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# **The Enlightenment Idea of History as a Legitimation Tool of Kemalism in Turkey**

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki, for public examination in the Lecture Hall (Luentosali), Arkadiankatu 7 (Economicum Building), on 3 December 2011, at 10.00.

**ISBN 978-952-10-7318-2 (pbk.)**  
**ISBN 978-952-10-7319-9 (PDF)**

**Helsinki University Printing House**  
**Helsinki 2011**

## Abstract

The study analyzes the effort to build political legitimacy in the Republic of Turkey by exploring a group of influential texts produced by Kemalist writers. The study explores how the Kemalist regime reproduced certain long-lasting enlightenment meta-narrative in its effort to build political legitimacy. Central in this process was a hegemonic representation of history, namely the interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle of 1919–1922 as a Turkish Revolution executing the enlightenment in the Turkish nation-state.

The method employed in the study is contextualizing narratological analysis. The Kemalist texts are analyzed with a repertoire of concepts originally developed in the theory of narrative. By bringing these concepts together with epistemological foundations of historical sciences, the study creates a theoretical frame inside of which it is possible to highlight how initially very controversial historical representations in the end manage to construct long-lasting, emotionally and intellectually convincing bases of national identity. The two most important explanatory concepts in this sense are diegesis and implied reader. The diegesis refers to the ability of narrative representation to create an inherently credible story-world that works as the basis of national community. The implied reader refers to the process where a certain hegemonic narrative creates a formula of identification and a position through which any individual real-world reader of a story can step inside the narrative story-world and identify oneself as one of “us” of the national narrative.

The study demonstrates that the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative created a group of narrative accruals which enabled generations of secular middle classes to internalize Kemalist ideology. In this sense, the narrative in question has not only worked as a tool utilized by the so-called Kemalist state-elite to justify its leadership, but has been internalized by various groups in Turkey, working as their genuine world-view. It is shown in the study that secularism must be seen as the core ingredient of these groups’ national identity. The study proposes that the enlightenment narrative reproduced in the Kemalist ideology had its origin in a similar totalizing cultural narrative created in and for Europe. Currently this enlightenment project is challenged in Turkey by those who are in an attempt to give religion a greater role in Turkish society. The study argues that the enduring practice of legitimizing political power through the enlightenment meta-narrative has not only become a major factor contributing to social polarization in Turkey, but has also, in contradiction to the very real potentials for critical approaches inherent in the Enlightenment tradition, crucially restricted the development of critical and rational modes of thinking in the Republic of Turkey.

## Acknowledgements

In September 2009 I was accepted as a doctoral student in the Network for European Studies in the University of Helsinki, which thus became my new academic “home” after University of Turku. It goes without saying that this appointment made it much easier for me to complete my thesis. Thus, I am extremely grateful for all those in the Network for European Studies for having faith in me. I would like to thank Teija Tiilikainen, Juhana Aunesluoma and Seppo Hentilä for advices and encouragement. Furthermore, all colleagues in the Network for European Studies, you deserve to be mentioned here, as you provided such a stimulating environment. Also, many thanks to Planning Secretary Marie-Louise Hindsberg for making it all so much easier for me during the last busy months.

The topic of this study, in its embryonic form, was decided in autumn 2005 when I started my PhD studies in the University of Turku, where I completed my Lic. Phil in 2008. For that early part of my dissertation, I would like to thank Kalervo Hovi, Eero Kuparinen, Auvo Kostinen, Taina Syrjämaa, Pertti Grönholm, and Zeki Kütük for advices and encouragement.

There are also a number of other people whose contribution to my work is worthy of mention. I am grateful to Aysel Morin and Yüksel Taşkın for their valuable comments on this dissertation. For the attitude of never giving up in our sometimes even a bit unrealistic plans, I owe my thanks to Sami Peltola. For opening my eyes to Turkish political realities from a highly personal point of view, thanks go to Emrah Yatkin. I express my gratitude also to Kurban Kerban whose book-store in Alanya provided me with some excellent dictionaries in the critical early phase of my work. I also highly appreciate that during the last years, I have had a chance to discuss with other young scholars concentrating on Turkey, that is, Lauri Tainio, Johanna Nykänen, Pia Irene Ranna, Anu Leinonen and Halil Gürhanlı; it is obvious that meeting you all has been inspiring.

For my parents Timo and Leena, thank you for all your support, especially for taking me to Turkey so many times as a kid!

My deepest gratitude goes to my wife Suvi for your love and companionship. My dear son Tapio, you came to this world one and a half year before my dissertation was completed; your smile is the best thing in life.

Toni Alaranta  
Helsinki, 18 October 2011

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Republic of Turkey, Kemalism, and the Problem of Modernity

The Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. The years immediately preceding this, 1919 to 1922, are viewed by the Turks as the years of their struggle for national liberation (*milli mücadele*). As a result of this struggle, the Turkish state (*devlet*) was rebuilt in a totally new form, as a republic. The Ottoman Empire had fought the First World War in alliance with Germany, and the Allies were prepared to split the Ottoman territories among them. Ultimately, this scheme came to nothing since the Anatolian Resistance Movement was capable of halting the Allies' designs. Since Britain and France were not ready to start a new full-scale war in Anatolia, the Turkish war of liberation meant a war against Greek forces trying to enlarge Greek territory in western Anatolia. This battle ended with total Greek defeat in 1922.

After an embryonic phase, the Anatolian Resistance Movement was led by Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938), later known as Atatürk. He managed to unite various organizations that were established throughout Anatolia in an effort to halt the Allies and prevent either an Armenian or a Greek state being constructed in Anatolia. In the long run, Mustafa Kemal also managed to organize a regular army capable of fighting the army of the sultan and the Greek forces. During and after the struggle for liberation, Kemal gathered political power around himself, managed to secure the declaration of a republic, and ended the 600-year-old Ottoman dynasty, as well as the institutions of the sultanate and caliphate. Atatürk then became the first president of the newly founded state. On 15–20 October 1927, Kemal presented his famous Six-Day speech (*Nutuk*) at the General Congress of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), giving his own account of the war of liberation, and the internal power struggle that followed it.

