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**THE ANALYSIS OF NATIONALISM, STATISM, STATE
NATIONALISM AND STATE ECONOMY IN TURKEY'S
MODERNISATION PROCESS: COMPARING THE
NATION STATE OF EUROPE TO THE STATE
NATIONALISM IN TURKEY**

**MODERNLEŞME SÜRECİNDE TÜRKİYE'DE
DEVLETÇİLİK MİLLİYETÇİLİK, DEVLET
MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİ VE DEVLETÇİ EKONOMİNİN
ANALİZİ: AVRUPANIN ULUS DEVLETÇİLİĞİ İLE
TÜRKİYENİN DEVLET MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİNİN
KARŞILAŞTIRMASI**

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ABSTRACT —

The concepts of nationalism and state nationalism have been fundamental principles in Turkey's modernization process. They played an essential role in reconstructing the new Republic. But both their evolution in content and adaptation to the new Turkish State differ considerably from the European's historical experiment.

The aim of this article is to analyze these differences comparatively and to show the importance of economic practices in forming a newly established nation.

ÖZET

Milliyetçilik (ulusçuluk) ve Devlet Milliyetçiliği Türkiye'nin modernleşme sürecinin temel prensipleri arasındadır ve yeni cumhuriyetin yapılmasında önemli rol oynamıştır. Fakat bu ilkelerin içeriksel evrimi ve yeni Türk devletine uyarlanması Avrupa'nın tarihsel tecrübesinden oldukça farklıdır.

Bu makalenin amacı ise, bu farklılıklar karşılaştırarak analiz etmek ve yeni kurulan bir devletin şekillenmesinde ekonomi uygulamalarının ne kadar önemli rol oynadığını göstermektir.

Nationalism, Statist Economy, State Nationalism, Statism, and Modernism.
Milliyetçilik, Devletçi Ekonomi, Devlet Milliyetçiliği, Devletçilik ve Modernizm.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Modernity and modernization are quite different concepts. While modernity means “*to own a project and reflection*”³, modernization refers to constructional changing process that makes it possible in practice. In this context, while modernity refers to the development of individuals and social classes, modernization refers to the implementation of that socio-political change at political and institutional base.

The prevailing ambition of modernization towards the end of the Ottoman Empire and throughout the Turkish Republic has led to an active political and social life in Turkish history. As the economic process in the Western world has not been followed until recently, modernization has always been appropriated by the elite and regarded to be luxurious for the public. Since concrete and abstract values of a civilization constitute a complete structure, “*partial transition from one culture to the other is not possible*. ”⁴ For this reason, it can be said that “non-western nations can only be modernized but not modern.”⁵ A society’s struggle to become modern in terms of institutional infrastructure is only seen to be more relevant to the Western civilizations.

Westernization, at the end of Ottoman Empire and throughout the Turkish Republic, has been perceived within the framework described above. At the beginning, westernization was perceived as “owning institutions in Western style”. Because of a failure to achieve the expected results, the term “Westernization” began to be interpreted as “having a Western life style”. Nevertheless, the decline could not be averted and all those attempts were re-questioned. As a result, the question “How can a nation become modernized in order to survive?”⁶ was asked by the intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire. Inspired by the Japanese example, Ottoman intellectuals intensely interpreted modernization as adopting the technology and science of the Western world while protecting the national values. To them modernization also meant “gaining an imperial vision”⁷, which was a struggle of reforming the old conservative behavior.

An examination of the modernization efforts in the period of Turkish Republic reveals that although the idea of “westernization” has always been preserved, what has been implemented in practice has been different from. In this context, in the early republican period, Modernization meant “breaking

³ Ahmet ÇİĞDEM, “Batılılaşma Modernite ve Modernizasyon”, *Modem Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, c. 3, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, ss:68-81.

⁴ Selçuk KÜTÜK, (2005), *Bilim Felsefesi Üzerine*, İstanbul: Açılmış Kitap, 2005, p.18.

⁵ ÇİĞDEM, ss.68

⁶ Renee WORRINGER, “Avrupa’nın Hasta Adamı mı Yoksa Yakın Doğunun Japonyası mı: II. Abdulhamit ve Jön Türkler Döneminde Osmanlı Modernliğinin İnşası”, (Çev. Celalettin Güngör), Muhamfazakâr Düşünce, Sayı:16-17, Ankara: Öncü Basımevi, 2008, ss.87-118

⁷ Bedri GENCER, “Garp Meselesi: Son Osmanlı ve Mısır Aydınlarının Medeniyet Tasavvuru”, Muhamfazakâr Düşünce, S.16-17, Yıl.4, Ankara: Öncü Basımevi, 2008, ss.33-57.

away” from the past in accordance with the origin of the term, “modernus”⁸. Intellectuals perceived modernization as a two-stage action plan. While the first stage included getting rid of the past, the second stage included an imitative westernization in order to build a new future. It was an imitation because political, social and especially economic process of the West was not followed truly. To the intellectuals, there was no time to follow the painstaking economic struggles of the Western world. Therefore, political, social, and cultural institutions were to be adopted as soon as possible. Principles of republicanism, secularism, and nationalism formed the first stage. Statism (state economy), populism and revolutionizm formed the second stage. There has always been a conflict between the two stages. Principles of Nationalism and Statism have been the first two reflecting the evolutionary side of modernization rather than the revolutionary side of it.

