amount of derneks related with the tribes. Such derneks work like social organizations. They might take a variety of forms depending on the immediate need. For instance, they might serve as a condolence house when there is a funeral but other times they are just a tribal meeting location. By establishing such locations, local tribes aim to protect their influence over the people even in the city center. The more connection tribes have with the people on daily issues, the more the former has the political influence on the latter. The visibility of the tribe through derneks would also remind people of their origins.

During the opening ceremony of a tribal dernek affiliated with the Karakecililer tribe, the head of the dernek expressed the necessity of derneks as the following:

We considered it necessary establishing this dernek in order to preserve the culture and history of our aşiret that has been sinking into oblivion. We aimed it to help us connect under the roof of a new constitution, would end the resentments among the members of our aşiret, would educate the members in cultural and professional realms and create new jobs. (Kaya, 2015, p. 145)

This speech reveals the details about recent concerns of a tribe in Şanlıurfa. We can easily see that the loosening of the tribal connections is acknowledged by tribe leaders. Furthermore, the tribe leadership should open new opportunities for jobs or trainings if it wants to keep people together. For this aim of bringing the

members of the tribe together, the dernek is seen as a new location where the mentioned opportunities would be organized.

Derneks are established not only for providing opportunities, but for sustaining trust and altruism among the tribe members. An NGO worker (Interviewee #14) also mentions how derneks are organized around the collection and distribution of aids. In his NGO, the interviewee is supposed to raise a budget for helping disadvantaged people. Yet, newly-established derneks have started to raise budget so that the share of NGO's has decreased as there are more organizations to collect money right now. The tribe members are much more inclined to share their belongings with the dernek affiliated with their name. This anecdote also exemplifies how derneks are recognized to some extent. Similar to how a tribe member helps his relative within his village, nowadays he does it in the city through his dernek.

Although derneks contribute to the tribe, it may sometimes create certain problems as well. Even though, derneks are designed to be the substitutes of the odas, the derneks system might result in tension between young and elderly members of the tribes. For instance, interviewee (#15) was a young member of one of the tribal derneks. Him and his friends would gather together in the dernek and once a week to eat and chat together. He was completely fine with the notion of dernek and in fact, was happy to be there.

Yet, conflicts arise when the tribe leader, who resides in the village wants to intervene with the operations of the dernek. Interviewee (#15) thought that since the tribe leader is far away from the center, usually, his decisions are irrelevant to the city in general and to their derneks in specific. For instance, they would want to improve their dernek's conditions by providing seminars for non-members as well but the leader ordered that the dernek would be used only by the members of the

tribe. This specific instance can be taken as a prototype of how the dernek itself can create conflict among the members of a tribe, especially between the young and elderly. While the young members, who live in the city center are open for new socialization processes, the elderly and the leaders struggle to conserve the tribal traditions.

At this point, I would like to give an example of how demands of the young members of the tribe are raised via the dernek with a quote from the young head of Karakeçili Derneği:

We, as the Karakeçeli youth, find our power not in ingratiating ourselves with somebody else. Quite the contrary, we find our power in unity and togetherness. Since we live in the age of information and technology, changing of our mentality is a must. That is why we should not base our actions on acting based on hearsay or taboo, rather, we should follow the path of science and the voice of youth should be heard. (Kaya, 2015, pp. 154–155)

Although the derneks are proper tools to bring tribe members together, the tension between the elderly and the younger members should be compromised in order to get benefit from the dernek institution. Otherwise, the young members of the tribe would not be happy to define themselves as a member of their tribes.

An academician in Harran University, Sociology Department (Interviewee #1) mentioned similar problems for another tribal dernek. This dernek was established by young members and they put a rule that prevents people older than 40 years old from registering to the dernek. Yet, they could not resist to the pressure coming from the tribe leadership and could not stop penetration of older people. At the end, they left the dernek to the older members of the tribe.