Atatürk's years in power, 1922–1938, witnessed tremendous reforms and modernizing efforts in Turkey and these reforms really altered the Turkish state. Instead of a theocratic constitutional monarchy headed by a sultan-caliph, there was now a secular republic, headed by the Republican People's Party, or, by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. During the years of the single-party regime of the Republican People's Party (1922–1945), an official state-ideology, Kemalism, developed into the modernizing ideology of the Turkish Republic. The Kemalist ideology was crystallized in the CHP party program of 1931. It included six main principles, or "arrows," which were republicanism, populism, nationalism, laicism, statism and reformism.<sup>1</sup> The original formation period of Kemalism was from 1927 to 1937. This ten-year period begins with the above mentioned Six-Day speech of Mustafa

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<sup>1</sup> Nur Betül Çelik, "Kemalizm: Hegemonik Bir Söylem" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnsel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 76.



Kemal Atatürk and ends with the total incorporation of party and state, including the constitutionalization of the six arrows of Kemalism.<sup>2</sup>

Today Kemalism is still the official ideology of the Turkish Republic. The country, however, is in many ways very different from the newly established Republic of the 1920s, as is the world around it. It can be claimed that the dominant position of Kemalism has been seriously challenged in the last two decades as moderate political Islam has slowly established itself as the representative of the conservative right in Turkey. Today, as the strained encounter of Western and Islamic cultures has been described on many occasions as one of the major challenges of our times, is a suitable moment to evaluate Kemalism and the process of modernization in Turkey.<sup>3</sup> The Turkish revolution produced for the first time in world history a modern, secular nation-state in a predominantly Muslim community. How this secular and progressive regime was legitimized in Turkey via the massive construction of a peculiarly Kemalist enlightenment idea of history, is a subject of great importance for our common goal of better understanding the relationship between modernity and Islam. This understanding is important for several reasons. Firstly, it has obvious significance for our conceptions of international relations generally. Secondly, the knowledge of the tools and conceptualizations utilized in Turkey to legitimize a modern secular nation-state brings to the surface many of the issues – political culture, historical representations, basic values and identities – which are crucial in determining the relationship between Turkey and Europe. Thirdly, this kind of analysis offers a case study on how the large-scale cultural narratives of the “West” and the “Islamic World” are constructed through a process of constant striving for political legitimation. Lastly, I believe this type of analysis is also important for individual European nation-states where the cultural encounter between the West and Islam is increasing all the time, especially as it seems clear that at the core of this ongoing encounter there is a recurrent struggle to determine the past, whether national, regional, or international.

## 1.2 The Nature of the Kemalist Political Discourse and its Project of Enlightenment in Previous Studies

Because of its place as the official ideology of state, Kemalism has been the subject of considerable scholarly interest. This has not always been the case, though. Writing

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<sup>2</sup> Mesut Yeğen, “Kemalizm ve Hegemonya?” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that realizing Turkey’s significance in the Western debate on modernization is as such a current observation: already in 1965 Frederick W. Frey was able to note that “reason for this special political significance of Turkey is simply that Turkey is an ‘emerging’ nation that has had, until quite recently, unique and exemplary success. Proceeding further and faster down the road of modernity than most other emerging states, she has, moreover, in the past few years careened off that road at a critical turning point which others have not yet reached. Hence, her experiences are of particular interest to analysts of the developmental process.” Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1965): p. 4. However, one can claim that the contemporary debate on the relationship between the “West” and the “Islamic world,” and the debate concerning the Enlightenment ideals and their postmodern criticism (as these are also currently debated inside Turkey itself) demonstrate Turkey’s crucial significance even more clearly.

in the beginning of the 1980s, a well-known Turkish historian Enver Ziya Karal still lamented that, at least outside Turkey, “not many books have been written on Kemalism.” Karal claimed that this was a result of Western authors’ common view that the Turkish revolution lacked a theoretical base, and that Atatürk himself had omitted to give a systematic explanation of his thought and actions.<sup>4</sup> In any case, it can be claimed that since the 1980s the Turkish revolution, Atatürk, and Kemalism have begun to receive increasing attention both in Turkey and in the West. What follows is a critical survey of what I have found to be most analytical previous studies on the nature of Kemalist political discourse and its project of the enlightenment. To date the most comprehensive effort to scrutinize Kemalism critically is the nearly 700 page long *Kemalizm* (Kemalism), published as the second volume of the *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce* (Political Thinking in Modern Turkey). According to Levent Köker, Kemalism was established as the official ideology of state in the beginning of the 1930s, together with the consolidation of the one-party regime of the Republican People’s Party. After the beginning of the multi-party period in 1945, Kemalism has been interpreted in many, sometimes very contradictory, ways, right up to the present moment. These different interpretations became more numerous with the usage of “Atatürkçülük” (Atatürkism) as an alternative to Kemalism. Especially in the 1960s, the developing Turkish left usually preferred Kemalism, whereas the more conservative and nationalistic circles used the term Atatürkism.<sup>5</sup>

According to Köker, it is not an exaggeration to say that in the practice of Turkish constitutional law and political norms, all acceptable opposition must fit into the general Kemalism/Atatürkism paradigm. To cross these borders has meant that “separatism,” or “backwardness,” have been equated with high treason.<sup>6</sup> This means that all social groups wishing to express their demands politically have to do so inside the Kemalist discourse. The ultimate reason for this is the fact that the borders of Kemalism define the fundamental reason for the existence of the state.<sup>7</sup> Because of this “must-be-kemalist” practice, the “correct” interpretation of Kemalism has thus become a battle ground for those aiming to political power. This is of course a pretty natural phenomenon. As Emre Kongar has stated, because of Atatürk’s position as the founder of the Turkish Republic, he belongs to everyone, to all citizens of Turkey. Since the death of the great founder, Turkish society has changed enormously and many new social groups have emerged, all with competing aspirations. Nearly all these groups define themselves “Atatürkist,” claiming to represent his ideas.<sup>8</sup> This means that the battle over the correct interpretation of Kemalism equals a battle for the future character of the Turkish Republic. In other words, the different interpretations of Kemalism are different interpretations of the fundamentals of the state.

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<sup>4</sup> Enver Ziya Karal; “The principles of Kemalism” in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981): pp. 11–12.

<sup>5</sup> Levent Köker, “Kemalizm/Atatürkçülük: Modernleşme, Devlet ve Demokrasi” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>8</sup> Emre Kongar, *Atatürk Üzerine* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2006), p. 23.