These two principles were regarded as the fundamentals of the Republic, and the Republican People’s Party (RPP hereafter) inserted them into the constitution in 1937 congress.⁹

As a matter of fact, Nationalism and Statism were two important concepts of the Ottoman intellectuals which transformed the Republic in an evolutionary way. Before analyzing the changing process, causes and socio-political effects of these principles, it will be wise to give referring definition of them. In Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s words in 1936 “Statism is to keep and protect individual initiatives; but, as enough capital has not been accumulated yet and the country is vast and needs cannot be met by individual initiatives, state should hold the economy in his hands.”¹⁰ Atatürk’s explanation of Statism is not a kind of socialism or something against free market economy. He said he was obliged to apply a state economy as private capital had not been accumulated yet.¹¹ But later the principle of statism gained a deep place in all institutions of the Republic and the *obligation was traditionalized*. It had not changed until the Decisions on 24 January, 1980 when an economic revolution took place in Turkey. Though Turkey first enjoyed pluralist democracy in 1950, its economy could only be changed in 1980s. As there would be no free democracy without free market economy, Turkey missed 30 years of economic, social and political development. Democracy in those years –and still is to some degree- was under tutelage and was disconnected from the people.

⁸ The term “modernus” was used in East Rome Empire to differentiate their pagan past from the new Christian vision. [Kezban ACAR, “Osmanlı ve Rus Modernleşmesine Dair Bazı Görüşler”, (Some views on Ottoman and Russian Modernization) Muhafazakâr Düşünce, S.16-17, Yıl.4, Ankara: Öncü Basimevi, , 2008, ss.59-86] The term in this meaning explains Turkish Republic’s modernization efforts best.

⁹ Cemil KOÇAK,“Kemalist Milliyetçiliğin Bulanık Suları”, Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, ss.37-52.

¹⁰ ATAMER, “M.Kemal İlkeleri:Devletçilik”, 2002, <http://www.atamer.sakarya.edu.tr/ilk-devlet.htm>. (Erişim Tarihi: 26.02.2008).

¹¹ Afet İNAN, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin İkinci Sanayi planı 1936, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, Ankara,1989,preface

Social scientists who analyze the historical development of Nationalism stress to the word “nasci”, which means “born” in Latin.¹² In this context, the word “Nation” was not related to the concept of government until the end of 18th century.¹³ Later on, it became a political program building nation states from common language, culture, religion and land.

Until it had its specific meaning today, Nationalism had undertaken different meanings including race, dignity and culture since the early feudal and communal period. In Western society, it referred to common geographical root, language, religion and history, and in 18th century's Europe it emerged as a vital political power in order to strengthen people's unity.¹⁴

Nationalism in Turkey mentioned together with the other Republican principles in the meaning of “a principle that should be in harmony with political unite and national unite.”¹⁵ It can thus be associated with the terms artificial, innovative and social engineering instead of associating it with destiny gained through heritage. Because, Atatürk described the term as “a principle of the nation who has the same shared manner, the same flag, and the same tradition as well.”¹⁶

From the definitions above, it can be said that statism and state economy of Turkey is quite away from the practices of socialist countries. It can also be reasonably inferred that nationalism in Turkey has nothing to do with the term's ‘ethnic root’ or race. However, Nationalism and Statism have been a reference to authoritarian implementations and interpreted in an ideological formation in order build a new society.

2. EVOLUTION OF TURKISH NATIONALISM

Evolution of Turkish nationalism in modernization process should be analyzed in two stages: first, the Ottoman period beginning from 18th century and the second, the period starting from the establishment of the republic. Although these two periods sometimes support each other, they are contradictory to a significant extent.

2.1. Nationalism in pre-Republican Period

Ottoman thought was first introduced the word ‘Nationalism’, which was then completely unknown and foreign, during the falling period of the Empire. It entered in during the French revolution and national movements and lasted until the end of statist period. As the Empire was made up of many

¹² Fatma Müge GÖÇEK, “Osmanlı Devletinde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım”, Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce-Milliyetçilik, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, ss.103-116.

¹³ J.Eric HOBSBAWM, Milletler ve Milliyetçilik, (Çev. Osman Akınhay), İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayıncılık, 2006, p.30

¹⁴ Torbjon L. KNUTSEN, Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorisi Tarihi, (çev. Mehmet Özay), İstanbul: Açılmış Kitap, 2006, p.242.

¹⁵ HOBSBAWM, p.24

¹⁶ ATAMER

nations, all those conquered nations showed an abstract reaction to the social assimilation, but it could not show itself as a concrete reaction since the Empire was still powerful. For this reason, according to Ülken¹⁷ “the idea of nationalism first expanded among the people who wanted to divide the Empire and to build their own nations”. Contrarily, Turkish people in the Empire were against the idea of nationalism as it might have shaken the existing social order. At the end of the 18th century, Ottomans, during the reign of Abdulhamid II, accepted the superiority (at least material superiority) of Europe and sent some young intellectuals to Great Britain and France in order to learn the science and technology of these countries. But these young intellectuals (known as Young Turks in literature) were more “interested in political classics”¹⁸ than science and technology. Their priority was to stop political and governmental decline. Thus, they thought that political, governmental, and institutional adoption would stop the decline and the rise would begin. Whereas, political, cultural, social, and institutional imitation neither transformed the society (perhaps caused to the transformation of a limited elite class) nor formed a developed society. This was because political, cultural and institutional developments in Europe were the result of struggles among social and economic classes. Instead of bringing economical model, science and technology of the West (Cause), Young Turks preferred bringing social and political institutions which were the result of that struggle. As will be discussed below, nationalism and statism have, thus, always contradicted each other. Thus, Turkey could not build a nation state in Western style, but instead it built a state nation in Eastern style. While economy remained close and feudal relations continued, social, cultural and political institutions in the Western style were adopted (especially at the beginning of the Republic).