From this observation, Interviewee #1 concluded that although the youth has a desire to change the tribe, rather than quitting from it, the elders are still strong enough to insist on their own rules. When the younger members are reluctant to

change, they may prefer to leave the dernek and hence, minimize their tribal connections. Thus, maintaining the dernek itself also requires a balance between the modern and traditional aspects of the tribe that could be represented by the young and elderly members.

6.5.2 Job-giver at rural municipalities

An agricultural research coordinator in the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) (interviewee #9) in Şanlıurfa pointed out that young people are proud of their tribes, especially if their tribes are strong enough to employ them in cases when they have problems in finding jobs. He adds by stating that such conditions can occur at the rural municipalities where tribes are effective to some extent. These jobs are usually low-paying jobs, such as being the cleaner of the municipality building, office boys of local official buildings.

In other words, the tools that any tribe can use to improve people's conditions are still valid and effective to keep tribes up. In rural municipalities, by providing jobs, tribes collect loyalty in return.

Interviewee #6 (the Arabic tribe leader), whom I have already mentioned as having a less intimate relationship with his son after he started to study in the city center, stated that the youth in the village has not been degenerated as much as the ones in the city center. Furthermore, he argued that the ones in the village do not live under bad conditions. The youth could find jobs in the village or in the close districts easily by the help of tribe. "Our tribe", he says, "is capable of feeding his members." What he implicitly means that there is no need to experience urbanization since the tribe is self-sufficient and can find jobs to the young members.

From another example, one of the tribe leaders affiliated with the incumbent party (Interviewee #16) (his brother was an MP as well) argued that young members of the tribe are content with having tribal routes if their tribe is perceived as powerful by the people of Şanlıurfa. Being connected to a strong tribe opens some doors for the young individuals. Yet, I would like to note that this interviewee had a biased perspective since he was coming from a tribe affiliated with a strong political party. He perceives his tribe as a job-giver but this situation would not be true unless incumbent political party allowed them to do so. Any clash between his tribe and the incumbent political party would change the picture. As it is discussed in the earlier chapters, such a tribe has no choice but to deal with the incumbent party if it wished to maintain its power over its members. So, such a tribe has a limited and conditional power, unlike the previous decades where the tribes were able to carry their political support to other parties. Yet, being a job-giver, even if it is conditional, helps a tribe to protect its political power.

The significance level of the possession of land at the model 1 and model 2 of quantitative analyses can be also reconsidered through this approach. By giving lands to the local members, tribe leaders maintain their job-giver characteristic through which local members can provide daily gains. Therefore, economic conditions are determinative while considering the political power of local tribes.

Another point from the in-depth interviews that deserves more attention is the seeming oblivion of the State to this significant economic influence held by the tribe leaders. The answer to this seems to be that the government benefits from this arrangement by gaining loyalty and votes of the tribes in return. So, the principal job-provider in villages and small districts is the government itself, with the tribe leaders

acting as local watchmen of the State. This will be discussed in-depth below, under the following section “Centralization of the state”.

One of the incumbent party municipality members (Interviewee #12) clarifies this patronage-client relationship as follows:

“The villages are closed circles, and their demand is not a big deal for our party. They ask for electricity and clean water or small jobs, etc. So, when the tribe leader could get such demands from the government, it is easier for him to satisfy and control his villagers. Especially if the village is far away from the center, then the voting would be under control of the tribe leaders, so he can make good on his promise as well. We do not approve of this, but this is the fact.”