According to Ahmet İnel, Kemalism can be summarized as a fusion of enlightenment and nationalism. At the level of political action, however, Kemalism has usually meant the protection of the state. Originally, Kemalism was a mission to raise Turkey to the level of modern Western civilisation. Before long, the enlightenment ideal of Kemalism was superseded by the conservative aim of preserving the social status quo. İnel stresses the importance of keeping in mind the fact that the first-generation Kemalists were traumatized because of the events in the late Ottoman times. The state, to which the military-bureaucratic first-generation Kemalists were deeply attached, had lost territories step by step before the First World War. After the Great War, even the remaining parts of the Ottoman state were to be partitioned according to the Treaty of Sèvres in 1922. The fear of losing the state produced a collective reaction which manifested itself in the extreme Kemalist concern of keeping the state intact.<sup>9</sup>

According to Murat Belge, Kemalism was not, like for example socialism, an effort to give a total explanation of the world in a universalistic manner. Belge stresses that Kemalism was, in essence, a nationalist modernizing ideology of the Turkish nation living in the Republic of Turkey.<sup>10</sup> This surely is the case, but what this assertion does not explicitly state is the fact that Kemalism was nevertheless grounded, like socialism, on a set of presuppositions that do claim universal validity. As I aim to demonstrate, in legitimating itself Kemalist discourse was based on an all-encompassing narrative of progressive scientific human development.

Here it is useful to look at how one of the leading Turkish sociologists, Şerif Mardin, has summarized the positive and negative aspects of Kemalism. According to Mardin, the new republican regime preserved in its ideology aspects of earlier Ottoman state-ideology, namely, the idea of the state as a central social actor, while the regime simultaneously tried to create new collective values. The Ottoman patrimonial sultanate legitimized itself with the rhetoric of the sultan's duty to maintain good governance for his subjects. In the Turkish Republic good governance has been idealized in the official rhetoric as a governance of the people. This ideal was accompanied with a still more radical conception of men freed from the eternal and deterministic cycle of history. According to Mardin, this conception of history was the last phase of the Young Turk positivist world view, absorbed by the first generation of Kemalists.<sup>11</sup> What this assertion by Şerif Mardin fails to express, however, is that the Kemalist discourse produced a concept of history stamped by progress and emancipation which became just as deterministic as the earlier, religiously motivated, one had ever been.

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<sup>9</sup> Ahmet İnel, "Giriş" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Murat Belge, "Mustafa Kemal ve Kemalizm" in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Şerif Mardin, "Projects as Methodology: Some Thoughts on Modern Turkish Social Science" in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1997): pp. 70–71.

On the negative side of the Kemalist regime, Mardin mentions the destruction of the old social order, where the elite and the people were brought together via religious discourse. With the Kemalist prohibition of Islam as a social force, the link between the elite and the masses was cut once and for all. The old Ottoman social order had tolerated pluralism in a society held together by Islam. The Kemalist order was most of all based on a Jacobin conception of a Republic as one and indivisible, where all ideological minorities were assimilated and declared as “feudal remnants.” According to Mardin, the old order took man’s existential concerns seriously, while the Kemalist order judged them as scholastic metaphysics.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, as Mardin argues, in Kemalist Turkey the ideological minorities were assimilated as “feudal remnants.” However, claiming that in the Ottoman social order Islam helped to create a context for pluralism is a very controversial argument, since the state-religion can hardly offer a public sphere where all people’s identities are seen as fundamentally equal.<sup>13</sup> It is perhaps in this context that the Kemalist enlightenment project is currently seen as most problematic. There are two major Turkish collections of articles devoted to analyzing the crucial significance of the idea of enlightenment in Kemalist ideology, and it is rather interesting that the earlier one, *Türkiye’de Aydınlanma Hareketi*,<sup>14</sup> published in 1997, still sees the Kemalist enlightenment project as rather unproblematic, while the more recent one, *Aydınlanma Sempozyumu*,<sup>15</sup> published ten years later in 2007, contains several highly insightful and deeply analytical studies of the meaning and nature of the Kemalist enlightenment project.

I cannot escape the feeling that, as is also the case in respect to my own study, it is only after postmodern theorizing had problematized Western-oriented modernity that we have been able to comprehend that the concept of the enlightenment refers not only to an intellectual movement in Europe during the latter part of the eighteenth-century (the Enlightenment with capital letter “E”), or to the political execution of the Enlightenment’s ideals world-wide ever since, but also to a totalizing meta-narrative claiming that there is a process of universal history constructed by the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 70–71.

<sup>13</sup> Granting minority-rights to different religious communities inside the Islamic political order – as was the case in the Ottoman system – is definitely not pluralism. As Bassam Tibi observes, Islam can be put in harmony with pluralism, but this demands the abandonment of the idea of *dhimmi*, that is, an idea that non-Muslims are a protected minority but not equal with the Muslims. Basam Tibi, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe: Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam versus Global Jihad*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 12. In contemporary scholarship there has also been a tendency to question the theocratic nature of the Ottoman Empire. However, I think that Halil M. Karaveli is right when he argues that “it is a non-refutable fact that Ottoman political power was ultimately religiously legitimated. However much the sultans may have made use of religion for political purposes, and even though legislation was admittedly never based exclusively on Sharia, religious law was nevertheless supreme, and it was religion that supplied the ultimate meaning of politics; what legitimated power was the perception that it upheld a religiously defined order.” Halil M. Karaveli, “An Unfulfilled Promise of Enlightenment: Kemalism and its Liberal Critics,” *Turkish Studies* 11 no. 1 (March 2010): p. 92.

<sup>14</sup> *Türkiye’de Aydınlanma Hareketi. Dünü, Bugünü, Sorunları. 25–26 Nisan Strasbourg Sempozyumu . Server Tanilli’ye Saygı* (Istanbul: Adam Yayınları).

<sup>15</sup> *Aydınlanma Sempozyumu*, ed. Binnaz Toprak (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007).

emancipation of humanity through science and technology based on critical reason. It is in this last sense that the concept of the enlightenment is used in the current work: the enlightenment meta-narrative is understood here as a story of an inevitable human progress aligned with rationality and science that characterized the Enlightenment era.

