AN EVALUATION OF THE RECENT DEBATES ON RESTRUCTURING OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT: FEDERALISM AND UNITARY STATE ARGUMENTS

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THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
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MASTER OF ARTS

BY MENDERES ÇINAR

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tarafından beğenilmiştir.

September 1993

I certify that I have read this thesis and in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration.

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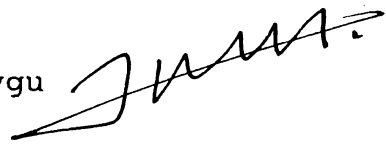Assistant Professor Dr. Muberra Yuksel

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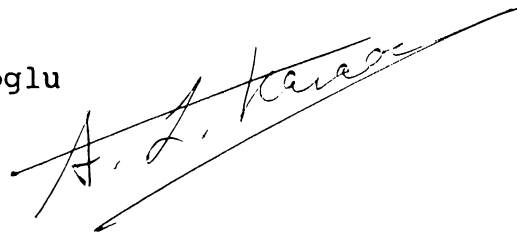Assistant Professor Dr. Ahmet Icduygu

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ABSTRACT

Political decentralization in a unitary state means
devolution of the center's power to localities and/or
periphery. Since such decentralization involves promotion
of alternative power bases, it goes against the nature of
the unitary state. Therefore, in a unitary state, where
the authority is distributed from the center, the center
should have confidence to whom it is decentralizing.
Such trust/ confidence is, in turn, linked to degree of
political integration, as measured by the
'decentralisers' (i.e. the center). In the Ottoman-
Turkish polity, the way of political integration was a
'centralized' one, and it was not conducive to
decentralization. Indeed, the centralization of the
system began with attempts to forge a nation. The center
was suspect of periphery. In such a context, the Turkish
political culture lacked local 'government' tradition.
The un(der)development of civic community hindered
political decentralization. There are, of course, other
factors influencing the degree of decentralization, such
as the size of the country in question. But, the
political culture and the degree of political integration
(as a determinant of the degree of confidence) are

considered to be the most important in the Turkish case. This is because, other factors are, actually, encouraging for more decentralization. The debates around the issue are part of the broader debates over restructuring Turkish politics. As far as decentralization is concerned, the key question is, whether Turkey completed its integration and/or if the way of integration was/is correct? Opponents and proponents of decentralization are divided over this question(s). Arguments against decentralization seems to be based on the assumption that, decentralization as proposed by the proponents, would lead to a wholesale transformation of the principles of the Republic.

OZET

Uniter bir devlette politik desentralisasyon merkezin politik gucunu yerel birimlere ve/veya 'cevreye' devretmesi demektir. Boyle bir desentralisasyon alternatif (politik) guc merkezleri olusturacagi icin uniter devletin dogasina aykiridir. Bu nedenle, otoritenin merkezden dagildigi uniter bir devlette, merkezin otoritesini dagittiklarina guvenmesi gerekir. Bu guven de politik entegrasyonun, merkez tarafindan olculmus, derecesine baglidir. Osmanli-Turk siyasetinde politik entegrasyon 'merkezi' bir yolla saglanmaya calisildi, buda desentralisasyon icin 'olumlu' bir gelisme degildi. Aslinda, Osmanli'nin modern anlamda merkezilesmesi yeni bir entegrasyon (ulus-devlet) denemeleriyle ayni zamana 'tesaduf' ediyor. Merkez cevreden kusku duyuyordu. Boyle bir durumda, Turk politik kulturu yerel hukumet geleneginden yoksun kaldi. Politik desentralisasyonu etkileyen, ulkenin cografi buyuklugu gibi, baska faktorlerde var. Fakat, Turkiye orneginde politik kultur ve 'guvenin' derecesini belirleyen olarak poitik entegrasyon derecesi en onemli faktorler olarak algilandi. Çunku, diger faktorler desentralisasyonu

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gerektirirken, Turkiye merkeziligini bugune dek korumustur. Konu uzerindeki tartismalar aslinda Turk politikasinin yeniden yapilandirilmasi tartismalarinin bir parcasi. Desentralisazyonu tartisanlar, Turkiye'nin politik entegrasyonun tamamlanip tamamlanmadigi sorusunda ve entegrasyonun seklinin dogru olup olmadigi konusunda bolunmektedir. Desentralizasyona karsi cikanlar Cumhuriyetin temellerinin sarsilacagina inanarak savlarini olusturmaktadir.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two years debates over the structure of the
Turkish government has gained momentum and became one of
the popular issues of the media. It is suggested that the
present 'centralized' government structure is no longer
effective and efficient in delivering services and in
carrying out its responsibilities, because it is the same
structure of government that was built in the early years
of the Republic [1]. But, a lot has changed since then, the
size of the population, the composition of the population
(i.e. urban-rural division) and so on. Therefore, it is
argued that it is almost impossible for central
government to meet with these 'diverse' demands/needs.
Also, it has been argued that local governments are
unable to meet the growing needs/demands of the local
population, since they do not have legal, financial, and
administrative means to do so. Not only the
administrative concerns but also concerns for further
democracy has paved the way towards making restructuring

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an issue. This is because, it is believed that local governments are more democratic since they allow participation of people, and since governors become accountable to electorate rather than to the center. The programme of the first True Path Party and Social Democratic Peoples Party coalition government (led by Demirel and Inonu), which states that a restructuring of government is needed and this will be done by 'withdrawing' the center from the localities illustrates the point reached in Turkey. The programme proposed that in the central-local administration dichotomy, the latter will be emphasized by increasing the authorities of the Province General Councils and Municipality councils.[2]

It can be suggested that there is a general trend favouring the reduction of the central state. It can be related to monetarist ideology, but also to what Huntington calls, the 'Third Wave' of democracy. In the Turkish case, debates over decentralization takes place in broader debates over restructuring of Turkish politics. It has been argued that politics in Turkey lags behind the changes in the society, and therefore, Hikmet Özdemir suggests, that it has been 'decaying'.[3] Thus,

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some reform in Turkish politics is needed. Decentralization is a part of these debated reforms, another, for example, is the presidency debates. Decentralization debates are also part of the Second Republic debates.[4] In order to explore what has really been debated by the commentators, it is essential to set a theoratical framework.

There are three types of decentralization; deconcentration, delegation, and devolution. But, not all of them implies political decentralization. Decentralization is a question of degree, and totally (de)centralized structures are abstractions. In the above typology, the degree of decentralization increases from deconcentration to devolution, hence, devolution is the most decentralizing one. Deconcentration can be defined as passing some authority or responsibility to a lower level **within** the central government machinery, normally under closer supervision of the central government. Delegation is transfer of some responsibility for specific functions to the agents that are outside of the central bureaucratic structure. Devolution is creation of sub-national units of government which are financially

and legally more powerful regarding the activities which are outside the direct control of central government.[5] Only devolution implies promotion of alternative centers of power and decentralization of decision making authority. Therefore, only devolution implies political decentralization which is of concern here.

In all structures of government, authority is distributed to various institutions and levels. This distribution can be construed in two ways, according to who has the authority and where the authority is located in a geographical sense.[6] It is the latter kind of distribution that refers to the extent and manner of decentralization to different sub-national governments which is of concern here. Whether it is a federal or unitary state, **political** centralization refers to a concentration of decision-making authority in the central (or national) government but not necessarily administrative implementation of decisions. Political decentralization, on the other hand, implies that sub-national units of government have discretion available to them to engage in effective decision making regarding policies affecting their area and discretion about how to

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implement and interpret central decisions. In other words, political decentralization refers to the dispersal of political decision-making with respect to matters regarding policy issues, including which policy to be pursued, the amount of revenues to be raised and the allocation of available revenues. Administrative decentralization refers to dispersal of administrative discretion as opposed to discretion over the nature of policy.[7]

Political decentralization can be measured in several ways. The ideal measure for political decentralization would asses quantitatively the independent decision-making powers of national, regional and local levels of government.[8] Functional responsibilities of national and sub-national governments, their financial independence, distribution of the public service employers are the tools used in measuring political decentralization. Among these tools the fiscal measures (resource capture) are the one most frequently used. By fiscal measures we mean the proportion of total government revenues and/or expenditures accounted for by central government. Keles suggests that,

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'The most serious impediment to local autonomy
is not administrative and political factors,
but financial strains on local governments....
Financial dependence of the municipalities on
central government forms a 'hidden mechanism'
for their political control and administrative
supervision'[9]

However, if sufficient amount of resources provided,
should we consider sub-national units as autonomous? Does
it make local governments autonomous? Wolman notes the
difficulty with associating availability of adequate
resources with decentralization:

'the portion of direct expenditure for which
subnational units are responsible may not be
a valid measure ....because subnational units
in some cases may simply be carrying out
the political will of the national government,
acting, in effect, as its administrative
agents, rather than making independent
decisions relating to policy and
resources.'[10]

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Perhaps, the important question is if the grants distributed conditionally? Centralization or decentralization can be defined in terms of legal arrangements between national and sub-national units. It is important to consider if the local governments have a chance to generate their own resources. If local governments are perceived as subordinate administrative units unable to raise their own revenues, it means that they are actually an extension of the center, hence, local administrations rather than local governments.[11] Thus, when local governments' fiscal/financial activity is limited by impositions of central government, then it is less decentralized politically. But if they have the legal means to be able generate their own resources, then, they are more decentralized.

Federal structure tends to be more decentralized. However, if we take the share of central government from total tax receipts, a federal state like Australia can be more centralized than a unitary state like Sweden. In the former, the share of central government from total tax receipts was 80%, while in the latter it was 62%.[12]

However, a simple measure of national as compared to sub-national expenditures cannot yield much useful information on where political decision making occurs. As noted above, sub-national governments may make expenditures as a means of implementing central government policy. If sub-national governments cannot determine which service to provide, how to provide and when to provide, they become, in reality, administrative agencies of central government. Thus, division of tax revenue, proportions (between central and sub-national government) of expenditures are not adequate measures in assessing the degree of political decentralization.

Also, reorganization into new-territorial units does not necessarily mean political decentralization. It can be administrative, if autonomy is not given to them.

In addition to degree of financial dependence (resource dependence) and degree of resource capture, the range and importance of functions performed by sub-national governments, and the autonomy given to sub-national units through legal relationship can be used for assessing the degree of political decentralization.

The functions of sub-national units and the degree of discretion that they have in carrying them out is the basic benchmark in assessing the degree of political decentralization. In federal structures sub-national units have a wide-range of functions, such as education and health. Normally, in a centralized state these functions are carried out by national government.

The second component, discretion, is defined by Page and Goldsmith;

> '[discretion] refers to the ability of actors within local government to make decisions, within the formal statutory and administrative framework for local government service delivery, about the type and level of services they deliver, and about how that services are provided and financed'[13]

Following from this point four major dimensions of discretion can be summed as: 1. Whether the services that local government provides are decided locally or whether they must be explicitly derived from a specific grant of powers.

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2. The extent of legal or administrative constraints upon the local government concerning the type of services they provide.

3. The degree of dependence of local government to a central government as a major source of technical advise.

4. The financial discretion of local government, that is, whether the local government is able to raise its own revenues.

The level of economic wealth, size of the country, political culture, cultural and economic diversities are correlates of the variations in centralization/decentralization.[14] The more developed a country, the more likeliness of decentralization. One reason for lack of decentralization in less developed countries is that central decision making ensures greater control over limited resources. Small size countries tend to be more centralized. Large size countries tend to be more decentralized since a large population concentrated in widely scattered areas is suitable for a federal form of government. Economically, in a larger and more populous country the localities are able to generate

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their own economies of scale. As far as the political culture is concerned, the mode of formation of the state (whether coercive or voluntaristic), the duration of the time over which state-building has taken place, the dominant ideology (pluralist ideology, for instance, fosters local autonomy) are influential factors. Furthermore, the degree of homogeneity of the population, in terms of language, religion, and race influences the level of decentralization. Lastly, federal government tends to be more decentralized.