This situation is different in the city center where economic demands are more diversified than the villages. Relations within the city center are not entirely immune from this patronage-client relationship, yet this influence drops down as there are lots of different tribes in the city center and unlike in the villages, none of these can establish the majority. As a result, establishing a consensus among the members gets hard. So, the local people become more self-oriented as they “move from dispersed villages to towns and small and medium cities; and become culturally more similar to large urban agglomerations” (Berdegué et al., 2014, p. 1)

From another perspective, an interviewee (#16) who is dissident about tribal relations criticizes how tribe leadership for being corrupted and using economic tools to enrich themselves. He condemns tribe leaders as “they eat too much and distribute only little to others.” Because this inequality in the sharing of the benefits disturbed the interviewee a lot, he left his village and settled down in the city center. He was annoyed due to the fact that the incumbent government was delivering goods only to the high-ranking members of the tribe. So, selective attitudes towards the tribe

leaders can win the hearts and minds of some people but it results in contempt among others. In any case, being a member of a tribe with a leader that is bolstered by the governmental endowments keeps some people still close the tribes.

Economic conditions are one of the most important facts that determine the positioning of people towards their tribes. If one is dependent on his/her tribe for economic benefit, s/he would have a positive tendency towards his/her tribe. However, if a person is not dependent on this relation and observes the conditions from the outside of the village, they would become real dissidents toward tribal systems. One way or the other, economic conditions do affect one's understanding of the political power of local tribes.

The Interviewee #12 takes the issue from a rational perspective while discussing how jobs and economic conditions affect people's approach to the tribes. "The youth," he says, "is aware of how tribe leaders sell their votes to the political parties. Then the youth asks, 'tribe's son has got the job from the municipality for our votes, but where is our allotment?'" Such an unfairness experienced by the youth forces them to disobey their tribe leadership. If they have a good allotment, they would stick with their tribes. He continues, "if the tribe leader cannot satisfy these young people, they can go against his saying and put his political power in danger as he loses control over his members".

Local patronage relations are more likely to survive since only a minority of local people are subjected to the newly-emerging factors that are mentioned above, such as education and urbanization. This finding is crucial as it shows us how the lack of fundamental necessities bounds one's ability to act and decide freely. Economic freedom is necessary for observing one's individual political behavior. Therefore, I do argue fundamental necessities of a citizen should be satisfied as a

prerequisite of freedom. What is needed is not free economic conditions but rather, fundamental commodities to survive. Any provider of fundamental commodities would have a saying on the receivers' political decisions.

Tribe leaders also act like landlords as they usually own the land that village resides in. So, it is another power through which the tribe leader can distribute farming jobs. Sharecroppers are economically dependent on their tribes so they cannot act freely either.

Not only through agricultural sectors, but tribe leaders may also have firms and corporations from where they can provide extra jobs for the loyal member of the tribes. For example, the owner of a big company mentions his ability to provide jobs:

“Recently we have 380 personnel in our firm. By adding the number in the mall, we have 620 workers. One of the best thing I like is to provide employment and share your earnings with others.” then he also mentions “The only aim I have is to strengthen the tradition and customs of Urfa..” ([Http://www.balikligol.com](http://www.balikligol.com), 2013)

He also points out his local emphasis while working. The same person could gather thousands of his tribes' members together for a meeting before the political elections (Gobeklitepehaber, 2015).

Throughout the quotation above and an interview with a tribe member who is also a firm-owner, one unexpected finding of the interviews is corporatization of tribal connections. The tribes could convert their economic resources to corporations from agricultural types. The firms based on tribal economic power is another way of finding jobs for the members of the tribes. Although the literature asserts that the death of older tribe leaders entailed division of land among the children and the power based on land (Erkal, 1998, p. 350), this finding suggests that they did not disappear but have changed their form of collectivity into firms and corporations, as I will elaborate in the next section.

6.5.3 Corporatization through tribal ties

Tribes are usually associated with agricultural production. They are seemed as farmer and animal husbandry (Kaya, 2015, p. 68). For a long time, tribe leaders had sustained their power through holding the land (Cem, 1970, p. 155). Since the Ottoman Empire, the eastern lands of the country are governed through such tribe leaders and those leaders are in charge of distributing the land and specific jobs for farming. The agha system allowed the tribe leader to become a respected person as the provider of the jobs in the rural areas. One should obey the tribe leader in order to get benefit from his lands and his distribution.