As Young Turks realized that the empire was on the edge of disintegration because of nationalist movements that were widespread among non-Turkish people, their response was to embrace the ideology of Ottomanism with the hope to save the Empire¹⁹.

It was understood that spreading nationalist movement cannot be prevented and eliminated. The decline was inevitable. Then they started to come up with different ideas including Turkism, Westernism and Islamism. The old Ottoman intellectuals thought that they would save The Empire with their new ideas. Whenever they failed to reach to their aim “they needed to revise their thoughts.”²⁰ For that reason, the delay of nationalism was not because of imperial power’s hegemony on Turkish nation. The main reason for the delay derived from the fact that intellectuals focused only on solving the question of disintegration.

¹⁷ H.Ziya ÜLKEN, Millet ve Tarih Şuuru, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları,2008, s.133.

¹⁸ Şerif MARDİN, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları,2005, s.14

¹⁹ MARDİN, p.255

²⁰ Mustafa GÜNDÜZ, II. Meşrutiyetin Klasik Paradigmaları, Ankara: Lotus Yayınevi, 2007, s.28

Two main movements affected the Ottoman thought. One was a nationalist idea which was fed by nationalist thoughts originated from Europe. The other one was again a nationalist idea originated from Caucasia that was a reaction to Tsarist Russia's pressure. The leading actors of this movement were mainly Caucasian refugees such as Yusuf Akçura.

While Ottoman central thought was only focused on saving the Empire, according to Yusuf Akçura and his friends (Ahmed Ağaoğlu Hüseyinzade, Sadri Maksudi and others) the main question was how to unite the Turkish Nation. To him, this was because, "Turkish borders were not limited to Ottoman borders"²¹ and it also included Islam. Although both of these movements showed differentiation in their manner and outbreak, they were joined around the idea that a national bourgeoisie-led action would take them to their long-desired goal. At the beginning of 19th century, those abstract nationalist ideas were enriched by concrete economical ones and a big transformation began. Concrete national economic programs began to emerge. Especially Union and Progress Party (UPP) tried to establish a European style nationalist-capitalist economic program. UPP's national economic program put forward in 1913 deeply affected socio-economic policies of the Republic at the beginning.²² As it is explained below, 1929 World Crisis increased the suspect towards capitalism. Putting imperialism and capitalism in the same bucket, anti-imperialist Turkish Intellectuals also stood against capitalism. The lack of capital accumulation accelerated and legalized the process. Thus a national, close economic model prevailed at the beginning of the Republic. That state economy model mainly relying on import substitution was far away from building a nation state. Instead, it built a unique state nation. Perhaps only newly established Turkish republic had such kind of a model.

2.2. Nationalism in Republican Period

During the years of establishments, nationalism meant a common culture of different ethnicities. It did not mean an ideological and ethnic root. The struggle given in Anatolia during the independence war brought the interpretation of the identification of Turk and Islam, which gave the impression of "Turkifying of Islam"²³. The idea of creating a nation from the ruins of an Empire "turned to be an idea which was marking the beginning of a state-centered socialization process."²⁴ In this period, instead of Yusuf Akçura's political Turkish Nationalism, Ziya Gökalp's nationalist idea, which was stressing political and cultural unity, was preferred as it well suited the principle of national sovereignty.

²¹ Yusuf AKÇURA, Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset, (Hazırlayan: Recep Duymaz), İstanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları, 1995, s.24

²² Erik, Jan ZÜRCHER, "Kemalist düşünencenin Osmanlı Kaynakları", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce-Kemalizm, C.II, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001, s.52

²³ E. Deniz GÖKTÜRK (Tol), "1919-1923 Dönemi Türk Milliyetçilikleri", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce-Milliyetçilik, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.106.

²⁴ Fethi AÇIKEL, "Devletin Manevi Şahsiyeti ve Ulusun Pedagojisi", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.18.

Later in coming years, however, Ziya Gökalp's "intense religious, lingual and moral thoughts"²⁵ were taken out of official nationalism and ethnic themes were more stressed in order to build a common or a collective comprehension. Main reason for the change of interpretation of nationalism was that Turkish intellectuals were under the effect of French Revolution and French thought system. They longed for a French style state. As a matter of fact, Atatürk was intensely impressed by Renaissance thinkers, especially Jean Jack Rousseau. As it is known, Rousseau put the responsibility on state in order to create a happy and a free society. To him, state was always central in directing people's preferences in social and political matters. "The main characteristic of the Republic in French model was having a social engineering project".²⁶ In the creation of Turkish Republic more or less the same way was followed, and a citizen profile was drawn in the direction of ideological formation. French model was implemented in the meaning that it created a collective social contract and eased the transformation of the society. As a matter of fact, in 1918, during his visit to Vienna for health reasons, Atatürk said "if one day I get a power in my hand, I think I will try to have an immediate revolution (coup) in order to transform the society".²⁷ He continued roughly saying that he could not wait for a gradual transformation of thoughts of scholars.