Totally centralized or totally decentralized structures are abstractions. It is reasonable to suggest that a federal state **generally** illustrates the more decentralized one.

Yet, centralization/decentralization is not the appropriate criteria in defining federalism. Federalism is different from decentralization. Indeed, Elazar suggests non-centralization for federalism, because the term decentralization carries with it the implication of power being transferred from the center, which is not a feature of federal states. This is because there is a

non-hierarchical relation between federal and regional states. In federalism, political system is organized on a territorial basis in which sovereignty is constitutionally divided between two units; a central government and regional governments.[15] Political decision making takes place at these two different levels, and central unit can not take the authority of component units unless the component units surrender. Federalism gives recognition to several levels of legitimate authority and allegiance. Here, the distinction between the terms regional-level government and local government helps to clarify the difference between federalism and decentralization. A regional-level government differs from local government in that it involves more far reaching balance of power questions. A regional-level government may have wider powers of autonomy and legislative competence of their own. Local government, on the other hand, usually involves the running of services that is considered to be more suitable to operate locally within the guidelines determined by central government.[16] It is, perhaps, best to call component units as states rather than governments, since they have functions hardly delegated to local governments in

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states, such as education, police power, public order, civil and criminal law. Furthermore, component units have considerable amount of financial and legal discretion on which service to provide and how to provide it. Local government, in a federal state, takes place within the regional-level 'states' (states, because they have the authority to make laws and to change laws unilaterally). In other words, there is devolution of functions, with considerable degree of fiscal and legal autonomy.

In a unitary state, on the other hand, power devolves from the center, and mostly for administrative concerns. In unitary states we are likely to see administrative decentralization, that is delegation or deconcentration, but not devolution which implies political decentralization. In a unitary state, political power is undivided, and is vested within the various organs of the central power. There is a unity of executive, judiciary and legislative powers at the center. If and when some sort of responsibility (and perhaps some authority with it) delegated to local level, it can be taken back easily. In unitary states, the powers to carry out the

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policies that are decided by the center are delegated to localities (for administrative efficiency concerns). The authority of local governments (if any) in unitary states is restricted by centrally defined parameters. Unlike federalism, power is decentralized primarily to various forms of local government where the relationship is **hierarchical.** Thus, the authority of local governments can be taken easily.

A third type of state is an intermediate one between the truly federal and unitary states. This type is termed by Elazar as 'compound unitary state'.[17] In this type of government, substantial rule making powers devolved to sub-national governments, and federal-like practices are adopted. In this type of government, regional governments have legislative powers and functional responsibilities that would normally be considered as the prerogative of central government. Spain and Belgium can be given as examples of this type.

Decentralization is used for various objectives such as nation building, local democracy, administrative efficiency, and so on. Objectives of decentralization can

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also act as a criteria by which it is possible to assess the implications of distributing authority to sub-national governments. Paddison, for instance, suggests that decentralization can be used as a vehicle for reinforcing the unity of the state, but the existence of alternative power bases can be seen as a threat to a larger unit.[18] Thus, political decentralization goes against the nature of unitary state.

Indeed, as Illy rightly puts it, the center feels reluctant to decentralize unless it has confidence in the people to whom it is decentralizing.[19] It was, perhaps, this lack of confidence which resulted in centralization rather than decentralization in the early years of nation-building in Turkey. The degree of confidence in periphery is, in turn, related to the degree of political integration. This is because loyalty to the center can be measured in its terms. The idea of political integration is tied to development of a cohesive political community, it can be better described as national integration or nation-state integration (i.e. achievement of a cohesive population, in cultural, economic and political terms).[20] The equation of political integration with nation (or

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national integration) is closely related with the concept of state. Baradat (1991) suggests the state is a political concept around which people unify themselves, it is through which people identify themselves. The individuals within the state are so closely bound together that they soon become a nation, if not already.[21] Individuals can be 'nationalized' by the state, and the nationality can be defined in terms of citizenship of a state.

A nation may create a state, but a state may forge a nation.[22] In the Ottoman-Turkish case, attempts to forge a nation were made by the state, or more accurately by the elites of the state (i.e. the military and the bureaucrats). The Tanzimat period was an attempt to create an Ottoman nation through reforms introduced by the elites of the center. The measures for decentralization were redressed by other measures of centralization during the Tanzimat period. On the whole, the period was a centralized period for center hoped to maintain 'unity' of the 'Ottoman State' by extending itself to the periphery.

The failure of Ottomanism (or Ottoman nation-state) can not solely be explained by the multi-ethnic structure of the Empire, because there are many examples of multi-ethnic nation-states. According to Mardin, success of Europe in creating nation-states lies in its feudal past. This is because the feudal antecedents allowed them to have multiple confrontations between feudal nobility, cities, burghers and so on. The multiple confrontations, in turn, led to the well articulated structure of nation-states.[23]

The conflict in the Ottoman empire, on the other hand, was unidimensional, between the center and periphery. And the solutions to these conflicts were highly centralized. The centralized feature of Turkish polity continued in the period of the Republic as well. Indeed, until recently basic cleavage continued to be between center and periphery. Similarly, the central (top to down) social engineering feature of the Tanzimat period continued in the Republican era. It was res publica by military/bureaucratic elites of the center. This res publica was to forge a nation (or better, a nation-state). If decentralization is one of the vehicles of

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building national unity in general, it is not one of the
vehicles used in the particular Turkish case. In the
Ottoman-Turkish case, centralization, in the modern
sense, occurred with Tanzimat reforms as the nation-state
building attempts were unleashed. Forging a nation and
centralization 'coincided'. This was, perhaps, because
periphery perceived to be as disintegrating. It is one
of the assumptions of this study that decentralization of
authority is related to transition from res publica by
the state elites to democracy.[24] This is because, elites
of the center kept authority in the center to build a
nation-state. Therefore, second assumption is that this
transition, in turn was linked to the degree of political
integration.

In Turkey decentralization is a delicate subject. This
is, perhaps, because of the phrases in the 1982
constitution about the indivisible integrity of the state
with its nation and land. Also, in Turkey the notion of
central government is generally used as a synonym of the
state. Therefore, there is a general tendency to perceive
state and local governments as two opponent units.[25] In
such a case the delicacy of decentralization springs from

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the fear of disintegration and/or 'division of integrity.' Furthermore, the fact that Turkey had no local government tradition is an unfavourable historical heritage for decentralization. It was only in 1913 that municipalities were recognized as corporate entities. One might easily get labelled as a traitor, when s/he suggests some decentralization. Indeed, when the previous President, Turgut Ozal, suggested that we should discuss federalism (regarding the Kurdish isssue), the then Prime Minister, Suleyman Demirel, declared that discussing federalism, is meaningless and associated with being a traitor.[26] Similarly when the president applied to the court for prosecution of a True Path Party deputy, who allegedly insulted him, the court rejected his application and accused him of damaging our nationality.

There had been one major cleavage in the Ottoman-Turkish polity, it was the cleavage between center and periphery. However, in the post-1980 period Turkish jacobins were left out of the picture and the old center-periphery cleavage was replaced by state-civil society cleavage.[27] Decentralization debates takes place between these groups. It is possible to observe a continuity, in change

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from periphery to civil society, in that both of these groups have decentralist tendencies. The proponents of civil society include the neo-Ottomans and those favouring the so-called Second Republic. On the other side of the cleavage, there seems to be the ones who take Ataturkism as an ideology, and those who are left out of the picture. Originally Ataturkism was aiming at an instrumental polity, which emphasizes society rather than state.[28]

In the following chapters, an attempt will be made to evaluate the debates between these groups. The following chapter gives a brief historical account of (de)centralization in the Ottoman-Turkish polity. The rationale for such review is that such account would help us to understand the political culture (as a determinant of the degree of decentralization) in Turkey. Then, the current debate will be reviewed. Finally, an attempt will be made to draw some conclusions from the current debate.

1.See 'Baykal: Turkiye Sadece Ankara'dan Yonetilemez', and Ertugrul Ozkok, 'Baykal'dan Carpici Iki Oneri' both in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 28.9.1992.

2.<u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 20 November 1991, Ertugrul Ozkok, 'Ozal-Demirel Mutabakatinin Maddeleri', <u>Hurriyet</u>,12.11.1991, 'Yerel Parlementoyu Tartismaliyiz', <u>Hurriyet</u>, 19.10.1992

3. Degisen Turkiyede Siyaset Paneli, Ocak 1993, <u>Gazi Universitesi</u>, Chaired by the previous President Turgut Ozal,

4.Mehmet ALTAN, Cumhurbaskani ve Yolsuzluk, <u>Sabah</u>, 25.4.1993, see also, '2. Partide, 2. Cumhuriyet', <u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 4.12.1992

5.Definitions draw from Hans F. Illy, 'Decentralization as a Tool for Development: Notes on the Current Debate' in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, M. Heper, ed., (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986)

6.Ronan Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State: The Political Geography of Power</u>, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p.4-5, 38

7.Harold Wolman, 'Decentralization: What It Is and Why Should We Care?' in <u>Decentralization, Local Governments, and Markets: Towards a Post-Welfare Agenda</u>, Robert J. Bennett, ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). p.29

8.Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State</u>, 1983,p.38

9. Rusen Keles 'Municipal Finance in Turkey with Special Reference to Istanbul' in M. Heper, ed., <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, p.54

10. Wolman, 'Decentralization: What Is It and Why Should We Care', p.39

11. Metin Heper, 'Local Government in Turkey: An Overview with Special Reference to the Municipalities', in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, M. Heper, ed., p.16

12.Arend Lijpart, <u>Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries</u>, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984).

13.Page and Goldsmith, 'Centralization and Decentralization: A Framework for Comparative Analysis', <u>Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy</u>, (1985), vol.3, p. 178

14.This paragraph draws from Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State</u>, 1983, pp.41-49.

15. Herbert, M. Levine, <u>The Political Issues Debated: An Introduction to Politics</u>, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc, 1987), second edition, p.202

16.Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State</u>, 1983, p.15

17.See Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State</u>, 1983, p.31

18. Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State,</u> 1983, p.50.

19. Illy, 'Decentralization as a Tool for Development..' in <u>Dilemmas of</u> <u>Decentralization</u>, p.115

20.Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State</u>, 1983, p.58

21.Leon P. Baradat, '<u>Political Ideologies: Origins and Impact'</u>, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc, 1991), p.12

22.Gordon Smith, 'A Future for Nation-State?' in <u>The Nation-State: The</u> <u>Formation of Modern Politics</u>, Leonard Tivey, ed., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p.198

23.Serif Mardin,'Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?, <u>Deadalus</u>, 101,2, Winter (1973): 169-190, p.170

24. The term state elites refers to military and bureaucratic elites of the center. They are different from political elites.

25. Mustafa Gönül, 'Secimli Valilik Üzerine Düsünceler', <u>Amme Idaresi</u> <u>Dergisi</u>, 25, 3,(1992), p.63

26.Tempo, 3.11.1992, yìl 4, sayì 45

27. Metin Heper, 'A Weltanschauung-turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics: 'Ataturkism' in Turkey', <u>Orient</u>, 25 (1984): 83-94, p.84

28. ibid, p.85

CHAPTER ONE

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

It was noted in the introductory chapter that political
culture has an influence on the degree of
centralization/decentralization. Here, it is convenient
to give a brief definition of political culture.
Political culture consists of beliefs, symbols, and
values that define the situations in which political
action occurs.[1] It can better be referred as the
orientations of all members of a political system to
political action/political system. Cognitive orientations
include knowledge and beliefs, affective orientations
involve feelings, such as attachment or alienation,
evaluative orientations comprise judgements and opinions
about the system.[2]

Historical heritage of center and periphery relations

(the major cleavage in the Ottoman Empire) is one of the determinants of political culture of decentralization. It is for this reason we now turn to give an account of the past.