For example, Cem Deveci has described this enlightenment meta-narrative – without using this expression – by talking about a strict or maximum enlightenment as an all-encompassing mentality which has assumed that modernity itself is identical with the Enlightenment tradition. Deveci argues that this is not the case, and that the Enlightenment project should be seen as an expression of only certain aspects of modernity, while it simultaneously rejects others, such as subjectivity and pluralism.<sup>16</sup> By referring to Jürgen Habermas’s criticism of Foucault, Deveci notes that the current postmodern philosophical stream speaks for a certain presentism as it aims to reject the Enlightenment tradition because of its totalizing – and thus repressive – vision of progress.<sup>17</sup> This kind of postmodern thinking has been a major influence on current criticism of the Kemalist enlightenment project in Turkey. As Nazım İrem has stated, in the contemporary world talking about the Enlightenment’s ideals such as freedom and equality is seen by many as an effort to support totalitarianism and authoritarian politics. Currently, as many claim that we are witnessing an era which has reached beyond the modern, the Enlightenment’s ideals have been, so the argument goes, completely distorted by perverse political ideologies of both left and right. Thus, the Enlightenment’s ideals of freedom, equality, and progress, which have since their beginning in eighteenth-century Europe come to influence the whole of humanity, are now seen as a shelter for political ideologies aiming to destroy human creativity and spirituality.<sup>18</sup>

İrem also notes that beyond the Western world, the Enlightenment project (a conscious attempt by the intellectual and governing elites to emancipate the people by rationalizing and secularizing governing methods, education, and social relations) was most often conducted alongside the establishment of the nation-state and within the ideology of nationalism. Besides, the Enlightenment’s ideals were attached to various kinds of ideological streams, which often contradicted each other. As the Enlightenment’s ideals were incorporated into the ideology of nationalism, this happened in the context where the original universal claims of the Enlightenment were already suppressed and taken over by the nationalist discourse. Thus, the ideology of nationalism transformed the Enlightenment’s universal and, in a sense, a-historical human, into a citizen of a clearly defined territorial nation-state. İrem’s analysis highlights how the current postmodern criticism of the Enlightenment clearly recycles those anti-Enlightenment tendencies of earlier centuries, namely, Romanticism and Conservatism.<sup>19</sup> He also argues that in the current situation,

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<sup>16</sup> Cem Deveci, “Habermas’ın Foucault Yorumu: Modernite ve Aydınlanma Eleştirilerine Bir Yanı Mı?” in *Aydınlanma Sempozyumu*, ed. Binnaz Toprak (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007): pp. 19–20.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> Nazım İrem, “Küreselleşme ve Postmodernleşme Sarmalında Modernite ve Türkiye’de Yerellik Siyaseti” in *Aydınlanma Sempozyumu*, ed. Binnaz Toprak (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007): p. 114.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114–119.

Islamist critics of Kemalist modernization in Turkey base their arguments on postmodern theorizing, and in this way aim to de-legitimize the Kemalist social engineering and reform movement as an authoritarian, elitist, and top-down project. However, even though this criticism is not wholly unfounded, postmodern ideology, which tends to reject all large-scale social reform movements also leads to a situation where it is impossible to criticize social inequalities legitimately. Thus, the current postmodern mentality tends to present the ongoing rise of religious and ethnic identity politics in the context of global capitalism (including its highly uneven distribution of wealth) as unproblematic, rejecting all utopias of a better society.<sup>20</sup>

Murat Belge has also paid attention to the fate of the Kemalist social engineering project during the last two decades by noting that after the *coup* by the Turkish army in 1980 – a coup which was made in the name of restoring Kemalism – it turned into a wholly conservative ideology. The changes caused by the collapse of socialism and the Soviet bloc set new standards in economies and politics worldwide. In Turkey this produced significant pressure for change. In this new situation, those resisting and those demanding new policies were not divided according to existing worldviews. In this new situation, interpretations of Kemalism were roughly divided in two. The first group interpreted Kemalism isolationistically while the other group emphasized general westernization. In late 1980s the second group – a silent majority – saw Kemalism as a general ideal of modernization/westernization. The first group, those who resisted change, and who had in 1960–1980 as left-wing Kemalists experienced various ideological phases, now objects globalization and forms the core of the authoritarian-conservative bloc.<sup>21</sup>

As Nur Betül Çelik points out, during 1930–1945 Kemalism established itself as a mythical narration in Turkey. According to this myth, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire was followed by the construction of a totally new order. In the place of the Ottoman state there had been born a Western, secular, and modern Turkish state and identity. At the core of this myth was the conception of the Turkish nation as a unified, harmonious and homogenous whole that was represented by the Republican People's Party. The political discourse of Kemalism was based on the conception of a single “right path” leading to the overall progress and welfare of society. This right path was called “modernizing and westernizing.” The vehicle executing this plan was to be the Republican People's Party founded by Atatürk.<sup>22</sup>

But, as for example Mesut Yeğen stresses, in no period did Kemalism – not even in its formation period of 1927–1937 – manage to create a positive reception among the masses. It was, more than anything else, an ideology “for the people despite the people.” The Kemalist elite tried, however, to spread its message to the masses via, for example, the so called People's Houses (*Halkevleri*) that were organised to propagate nationalism, secularism and a scientific world-view among the people.<sup>23</sup> It is also quite justified to claim that the first phase of Kemalism ended in 1950 as the

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 136–137.

<sup>21</sup> Belge 2002, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> Çelik 2002, pp. 75–76.

<sup>23</sup> Yeğen 2002, pp. 60–61.

one-party regime of the Republican People's Party was voted out of office. One could even, in some respects, interpret this as the end of Kemalism: after 1950 Kemalism was no longer the dominant ideology of any political program in Turkey. However, Kemalism did not die with the collapse of the one-party regime. The overall minimum goal of Turkish politics was still to be the construction of a Western type secular nation-state, a goal that emerged from Kemalism. As Mesut Yeğen points out, the "ghost" of Kemalism inhabits all the rooms of Turkish politics.<sup>24</sup>

Besides this, as Özlem Demirtaş Bagdonas emphasises, the continuity of Kemalism does not depend on preserving all the elements of the initial discourse employed by Atatürk and his associates. It continues through the capturing of some of its elements and giving new meanings to them by various discourses. In this sense, Bagdonas emphasises, Kemalism should not be taken as a unified system that promotes action in a consistent direction. It rather comes as a package of various meanings, as a repertoire, from which political actors select different pieces for constructing their discourses. In this sense, Bagdonas writes, "actors may have various intentions for selecting particular parts or in attributing specific meanings to them, but they are not completely free in constructing their discourses, as they have to operate within the existing terminology."<sup>25</sup> Thus, even though governments in power since 1950 have not been "Kemalist" in the sense that the Republican People's Party was in the one-party era, political discourse in Turkey continues right up to the present moment employ Kemalist terminology.