According to Rousseau, if the main aim is to have a free society, the way to reach that aim is to create a sovereign state. Weakness of a state may, because, create some other power centers that threaten the individual's freedom. To have a real state, every individual should have citizenship consciousness. Thus, Rousseau emphasized that laws should not only address to an abstract mind, they should also address to the spirit, heart, and emotion of human being.²⁸ That is to say, good laws can only exist when they conquer the hearts of the citizens. For this reason, citizen consciousness among the members of state should be created by using patriotic feelings. Achieving this aim necessitates the creation of a common culture (though has always been artificial in Turkish like countries) in order to inoculate patriotism to its citizens. It also necessitates the acceptance of this common culture (however artificial it was in Turkey) and a harmony between individual will and common will.²⁹ Perhaps one of the major problems in Turkey was to provide that harmony. As Turkish people were not ready to that kind of transformation, an assimilation project was started in order to create a quick modern nation state. For that aim, conservative nationalism, which also included Islamic themes, relinquished and instead a state centered socialization project started. As a result of this, instead of a nation state, a

²⁵ Nevzat KÖSOĞLU, "Türk Milliyetçiliği İdeolojisinin Doğuşu ve Özellikleri", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, c.4, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.210.

²⁶ H.Emrah BERİŞ, "Teoride ve Pratikte Demokrasi: Tarihsel ve Siyasal Gelişimi", Feodaliteden Küreselleşmeye, (Ed. Tevfik Erdem), Ankara: Lotus Yayınevi, 2006, s.86.

²⁷ Orhan TÜRKDOĞAN, Kemalist Modelde Fert ve Devlet İlişkileri, İstanbul: İstanbul Kitapevi, 1982, s.24.

²⁸ M.Ali AĞAOĞULLARI, Ulus Devlet ya da Halkın Egemenliği, İstanbul: İmge Kitapevi, 2006, s.150.

²⁹ AĞAOĞULLARI, s.153

state nation was created. The implementation of state economy added to that and state nation coupled with a state centered economy had been well rooted in the center of Turkish society until 1980s when the state economy was replaced by a free market economy.

Falih Rıfkı Atay also stated that a plain nationalist understanding might “include conservative and traditional meanings and might be used as a mask for religious fanaticism”³⁰. For this reason, Kemalist nationalism cleared away conservative and Islamic themes as they were thought to be against Western and secular nationalist idea of the new Republic³¹. This kind of Nationalist understanding undertook the task of transforming the society with all its aspects ranging from literature, art, education to architecture. Turkish history was isolated from Ottoman and Islamic history. Actually Turkish nationalism was an adopted nationalism and one might say that it was non-national. Hence, it was not embraced by the vast majority of the people. Prevailed narrow Westernist-Turkist elite used the word “nationalism” as a means of transforming the society from top to down. As a result of that a state nation instead of a nation state emerged. As will be analyzed in the next section, economy and economic model also riveted the existing state nation.

In line with the new nationalist idea, a program was launched to purify the language. All foreign words (especially Arabic and Persian ones) were cleared out. A theory of sun-language was developed. According to this theory Turkish was the mother of all other languages in the world³². A language simplification process was started. Purifying the language and saying that Turkish language was actually mother of other languages caused a theoretical incoherence. The theory did not live long and was abandoned. Supporters of the theory in *Darul Funun* (Science School) were eliminated by replacing the school with Istanbul University.

The shift in modernization and nationalism emerged as a project of bureaucrats, which was in harmony with the spirit of newly established republic. Modernization and Nationalization reforms from the end of the Ottoman Empire to the establishment of the Republic were always “realized by the choice and preference of bureaucrats instead of democratic demands of the people”³³. This situation can be explained with two main reasons. The first one is the religious and national characteristics of Ottoman citizens

³⁰ Ahmet YILDIZ, “Kemalist Milliyetçilik”, *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce-Kemalizm*, c.II, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.226

³¹ The term “nationalism” in Ottoman times was translated into Turkish as “Milliyetçilik” which included conservative and Islamic elements in it. However, later in Republican times, it is replaced with the word “ulusçuluk” in order to stress that all these non-western and non-secular elements are cleared out. This conceptual conflict still continues among the intellectuals. The second meaning is generally used in this study.

³² Soner ÇAĞAPTAY, “Otuzlarda Türk Milliyetçiliğinde İrk, Dil ve Etnisite”, *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, c. 4, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.256.

³³ Fethi AÇIKEL, “Devletin Manevi Şahsiyeti ve Ulusun Pedagojisi”, *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002, s.118.

(*Teb'a*)³⁴. The second one is the lack of capitalist process or free market economy. The existence of state economy prevented the formation of economic classes and class struggle. Thus, people could not claim for their economic and social rights. Instead, those rights were (still to some extent) given by a small governing elite. This patrimonial characteristic which marked the bureaucratic past of the Ottoman Empire was transformed into patrimonial citizenship system in the creation of a loyal nation".³⁵

The transformation in the understanding of nationalism emerged as a reaction to Republican People's Party's (RPP) totalitarian applications. As soon as the Second World War ended, domestic and foreign pressures pushed Turkey towards democracy. When a pluralist democratic life started in 1950, Democrat Party used conservative elements against RPP. People, who were fed up with the implementation of RPP, took this opportunity as granted. Apart from small changes, Democrat Party did not make any radical changes in economic and social life. State economy turned to a kind of unique mixed economy. Institutions and the rules of a free market economy were not settled. Thus, state economy continued to exist until 1980s when the economic model transformed into a free market one. The lack of economic and social reasons caused an identification crisis in the explanation of nationalism. After 1950s, nationalism neither could be associated with its conservative and religious meaning of late Ottoman times, nor could it be associated with its second meaning in the beginning of the Republic. Radical thoughts of Anatolian movements, East-West synthesis, Turk-Islam synthesis, emerged as a result of this identification crisis.³⁶