Yet, such an economic system was crucial and effective until the land was divided among younger generations. The respect a high-ranking member of a tribe would receive is commensurate to the amount of land he owns. After the sharing of the inheritance, the job provider characteristic of the high-ranking members of a tribe is mostly disappeared as they have not much to distribute. The smaller portions of the land did not permit its owners to use it as a political and economic tool. This may also seem another point of decay within the tribal structure. However, such economic structure did not disappear but has also evolved as a reaction to modernization. By the conversion of lands and other static endowments to new economic tools, the economic power of the tribes has persisted to some extent. Corporations and firms based on tribal relations are observable in these days. Such corporations prevented the division of the commodities among the high-ranking members of the tribe. Furthermore, it has enabled the members to merge their economic endowments under the company partnership so that the capital of the tribes has been protected.

One of interviewee (#8) shares how their corporations evolved. They have converted their belongings to a firm as an entrepreneurial activity. Otherwise, he argues, there would not be enough land to share among each other. Instead, they turned their land to a shared company among tribal leadership. Recently, they have become one of the biggest traders in the Şanlıurfa. Besides producing toys and clay products, they have also established one of the local television channels in Şanlıurfa. He acknowledges the part of the tribe members in this economic expansion and adds, “I helped them in return.”

His firm is a family affiliated one where they take decisions with the elder members of the tribe. He always mentioned his respect to his elders within the tribe and the importance of tribal connections as a positive aspect of the region.

Interestingly, the owner of this corporation is a proper example of patronage in the urbanized Şanlıurfa. Having economic power and tribal connections, the interviewee has been appointed as one of the candidates of the incumbent party from Şanlıurfa for member of parliament in the election in 2018. His political influence based on economic power and tribal connection sustained as he was able to convert his familial endowments to a proper firm and media power. Then, he has garnered political power based on his tribe and tribal corporation.

Although corporatization can be seen as modernization of the tribes, it is not for the following reason. “Rationalist and positivist spirit” (as quoted in Harrison, 1995, p. 16; Lerner & Pevsner, 1964, p. 45) of modernization cannot be observed in the tribal firms. The workers are chosen from the tribe. The decisions are taken not by the experts, but by the tribe leaders. Therefore, those economic institutions are the tools of the tribes in order to protect the tribe’s wealth and solidarity as opposite to modern institutions.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Theoretical implications

This paper discusses the potential causes of the change in local tribe members' perception of the political power of tribal leadership, which defines the extent to which this power can be executed and the political consequences regarding this change. Throughout this work, Although the findings partially confirm the modernization theory of the tribes, I pointed out certain limitations as well.

Urbanization and education are defined as crucial factors for the expansion of modern life styles and in challenging the local political systems. According to the survey results and the in-depth interviews conducted in Şanlıurfa, these factors contributed to the rise of modern characteristics in local people, in Harisons's terms, "more democratic attitudes, a readiness to plan one's own life" (Harrison, 1995, p. 20).

As it can be seen throughout the text, Bruinessen's understanding of tribes (Bruinessen, 1992), as small and powerful actors in a specific region, has lost its validity through urbanization. Self-sufficient and self-regulating nature of the tribes has been subjected to change as the number of interactions with the outside has increased tremendously. Tribes cannot enforce their authority since what used to be their small village has now become a part of a big centrality. They are not able to vote their independent candidates into the parliament anymore. Nowadays, tribes are neither small nor introverted, hence the hardship in controlling the members. The distinction between the central and the rural areas has been now blurred and simultaneously, the effects of tribal control has diminished.

Yet, the deterministic argument of the modernization theory, the idea that “sweeping of local political systems is an inevitable process” are also challenged by this research. Local tribes are valid and cogent actors at certain points and there is a constant struggle to find ways to survive, rather than giving up their political power passively. For the perpetuation of the tribes, they need new tools to regulate their members. Furthermore, as a defense against the threats of modernity, the tribes found survival strategies by compromising with the modern central state and its political parties. Hence, I differ from Bruinessen’s argumentation at the point that tribes are not autonomous political actors anymore albeit Bruinessen’s assertions were valid for the earlier decades.