The most important reason for abandoning the interpretation that Kemalism "vanished" after 1950 because it was no longer the dominant ideology for political parties is, however, its secured status in a coalition that can be called a state elite as opposed to a political elite. As Metin Heper has proposed, by referring to Şerif Mardin's influential text on the subject,<sup>26</sup> the key issue in Turkish politics seems to be the relation between the central authorities and local provincial forces. The initial opening up of the Turkish political system in the mid-1940s led, according to Heper, "neither to a confrontation among different socioeconomic groups, nor to a conflict between central authority and powerful local forces which could exert influence on the affairs of state at the centre, but it evinced a configuration comprising, on the one hand, the state elites who posed as guardians of Atatürkism as they themselves interpreted it, and, on the other hand, a not well-organized periphery."<sup>27</sup> These state elites can be seen as "guardians of the Kemalist regime," that is, they secure the continuity of Kemalism irrespective of the policies deployed by the various elected political parties.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 62–64.

<sup>25</sup> Özlem Demirtaş Bagdonas, "The Clash of Kemalisms? Reflections on the Past and Present Politics of Kemalism in Turkish Political Discourse", *Turkish Studies* 9 no. 1 (March 2008): p. 105.

<sup>26</sup> Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?," *Daedalus* 102 no. 1 (1973).

<sup>27</sup> Metin Heper, "State and Society in Turkish Political Experience" in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988): p. 5.

However, it seems that in the 1990s the central position of Kemalism came to be seriously challenged in Turkey. Nur Betül Çelik argues that “since the 1990s Kemalism has lost its ability to mediate among the floating elements in order to produce political consensus and has been unable to fix totally the meaning of all social and political activities.”<sup>28</sup> According to Erik J. Zürcher, the spread of Islamic movements in Turkey since the 1980s should be seen as a proof of the degree to which modernization has succeeded in Turkey. As a result of the modernizing project, the secularist and positivist elite has lost its monopoly over intellectual debate. Zürcher states that by the beginning of the 1990s so many members of the old subject class had been educated that they could put forward social and cultural projects of their own and in this way challenge the secularist one.<sup>29</sup> Even more important, the whole Western project of modernity – on which the Kemalist discourse is heavily dependent – seemed to be seriously challenged in the 1990s. As Ayşe Kadioğlu writes “a crisis of official ideology in Turkey coincides with the weakening of the foundations of modernity in the West. The weakening of the foundations of modernity had an impact on the modernizing contexts and especially put into question the certainties of Kemalism in Turkey.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, similar to Cem Deveci and Nazım İrem, Kadioğlu sees the “crisis” of Kemalism as the result of a general weakening of the foundations of the Western discourse of modernity.

In a similar vein, Cemal Karakas has argued that the military intervention in 1980 can be seen as a real turning point in Turkish politics: the expansion of state-run religious services, the introduction of religious education as a compulsory subject in public schools, and the use of the *Diyanet*, the state agency for religious affairs, for the “promotion of national solidarity and integration.” Karakas emphasizes that these changes led not only to a nationalization of Islam, but also to an “Islamization of the nation.” In this way the military granted Sunni Islam a discrete and important role in the country’s sociopolitical development. According to Karakas, this was the “new old” source of legitimation for the Kemalist state. This trend was further consolidated by Prime Minister Turgut Özal whose liberal economic and social policies promoted religious interest groups, mainly the Anatolian religiously-oriented middle classes and the emerging Islamic business circles.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, previous studies understand Turkey’s political history as a process where the ability of the Kemalist discourse to define the public sphere has been gradually transformed and weakened, leading to a resurgence of the Islamic component in Turkey’s society and politics. As noted, Cemal Karakas, for example, interprets this process as leading to a “new old” Islamic legitimation of the Turkish state. This kind of new phase in the political legitimation effort must then necessarily lead to a

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<sup>28</sup> Nur Betül Çelik, “The Constitution and Dissolution of the Kemalist Imaginary” in *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies, and Social Change*, ed. David Howarth, Aletta J. Norval and Yannis Stavrakis (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000): p. 193.

<sup>29</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey – A Modern History*. New Revised Edition (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 303–304.

<sup>30</sup> Ayşe Kadioğlu, “Republican Epistemology and Islamic Discourses in Turkey in the 1990s,” *The Muslim World* 88, no. 1 (January 1998): p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Cemal Karakas, “Turkey: Islam and Laicism Between the Interests of State, Politics, and Society,” *PRIF Reports* No. 78 (2007): p. 2.



radical re-evaluation of republican history. However, it can be argued that this re-evaluation was presented in a very ambiguous manner during the 1980s, and that the ability to understand the current situation demands that we first acquire a more profound understanding of the legitimation tools utilized by the Kemalist discourse during the major part of the twentieth-century. Before proceeding to these questions, however, we still need to evaluate what can be considered as the two critical periods in constructing the Kemalist idea of history in Turkey.

Besides various general analyses of the nature of Kemalist discourse, we need to look at how previous studies have understood the Kemalist construction of Turkish national history proper. Here I shall first concentrate on a seminal work on this subject, namely Büşra Eranlı's *İktidar ve Tarih: Türkiye'de "Resmî Tarih" Tezinin Oluşumu (1929–1937)*,<sup>32</sup> which highlights the process of re-writing national history during the early decades of the Kemalist regime. Eranlı notes, quite correctly, that history writing and teaching compose a significant part of society's mental map, as a glance at the past, whether near or more distant, is in close relationship to the individual's habit of seeing the future. According to Eranlı, it was obvious that the so-called "Turkish History Thesis" (*Türk Tarih Tezi*), constructed at the Turkish Historical Congresses (*Türk Tarih Kongreleri*) of 1929 and 1937, was meant to provide Turkish citizens with a new national identity. As such, the "Turkish History Thesis" is best understood as part of the Kemalist revolutionary nation-building process.<sup>33</sup>

The Turkish History Thesis was, in short, a highly imaginary collective effort by the first-generation of Kemalist nationalist-oriented "politician-historians" to compose a glorious pre-Islamic Turkish national history. According to the Thesis, the Turks were the progenitors of the first historical civilizations, for example the Sumerian and the Hittite, and, had crucially influenced to the development of other civilizations, such as the Egyptian, Aegean, and Chinese.<sup>34</sup> Eranlı further notes that different generations of Turkish historians have each had a different relationship to the history writing of the early republican period: some have emphasized the role of the Kemalist revolution as the progenitor of scientific-minded historical research in Turkey,<sup>35</sup> while others have asserted that the Turkish History Thesis produced a racist and exclusionist view of Turkishness. Eranlı, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the most negative aspect of this historical practice was the enduring habit of writing history from the narrow perspective of political power. What was created, thus, was a propagandist self-understanding among the historians in Turkey.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Büşra Eranlı, *İktidar ve Tarih: Türkiye'de "Resmî Tarih" Tezinin Oluşumu (1929–1937)* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006).