Because of a powerful state tradition, nationalism was dictated from center to periphery. This caused a conflict between elitist bureaucrats and conservative rural society which was incomparable in size because of the lack of education and liberal economic system. This caused a deep fracture between the two. The Turkish history of democracy in republican times was the history of conflict between these two parts. This conflict was far away from the class conflicts of the West. In the West, conflicts between economic classes have provided a stable democracy, thus improving social and economic rights. In Turkey, however, rights given by the adopted constitutions were used to ask and demand the regime itself instead of asking and demanding from the regime. One can see a good example of this by comparing the 68 generation of the West and Turkey. 68 generation in the West somehow repaired the democracies by asking and demanding from the regime, because the social and economic channels were open thanks to the liberal political, economic and social structure. In Turkish case the situation was not the same. Political rights were given by the constitutions (especially the Constitution of 1960) adapted from the West but not supported with economic and social rights. As there was no interest, interest and pressure

³⁴ The word (*Teb'a*) means more than nationalism. It includes patrimonial elements beside religious ones.

³⁵ AÇIKEL, S.118

³⁶ Birol AKGÜN, ve Ş.H.Çalış, "Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Terkibinde İslamcı Doz", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, c. 4, İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2002, s.596.

groups could not emerge. Political rights, thus, were used in radical political issues and 68 generation in Turkey corrupted the democracy instead of repairing it. Perhaps the main reason for military interventions was a lack of a liberal economic system supported with some social rights. This subject will be analyzed further when we compare the Turkey's state economy to the that of European social states.

3. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE IMPACT OF STATE ECONOMY IN TURKISH MODERNIZATION PROCESS

In the restructuring process of Turkish Republic, a strong state economy was implemented due to the lack of entrepreneurship and capital accumulation. A small number of private entrepreneurship existed with the support of the state. This behavior was not only a practical solution to the economy of the Republic, it was also suggested in the late Ottoman period as a way-out of economic troubles. The model of state economy was put into practice with the beginning of the Republic for the reasons explained above and will be detailed more below. At the beginning, the state economy was a direct result of conditions that the Republic was in. However, in the course of time it became an ideology of the elite and the *necessity* turned to be a *tradition*. State economy was harshly implemented and it became one of the indispensable principles of RPP members who established the Republic. The term also meant more than economy. With its political and social meanings, it was called as Statism. Some called this unique structure as Turkish version of State Capitalism.³⁷ Although the economic conditions in Europe and Turkey changed after the World War II, The statist structure of Turkey did not change. An important reason for this conservative statism was that the founder elite of the Republic wanted to easily finance the transformation process by controlling the economy. The next two sections explain the reasons for the application of state economy in the late Ottoman period and Republican period.

3.1. State Economy in the Late Ottoman Period

Historical reality shows that state economy was in the agenda of the elite since the day of formation (Tanzimat) movement during the rule of Mahmud II. Ottoman elite at that time thought that the only way to pace up with the European counterparts was to implement a state-centered economy as there was no sufficient capital in the hands of private sector. At the beginning, state bureaucrats and intellectuals tried to solve the problems with governmental, structural and military reforms³⁸, but the decline could not be stopped. They, then, started to think about an economic model at the end of 19th century. A major mistake of the elite was to believe that governmental, structural, political and military reforms would also bring economic prosperity. Whereas, economic changes are not the result of the changes

³⁷ Berch BERBEROĞLU, Turkey in Crisis, Zed Pres, London,1982,pp 34-47

³⁸ İlber ORTAYLI, İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı, İstanbul: İletişim Yayımları,2005,s.123

mentioned above. Political, social and governmental improvements in the Western European countries were the results of an economic conflict and struggle between different classes, which lasted for more than two centuries. The Turkish elite preferred the easy way and adopted non-economic matters and hoped that the economy would improve accordingly. In short, they brought the results and waited for the cause to emerge. It is a sociological reality that economic causes create some political and social results, but not the opposite. This contradiction cost much in the modernization process of Turkey. This contradiction caused people to misperceive and misunderstand the concepts of nationalism and nation state. The creation of the State-Nation instead of a Nation-State lies underneath this contradiction. As a result of this, the political concepts of “left” and “right” was used artificially and did not mean what they meant in the Western European countries. The term “leftist” politically meant people who were in favor of changes and reforms no matter what their economic status and class were. The term “Rightist” also meant people who were somewhat conservative, religious and above all non-Western, which is also nothing to do with the economic status.

The elite of the late Ottoman (especially Unionists- Partisans of the Union and Improvement Party) interpreted economic independence in a narrow way limited to legal and political terms only.³⁹ As a matter of fact, the transformation of information on economic model was not realized in those years.⁴⁰ Because, intellectuals who were sent to the West for education were more interested in solving the problem of saving the country rather than dealing with the economic programs.⁴¹ Most of them, thus, became political activists⁴² who were trying to lead the country in their glass houses. For the reasons explained above, it was not possible to come to an agreement on a long lasting economic policy. The economic policy was a mixture of liberal, corporatist and national economic movement in the last days of the Union and Improvement Party.⁴³ The common tendency of those three movements was the increasingly growing feelings of nationalism and statism. This was because Western type of pre-capitalist social classes could not emerge⁴⁴ in the Ottoman Empire since the mode of production and the social life had a structure in which society and social life could only exist with the existence of the state.⁴⁵ State was always in the center as a solvent when the social and economic life was in trouble.