Having said these, I also acknowledge that the transition to an urban and modern society did not occur in a smooth way in a similar fashion to that of Lerner’s Balgat case (1964) because of the politics within the region. The collective actions of tribes shifted the trajectory of this transition. The tribes in Şanlıurfa usually sought a way to keep up with the changes and were not left behind.

From another perspective, Kaya (2015) argues tribes are modernized through establishing derneks while discussing the survival of the tribes. Although derneks are indeed modern institutions partaking under the modern civil society, asserting that derneks in Şanlıurfa have completely evolved into modern institutions would be an overextension of the term since in reality, these derneks preserved some contradictory characteristics within modernity. For example, Oncel-der dernek, a tribe-related foundation, has a charter that puts familial connection to the Oncel tribe as a prerequisite for registering to the dernek (Kaya, 2015, p. 147). This emphasis on familial connections, rather than considering individuals as individuals, is a contradiction with the necessities of a modern society. Modernization of social

relations refutes any system based on familial connections as I mentioned in the literature review chapter (see also, Harrison, 1995, p. 20).

As opposed to Kaya's approach, which suggests that tribes experienced modernization through derneks, the current study suggests that tribe leaders utilized derneks in order to protect their traditional ties within the modern society. The reason behind the establishment of derneks was not the accumulation of individual demands as would be crucial for a modern political environment. Rather, their aim is to protect collective tradition based on kinship. Therefore, I end up at disagreeing with Kaya's modernization of tribe argument.

I show how local tribes and their family ties can survive within the modern societies hence proving that this deterministic argument is incomplete. Ascribed connections are still crucial and new survival methods can emerge from these connections. People are still proud of mentioning their tribal connections and achieve a higher quality of life through their interactions with their tribes. These realities are observed within the urbanized cities as well as within the rural areas.

This would create a challenge against democratization of the region as the people are not considered as individuals but collective groups. Although such an outcome is a problem for democratization of the region, it is also a way of the people's survival through tribes. As people are dependent about their fundamental necessities, the importance of democracy and autonomous decisions decrease. The quantitative and qualitative findings show us how crucial economic conditions for one to have much more autonomous political decision ability.

7.2 Practical implications

Since the founding of the Republic, bargaining between local and state elites has been contentious. At the dawn of the Republic, incumbent governments aimed to eradicate any intermediary organization between the state and its citizens, which caused insurgencies within the Eastern side of Turkey. The relationship was more adversarial than cooperative by nature.

After the introduction of the multi-party system, the perspective of political parties towards tribes changed. Tribes became political actors as they could move to support another party if they felt suppressed. To some extent, bargaining replaced suppression. In those days, lack of education, inability to access information, and low levels of urbanization left people no choice but to obey the tribe leaders. From the other side of the coin, lack of state apparatus to directly reach local people lead the political parties to get into a bargain with local elites, namely tribe leaders. This was only reinforcing the power and authority of the tribe leader and uniting the tribe as a whole. The unification of tribes and their potential to be utilized in the political scene changed the relationship between the central powers and the tribe leaders, henceforth, the relationship became more cooperative.

However, through what they acquired with their favorable position with the state, namely education and urbanization, the tribes' scope of influence eventually diminished making them more dependent on the state aid. Although they were strong political actors in 1950s who bargained and changed their allies with political parties if necessary, they became less autonomous in recent days. The balance of power started to shift toward the central government.

Yet, such a shift did not end up with a strong resistance from the local political

traditions, instead, the tribes adapted to ensure their continuance (i.e. local tribes) in Şanlıurfa as it is argued in Belge's work (2011). The Kurdish tribes have also adapted the new conditions and changed their political standings accordingly.