<sup>33</sup> Eranlı 2006, p. 15.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> To give a one example of this kind of argumentation, see İlber Ortaylı, "Atatürk Döneminde Türkiye'de Tarih Yazıcılığı Sorunu" in *Türkiye'de Aydınlanma Hareketi. Dünü, Bugünü, Sorunları. 25 – 26 Nisan Strasbourg Sempozyumu . Server Tanilli'ye Saygı* (Istanbul: Adam Yayınları, 1997): p. 135.

<sup>36</sup> Eranlı 2006, p. 16.

Ersanlı's work can be taken as a necessary precondition for the present study for two main reasons: first of all, it takes as its sources the concrete Kemalist nation-building tools, that is, the official history schoolbooks of the Republic. Analysis of how these schoolbooks aimed at creating a citizen who would be proud of the Turks' civilizational role in the pre-Islamic era has made it clear just how politically motivated these historical representations were on this primal socialization level. Secondly, Ersanlı's work also highlights the limits of this kind of "crude" or "straightforward" usage of the past for political purposes. According to Ersanlı, the Turkish History Thesis was elevated to its sovereign position at the second Turkish Historical Congress in 1937 where even the minor speculations concerning its relevancy were abandoned. This was due to the fact that the need to produce and propagate glorious Turkish antiquity was more urgent than rigorously following scholarly methods.<sup>37</sup> This, on the other hand, as Ersanlı underlines, was also the very reason why the Turkish History Thesis was finally unable to produce strong and lasting grounds for Turkish national identity. The emphasis on the pre-Islamic Turkish states and the total omitting of 600-years of Ottoman history as an ingredient in the Turks' identity created an intellectual and emotional emptiness which was hard to ignore.<sup>38</sup> This observation is also a precondition for my effort to highlight what else was needed for a convincing and legitimating representation of the national past to emerge in Turkey.

That there did indeed develop something of a kind becomes obvious if we consider the fact that the Kemalist regime was not seriously challenged in Turkey before the 1980s, and that during the period from the 1930s to the 1980s Turkish nationalism became very influential in the collective identity formation among the Turkish-speaking population of Turkey. Even though it has become a popular phrase to say that the Turks are experiencing a crisis of identity, torn between East and West, I believe that Andrew Mango is correct when he says that "in fact there are few peoples which have a stronger sense of national identity than the Turks."<sup>39</sup> One can say quite justifiably that an analysis of the Kemalist politician-historians and the Turkish History Thesis constructed by them is only the first step in an overall effort to picture the close relationship between historical representations and political power in Turkey. The second, and just as important, is the process of representing the national history of the Republic's foundation years, and in particular the Anatolian Resistance Movement in 1919–1922.

One can claim that at the bottom of the legitimacy question lies the idea of a shared community, or, in other words, collective identity. As Bozkurt Güvenç rightly observes, modern nation-states do not just expect their citizens to obey the laws and construct their society, they also expect that the individual citizens believe in, and adhere to, the official history, accepting the official identity like a common uniform. Those who do not do this are often deprived of social and political rights. The official state-ideology and the collective identity attached to it do not pay attention to individuals' historical or ethnic differences, but conceives all individuals as part of

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 225–226.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 226–227; 239.

<sup>39</sup> Andrew Mango, *The Turks Today* (London: John Murray, 2004), p. 4.

the unitary whole.<sup>40</sup> As Güvenç asserts, the ideology of Kemalism should indeed be seen as a vehicle (a conscious effort) to construct Turkish nationality and identity. The Turkish nation could not, in reality, be forged by the Turkish revolution; it is more reasonable to claim that this revolution made the birth of the Turkish nation a future possibility.<sup>41</sup> As for the tools for constructing this new Turkish identity, Güvenç argues that it was probably rational to lay its foundations on the Turkish language, which was spoken by 88 percent of the population. Thus, according to Güvenç, the conceptual difficulty of Turkish nationhood did not derive from ethnicity, but stemmed from the fact that the vast majority of the population lived in an agrarian, pre-modern society. Approximately 75 percent of the population lived in villages; they did indeed speak Turkish, but they did not perceive themselves as Turks (or, as a Turkish nation).<sup>42</sup> Today, the majority of the Anatolian Turkish-speaking population perceive themselves as Turks. Something, then, must have happened during the period 1930–1980 to make this idea of Turkishness a social reality.

Emre Kongar is one of those Turkish scholars who have paid attention to the problematic representation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle in the official Turkish history writing. He notes that the enduring habit of identifying the Anatolian Resistance Struggle of 1919–1922 with the foundation of the Republic has obscured the historical reality: Mustafa Kemal excluded, those who took part in the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, whether army commanders or ordinary peasants and merchants, were not fighting to establish a new Turkish nation-state in the form of a Republic. These people fought in order to save the integrity of the Ottoman territories in Anatolia, and to secure their traditional rights and the institution of the Caliphate.<sup>43</sup>

As Bozkurt Güvenç rightly observes, for Mustafa Kemal Atatürk the question of Turkish identity was crystal clear. He declared that culture should be the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. This culture, however, was not to be the out-dated and superstition-filled old Islamic culture of the Ottoman Empire, but a new secular Turkish culture, which would help Turkey to take its proper place among the “civilized nations of the contemporary world.” This could be achieved by internalizing a new national culture, characterized by rational thinking and scientific education.<sup>44</sup> Atatürk’s vision of a new secular and rational Turkish collective identity should also be taken as the basis for all subsequent analyses of the Turkish History Thesis and its conception of the Turks’ glorious pre-Islamic past. What is important is that the doctrine of Turks’ glorious past, their magnificent states, and contributions to the first human civilizations, is not an aim in itself. These narratives of a civilized past were needed in order to convince the Turks of the republican period that the Turks had a natural ability to produce and maintain “civilization.” Thus, it was only “natural” that the Turks should adhere to “contemporary civilization” after the degeneration of the Ottoman period.

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<sup>40</sup> Bozkurt Güvenç, *Türk Kimliği: Kültür Tarihinin Kaynakları* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1993): pp. 6–7.