The classical Ottoman Empire had not been a centralized state.[3] As Mardin puts,

> 'the Ottomans dealt with the new social institutions they encountered [as the Empire expanded] by giving the seal of legitimacy to local usages and by enforcing a system of decentralized accommodation toward ethnic, religious and regional particularisms. No attempt was made for a more complete integration when loose ties proved workable....The center and periphery were two loosely related worlds'[4]

The traditional system was called <u>millet</u> system, under which the distinction between different groups was not geographic, but sociological. The meaning of <u>millet</u> was a religious community, it was based on religious affiliation alone and included members of different

ethnic groups and residents of widely separated regions of the Empire.[5] In this system, the laws that govern one were those of one's <u>millet</u>.[6]

The governor-generals of provinces enjoyed a large degree of delegated military and financial authority. But this is not to say that provinces were self-governed, the governor-generals were subjects of the Sultan and they did not have autonomous **political** power.[7] In the traditional Ottoman system, taxation and administration was not centralized but tightly controlled.[8] The traditional Ottoman system, Heper notes;

> 'was neither 'centralized' nor 'decentralized' feudalism. Instead it evidenced strong characteristics of patrimonialism. Whereas in both centralized and decentralized feudalism central authority is effectively checked by countervailing powers (of political and legal nature respectively) in patrimonialism the periphery is almost totally subdued by the center'[9]

It was this lack of feudal antecedents that led to the ill-articulated Ottoman nation-state. The major (center and periphery) conflict in the Empire was never resolved by means of a compromise. The state was not consensual in the Ottoman system.

At the beginning of nineteenth century, the center was losing its control over provinces almost completely. After 1812, Mahmut II destroyed the delegated autonomy of ayans in order to gain direct control of the center over the provinces. But, there was no fiscal/financial centralization in this period, provincial revenues were still farmed out by iltizam. Tanzimat reforms were a response to this loss of control of center. Therefore, it is difficult to talk of decentralization in this period (1839-1876). Tanzimat reforms were to extend center into periphery, to introduce a centralized administration. These modernization efforts were also efforts to 'Ottomanise' the Empire. There was no concept of Ottomanism before nineteenth century. It was the Tanzimat reforms attempting to built an Ottoman nation-state. The political conception underlying the Tanzimat period has

a close affinity to the rationalist tradition of eighteenth century Western Europe.[10] It was this rationalism which was in the origins of the notion of nation-state. This is because, rationalism created the idea of citizen (i.e. the individual who recognized the state as his/her legal home), the idea of uniform law system throughout the country where all citizens have the same status, the idea of loyalty to a larger group than clan or caste, and the idea of the state that exist to serve those interests.[11] The nation-state building efforts of Tanzimat reforms becomes more apparent when we consider the aim of the reforms. Heper notes that,

> 'The aim of the Tanzimat reforms was to establish a uniform and centralized administration linked directly with each citizen, and working with its rational principles of justice, applied equally to all'[12]

Tanzimat reforms represented a shift from the traditional millet system towards creating an Ottoman citizenship, and loyalty to Ottoman fatherland and to the ruling dynasty, irrespective of religion or origin.[13] It was

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Western type of nationalism -or more accurately, patriotism since the criteria in defining nations was the occupation of a common territory, defined by the jurisdiction of a common sovereign authority - which gave rise to the attempt to focus loyalty on an Ottoman fatherland, and vaguely defined Ottoman nation.[14]

In this period tax collection was centralized through appointment of Muhassil(s). A muhassil was a tax collector with a fixed salary, and was directly dependent on central government. What might be perceived as 'decentralization' in this period was the creation of advisory councils at the Province and Kaza levels. However, the existence of councils does not represent a sign of decentralization by themselves. It is important to see its functions, membership composition, and the decision-making process.

The provincial councils were to be made of thirteen members, of which seven were central government officials. The remaining six were to be representing guilds and local notables. At the Kaza level there was to be five members, three of which were to be government

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officials.[15] Thus, the center was dominant in the councils. In addition, candidates to be elected nominated by the center, and twice the number of representatives were elected, so that the center could choose between the elected representatives. Moreover, these councils were advisory, and they were actually established in order to improve tax collections.

The local governments were seen by Tanzimat reformers as administrative agencies of central government, thereby they were seen as a means of getting rid of intermediaries between center and its subjects.[16] The reformers did not have 'decentralizing' objectives, such as local autonomy and local democracy. Rather, they wanted participation of local people to local administration for a better provincial government by the officials of the center.[17]

Because the coordination was lacking, the reforms led to confusion and conflicts. Lewis suggests that anarchy and confusion was a result of the grave difficulties of centralization policy. Mithad Pasha was called to lead the discussions on revision of provisional reform. He

declared that:

> 'the main difficulty in the provinces before
> the Tanzimat began had been the concentration
> of all administrative powers in the hands of
> the governors. The tanzimat tried to limit
> their powers and regulate the acts of all
> officials through supervision from Istanbul.
> But the Tanzimat leaders soon had discovered
> that central government could not handle
> provincial affairs efficiently and that
> centralization lead to confusion, delay and
> inefficiency'[18]

However, the following measures were not decentralizing
either. The _Vilayet_ Law was, too, increasing the presence
of the center in the periphery. The authority of the
agent of central government, provincial governor, was
increased; he had the power to convoke the councils and
to dismiss them. The 1864 law remained in effect until
1876. It was based on French system of administration.
Old _eyalets_ were replaced by larger _vilayets_, and they
were to be governed by _vali_. The _vali_ was granted more
discretion than his French counterpart _prefet_. But, the

general tendency of law was towards centralization. It was multi-ethnic and multi-religious feature of the Empire which led to balancing any decentralizing measure with another centralizing one elsewhere in the law.[19]

The centralizing tendency continued in the 1871 Idare-i Umumiye-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi , which can be translated as the General Administration of Provinces Law. Both 1864 and 1871 laws show little difference as far as the Vilayet Idare Meclisleri (Province Administration Chambers) were concerned. The Province Administration Chambers were executive bodies elected out of the Province General Councils. But, in the latter law, the number of bureaucrats in the Councils was increased, thereby the role of elected members were further reduced.[20]

The starting point for Turkey's local government tradition was Vilayet Umumi Meclisleri (Province General Councils). [21] These councils were to be met once in a year for a maximum of forty days. These councils were hoped to be a channel for presenting wishes and the problems of local people to the governors. However, the

dominance of the center continued here as well; agenda was set by the governors, and it was impossible for representatives to talk of other subjects than those indicated in the agenda.

The 1876 constitution affirmed the principle of decentralization, but the basic law was that of 1864 with minor subsequent amendments. The Tanzimat reforms represents attempts of a state to forge a nation. It is perhaps, because only the center was Ottoman, it tried to extend itself to periphery. Gökalp criticizes the Tanzimat reforms as follows,

> 'supporters of the Tanzimat reforms believed that it would be possible to create a nation based on will out of an existing 'nation' composed of several nationalities and religions'[22]

But, even Gökalp himself was initially an Ottomanist for he stated that 'we Turks are first Ottoman, then Turk, Arabs are Ottoman then Arab...'.[23]

Ottomanism failed, partially, because of the persistence
of religious allegiances as opposed to an allegiance to
a common Ottoman fatherland. Although many statesman and
officials of the Tanzimat reforms were sincere in their
attempts to apply Ottomanism, a totally secular outlook
has yet to be developed even among them, and religious
allegiances were still too strong. [24] In the local
councils, the representation of non-muslim subjects was
opposed by the muslim subjects, and the central
government had to 'warn' the muslim subjects. It was with
the help of _vali_ that these councils were able to
'operate'. [25]

A territorial and political nation proved to be difficult
to achieve at a time of increasing nationalist movements
in the multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire.
Decentralization was considered as conducive to
disintegration, because of the separatist nationalist
movements.

When Ottomanism did not observe loyalty of non-muslim
subjects, Sultan Abdulhamit responded with pan-Islamism.
Pan-Islamism offered advantages to Abdülhamit;

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internally, the appeal to muslim loyalty could win
support for his efforts to repress the opponents of his
autocratic power, and externally, Islamic manipulation
could create problems for imperial powers. He laid the
emphasis on the Islamic feature of the state, and
strengthened the institution and symbol of the
caliphate.[26] Namìk Kemal was aware of the difficulties
with Ottomanism, and he, too, emphasised Islam as a
unifying element. Instead of a nation based on
territorial allegiance, Islamic brotherhood and
allegiance to caliphate was his emphasis.[27] Abdulhamit's
pan-Islamism was successful for a while,[28] but his
success should not be exaggerated for at the turn of the
nineteenth century Arab, Laz, Abhaza etc. were words that
referred to the social reality of the Empire.[29]

However, although there was an emphasis on Islam, the
name of the unification was *Osmanli*.[30] Indeed, there was
a blurring distinction between Islamism, Ottomanism and
Turkism. Lewis notes that;

> 'The Ottomans revealed that ..they were not
> prepared to concede real equality to non-
> muslims; the Turkists made it clear that the

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greater Turkish family was limited to those professing Islam.. To this extend both groups were Islamists, and Ottomanist leaders were indeed ready to make use both of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism when they suited their ends'[31]

The failure of both Ottomanism and Islamism, it might be suggested, was because of ethnic nationalism, which emphasised people rather than territory. This kind of nationalism was influenced by romanticism, and stressed the importance of common language and culture as a criteria in affiliation with a nation. Consequently, both Ottomanism (emphasised territory) and Islamism (emphasised religion) have failed.

The Turkism of the nineteenth century was romantic in nature as well. Turkism was another alternative for saving the Ottoman state. In 1862, Foreign Minister Ali Pasha emphasised the role of the Turks as the unifying element in the Empire. It was this observation of Ali Pasha which led Yusuf Akçura to offer his alternative pan-Turkism. Yet, he soon realized its practical

political difficulties.[32]

It was the ethnicity-based separatist current that developed among the subjects of the Ottoman Empire, which made the Young Turks suspicious of decentralization. The Young Turks were dedicated to the idea of the union of the Ottoman Empire and Ottomanism. The basic concern of them was to save the state, that is the same concern with Alemdar Mustafa Pasha's and his Deed of Alliance's concern. The Ottomanist feature of Young Turks was illustrated in the 1890 programme of the Ottoman Society for Union and Progress. It stated that the party is composed of men and women who are all Ottomans.[33]

The Young Turk era was a centralized one as well. In the Parliament and within the party, the opposition was overcome by the absolutism of the Committee for Union and Progress. Those who demanded decentralization were singled out and suspected, for decentralization perceived as dangerous, if not a suicidal formula.[34] During their tenure, as part of the centralization policies, the number of 'elviye-i gayri mülhaka' type of lives, which

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were under the direct control of central government, were increased. However, the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) was not united regarding policies about centralization.