Under the new conditions in Şanlıurfa, the tribes acknowledged their positions as the following: First, they are aware of that their voting power is not enough on their own. They realize that they have less room for bargaining with political parties and that they should integrate themselves into one of the powerful political parties in order to sustain their power. Second, they cannot control the voting procedure in the city center as much as they could in their villages. Third, they also believe that tribes would be supported to the extent that they are able to provide block votes from villages. Otherwise, state capacity may lead to the disintegration of tribes. Therefore, in the eyes of the local interviewees, the tribes have no choice but to deal with the incumbent government in order to survive.

This is the case especially under the single dominant party regime of AKP, which can collect most of the votes within the regions. As the most significant provider of jobs, goods, public provisions, the incumbent party has become much harder to go against and shifting party alliances have become an inoperative policy for the tribes. Thus, I differ from Belge's work regarding the local kinships' resistances. I claim that the tribes' ability to resist is very costly and they therefore prefer to compromise with the central governments, especially in Şanlıurfa.

The recent incumbent party took advantage of the newly emerged political reality and convinced tribes to vote for them. Through using "a carrot and a stick" (as described by an interviewee #12), the incumbent government takes control. Weak tribes need the government's resources to satisfy their people and they are also aware of the consequences of withholding support. In urbanized areas, the government does

not talk about tribes, whereas in the rural ones it bargains with them (interviewee #10).

Besides, local tribes still look for ways to get involved within city centers. They establish derneks and different economic organizations to survive and protect their tribal connections. Although such attempts have limited effect on daily political discussions, they are still taken under consideration by political parties. The visibility of tribes would help the local tribe leaders to influence people and the politicians. That is why, tribe leaders make an appearance in meetings” (Gobeklitepehaber, 2015). Furthermore, through dernek activities, they are seeking to remain on the agenda of people and political parties.

Tribes maintain their ability to provide jobs to its members within rural areas. Any compromise with the central government would allow them to provide more and more. Although they are not totally autonomous, they are still active and can satisfy their members’ needs to some extent.

Tribes have also evolved from agricultural economic power to firms, companies and have sustained their economic prevalence in the urbanized areas. Yet, it is not a complete modernization since their essence of familial ties is still protected within the owned firms.

For individuals, they do not have much to say as their dependency towards the government or tribes maintains. Without improving the economic conditions and delinking those conditions from higher authorities, it is hard to talk about individual in the region. The provider of jobs and commodities would have a word on the political decisions of the people.

This contentious struggle between political parties and tribes oscillated both ways, but the local people themselves have remained relatively powerless, even in

these changing circumstances. It is still less costly to reach the local people via tribe leaders, especially in villages. So, the central governments may choose to deal with local tribal leaders. Yet, educational and technological improvements are promising developments in the region whereby people will eventually see how fragile the power of their tribes is. Eventually, some villagers would find new ways to bargain with the state directly, which would transform their daily lives. However, such potential improvements do not necessarily mean that the traditional systems will disappear. Through new tools (i.e. dernek, corporatization) that tribes are utilizing, some tribes are also finding their own ways in the modern system without losing their familial ties.

APPENDIX A

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research question: Are local tribes still powerful actors within social and political arena in the eastern side of Turkey in the eyes and perception of local people? How influential is collective decisions of local tribes over members of the tribes?