The cost of the First World War had increased the burden on the state, and Ottoman State tried to tidy up the economy and social life, which used to be done by the foundations (Vakıflar) before. For that aim German economists were invited to Istanbul University, which was then known as

³⁹ Korkut BORATAV, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2007, s.31

⁴⁰ Ahmet Güner SAYAR, *Osmalı İktisat Düşünçesinin Çağdaşlaşması*, İstanbul: Ötüken Yayıncılık, 2000, s.39.

⁴¹ Çağlar KEYDER, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2001, s.78

⁴² KEYDER, s.78

⁴³ Tevfik ÇAVDAR, *Türkiye Ekonomisinin Tarihi*, Ankara: İmge Yayinevi, 2003, s.82

⁴⁴ ÇAVDAR, s.44

⁴⁵ Ahmet İNSEL, *Düzen ve Kalkınma Kıcıkçında Türkiye*, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayıncılık, 1996, s.70.

Darulfunun (Science School), and they developed and suggested non-classical economic policies increasing the role of the state in the economy.⁴⁶ They suggested a kind of social state economy in order to eradicate the deficits of capitalist system that people in the West were fed up with. However, as the capitalist system was not implemented as it was in the West, problems were not the same. This suggestion yielded a state economy instead of a social state. As can be seen later on in the next section, the reaction to capitalism and therefore to imperialism caused the emergence of a unique national-socialist economic structure, instead of creating a Western style of social state. Since then, social state and state economy were thought to be similar by the Turkish Elite although both were completely different from each other. While the former were designed to eradicate the deficits of harsh capitalism, the latter was trying to establish a capitalist system through the initiative of the state.

3.2. State Economy in the Republican Period

During the years of independence war, Turkey gave a great priority to economic development. Actually, The Turkish Elite were generally not against a liberal economy. Historical and economic conditions made them apply a relatively closed and national economic model. One can see the proof of this in Cavit Bey's liberal thoughts. Cavit Bey, who was a partisan of Union and Improvement Party, stated that "states, in which there is sufficient capital that is used fairly, the division of labor works well, and machined labor is paid well, will prosper no matter in which parts of the world they are."

Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Republic, declared in Izmir Economy Congress that they were not against foreign capital.⁴⁷ However, until conditions get better, a moderate state economy will have to be applied as there is not enough capital and entrepreneurship⁴⁸. Atatürk stated that economic model that Turkey is implementing is a moderate state economy which is "*not a system translated from the idea of European socialist thinkers. This system uniquely belongs to Turkey, which is derived from the needs of the country.*"⁴⁹ Atatürk also said that "*we need foreign capital and expertise.*"⁵⁰ It can be understood from his statements that Atatürk did not want a socialist economy which was popular those days because of the economic crisis suffered by the European countries then. He always stressed that a moderate state economy was necessary under the current conditions of the country then.⁵¹

Atatürk praised Bolshevik Revolution of socialist Russia only and simply because he wanted to gain political and military support of Russia

⁴⁶ Zafer TOPRAK, İttihat Terakki ve Devletçilik, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1995,s.5.

⁴⁷ Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1997, s.115.

⁴⁸ From the opening speech of Izmir Economy Congress, 17.11.1923.

⁴⁹ Afet İNAN, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin İkinci Sanayi Planı 1936, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara.

⁵⁰ Mahmut SOYDAN, "1923- Gazi ve Devrim", Milliyet, 2-3 February 1930

⁵¹ Utkan KOCATÜRK, Atatürk'ün Fikir ve Düşünceleri, Ankara: M.Kemal Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları, 1999,s.311.

against imperial states.⁵² His speeches and statements, thus, were conjectural and should be taken into consideration from this point of view.

After the establishment of the Republic, the economy was the prime concern of the Elite most of whom were educated in the West where liberal economy was in fashion. However, as there was not enough capital and the people were not used to a Western type of liberal economy, the state undertook the responsibility of initiating and encouraging the industry. Therefore, state's involvement in the economy was thought to be a temporary duty driving from social and historical necessities which had no similarity with Russian Revolution and nothing to do with socialist ideas. Socialist ideas were generally reactions to the harsh and failed capitalist systems. Capitalism was never in the agenda of Turkey. Political, Social and institutional liberalist tendencies were started in the first quarter of 19th century but economic liberalism was not initiated because of historical and socio-economical reasons. As a matter of fact, one of the presumptions of this article is to stress this contradiction. Without bringing and adopting a Western style of liberal economic system, all the other political, social, legal and institutional reforms remained baseless and artificial as they were the results of a well running liberal economic system.