In contrast to the centralizing policies of CUP, Prince Sebahattin was insisting on decentralization as the prescription to the ills of the Ottoman state. His prescription included provincial chambers that composed of ethnic groups of province in proportional numbers. These chambers were to have full power over legislation, order, and fiscal issues. He was also suggesting deputies to be elected from this chamber. Sebahattin's proposal was implying **political** decentralization for it gives provinces political authority to make laws, and allows them to generate their own resources. However, he eventually left the CUP and founded *Tesebüsi Sahsi ve Ademi Merkeziyet Cemiyeti* (The League of Private Initiation and Decentralization). Kutlay suggests that Sebahattin, too, was an Ottomanist for he wanted local government to be strengthened and re-ordered under the ideology of Ottomanism.[35] According to Aksin, what he was suggesting was even more than a federation, a

confederation,[36] which implies a weak central government
which is a creature of and subordinate to constituent
groups, and can only work through constituent units.[37]
However, Sabahattin's ideas were not put into practice.

During the War of Independence center-periphery duality
appears in the Grand National Assembly (GNA). The
representatives of periphery were the so-called Second
Group, and this group was demanding decentralization and
political liberalism. The influence of the province
residents in the making of this assembly was great.[38]
Therefore, it was the most representative Assembly. The
1921 constitution was made by this assembly. In this
constitution local government and self-government
principles were weighted the most.[39] According to this
constitution, *Vilayets* would divide into *kazas, kazas*
into *nahiyes. Vilayets* were to have a corporate entity
and full autonomy as far as local were matters concerned.
Within the framework of laws set by the GNA, all matters
of education, health, economy, agriculture, re-settlement
and social services were to be arranged by Provincial
Assemblies (*Vilayet Meclisleri*). A body, called *Idare
Heyeti* (Administration Group or Council) was to be

elected out of the Assembly would carry out the executive functions. The governors would be appointed by the GNA, but they would interfere only when there was a clash between general duties of the state and the local duties.

Even today, local government as proposed in this constitution is not realized. The constitution was short-lived and it was 'both functionally and ideologically undesirable to allow the development of strong local power centers'.[40] Also, this constitution was giving local governments a role and an authority beyond the historical development and tradition of local government in Turkey. Bearing in mind the inherited structure of state and society, it was almost impossible to see sudden realization of such decentralized system.[41]

In fact, leaving political culture and the heritage of the past aside, the early years of the Republic had its own 'legitimate' reasons for centralization. The resources were restricted and had to be used in most efficient manner. There was a need for a nation-wide bureaucratic organization staffed by civil servants who

shared the ideals of Atatürk. The country faced both internal and external threats, therefore the emphasis was on geographic and ethnic integration. The means of transportation and communication were not developed.[42] All this provided the grounds for centralization.

The 1924 Constitution reaffirmed the principle of decentralization. However, although local government existed in theory, in practice there was no local government in Turkey, but **local administration.**[43] The budget of the provinces was provided by the center and not by the local taxes. Thus, they were dependent on central government financially. Also, the functions of local 'governments' and how to provide them were determined by the center.

During the single party era prefets[44] and the provincial chairmans of the Republican Peoples Party were same the persons. This laid the basis of partisanship of later years. The single party era was a centralized one, and the peripheral elites were barred from impinging affairs of the center which upheld the nation idea. The absence of any true local **government** reinforced the monopoly

holding of the nation idea by the center.[45] The state
was forging a nation, and decentralization in such a case
considered to be dangerous. It was Ziya Gökalp who paved
the way towards a view of Turkey as a nation, and he
influenced the attempts in forging a nation. For him,

> 'nation is not a racial, ethnic,
> geographical, political or voluntary group
> or association. [but].. a group composed
> of men and women who have gone through the
> same education, who have received the same
> acquisitions in language, religion,
> morality, and aesthetics'.

A nation-state could be a 'homogenized product of various
racial, ethnic, and religious elements', therefore
education was an important element of forging the
nation.[46] It was this 'homogenization' effort of the
center that prevented it from devolving and delegating
its authority to localities. During this political
integration process, periphery was considered to be
'disintegrating' and 'undermining' national unity.
Mardin notes that;

> 'between 1923 and 1946 the periphery -in

the sense of provinces- was suspect, and
because it was considered an area of
political disaffection, the political
center kept it under close observation'.[47]

This era was *res publica* from the center by the military
and bureaucrat elites. But, it aimed a moderate
instrumental rather than transcendental polity.
Therefore, on the long run, the aim was to emphasize
society (or periphery) (i.e.instrumentalism) rather than
the state (center).[48] Here, it should be noted that
transcendentalism refers to the belief that man primarily
belongs to a moral community, and it connotes a 'statist'
orientation. In transcendentalism politics understood in
terms of leadership and education. Instrumentalism, on
the other hand, embodies the belief that man primarily
belongs to an interest community, and it connotes a
'societal' orientation. In this approach politics is
understood in terms of adjustment of private pursuits and
reconciliation of various interests.[49] Such transition
implied transition to democracy from res publica.
Perhaps, this transition was to allow some
decentralization once the people were

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educated/homogenized enough to be a nation. In fact, it
was the general process of democratization that began
with the Green Revolution of the 1950s which led to the
decentralization of local government in Turkey[50].

However, the centralized feature of local government in
Turkey continued in the following decades. It is for this
reason local 'government' in the post-1950 period would
not be studied in detail. Their duties were defined and
resources were given by the center. Local governments
were unable to generate their own resources. The
contribution of local governments' own resources to their
budgets have always been smaller than the share received
from national taxes. In other words, the major resource
base has been the center. Moreover, the shares of local
government within the national budget sums up to a small
percentage. These shares were not distributed on a
balanced fashion, but on a partisan basis. The increase
in the numbers of municipalities led to further division
of this inadequate source. Financial dependence of local
governments is a hidden mechanism for their political
control.[51]

In the multi-party era, the 'centralized' tradition of
Turkey made local governments a tool of irrational and
partisan policies. As a result, there were pressures for
devolution rather than delegation. The latter was the
form of decentralization hitherto applied. In 1978, a
Ministry of Local Governments was created, but the
attempts were only able to survive until the September
1980 coup.

The philosophy of the military government was to have a
strong central government with an emphasis on
deconcentration. The goals of the military reforms were
two-fold; first was to solve urban problems, this was a
new approach concerned with service delivery and finding
and allocating resources to provide them, and the second
was re-establishing the control of the center over
municipalities of major centers. This was not only a
product of the state tradition in Turkey, but also of the
concern for national integrity/security.[52] The latter
concern was perhaps because 'politicized' municipalities
were considered to be distorting the political stability.
In such a context, it is natural to see the attempts to
close the fiscal gap, but not any devolution. Although

the military government did not change the municipal revenue system radically, they made serious efforts to financially support local governments. Some improvements were made in the municipalities own revenue sources and the share of local governments from national taxes was increased.

1982 constitution, for the first time, provided that 'special administrative arrangements may be made into law for the large settlements' (Act number 126). Some of the debates in recent years, as will be seen in the next chapter, are based on this act. On the basis of this act, the Motherland Government of 1983 tried to decentralize several functions, such as transfer of development planning to the newly created metropolitan local governments.

The local governments in Turkey, to this day, are administratively, politically and financially dependent on central government. They act as local administration agents of the central government.This is perhaps, because the attempt for decentralization, as Heper rightly puts;

'was always made to close the fiscal gap

by increasing the revenues of local
governments to a level that would match
their responsibilities.'[53]

But as noted above in the introductory chapter,
availability of resources does not mean
'decentralization'. In the following chapter we will
search for elements of political decentralization and
devolution in the recent debates, especially in the
debates after 1987.

1. See Ronald Chilcotte, 'Theories of Comparative Politics: A Search for a New Paradigm' (Boulder, Colarado: Westview Press,1981), p.8

2. Definition of political culture draws from Almond and Verba, and Verba cited in ibid, p.224, 111

3. Bernard Lewis, 'The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 2nd Edition, (London, Oxford University Press, 1968), p.384,389

4. Serif Mardin, 'Center and Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?, Deadalous, 102, 1, Winter (1973): 169-190, p.171

5. David Kushner, The Rise of Turkish Nationalism; 1876-1908,(London and New Jersey: Frank Cass, 1977). p.23

6. Gordon Tullock, 'Sociological Federalism' in Decentralization, Local Governments, and Markets:Towards a Post Welfare Agenda, Robert J. Bennet, ed., (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1990). p.79

7. Political authority, here and elsewhere in this study, refers to authority to make laws and regulations independently from the central state. This definition is borrowed from Metin Heper, 'Center and Periphery Relations in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century', International Political Science Review, 1,1 (1980). pp.81-105. p.84.

8. Mardin, 'Center and Periphery Relations..', p,169.

9. Metin Heper, 'Local Government in Turkey: An Overview with Special Reference to the Municipalities', in 'Dilemmas of Decentralization', Metin Heper, ed., (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986), p.7

10. Heper, 'Center and Periphery....', p.91

11. Cornelia Navari, 'The Origins of Nation-State' in The Nation-State: The formation of Modern Politics, Leonard Tivey, ed., (New York; St Martins, 1981). p.35-36

12. Heper, 'Center and Periphery....', p.92.

13. Kushner, The Rise of Turkish Nationalism, p.7

14. Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, p.334

15. See Stanford J. Shaw, 'Local Administrations in the Tanzimat', in 150. Yilinda Tanzimat, Hakkì Dursun Yìldìz, ed., (Ankara: Atatürk, Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, TTK Yayìnlarì VII. Dizi, Sayì 142, 1992).

16. Heper, 'Local Government in Turkey....' in Dilemmas of Decentralization, p.12

17. Ilber Ortaylì, 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Yerel Yonetim Gelenegi',(Ankara; Hil Yayìnlarì, 1985). p.26-7

18. quoted in Shaw, 'Local Administration ...', p.47

19. See Heper, 'Center and Periphery...', p.96, Lewis, 'The Emergence of Modern Turkey', and Ortayli, 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete..., p.54

20. Ortayli, 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete.., p.75

21.ibid, p.84

22. Ziya Gökalp, 'The Evolution of Society' in Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization: Selected Essays of Ziya Gökalp, Niyazi Berkes, ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1958). p.72

23.Naci Kutlay, 'Ittihat Terakki ve Kürtler', (Ankara; Beybun Yayinlari Genisletilmis Üçüncü Baski, 1992), p. 99

24.Kushner, 'The Rise of Turkish Nationalism', p.3

25. See Ortayli, 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete..', p.75

26. Kushner, 'The Rise of Turkish Nationalism', p.4

27. Cited in Lewis,'The Emergence of Modern Turkey', p.340,341

28. Lewis, 'The Emergence of Modern Turkey', p.342

29. Mardin, 'Center and Periphery..', p.176

30. Ramsay cited in Mardin, 'Center and Periphery...', p.176

31. Lewis, 'The Emergence of Modern Turkey', p.352

32. Kushner, 'The Rise of Turkish Nationalism', p.5

33. Cited in Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, p.211

34.See Mardin, 'Center-Periphery Relations ...',p.178,181, and Lewis, 'The Emergence of Modern Turkey', p.204

35. Naci Kutlay, 'Ittihat Terakki ve Kürtler', (Ankara; Beybun Yayinlari, Genisletilmis Üçüncü Basim, 1992)

36.Sina Aksin, 'Jön Türkler ve Ittihat ve Terakki' (Istanbul;Remzi Kitabevi, 1987), p.48

37.Daniel J. Elazar, 'Federal Systems of the World: A Handbook of Federal, Confederal and Autonomy Arrangements', (Essex; Longman Current Affairs, 1991), p.xvi

38. Ortaylì, 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete..', p.208

39.Ergun Özbudun, '1921 Anayasasì', (Ankara: Atatürk Arastirma Merkezi, 1992), p.43

40. Walter F. Weiker, 'The Modernization of Turkey: From Atatürk to Present Day', (New York: Holmes & Meier Publìshers Inc, 1981), p.228

41.Ortaylì 'Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete..', p.208

42.Heper, 'Local Government in Turkey.., p.14

43. By local administration 'a form of deconcentratìon in which all subordinate levels of government within a country are agents of the central authority' is meant. see Metìn Heper, 'Directions for Reform' in 'Dilemmas of Decentralization' M. Heper ed., p.96

44.In this study, the term Prefet, rather than governor, will be used as the synonym of *Vali*. This is because, term prefet is used for the similarly-positioned officials in the French system, on which the 1864 Provincial Administration Law was based. Also, the term governor seems to imply a political status, while the prefet seems to imply an administrative status.