1. Can you tell me about yourself? (Kendinizi tanıtır mısınız?)
2. What is your Occupation? (Ne işle meşgulsünüz?)
3. What is your marital status? (Evli misiniz?)
4. Do you have any children (Çocuğunuz var mı?)
5. What is your place of birth (Doğum yeriniz nedir?)
6. How long have you been in Şanlıurfa? (Kaç yıldır Şanlıurfa'da yaşıyorsunuz?)
7. Have you ever lived at the outside of Şanlıurfa? (Şanlıurfa dışında yaşadınız mı?)
8. How do you perceive the human relations in Şanlıurfa? How do people behave to each other on streets? (Şanlıurfanın şu anki insani ilişkilerini nasıl görüyorsunuz? Sokaktaki insanların birbirlerine tavrı davranışı, insanların birbirlerine olan muhabbeti nasıl?)
9. Is there any difference between today and 20 years ago? (Bundan 20 yıl öncesi ile bir fark var mı yok mu?)
10. Does the youth protect the local local culture? Do they embrace it? Do they join the local meetings, like sıra gecesi. Are they curious about the history of Şanlıurfa? (Gençler Şanlıurfa kültürüne sahip çıkıyor mu? Bir benimseme durumu var mı? Sıra gecesi yapıyorlar mı? Şanlıurfanın tarihine meraklılar mı?)

11. What is the biggest problem of Şanlıurfa? Who can solve this problem? Can you reach officials about it? (Şanlıurfanın en büyük sorunu nedir desem ne dersiniz? Bu sorun kim tarafından çözüme kavuşturabilir? İlgililere ulaşabiliyor mu?)
12. Do you think that the central government can serve Şanlıurfa properly? Does the service which is requested deliver quickly? Which area the government serve the most? (Şanlıurfa'nın devlet tarafından iyi hizmet aldığını düşünüyor musunuz? Talep edilen hizmet hızlıca ulaşıyor mu? Sizce en çok hangi alanlarda hizmet veriliyor?)
13. One of the crucial topics is local tribes in here. How is your family ties? Do you have a tribe that you belong? (Buradaki önemli bir gerçek de büyük aşiretler. Sizin akraba ilişkileriniz nasıl? Bağlı bulunduğunuz bir aşiret var mı?)
14. “Who are you belong to?” is one of the important questions in Şanlıurfa. Is it still asked when one meets with another person? (“Kimlerdensin?” sorusu çok önemli bir sorudur Urfa’da. Bu soru hala ilk tanışmalarda sorulur mu?)
15. How strong is tribal ties? For example, is tribe leader’s order implemented in every case? Is there any chance for objection? Does everybody obey the decisions of the tribe? Are members of a tribe free to act according to their own decisions? (Aşiret bağları sizce eskisi kadar güçlü mü? Mesela aşiret ağasının sözü kesin uygulanır mı? Yoksa itiraz edilebilir mi? Aşiretten bir karar çıkınca herkes ona uyar mı? Yoksa herkes kendi kararını uygulamada serbest midir?)
16. How is the perspective of the youth to tribes? Which parts of tribes they like and which parts they do not? (Peki, gençlerin aşiretlere bakışı nasıl? Aşiretlerin hangi özelliklerini benimseyip hangi özelliklerini reddediyorlar?)
17. Let’s talk about the tribes much more deeply. Do you think tribes should have an influence over its members? What are the advantages and the disadvantages

about it? (Şimdi size aşiretlerin iç yapısıyla ilgili iki soru soracağım. Sizce aşiretlerin üyeleri üzerinde etkili olması gerekir mi? Ne gibi faydaları var veya ne gibi zararları var?)

18. In terms of voting, does a tribe members intervene each others' decision or not?

Does the head of a tribe has an impact on the others' votes? (Peki oy vermeye gelince, aşiret üyeleri hep topluca mı oy verir yoksa kimin kime verdiğine karışılmaz mı? Aşiretin başı oy verme konusunda diğerleri üzerinde etkili midir?)

19. How is the relationship between political parties and tribes? (Siyasi partilerin aşiretlerle ilişkileri nasıl?)

20. Do political parties have concerns to satisfy tribes? Do party officials visit tribes?

Did you experienced any? What kind of interactions they have? (Siyasi partilerin aşiretleri memnun etmek gibi bir kaygısı var mı? Parti temsilcileri aşiret ziyaretleri yapar mı? Böyle bir olaya hiç denk geldiniz mi? Ne tür etkileşimler oluyor aralarında?)