The term “mixed economy” was derived from the real conditions of the country. However, mixed economies of Europe were derived from the fact that capitalist system was successful in the production of goods but it failed in income distribution and in some other areas of social matters. States in the West hence intervened in the economy, especially after the Second World War, in order to arrange the consumption of the goods production of which was not a problem at all. On the contrary, Mixed economy of Turkey meant state initiation of all new investments. Even the vast majority of basic consumer goods were produced by the state until 24th January Decisions of 1980 when liberalization of the economy started.⁵³ The mixed economy of Turkey was also somehow an ideological synthesis conciliating socialist economic systems of the East with the capitalist system of the West.⁵⁴ Perhaps, that is why nation-states of Europe created capitalist states and then social states but, in Turkish case, state-nation created state capitalism⁵⁵ with a national-socialist application which had no relation with the social states of Europe. In the early years of the Republic, Atatürk's suggestion of state entrepreneurship thus was not an outcome of an ideological or a doctrinal thought. On the contrary, it was an outcome of practical reasons.⁵⁶

Although individual entrepreneurship was praised in every occasion by the establishing Elite at the beginning of the Republic, it was only rhetorical and remained in the speeches of the politicians as the historical realities and the economic trend of the world did not allow a Free Market

⁵² Taha AKYOL, Ama Hangi Atatürk, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2008, s.215

⁵³ Rıdvan KARLUK, Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye, Beta Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, ss.297-306.

⁵⁴ KOCATÜRK, s.308

⁵⁵ Berch BERBEROĞLU, , (1982), *Turkey in Crisis*, Zed Pres, London, 1982, p.34-106

⁵⁶ Aytekin ALTIPARMAK, “Türkiye'de Devletçilik Döneminde Özel Sektör ve Sanayinin Gelişimi”, http://sbe.erciyes.edu.tr/dergi/03_Altiparmak.pdf, 2002, s.39(ErişimTarihi:12.12.08)

Economy. Turkey did have almost any of the economic institutions of a free market economy. For instance, share market, free exchange of foreign currency, international banking, budgeting and audit systems either were not existed or were not as they were supposed to be in a European capitalist economy. However, it was always stated that the Turkish state would not be an obstacle to individual initiative which is vital for maintaining a stable democracy.⁵⁷ Despite those praising speeches, individual initiative did not develop until 24th January Decisions for the very fact that the state economy of Turkey was, however unwillingly, an economic barrier in front of entrepreneurs. The implementation of state economy hindered the free initiative in three ways: first, state produced goods were and, had to be, cheaper as there was not a sufficient purchasing power and private sector could not compete with it; second, state tried to compensate the loss by introducing new taxes decreasing the already vulnerable purchasing power; and lastly, as the state economy made devastating loses and could not renew its production means, the Turkish State tried to get more and more into foreign debt. In order to pay the debts, state increased the money supply as the tax revenues were insufficient. Then the prices were inflated. The history of state economy of Turkey from 1923 to 1980 might be called as the history of inflation. As a result of this, political and social life always remained elitist and a tutelary democracy prevailed. Perhaps the main reason for military interventions to the political life was because of the lack of a running free market. Interest and pressure groups did not flourish under the state economy. 1961 constitution was a modern constitution which was mainly adopted from the West and gave the citizens political and social rights. However, as those rights were not supported with economic freedoms, they caused the emergence of radical ideologies and political activism prevailed over the economic class struggle. Political societies and groups did not ask and demand from the regime instead they asked and demanded the regime itself.

Statism in Turkey got traditionalized in time and became one of the indispensable principles of Republican People's Party (RPP). In the mean time, Atatürk stated in RPP's Izmir Congress in 1931 that "*our people are virtually statist that they demand all their needs from the state*".⁵⁸ It can be seen that the state-centered economic model which was formed from top to down at the beginning became an instrument of an authoritarian rule.⁵⁹ From then on, statism assumed political, social and ideological meanings alienating from what it meant economically at the beginning. Beside state-owned sugar, tobacco and textile industries, social and cultural institutions were established. It was thought that a mental change would be realized and a national bourgeoisie would be created. Another duty of the state was to prevent a possible class struggle as it was thought to hinder the economic

⁵⁷ KOCATÜRK, s.307.

⁵⁸ Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1997, s.295

⁵⁹ Suna KILIÇ, Atatürk Devrimi Bir Çağdaşlaşma Modeli, Ankara: İş Bankası Yayınları, 1981, s.230

development. To realize this, the RPP's principle of Populism was used as a catalyst.⁶⁰

The application of state economy became even more authoritarian after the death of Atatürk. The second president of the Republic, İsmet İnönü, was in favor of state economy and the world trend, especially changes in Germany, Italy and Spain, encouraged him to do so. National-Socialist trend pushed Turkey deeply into a state economy. From then on, state economy meant more than an economic model undertaking political, social and cultural issues. İnönü was declared as the "National Chief" and political, social and cultural changes were expected to be secured through that model. The effects of the 1929 World Crisis also strengthened the idea of state economy. Statism in Turkey was traditionalized which was supposed to be a temporary policy in Atatürk's period. After the Second World War, this policy was implemented so harshly that most people started to criticize it. The state economy became a state capitalism⁶¹ with its political and social results. Some new taxes such as: Land Tax, Wealth Tax and Road Tax were introduced to an economically fragile society where there was no solvency because of a lack of a liberal economy.

After the Second World War, balances in the World changed. In the eve of the end of the war, Turkey declared its alliance with the West in order to gain the economic support and protect itself from a possible communist invasion. Statism was wounded though the state economy remained to be operational because a liberal economy was not declared until 1980s. Political, social and cultural pressure of the state economy on people decreased, but unlike its Western allies, the state still remained to be the major actor of the economy. This model was called "the Mixed Economy". The mixed economy of Turkey was quite different from its western counterparts. In the West, state, apart from some sectors such as railroad, airway and telecommunication, remained away from the production of the goods but intervened in the distribution of them. However, the situation in Turkey was completely opposite. More than 80% of the basic consumer goods were produced by the state but there were no social channels to distribute it. Perhaps the biggest mistake of Turkish decision makers was that they misinterpreted the social intervention of the West. They thus thought that, as the Western countries started to intervene in the economy after the Second World War, they were in the right place by already applying a state economy. They were not aware of the fact that the state intervention in the West was in favor of the distribution aspect of the economy, whereas the state intervention in Turkey was, on the whole, in the production aspect. This mistake was like an engineering mistake and prevented Turkey from building a fair, modernized, stable and running economic and political structure. The roots of democratic tutelage lie underneath this misperception and it cost Turkey much delay in the modernization process for about forty years.