45. Metin Heper, 'The Strong State and Democracy: The Turkish Case in Comparative and Historical Perspective', in Democracy and Modernity, S.N Eisenstadt. ed., (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1992), p.156

46. see Nìyazì Berkes, ed., 'Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation: Selected Essays of Ziya Gökalp' (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood.Press), p. 30, 137

47.S. Mardin, 'Center-Periphery Relations..', p.182

48. Metin Heper, 'A weltanschauung-turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics: 'Atatürkism in Turkey', Orient, 25 (1984):83-94, p.85

49.R.N. Berki cited in ibid, p.85

50.Metin Heper, 'Conclusion' in <u>Democracy and Local Government:</u> <u>Istanbul in the 1980s</u>, M. Heper, ed.,(Walkington: The Eothen Press, 1987), p.53

51.Rusen Keles, 'Municipal Finance in Turkey with Special Reference to Istanbul' in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, Metin Heper, ed.,

52.Üstün Ergüder, 'Decentraslisation of Local Government and Turkish Political Culture' in <u>Democracy and Local Government...,</u> M. Heper, ed., p.11

53.Heper, 'Introduction' in <u>Democracy and Local Government..</u>, p.2

CHAPTER TWO

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST

DECENTRALIZATION

In the relevant literature, advocates of decentralization associate it with better government. It has been argued that, decentralization will increase the administrative effectiveness and efficiency as well as responsiveness to local needs, and political responsiveness.[1] It has, also, been argued that decentralizing authority to sub-national units makes it more likely that policy outputs will more closely meet local needs, because national level administrators, politicians and civil servants tend to perceive the problems of state uniformly.[2] But, each region/locality may have its distinct problems. Here, if efficiency can be termed as policy outcomes meeting with the local needs more closely, then decentralization, it has been argued, results in efficiency. This is because, decentralization can increase the knowledge of officials about the local

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problems, which in turn can lead to realistic and
effective projects and programs.[3] As Wolman notes, 'if
political decision-making is decentralized among
subnational units, each unit can tailor its tax and
service to the preferences of its citizenry'.[4]

On the contrary, decentralization to large numbers of
small units may inhibit achievement of optimal levels of
efficiency by not permitting economies of scale in some
service provision, such as education which generates cost
and benefits across local and regional boundaries and
requires national coordination.[5] In sum, smaller units
encourage efficiency by bringing closer the ties between
expenditure needs and revenue decisions, but economies of
scale may be missed as a result of this.

On the political side of the issue, it has been argued
that decentralization fosters responsiveness of policy-
makers to the will of the citizenry by placing government
closer to the people. This is because, decentralization
permits these decision-makers to be held accountable
directly to the local citizenry and electorate. Thereby,
decentralization promotes civic responsibility. Moreover,

it has been argued that decentralization might allow greater representation for various political, religious and ethnic groups in decision-making.[6] Thus, it has been argued that decentralization allows government by people, and better democracy.

However, a positive correlation between decentralization and democracy, it has been argued, needs to be treated with caution, because local government may become dominated by the interests of an oligarchy and fail to represent community at large. Wolman notes,

> 'Politics in decentralized units of government may be more closed than national politics and more susceptible to domination by a small and unrepresentative faction or factions. Local politicians may be responsive to the local needs of their defined constitutiency (e.g. local business interests) rather than broader community. Accountability may be attenuated if local elections are not viewed as important and produce low turnouts (as in the USA), or if local

elections are contested on non-local
issues or are seen essentially as
referendums on the performance of the
national government (as in U.K) [7]

It has also been argued that, decentralization can reduce
the perceived distance between citizens and their
government, and can increase citizens' feelings of
political efficacy.[8] It is said that higher levels of
participation in local government can be obtained when
decision-making devolves to local levels. Consequently,
it is hoped that citizens will be anchored to the
political system and democratic values will increase. All
these, in turn, have a positive influence on securing
political stability and increasing national unity.

However, decentralization may not necessarily increase
the degree of participation. Empirically, in a
decentralized polity such as USA, a low turn out rate in
local elections might occur (around 30%). On the other
hand, the turn out rate could be much more higher in a
relatively centralized polity, such as Italy (85%). [9]

It has been noted in the second chapter that, the present Turkish government structure is highly centralized, local governments' revenues are inadequate, and local governments are supervised by the center and they did not have any autonomy. In addition to these 'tangible facts', debates over decentralization take place in an 'unfavourable' historical background. The Ottoman-Turkish polity had not experienced feudalism, but had a tradition of a centralized state and bureaucracy. Erguder adds, the elitism of Turkish politics which is closely associated with the Turkish bureaucratic tradition worked towards reinforcing centralization. Also there was an extreme polarization because power resources were concentrated in the center. This concentration of resources in the center, as noted above, also resulted in partizan attitudes in distributing revenues to local governments. The (partizan) distribution of resources helped to solidify the parties and their organizations. He also adds the fact that concepts like decentralization and performance of certain functions by autonomous or private institutions were not very popular within the citizenry.[10] This is perhaps related to the 'papa state' concept in Turkey.[11] Indeed, as Heper notes, initiative

for decentralization came not from the 'civic community' but from the political center, and responsibility to higher levels viewed as more important than political responsiveness to people.[12]   In this context, decentralization is debated among, what might be referred as, intellectuals (i.e. journalists, top bureaucrats) and some of the politicians.

Debates over decentralization takes place against this background. There are a number of ways suggested for decentralization and strengthening local governments, such as election of prefets and creation of regional units, holding prefets accountable and responsible to local councils[13], giving already existing units new functions, such as collecting taxes. An attempt will be made to understand and evaluate these arguments below.

In the post-1980 period, the first relevant appearance in the media was in late 1987. It was about creation of regional-level units (*eyalet*) covering a number of cities. The proposal was prepared by the Motherland Party (which was in office then) as part of the constitutional change proposal. First, the number of provinces was to

increase, then they were to be combined under *eyalets*. According to sources, the number of *eyalets* varies from six to nineteen. If they were to be six, the regional centers would be Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Adana or Antalya, Samsun or Trabzon, Diyarbakir or Erzurum.[14] Another possibility is the old regional centers of the Ottoman Empire which are now in Turkey: provinces of Istanbul, Edirne, Bursa, Izmir, Elazig, Konya, Kastomonu, Ankara, Adana, Sivas, Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, and Diyarbakir.[15]

According to this proposal, each region was to have a council able to take decisions regarding the matters of the region. This seems to represent a step forward for political decentralization. But, since we do not have adequate information about the functions, and the position of *vali*, the self-government aspect of the proposal remains ambiguous. However, the fact that the *vali* (prefet)[16] will be appointed by the center and will be responsible directly to the president led some of the commentators to see the proposal as a step forward to presidency system based on unitary state.[17] Yet, the reported possibility of election of *vali* implies some

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sort of self-government and political decentralization.

It has been argued that, organization at the regional level is not unconstitutional, except for foreign relations, justice, and defence. And some of the proponents of the 'regionalisation' suggests that policies such as education and health would be made by the center.[18]

A similar alternative of what he calls 'Administrative Federalism' was suggested by Asaf Savas Akat (Professor of Political Science). He proposed division of Turkey into fourteen equally populated areas, excluding Istanbul. The sum of his proposal was 'a Turkey governed by localities'. The system suggested by him was similar to the German *Lander* system; each region would have elected Parliaments, Prime Ministers, and Governors.[19] Therefore, it can be suggested that his alternative goes beyond administrative federalism and implies political federalism.

Yet another alternative of *bolge yonetimi* (region(al)

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administration) created on the basis of already existing spontaneous economic centers was suggested by Necdet Ugur (formerly Minister of Education, and Interior). His alternative proposes regional level organization of local functions of ministries, cooperation among the regional units of different ministries.[20] Thus, administrative rather than political decentralization based on the principle of delegation of center's authorities to the representatives of the center in the regions.

It is assumed by the proponents of decentralization that, regional level units would expand the democratic structure through its councils, and would help to overcome the problems encountered in central government. Pluralism and openness will erode the negatives of restricted democracy of a single central parliament. Spread of political decision-making powers would mean further democratization and a transparent administration. Moreover, the division of labor between the center and regions would mean reaching the outcomes fast, and reduction in the burden of the center. Furthermore, creation of political- administrative big industry and commerce centers will slowdown immigration to the west of

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Turkey. This is because, it is believed that regional centers will become attractive and stop the capital flight to the West. Also, it has been argued that the wish of civil servants to be appointed to the west will stop. Lastly, the sense of possession of government will develop.[21]

As opposed to creation of larger units, another alternative suggests focusing on smaller *ilce* level. It proposes giving a corporate status to *ilce*, and creation of its councils. Organization at this level, it is suggested, will result in carrying out services effectively at a reduced cost, and easier control of them. Also, it is argued that, the race to become a province will stop.[22]

According to Coskun Kìrca's (member of Parliament since 1991, formerly Ambassador to UN) interpretation, the current constitution does not allow creation of political regional level units. According to Kìrca, *eyalet* can only be seen as administrative units of the center, based on the principle of **delegation**. To carry this out, relevant acts of the constitution should be changed. This is

because, the act 127 did not count *eyalet* among local administration units, and although the act 126 makes it possible to form an administrative unit covering more than one province, the aim of this is not the creation of another central administrative division, but to obtain productivity and coordination in carrying out public services. Further, he considers any administrative unit beyond the province level as a *de facto* step towards federalism, a system that could lead to separatism and challenges the 'indivisible integrity of the state with its nation and country'.[23] Kirca regards even administrative 'regionalisation' as going against the unitariness of the state, because he considers regionlisation a step towards 'regionalism'. According to Kirca, regionalisation is a kind of administration which proposes regional self government for effective defence of regions' own interests. Regionalism, in his definition, is the case in which the interests of a region is hold more important than the whole country's interests. He goes on, given that 'in our country regionalist feelings are quite strong even among the present provinces' (sic), decentralization to regional levels can be harmful for our national integrity. Kirca

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points out that, without consolidating our national integrity, especially as far as the language and culture concerned, local autonomy goes against the unitary structure. He adds the planning needs and the aim of preserving general economic balances as obstacles to autonomy. He also projects/suggests that, the actual aim of regionalisation is to shift the basis of the state from *millet* (nation) to *ummet*.[24]

(Further elaboration of the last point will be made below in the paragraphs regarding Neo-Ottomans).

The regionalisation proposal of the Motherland Party, it is said, would have the prefets elected (they then would become 'governors') on the long run. Elected prefets were supported by some other commentators on the issue. It was seen not only as a solution to the Kurdish issue in the Eastern part of Turkey, but also as a means of strengthening local governments and removal of the tutelage of the center.

Mustafa Gonul (member of the Supreme Court) takes the lead in 'elected prefets' debates, but he also favours regionalisation. Politics, he argues, is the most

effective and democratic means in realizing the objectives of local governments. Gonul states the 'wrong' with the system and the obstacle to local government: although the election process of the members of Province General Councils and Municipality Councils is political (for they are nominated by political parties as candidates), these councils are barred from political discussions. Moreover, these councils are chaired by a centrally appointed governor, who has considerable degree of 'influence'. Therefore, solution to the problem is politicization of both councils and prefets (i.e. election of prefets).