<sup>41</sup> Güvenç 1993, p. 12.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>43</sup> Emre Kongar, *Tarihimizle Yüzleşmek* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2006), pp. 160–161.

<sup>44</sup> Güvenç 1993, pp. 34–35.

This suggests that the proclaimed idea of the Turks' historical ability to produce "civilization" was in direct relation to the fundamental Kemalist idea of achieving a modern Western civilization in the new Turkish Republic. What emerged was indeed a cultural rupture, as Ersanlı asserts, if we consider the way in which 600 years of Ottoman cultural heritage was suddenly excluded from the Anatolian Turkish-speaking population's collective identity. What was constructed as a cultural continuum, however, was the idea of the Turks' historical ability to produce and participate in progressive civilization. The continuum suggested that the new nation-state represented a nation which had been very much part of a progressive civilization in its distant history, and which would, after long period of degeneration, now participate in a true modern civilization. What is common to all Kemalist texts analyzed in this study, is their commitment to this idea of "taking part in modern civilization." As we will see, the acceptance of this universal discourse of modernity thus separates Kemalist narratives from those political programs which seek to ground the Turks' communal identity on Islam.

I think Christoph Herzog is definitely right when he argues that since the 1980s, when the military established the so-called "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" as an official ideology, the Western-originated conception of historical development inherent in the Kemalist discourse became problematic. Since then, the Ottoman Empire has been re-interpreted officially as an Islamic and Turkish entity, and the glorification of the once powerful Ottoman Empire has become a widely shared belief of public discourse in Turkey.<sup>45</sup> But, why did the Kemalist discourse manage to establish itself as a credible one for so long, and why are there still influential groups in Turkey who are willing to defend its fundamental premises? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to scrutinize closely the Kemalist narratives as "historical forces."

### **1.3 Research Problem – The Enlightenment Idea of History as a Legitimation Tool**

As the evaluation of the previous studies on Kemalism has already demonstrated, the Kemalist regime has utilized two interrelated tools of legitimation, namely nationalism and the idea of the enlightenment. As the present study will show, Kemalist nationalism aimed to produce a secular and modernist (*ulusalcılık* in later Kemalist terminology) expression of Turkish national identity and one can argue that the idea of history as the enlightenment process has been a major component of this effort. However, the Kemalist secular-modernist version of nationalism was especially from the 1950s onwards challenged – and in respect to mass support superseded – by a more Islamic-oriented form of nationalism (*milliyetçilik*). As evidenced above, when the Kemalist conception of history is being debated in previous studies, its general tendency to produce a national modernizing story for the Turkish nation has been noticed as a major theme. However, the focus has most often been on the above mentioned "Turkish History Thesis" and issues related to it.

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<sup>45</sup> Christoph Herzog, "Enlightenment and the Kemalist Republic: A Predicament," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 30 no. 1 (February 2009): p. 29.

What is lacking is an analysis of the legitimation function of the enlightenment idea of history constructed in various Kemalist writings. What I aim to demonstrate in this study is that the Kemalist interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement as a Turkish Revolution executing the enlightenment project (emancipation of humanity with the help of science and technology, based on critical reason) in the nation-state of the Turks must be seen as fundamental in producing Turkish national consciousness among the secular middle classes – a spectrum of society partly emerged in response to the Kemalist interpretation of history.

In order to create a section of urban middle-class Turks supporting the Kemalist regime, it was crucial to reproduce a Kemalist interpretation of history which established emotionally and intellectually convincing grounds for identification. Seeing the issue from the perspective of this group's world-view, the genuine achievement of the Kemalist nation-building project has not been the more or less accepted idea of a glorious Turkish antiquity, but the fact that the Kemalist regime was able to produce a credible narrative of the Anatolian Resistance Movement as the Turks' collective effort for the enlightenment. One can argue that even in contemporary Turkey, the sense of social polarization is in many respects grounded on the different conceptions about core ingredients of the national identity held by the secular middle classes and the more Islamic-oriented majority.

The initial legitimacy of the Republic was surely very much grounded on the fact that the Republic had created a secure homeland for tens of thousands of Muslims who were forced to leave their previous homes in various Ottoman territories during and after the Great War. Another mechanism working in the same direction was the expulsion of various non-Muslim minority groups (most of all Armenians and Greeks) during and after World War I, and the taking over by Anatolian Muslims of these groups' land and property.<sup>46</sup> Thus, it must be underlined from the start that the current work focuses only on one significant part of the Kemalist legitimation effort, namely the enlightenment interpretation of history. I propose that the "enlightenment idea of history" as a legitimation tool employed by the Kemalist discourse has not been sufficiently analyzed in earlier studies, especially in respect to its "narrative force." Without a detailed analysis of this narrative, it is impossible to understand the world-view of the Kemalist secular middle classes in Turkey. What is meant by the "enlightenment idea of history" will be defined a bit later. First I shall discuss the term "political legitimation."

According to David Beetham, where power is acquired and exercised according to justifiable rules, and with evidence of consent, we call it rightful or legitimate. Beetham takes a highly critical stand towards what he calls "a Weberian definition of legitimacy" where power is conceived as legitimate when people believe in its legitimacy. According to Beetham, this is manifestly erroneous: a power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs. According to Beetham, "When we seek to assess the legitimacy of a regime or political system, one thing we are doing is assessing

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<sup>46</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London and New York: Verso, 1987), pp. 80–81.

how far it conforms to society's values and standards, how far it satisfies the normative expectations people have of it. We are then making an assessment of the degree of congruence, or lack of it, between a given system of power and the beliefs, values and expectations that provide its justification."<sup>47</sup>

But how are these beliefs and values internalized in the first place? Beetham states that power relations are an ongoing process, and a central question concerning them is how legitimacy is maintained and reproduced within a given society. According to him, the Marxist concept of ideology asserts that dominant groups are able to secure their own legitimacy through their influence or control over the processes whereby the beliefs of the subordinate are shaped and reproduced.<sup>48</sup> Beetham stresses that "dominant ideology" theories, however, tend to put far too much emphasis upon the determining influence exercised by the powerful over the ideas of the subordinate.<sup>49</sup> According to Beetham, a system of power relations itself indirectly shapes the experiences, the capacities, the expectations and the interests of subordinate groups through a variety of social processes, so that justifications for the rules of power become credible because they are confirmed by the subordinates' own experiences.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Beetham admits that stories about origins may have a crucial part to play in legitimation. According to him, it is certain that stories about origins are important and therefore who tells them, or who controls their telling, is of great consequence. In Beetham's words, "This is why the content of history syllabi is so contentious. Historical accounts are significant precisely because of their relationship to the legitimacy of power in the present."<sup>51</sup>