⁶⁰ Levent KÖKER, "Kemalizm, M.Kemalçılık: Modernleşme Devlet ve Demokrasi", Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001, s.109.

⁶¹ BERBEROĞLU, pp.34-47

Turkey opened its economy to the world, especially to the West, after becoming a member of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1947. This initiative of Turkey was also misinterpreted and was regarded as a transformation of its economy into a liberal one. However, almost no domestic economic reforms were realized until the economic changes of 24th January Decisions of 1980. Foreign economic relations were limited to the West and were only on an institutional and intergovernmental basis. Therefore, it is almost impossible to share the idea⁶² that Turkey implemented a liberal economy during the multi-party period between 1950 and 1980. Turkey's so called liberalism was only designed to get the economic support of the West, especially the Marshall Plan. The West in turn wanted Turkey to be a firm military ally against Soviet Union. It was not therefore in the interest of the West to warn Turkey to make drastic domestic economic changes in order to have a Western type of liberal economy with social measures.

As a result of those state-induced economic and political structures, Turkey's modernization process was not embraced by the vast majority of people and the democracy remained tutelary, which was open to military interventions. Military interventions became almost a tradition in Turkey between 1950 and 1980. Military takeovers were realized in every decade.

History shows as a proof that no direct military intervention happened, except some indirect interventions, after the economic reforms of 1980's. Because, Liberalization of the economy has created a pluralist political life and at least the Elite were pluralized. New private entrepreneurs mushroomed in different parts of the country. A group of small number of state-supported businessmen centered in İstanbul gradually lost power and new businessmen groups flourished in every parts of the country. Those new groups were called as "Anatolian Lions" and had, and still have, a great influence in the modernization process. The plural economic structure of Turkey stabilized the democracy and direct military interventions became unnecessary and perhaps impossible. It became unnecessary because political fanaticism and radicalism were eradicated by liberal economic implementations. Interest and pressure groups asked and demanded from the regime using their collective economic power as a lever instead of asking and demanding the regime itself which was the reality of 1960's and 1970's.

4. CONCLUSION

The concepts of "Nationalism", "State Nationalism" "State Economy" and "Statism" have always been important and effective in shaping the political, social, cultural and economic life of Turkish Republic. Nationalism and Statism became founding principles of the Republic. At the beginning of the Republic, those principles were seen as solvents in solving economic, social and political problems. But, later on, they were loaded with

⁶² Korkut BORATAV, Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2002, Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2004, s.101

ideological and doctrinal meanings. State had to initiate the economy as there was not enough capital in the hands of private sector. The state economy, which emerged out of economic and conjectural reasons, became an ideology of the founding Elite of the Republic and could be named as “Statism”.

The term “Nationalism” was used to get a firm social and political solidarity and to create cultural cohesion during the late Ottoman times. But it was also idealized and used as a transforming project in order to create a Western style political and social structure by imitating French style of social and political understanding of contractive nationalism. Socioeconomic transformation of a healthy society should be based on the existing social and cultural structure. However, in Turkey the situation was not the same. The Elite of the Republic neglected this social and cultural base and thought that social, political and cultural adoption of the modern institutions of the West will modernize the country. As the economic structure did not resemble the West's, all those imitative changes came to naught. The modernization of the West was a result of the economic structure and the resulting class struggle. Without implementing a pluralist free market economy, Turkey's imitative political, social and cultural structure was not embraced by the majority of the people. Thus, Turkey's democracy remained tutelary and fragile until 1980s when a liberal free market economy started to be effective. In almost every decade, democracy was interrupted by the military. The existence of state economy eased this interruption. Because its existence prevented the emergence of social and economic classes and it also prevented the emergence of interest and pressure groups.

Liberal changes in Turkey have created a favorable environment for pressure groups. Radical thoughts are on the whole eradicated. Society became more organized in order to maximize their interests. The effects of state economy and statism were reduced. However, the implementation of harsh capitalism even more disturbed the income distribution. The middle class started to become diminished. Turkey, at the moment, is undergoing two crises together; the first one is the national capitalist crisis. Turkey is chronically enduring 1929 crisis of the West. This is because capitalist economic system implemented after 1980s showed its ill effects and the economic system could not renew itself. The middle class has been deeply harmed. The need for social change remains at a high level. Secondly, Turkey is also deeply affected from ongoing global crisis. To eradicate the effects of both crises, it is really high time that Turkey transformed its economy to a social stage. State should, instead of producing, help in the distribution of goods. By doing this, it will be possible to create a social state citizens of which are more involved in the social, political and cultural matters. Statist economy, which is causing a top-to-down and tutelary democracy, is being and should be changed in order to create a society in which decisions are taken from down to top. The democracy then will be more stable. All radicalism, including radical nationalism, will be eradicated. Then an artificial and ideological state-nation will be replaced by a real nation-state which is ready to integrate with the other developed nations of the world especially with the European Union.

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