Election of prefets would politicize the institution of provincial governorship, but, Gonul argues, it is already politicized for a number of reasons. Firstly, the nature of the duties of prefets puts the prefet in such a process because, some of the decisions that they could make have considerable political implications. Indeed, prefets are not only administrative, but also political representatives of each minister in the cabinet. Secondly, reshuffling of the prefets with each change in the central government is a sign of politicization as

well.

Election of prefets can be realized in two ways. First by
changing the relevant acts of the constitution. Second,
by changing the relevant law. Gonul suggests two possible
alternatives for realization of the latter. In both ways
the principle of the integrity of administration and
local government would be maintained. The first
alternative is to get an independent or party member
candidate elected at the same time and for the same
period with the Province General Councils. Alternatively,
'local parliaments' can nominate a number of candidates,
one of which to be appointed by the center as 'governor'.
It should be noted here that, it seems like local
parliament in Gonul's terminology, actually refers to
'regional parliaments'. This is because, Gonul refers to
the creation of units covering more than one province
(i.e. regionalisation) at the same time with election of
governors. Gonul sees creation of central administrative
units covering more than one province possible according
to acts no.126 and 127.[25] The idea of election of
governors is supported by the so-called 'Second Party' of
the previous president Turgut Ozal's proteges. However,

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as it appeared in the media, they emphasized that this would not be a step towards federalism, but strengthening local governments. Authority to make laws would remain in the Grand National Assembly, and police and justice would be excluded from the possible autonomy of local governments. Although matters of education and health will be dealt by the local governments, the policies on these matters would be made by the center.[26]

It is believed that the election of prefets will bring the present system, which have a long history of central government, to a local government base. The proponents of the elected prefets states its advantages and decentralization as follows: The bureaucratic burden that suffocates/restricts the central administration would be lightened; participation of people in issues regarding their own life and in making of the 'general will' will lead to the satisfaction of people and peace in the country; democratization will gain speed, and produce its fruits; the feeling of common responsibility will develop; local government (strengthened through election of prefets) is the golden key of creating a contemporary, pluralist and participationist civil society, this is

because local governments are outward looking, and close to the individual, open to their participation and contribution. Also, Turkey would be able to realize the international responsibility that it undertook to strengthen the local governments by signing the 'Europe Local Government's Autonomy Charter'.[27] Strengthening of local governments and weakening of the central authority would, it is argued, accelerate urbanization as well.[28] Finally, there is a general belief in Turkey, which considers central government and state concepts as synonymous, and which associates the unitary state with over-centralized state. But, proponents of local government argue that this is an incomplete approach, and local governments are actually parts of the state. Therefore, although local governments seemingly weaken the state, strengthening them will also mean strengthening the state as well as civil society.[29]

Election of prefets is opposed by different commentators,[30] but Kìrca takes the lead here as well. The act 3 in the constitution states the 'indivisible integrity of the state with its land and nation'. Kìrca draws two implications from this.[31] First, autonomous

regions with their own executive and/or judiciary cannot be created. Second, the administration is unified, a point which Gonul would not oppose for he himself emphasizes the maintenance of administrative integrity. The second implication means not non-election of local government organs, but creation of new units will be regulated by laws and national government will have the right of administrative tutelage. The Prefet (*vali*), as the representative of the center (and the unitary state) and the highest authority in the province, uses the administrative tutelage right of the center in the localities. The prefet, in the present system, takes orders from his/her hierarchic supervisors. Kìrca opposes to election of prefets for he considers it as removing the administrative tutelage right of the center, and as dismantling the hierarchy. This is because, when the prefets get elected their power will spring from the electorates, but not from the center. Thus, they would not be the representative of the center. Kìrca states that it is impossible to understand how would a prefet not hired and fired by the center would serve the government of unitary state. Election of prefets would mean that they would not be subject to orders of the

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center, because their power does not spring from the center, but from the electorate. According to Kirca, the implication of this is bringing the prefets out of the central administrative structure and turning the present system into a federal government.[32] But a federal structure is unconstitutional. Kirca sees creation of regional level units possible, only if they are to remain as administrative units. Thus, they cannot have governors (i.e. elected prefets). It is possible to increase the powers of prefets' by delegation only, which would mean that they would still be subject to orders from the center.[33]

In the meantime, a proposal prepared by the coalition government at the beginning of 1993 is to became a law soon. This proposal named in the media as the 'Super Prefet' proposal. The new arrangement will allow prefets (as representatives of the center) to use a considerable degree of the powers of the center. It seems the proposal is based on the principle of delegation rather than devolution, and further extension of the center.

The neo-Ottomans include Cengiz Candar (journalist, who

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claims that he has got the patent rights of neo-Ottomanism), Engin Ardic (journalist), Fatih Cekirge (journalist), and to some extend Zulfi Livaneli (artist) and Nur Vergin (sociologist). It should be noted here that, although some other journalists do not agree with the name, they agree with the idea.[34] For some, it is the 'softened' version of nationalism.[35] Indeed, Candar states,

> 'In reality, we should not be afraid of Pan-Turkism, Pan-Islamism. This fear gives us a 'complex'. Pan-Turkism is the unity of Turks, and it is worth pondering on the idea of unity of Turks'[36]

The Neo-Ottomans are concerned with the international context more than the national context. Consequently, their alternative restructuring is for the aim of using the opportunities emerged with the dismantling of the ex-soviet Union, ex-Yugoslavia, or more accurately with the collapse of communism. The neo-Ottomans argue that the present international context allows Turkey to be a 'big brother' (read sub-super power) state to the countries founded on the Ottoman hinterland. Here, it should be

noted that they do not talk of removal of political
borders, but economic borders. Following quotations
illustrates the perspective of the neo-Ottomans.

'Turkey should do what Ottomans once did, but
this time   through   economic   rather   than
military conquest'[37]

'At the edge of the 21st century a great
hinterland stretching from Blacksea to China
is placed behind Turkey. This invites Turkey
to be a 'big' country.'[38]

'Discussing an Ottoman commonwealth or
federation is more meaningful (than
discussing presidency (system)'[39]

Ardic gives some of the details of his idea which is

'based on economic cooperation, aiming
at open and free market unity, built
upon a loose confederation   model -a
kind of *Lebensraum*' [40] [41]

Economic   cooperation   on   the   Ottoman   hinterland   is

considered to be similar to the idea of Turan, and the Blacksea Economic Cooperation is considered as a step towards realization of the Neo-Ottoman plan.[42]

But, the present structure of Turkey hinders rather than encourages political and economic development of Turkey. Therefore, structure of the government should be changed to be able to avoid separation, and to be able to make the most of its potential. One of the essential requirements of this is to be in peace with our past[43]. This is because neo-Ottomans believe that the Republic was founded upon the basis of rejection of our Ottoman past. 'The Republic', Ozkok reports,

> 'was an 'assertion' regime,this involved fighting with everything coming from the past, and rejection of the past.
> Indeed, this has been done.'[44]

What was rejected? Candar gives the answer;

> 'Turkish Republic was founded upon the basis of nation-state, but this in a sense meant rejection of the imperial heritage, because a lot of Abhaza, Bosnak, Tcherkess, Arnaut

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existed within the country'[45]

Therefore, the 'peace' seems to involve a shift from the concept of nation-state, and another rejection (of the 70-year of nation-state). When the nation-state is seen as a rejection of the past, differences in the ethnic structure is emphasized, sometimes even in an exaggerated fashion; Candar argues,

>'the Ottoman state of the past and the USA of today resembles each other a lot'[46]

He, similarly suggests,

>'there are breezes in Istanbul from
>New York, and in Turkey from USA (Turkish
>Kurd etc.)'[47]

Another version draws similarities not with USA, but with the Ottoman state;

>'Turkish state is very much like the union of *kavims* in the Ottoman Empire. Turkey, in its ethnic structure, is the microcosmos of the Ottoman Empire. Though, it is a nation-state'[48]

It was even claimed in an exaggerated fashion that there are 47 different ethnicities in Turkey.[49]

Once it is believed that the nation-state was the rejection of the past, and once the ethnic structure of Turkey becomes the emphasis, **Turkeyism** and religion emerges as the unifying factors. Religion, for Candar, 'emerged as a valid value system with the dismantling of the socialist block'. It also emerges as the unifying factor, as the solution to the Kurdish issue.[50] Neo-Ottomanism was also suggested as the

answer to the search for Turkish identity.[51]

The neo-Ottoman line of argument **for** decentralization takes the issue from a more fundamental point, by claiming that the nation-state is a rejection of the past. They seem to argue that the integration was/is a **mal**integration. Their emphasis seems to be on Turkey with its many different ethnic elements unified, perhaps partially, through religion, rather than (created-through education) Turk. Thus, the emphasis on Turkeyism follows.

If the unifying factor is not non-ethnical nationalism, but religion, Kìrca argues, then the unitary nation-state will heavily be wounded.[52] Opponents of neo-Ottomanism

argue that we have been in peace with our history, and such arguments are, in fact, arguments of the enemies of the secular state.[53]

At this stage, it is perhaps convenient to consider the meaning of secularism in Turkey. The nation-building discourse did not consist of an emphasis on religion. Secularism can be defined as the separation of religion and the state. But such 'shallow' definition might lead one to argue that state should not interfere in the field of religion. The divisions over the concept of secularism in Turkey springs from this point. According to Ozankaya, secularism does not mean that the state would not interfere in the field of religion.[54] Another line of argument is that interference of the state through its Religious Affairs Branch (*Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi*) creates a system in which 'religion is dependent on the state'. Therefore, secularizing policies of the center are actually meant to be a tight control over the rights springing from religious liberty.[55] Thus the notion state-controlled-religion emerges.

Secularism means that the religion would not be the determinant factor in economical, political, educational, and societal matters. In Turkey, it can be suggested that, secularization policies aimed at 'individualization' of Islam. Then, as far as decentralization is concerned, the homogeneity in understanding the place of Islam is important. This is because, decentralization (autonomy) allows 'deviant' cases, and could make the religion determinant in local affairs. In this context, one might consider decentralization as 'dangerous', when s/he bears in mind the Konya case in the mid-1980s. The then mayor of Konya either provided different busses or divided the busses into two sections for men and women. Such policy represents a significant deviation from the center's policies. It can also reduce the center's confidence in the periphery (a determinant of decentralization), and may make the center reluctant to decentralize.

When we link the neo-Ottomanism to the proposals of regionalisation, neo-Ottoman's alternative restructuring seems to have similarities with the traditional Ottoman system. Candar argues that Ottoman state was the first

federal state of the world in an unnamed fashion.[56] Given the belief that there are similarities between Turkey and Ottoman Empire, the traditional Ottoman system can be a model. In this picture, center and periphery could be two loosely related worlds, but, for them, this would not necessarily mean federalism. This is because, in the Ottoman system there was a tight control by the center and hierarchy, whereas federalism implies a non-hierarchical division of authority in the modern sense of the word.

It seems the neo-Ottomans are favouring the maintenance of the unitary structure of the state, but in a different way. They argue for the strength of the executive (for the presidency system). They draw parallels between the Sultanate and Presidency system, and argue that presidency is familiar to us.[57] In their picture we will perhaps have an 'Ottoman President'[58]who will be the absolute head of the executive, ruling over the regionalised (perhaps on the basis of ethnicity) country. Each region would have discretion over its internal affairs such as education and health, but not the authority to make policies and laws on such issues. It

seems Neo-Ottomans are arguing for administrative, rather than political, decentralization. This is because, their arguments seems to favour administrative discretion over the policies determined by the center. Thus, delegation is the type of decentralization. In an article addressing the Kurdish issue, Candar suggests that *eyalets* governed by governors (elected prefets) would solve the problem without necessitating a federation.[59] Thus, election of governments is not seen as a step forward to fedaralism.