21. Do tribes struggle to get into political parties? (Peki, aşiretler siyasi partilerde yer almak için uğraşır mı?)

22. What is the reason for the vote percentage change between June 7 election and

November 1 election as AKP increased vote percentage by 20 and HDP

decreased by 10? Do tribes have an influence on such change? To what extent?

(Şanlıurfa'nın 7 Haziran seçimlerine kıyasla 1 Kasım seçimlerinde AKP'nin aldığı oy oranında %20 artma ve HDP'nin oy oranında %10 oranında azalma var. Bu kısa süredeki bu değişimi neye bağlıyorsunuz? Aşiretlerin bu değişimde etkisi oldu mu sizce? Ne kadar olmuştur?)

23. In 2009, Ahmet Eşref Fakıbaba who was an independent candidate and elected as the Mayor of Şanlıurfa 2009 yılında. What was the reason behind this success?

(Ahmet Eşref Fakıbbaba %44 oy olarak Urfa'nın bağımsız Belediye Başkanı seçilmişti. Bu başarıyı neye bağlıyorsunuz?)

24. Can we say that tribes were important factors during these elections? Do tribes declare their voting preferences openly? Does anyone know which tribe supports whom? *(Bu seçimlerin sonuçlarında aşiretler önemli bir etkeni diyebilir miyiz? Aşiretler açıkça oylarını söylerler mi? Kimi destekledikleri bilinir mi?)*

25. If a tribe has changed its party preferences, what can be the reason for it? *(Bir aşiret desteklediği partiyi değiştirdi ve yeni bir partiyi desteklemeye başladı diyelim. Böyle bir durumun sebebi ne olabilir?)*

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEWEE LIST

The surnames are erased to protect privacy of the interviewees. For each interviewees, their tribes, their origin and the living location is noted as they declared.

1. Yar. Doç. M.
 - Izol Tribe – the Turks located in Kurdish region – Siverek
2. Yar. Doç A.
 - Kikan Tribe – Kurdish - Close to Mardin
3. Doç. Dr. S.
 - Badıllı – Kurdish –Hilvan/Akçakale
4. İ.(peasant)
 - Hartavi Tribe – Kurdish – Birecik
5. Y. (Lawyer)
 - Karakeçili tribe – Kurdish – Suruç
6. Ö. - Tradesmen and Craftsmen chairman (Harran)
 - Bini Ubiyt tribe – Arabic – Harran
7. V. - the owner of local newspaper (GAP Gündemi)
 - No tribe
8. İ.– the owner of Kanal Urfa
 - Taiy (Tayy) Tribe – Arabic - Akçakale
9. N. (GAP Project - Agricultural Comission)
 - Şeyhanlı Tribe – Kurdish – Viranşehir
10. M. (member of regional HDP)

- Revahi Tribe - Turk - Harran
11. C. (Previous AKP Regional Chairman)
 - Badıllı Tribe - Kurdish –Hilvan/Akçakale
 12. F. (AKP Regional Member)
 - Dına Tribe – Turk? – Suruç
 13. İ. (Municipality Deputy Chairman)
 - Dügerler Tribe –Kurdish - Center
 14. E. (NGO worker)
 - Cumali Tribe – Arabic – Harran
 15. A. (member of regional committee of HDP)
 - Cehveri Tribe – Kurdish – Siverek
 16. C. (brother of an MP of AKP)
 - Cevheri Tribe – Kurdish – Siverek
 17. A. - Tradesmen and Craftsmen chairman (urfa)
 - No tribe –Turkish
 18. F. (owner of bahçe (resistance area))
 - BiniZeyd Tribe – Arabic – (eyyubiye - Center)
 19. M. Revahi, Kızılay Foundation Worker
 - Revahi Tribe – Kurdish – Siverek
 20. R. Graduate Student
 - Tirkan Tribe, Turkish-Kurdish Speaking

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