1. See Ayse Oncu, 'The Potential and Limitations of Local Government Reform in Solving Urban Problems: The Case of Istanbul' in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, Metin Heper, ed., (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986), p.58

2. Ronan Paddison, <u>The Fragmented State: The Political Geography of Power</u>, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p.53

3. Hans F. Illy, 'Decentralization as a Tool for Development; Notes on the Current Debate' in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, Metin Heper, ed., (Bonn; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986). p.112

4. See Harold Wolman, 'Decentralization; What is It and Why Should We Care', in <u>Decentralization, Local Governments, and Markets; Towards a Post-Welfare Agenda</u>, Robert J. Bennett, ed., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p.31, see also Paddison <u>The Fragmented State</u>, p.54

5. See Wolman, 'Decentralization: What is It?...', p.31, Paddison, 'The Fragmented State', p.54

6. Illy, 'Decentralization as a Tool for Development...', p.113

7. Wolman, 'Decentralization: What is It?....', p.33

8. Oncu, 'The Potential and Limitations of Local Government Reform in Solving Urban Problems...', p.58

9. See Wolman, 'Decentralization: What is It?...', p.54

10. Ustun Erguder, 'Decentralization of Local Government and Turkish Political Culture' in <u>Democracy and Local Government: Istanbul in the 1980s</u>, Metin Heper, ed., (Walkington; The Eothen Press, 1987), p.21

11. See Metin Heper, 'A Weltanschauung-Turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics: Ataturkism in Turkey', <u>Orient</u>, 25 (1984): 83-95, p.90

12. Metin Heper, 'Conclusion' in <u>Democracy and Local Government; Istanbul in the 1980s</u>, Metin Heper, ed., (Walkington: The Eothen Press; 1987). p.54

13. A TUSIAD Report on Istanbul, cited in 'Istanbul'u Ozerklik Kurtarir' in <u>Aktuel</u>, 30.7-5.8. 1992, see also Ertugrul Özkok, 'Yerel Parlementoyu Tartismaliyiz' in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 19.10.1992

14. See 'Turkiye 6 Eyalet, 92 ile Bolunuyor' Sabah, 29.11.1987, see also Engin   Ardic, 'United States of Turkey', in Sabah, 21.12.1990

15. See Yilmaz Oztuna, 'Eyalet Sistemi', in Tercuman, 17.12. 1987

16. See endnote 45 in the previous chapter for the reason of the choice of prefet, instead of governor, as a counterpart of vali.

17. See Yalcin Dogan, 'Baskanlik Yolu' in Cumhuriyet,   11.12.1987 and Coskun   Kirca, 'Eyaletler mi?, in   Hurriyet, 12.12.1987

18. Raif Ertem, 'Il Ozel Idaresi', Cumhuriyet, 22.4.1992,

19. See 'Federasyon Tartismasini Baslatiyoruz', Aktuel, no. 9, 14-20.11.1991

20. see 'Tanzimat Modeline Son', Nokta, 4-10.11.1992

21. See Ibrahim O. Karaoglu, 'Yerinden Yonetim ve Demokrasi', Cumhuriyet, 10.1.1992,

22. Raif Ertem, 'Il Ozel Idaresi', Cumhuriyet, 22.4.1992

23. Coskun Kirca, 'Eyaletler mi?', in Hurriyet, 12.12.1987

24. See Coskun Kirca, 'Bolgelesme, Bolgecilik' in Milliyet, 19.2.1989

25. See Mustafa Gonul, 'Kontenjanli yada Secimli Vali', 10.2.1992 and 'Secimli   Valilik Yontemleri' 24.3.1992 both in   Cumhuriyet, see also 'Secimli   Valilik Uzerine   Dusunceler', Amme Idaresi Dergisi, 25,3 (1992), pp.51-70

26. See 'Ozal Cok Iddiali Geliyor' in Sabah, 17.11.1992

27. see Mustafa Gonul, 'Secimli Valilik Yontemleri', 24.3.1992, and 'Yerel Yonetimlere Siyaset Yasagi', 1.5.1993 both in Cumhuriyet.

28. Turgut Ozal, untitled conference in Turk Demokrasi   Vakfi on   21.10.1992, Ankara

29. See Gonul, 'Secimli Valilik Uzerine Dusunceler' above note, and 'Sosyal Demokratlar Tartisiyor: Asaf Savas Akat'in Gorusleri' in <u>Milliyet</u>, 25.7.1992

30. See interviews with Tayfun Akguner and Esat Cam in 'Valiler Secimle Gelmeli' in <u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 25.10.1991, and interview with Bedrettin Dalan in <u>Nokta</u>, 13.9.1992, p.22. All of them argue that election of governors will go against the unitary state.

31. See Coskun Kirca, 'Tekil Devlet Ilkesi ve Sonuclari'in <u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 31.1.1992

32. Coskun Kirca, 'Safsata Furyasi' in <u>Milliyet</u>, 26.10.1992, p.13

33. Kirca, 'Tekil Devlet Ilkesi ve Sonuclari' in <u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 31.1.1992

34. See 'Neo-Osmanlilar' in <u>Nokta</u>, 21.6.1992, pp.27-33

35. See Taha Akyol in the above note no.34

36. Cengiz Candar, 'Turkler ve Ruslar' in <u>Sabah</u>, 10.3.1992

37. Cengiz Candar, 'Yeni Dunya Kosullarinda Turk Dis Politikasi', conference held in **Turk Demokrasi Vakfi** on 19.12.1992, Ankara

38. Cengiz Candar, 'Asya Hilali Turk Yildizi' in <u>Sabah</u>, 5.2.1992

39. Engin Ardic, 'Osmanli Commonwealth'i' in <u>Sabah</u>, 29.10.1989

40. Engin Ardic, 'Gavur Hakli', in <u>Sabah</u>, 29.9.1991

41. Lebansraum as defined by Collins English Dictionary is 'territory claimed by a nation or state on the grounds that it is necessary for survival or growth'

42. See 'Ozal'in Osmanli Plani', in <u>Milliyet</u>, 14.12.1992

43. For example, Candar argues 'to be a big brother state we need to be in peace with our history'. See Candar, 'Mustafa Kemal ve Enver Pasa' in <u>Sabah</u>, 3.3.1992. see also Engin Ardic, 'Vision Imperiale' in <u>Sabah</u>, 12.9.1991, and Fatih Cekirge 'CHP ve Resmi Tarih Sorgusu', in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 5.7.1992

44. Ertugrul Ozkok. 'Yeni Osmanli, Ikinci Cumhuriyet' in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 21.7.1992

45. Candar, 'Yeni Dunya Kosullarinda Turk Dis Politikasi' see above note.

46. Candar, '21. Yuzyil Osmanlisi Turgut Ozal' in <u>Sabah</u>, 28.4.1992

47. Candar, 'New York ve Neo-Osmanlilik' in <u>Sabah</u>, 10.5.1992

48. See Nur Vergin in 'Neo-Osmanlilar' in <u>Nokta</u>, 21.6.1992

49.See <u>2000'e Dogru</u>, 17.11.1991, Vol. 5, no. 38

50. See Candar, '21. Yuzyil Osmanlisi Turgut Ozal', and 'Yeni Dunya   Kosullarinda Turk Dis Politikasi' in above notes.

51. See Engin Ardic 'Kayip Araniyor' in <u>Sabah</u>, 6.7.1991

52. Coskun Kirca, 'Toplumsal Mutabakat' in <u>Milliyet</u>, 10.1.1990

53. Ilhan Selcuk, 'Tarihimizle ve Dinimizle Barismak' in <u>Cumhuriyet</u>, 23.5.1993

54. See Ozer Ozankaya, '<u>Turkiye'de Laiklik; Ataturk Devrimlerinin Temeli'</u>, (Istanbul: Cem Yayinevi, (4. Baski) 1990), pp. 80, 104, 168

55.See Hasan Huseyin Ceylan, '<u>Cumhuriyet Donemi Din-Devlet Iliskileri 1</u>', (Istanbul: Risale, (5. Baski) 1990). pp. 14-17

56. See 'Neo-Osmanlilar' in <u>Aktuel</u>, 11-17.6.1992. pp.30-33

57. See Engin Ardic, 'Baskanlik Sistemi Uyar mi, Uymaz mi?'(27.3.1991), 'Baskanlik Sistemi N'ooldu Yau?'(6.4.1991),and 'Vaziyet ve Manzara-i Ummumiye ve de D u v e l - i Muttehide..'(23.10.1991) all in <u>Sabah</u>.

58. See Oktay Eksi, 'Osmanli Cumhurbaskani' in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 30.4.1992

59.See 'Kurtlerin ve Turklerin Ortak Bayrami' in <u>Sabah</u>, 4.4.1992

CONCLUSION

It has been pointed out in the introductory chapter, that there are types of decentralization, and not all of them implies **political** decentralization. Three types of decentralization are; deconcentration, delegation, and devolution.[1] Deconcentration can be called as administrative decentralization, because it is extension of center into localities for administrative reasons. Delegation is creation of agents that are outside the central bureaucratic structure and it involves giving some responsibility and authority to these agents, though the parameters are defined by the center. The third type, devolution, is creation of sub-national units of government which are financially and legally more powerful regarding the activities that are outside the control of central government. Devolution involves a more clear-cut division of labour and autonomy in carrying out

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the functions that such division gave. Since the concern

of this study is political, as opposed to administrative,

decentralization, the focus is on autonomous authority of

subnational units from the center. Thus, by political

decentralization authority to make autonomous decisions

is understood. It was suggested in the introductory

chapter that, although it is difficult to make

distinction between administrative and political

decentralization, only devolution implies

decentralization of decision-making authority and

promotion of alternative power centers.

Once, it is pointed out that the concern of this study is

political decentralization, the criteria of resource

capture, solely, is not adequate in assessing political

decentralization. This is because sub-national units may

receive adequate amount of resources, but can still act

as administrative agents of central government without

any decision-making authority/autonomy. The inadequacy of

resource capture can be observed from a different angle

as well. A federal structure means politics at two levels

and decentralization of political decision making. But,

when we take the criteria of resource capture,

ironically, it can be more centralized than a unitary state! Therefore, resource dependence can be a better measure in assessing political decentralization. If sub-national units are able to generate their own resources, then they are politically more decentralized. This is because such ability means they have the legal means to generate their own resources, that is to make decisions. Resource dependence creates a kind of 'who pays the piper calls the tune' situation, and therefore make sub-national units just administrative agents of the center. And such situation can not be changed by providing enough resources.

Leaving political culture aside for a while, the level of economic wealth, the size of the country, economic diversities, and homogeneity of the population in terms of language, religion, race are the factors influencing decentralization.[2] It is said that the more developed a country is, the more likeliness of decentralization. This is because, a less developed country needs to use its limited resources in the most efficient manner which necessitates some degree of centralization to gain economies of scale. As far as this factor is concerned,

Turkey, as a developing country, perhaps need some degree of centralization.

However, when we take the large size of country into account, the picture may change. Generally, large size countries tend to be more decentralized for not only it is difficult to meet with different needs of different areas from one center, but also it is possible to generate economies of scale at more than one level. Centralization, when the size of the country is large, may lead to inefficiencies and delays, hence, some degree of resource waste. Therefore, in the case of Turkey, the large size of country represents a contrast point to the degree of economic development, and provides us with good grounds for some degree of decentralization.

Economic diversities may lead to the pressures for more autonomy. The Lombardia League of Umberto Bossi in Italy illustrates this point. The rich North (almost two times more than the south) presses for more autonomy from the central government. In the case of Turkey, proposals of autonomy for the economic capital, Istanbul, appeared in the media. However, the rationale seems to differ from

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the Italian case, where the North does not finance the South anymore. In the case of Istanbul, the main reason for the grievance seems to be the lack of inadequate resources to meet with the needs of the city. It is argued that although Istanbul pays 50% of the total income tax, it receives only 5% of it. The only way to be able to meet with the needs of the city, it is argued, is autonomy and transfer of more resources.[3] In the meantime, it appeared in the media recently that a special law on Istanbul is ready. The law allows municipalities to receive 80% of the revenues of the roads and bridges within the boundaries of Istanbul. But, this is, again, an attempt to close the fiscal gap, rather than political decentralization.

A different kind of pressure for a different kind of autonomy comes from the poorer Kurdish areas. Decentralization in such a case would not be beneficial to the poorer areas as far as the distribution income/investment concerned. Indeed, the previous President suggested the reason why there can not be federalism with regards to the Kurdish issue: there will be no investment made there.[4] All these are to suggest that economic diversities provides a potential ground for

future pressures for autonomy. The uneven regional development of Turkey increases the likeliness of such pressures in the future.

Homogeneity of population in terms of language, religion, and race, too, influences the degree of (de)centralization. The more heterogeneity is the more likeliness of decentralization. In the case of Turkey, this correlate is to some extent linked to the nation and/or nation-state building. In terms of religion Turkey can be considered as homogenous. But, there are different understandings of Islam/secularism. Language is not completely homogenous since there is a Kurdish-speaking community. In addition to existence of Kurdish ethnicity, in recent years there had been an increasing emphasis on the 'rich' ethnic structure of Turkey. It is on this emphasis, as was shown in the second chapter, that some of the arguments **for** decentralization are based. At this stage, it is, perhaps, convenient to consider the possible implications of political decentralization. As noted in the second chapter, decentralization allows 'deviant' cases. But, it is important how deviant these cases will be from the center's policies. Konya-like

cases seems to represent significant shifts from the center's (secular) policies, which, in turn, decreases the confidence of the center. Thereby, center may become reluctant to decentralize.

Political culture is yet another factor influencing the degree of (de)centralization. It seems that in the Turkish case political culture is the most important factor. The components of political culture are the mode of formation of the state, duration, and ideology of nation-building. It was political culture that provided us with a rationale to review the history of (de)centralization in the Ottoman-Turkish polity.

Decentralization can be used for various objectives such as nation-building and administrative efficiency. In the Ottoman-Turkish case, decentralization was not the means used for nation-building. In contrast, the nation-building efforts involved centralization rather than decentralization. The traditional Ottoman Empire had not been a centralized state. Centralization of the system has actually began with the attempts to forge a nation. It was the strong state trying to forge an Ottoman nation

(later a Turkish nation). Such trial (and centralization of the system) began with the <u>Tanzimat</u> reforms. During this period, we have seen the extension of center into the periphery. The reformers did not have genuine decentralizing concerns such as local **government.** They have seen local units as the agents of central government, as an extension of central government machinery. Therefore, would-be decentralizing measures, such as participation of people to local **administrations,** were actually to improve tax collection and for better government of provinces by the center's officials.

The centralizing trend continued during, the initially-Ottomanist, Committee for Union and Progress period. Those prescribing decentralization for the ills of the Ottoman State within the Committee eventually had to leave. The leader of the decentralizing fraction, Prince Sebahattin, left the Committee and found his own League of Private Initiation and Decentralization. But, because his ideas were not put into practice, Ottoman-Turkish polity lacks such experience (and culture?).

Other alternative prescriptions to save the Ottoman state

were not emphasizing a common Ottoman
citizenship/territory/state as the unifying elements, but
the religion or race. Pan-Islamism of Abdulhamit was
successful only for a while, and the proponents of the
romantic-natured pan-Turkism soon realized the practical
problems of the idea.

To sum up, the nation/state building during the Ottoman
period was not pluralistic in ideology. The source of
this 'shortcoming'(for decentralization) can be found in
the unidimensional center-periphery conflict in the
patrimonial Ottoman Empire, as opposed to multi-
dimensional conflicts in the feudal Europe. Moreover, the
mode of formation of nation/state building was not
voluntaristic. The top-to-down social engineering
continued. It was the state forging a nation. These two
hindered rather than encouraged political
decentralization.

Top-to-down social engineering and the unidimensional
conflict continued in the early years of the Republic. It
was a kind of decentralizing periphery versus
centralizing center conflict. The centralized structure

survived in this period. The only exception was the 1921 constitution, which gave local governments an unprecedented autonomy and role that went beyond the Ottoman-Turkish 'local government tradition'. However, such local government was not realized. In the early years of the Republic, centralization had its own 'legitimate' reasons, such as to gain economies of scale in the absence of adequate resources. If the concern of making the most of the limited resources provided the functional reason for decentralization, the concerns over ethnic/geographic integration (i.e. nation-state building and/or political integration) provided the ideological reason. Here, again the initiator-state was forging the nation. This period, in this study, was called <u>res publica</u> by the military and bureaucratic elites of the center. Thus, voluntarism was missing here as well.

The ideological reason for centralization, in turn, can be found in the nation concept of the Republic. According to this, a nation could be created through education (read, homogenization) out of different ethnic and religious elements. Therefore it is not surprising to see the elites of the <u>res publica</u> considering the periphery

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as disintegrating at the beginning of such (homogenization) process. The center's lack of confidence in periphery illustrated in the Republican Peoples Party's warning to Democratic Party in 1946:

> 'Do not go to the provincial towns or villages to gather support: Our national unity will be undermined'[5]

However, the emphasis of <u>res</u> <u>publica</u> on the state was not for good, but it was just an initial emphasis at the stage of nation building. On the long run the aim was to emphasize society (i.e. transition from transcendentalism to instrumentalism). In this study this was called transition to democracy (and to local **government** with it) from <u>res</u> <u>publica</u>.[6] Thus, the <u>res</u> <u>publica</u> was a phase to be passed.

Once this is pointed out, it can be said that the prospects for local government was depended on the degree of homogenization. This is because, center would then feel some confidence in the periphery. Thus, the Turkish case represents a contrary point in that, in general,

heterogeneity is considered conducive to decentralization. Whereas, in the case of Turkey, decentralization was linked to the degree of homogenization, but not to the degree of heterogeneity.

Although, some reforms were introduced after 1950s, sub-national units to-this-day still remain the local administrations of the center, but not local governments. The military government of early 1980s was not a deviant case either: deconcentration was the type of decentralization, and the attempt was made to provide adequate resources to local **administrations**. However, it was the act 126 in the 1982 constitution which provided that 'special administrative arrangements may be made into law for large settlements', and on which some of the recent debates based. A further 'positive' ground for decentralization was provided by the normative ethics system of the post-1980 regime which attempted to make the sovereign state unnecessary. Thus the emphasis of the solidarity shifted to the 'motherland'.[7] It can be suggested that it was this shift prepared the basis of *Turkeyism*.

In sum, the 'tradition' of centralization rather than decentralization, and the lack of local 'government' tradition (but a strong central state) puts Turkey in a disadvantaged position as far as political decentralization is concerned.

Since Turkey lacks a popular pressure for decentralization from the civic community, it can be said that the political culture in Turkey is either parochial (implies that individuals have low expectations and awareness of government and generally not involved) or subject (in which individuals are aware of the outcomes of government but do not participate in the process that result in policy decisions).[8] The lack of civic culture can, in turn, be related to the 'papa state' concept in the Ottoman-Turkish polity.[9]

The duration of nation building is, too, a component of political culture. It seems that the divisions between proponents and opponents of decentralization actually represent the divisions over the Turkish concept of nation, and there seems to be a division over the question of 'if Turkey has completed the process of

integration or not' (i.e. duration). Coskun Kirca, as an opponent of decentralization, for example, argues that we have not yet consolidated our integration. In reality, a complete political integration is not essential before decentralization. Indeed, decentralization can be a means of political integration. However, in the Turkish case pre-condition of decentralization seems to be integration first (i.e inheritance of the past).

In addition to this belief that Turkey has not yet consolidated its integration in terms of language and culture, decentralization is considered to be as a *de facto* step towards federalism. Moreover, because of the belief that integration is not completed, decentralization is considered to be a threat to the 'indivisible integrity of the state with its nation and land'. Furthermore, the opponents argue that decentralization, in such an environment, would wound the non-ethnical/non-racial nation state, and shift the basis of the state from *millet* to *ummet*. Thereby, it is believed that the religion will become the unifying factor.

The proponents of decentralization, on the other hand, seems to believe either that we have consolidated our integration or the already existing way of consolidation is 'wrong' (i.e. neo-Ottomans). The proponents in the former camp believe that decentralization through regionalisation and/or election of prefets would strengthen the state. Thus, periphery is not seen as disintegrating. Moreover the proponents of decentralization associate it with further democracy, transparent administration, pluralism, truly local governments, and civil society. All these are, of course, positive developments. It is also believed that decentralization, would result in effectiveness and efficiency, urbanization, removal of the bureaucratic burden of the center, and participation of people in the making of the 'general will'.

The degree of decentralization is influenced by a number of factors, such as the level of economic development and the size of the country. Although these factors were mentioned in this study, the factors of political culture and political integration were the main focus. This was because, both of these factors were considered to be most

important factors influencing the degree of decentralization in Turkey. The center, in the Ottoman-Turkish case, did not have confidence in the periphery, and the way of political integration, combined with the heritage of the patrimonial past, hindered political decentralization. Yet, the aim was to emphasize the society on the long run. The suggestion of this study is not an unexpected one, though it is a tentative suggestion: The prospects for decentralization depends on the development of `civic culture'[10], and the adequate degree of homogenization as measured by the center.

1. See Hans F. Illy, `Decentralization as a Tool for Development; Notes on the Current Debate', in <u>Dilemmas of Decentralization</u>, Metin Heper, ed., (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986).

2. Ronan Paddison, `<u>The Fragmented State; The Political Geography of Power</u>', (New York: St Martin's Press, 1983), pp.41-49

3. See `Istanbul'u Ozerklik Kurtarir' (a TUSIAD report on the ills of Istanbul) in <u>Aktuel</u>, 30.7-5.8 1992, and `Harcayan Biz Toplayan Devlet' (interview with the Mayor of Greater Istanbul, Nurettin Sozen) in <u>Nokta</u>, 13.3.1992, p.26-7

4. See `Ozal: Kurtce Egitim Serbest Olmali' in <u>Hurriyet</u>, 19.8.1992

5. Cited in Serif Mardin, `Center and Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics', <u>Deadalus</u>, 101,2, Winter (1973): 169- 190, p. 182

6. The fact that decentralization of local government was began with the general process of democratization seems to support the positive correlation, posed in this study, between democracy and local government in Turkey.

7. See Metin Heper, `A Weltanschauung-turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics; `Ataturkism' in Turkey', <u>Orient</u>, 25 (1984): 83-94, p.93

8. A la Almond and Verba, see Ronald H. Chilcotte,`<u>Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a New Paradigm</u>' (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), p.224

9. see Heper, ` A Weltanschauung-turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics....', p.90

10. By 'civic culture', people's awareness, involvement and participation in local 'politics' is meant. In the case of Turkey, such development seems to be achieved only through top-to-down social engineering of local politicians. The ex-mayor of Ankara, Murat Karayalcin, seems to try injection of such culture in various ways. One of them is sticking 'Ben Ankaraliyim' (I am from Ankara) notes on the buses.

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