Thus, it seems Beetham admits that the dominant group's ability to control historical representations has a major role to play in the reproduction of legitimacy in society. Furthermore, Beetham's habit of emphasizing the system of power relations itself as the main arena of reproducing justification tends to hide the fact that the "system" is composed of different people in various positions holding various opinions. Further, a system of power relations only becomes meaningful as people interpreted it. This process of giving meaning, on the other hand, is always based on communication. The structures themselves do not have any meanings. On the contrary, it is the people in communicating with each other who give meaning to these structures. As people are not equally situated in terms of their position in society, some discourses become more influential than others. As John B. Thompson puts it, "to study ideology is to study the ways in which meaning serves to sustain relations of domination."<sup>52</sup>

One can also argue that the dominant ideology thesis is not so easily rejected as David Beetham wants us to believe. Siniša Malešević notes that during the latter part

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<sup>47</sup> David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power* (Hampshire and London: MacMillan, 1992), pp. 10–11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>52</sup> John B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), p. 4.

of the twentieth-century the so-called dominant ideology thesis was debunked in many studies as being analytically useless. The argument was that there is no, and never was, such thing as “dominant ideology,” in the sense of an intra-group value unity, and that both functionalism and Marxism overstate the importance of shared values as generators of social action. Malešević argues, however, that the concept of a dominant ideology is indispensable when attempting to deal with the dominant ideological narrative of modernity, that is, nationalism, which has remained the essential source and principle glue of state legitimacy. As Malešević points out, a very problematic aspect of the criticism of the dominant ideology thesis is the explicit dismissal of the main political institutions of ideology transmission such as the mass media and educational system, but also the explanatory neglect of the role of the military apparatus, political parties or scientific institutions and authorities in the articulation and dissemination of ideology. As Malešević emphasizes, this is a grave omission since most empirical research shows that these state institutions are clearly influential in the formulations and transmissions of ideological messages. Perhaps more importantly, the critics of the dominant ideology thesis understand it in a very hard way, as dominant ideology would require strong internal coherence. Malešević notes that the power of ideologies, on the contrary, is built into their conflicting and partially incoherent messages. A fully elaborated ideological narrative would demand a high level of discursive literacy, thus automatically excluding a great majority of the population from “absorbing” the concepts of any such dominant ideology. However, as Malešević notes, this is not how ideologies operate. In Malešević’s own words, “instead of crude macro-structural narratives mediated by particular modes of production, what takes place is a subtle ‘translation’ of semi-coherent dominant normative doctrines into a set of micro stories, with recognizable discourses, events and actors which are available and accessible to the general population. Thus, ideology is not a ‘thing’ but rather a complex, multifaceted and messy process. Further, it is best conceived as a form of thought-behavior that penetrates all social and political practices.”<sup>53</sup>

Like David Beetham, Bruce Gilley is among those who have emphasized the obvious relation between the state and the moral community over which it is supposed legitimately to rule. Thus, the more a state behaves in ways consistent with the moral consensus in society (assuming there is one), the more legitimate it is.<sup>54</sup> Legitimacy thus supposes that there is a certain moral consensus in society. If there is not even a rudimental consensus on what norms and values the community is grounded on, legitimacy becomes unattainable. According to Gilley, norm change always begins with a questioning of existing norms. In the case of legitimacy norms, a strong sense of the violation of what is perceived as rightful drives both elites and societies at large to seek alternatives. In this sense political communities are, according to Gilley, in perpetual debate over the content of norms justifying political power. Gilley emphasizes that although norms may emerge initially from individualistic actors, their diffusion will depend on their being accepted by elites, who are partly defined as the “leading thinkers” in society, and then by society as

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<sup>53</sup> Siniša Malešević, *Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 83–89.

<sup>54</sup> Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 7.

whole. Once accepted, legitimacy norms often become embedded in state institutions or social structures. One player in the game of producing ideas and values is the state itself. In reference to the state, however, it is, according to Gilley, more plausible to claim that the state can propagate some ideas, but it can rarely if ever achieve some sort of “hegemony” in the reproduction of social norms. Thus, Gilley points out, states typically strive to embrace a set of legitimacy norms that are grounded in the societies they rule.<sup>55</sup>

The role of state elites in the reproduction of values in modern society is however more crucial than Gilley admits. This is because of the central role of the discourse of nationalism in the legitimation of power. I am convinced that Siniša Malešević is correct when he notes that nationness is “a complete historical and profoundly contingent novelty,” and “a complex process whereby a patch of relatively arbitrary territory becomes firmly demarcated, centrally organized and run while simultaneously growing into an indisputable source of authority and group loyalty for the great majority of those who inhabit it.” Thus, nationhood is a modern ideological construct reinforced equally by the institutions of the modern state (the education system, the mass media, and public culture) as well as by civil society and family and kinship networks.<sup>56</sup> Malešević further notes that, “whether democratic or authoritarian, left wing or right wing, religious or secularist, radical or moderate, at the end of the day modern political orders tend predominantly to legitimize their rule or to delegitimize the rule of others in nationalist terms.”<sup>57</sup>

What seems to be crucial in nationalism is a narrative of “us” in relation to others. The “us” structure is constructed in the story of a nation. Nations are narratives in a very profound sense. A nation can exist only in/through these narratives, as they are reproduced over and over again – after initial internalization – in the every-day communication of the people. As one can observe, the characterization of nationalism presented here is very similar to those offered by Benedict Anderson,<sup>58</sup> Ernest Gellner,<sup>59</sup> Miroslav Hroch,<sup>60</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm,<sup>61</sup> and Thomas H. Eriksen,<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 76–80.

<sup>56</sup> Malešević 2006, p. 28.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>58</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition (London and New York: Verso, 1991), especially page 6, where Anderson asserts that a nation is an imagined political community “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”

<sup>59</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), especially pages 6–7, where Gellner notes that “Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.”

<sup>60</sup> Miroslav Hroch, “From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-building Process in Europe” in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Balakrishnan and Gopal (New York and London: Verso, 1996), especially page 79, where Hroch declares that a nation is a large social group integrated most of all by “(1) a ‘memory’ of some common past, treated as ‘destiny’ of the group, or at least its core constituents; (2) a density of linguistic or cultural ties enabling a higher degree of social communication within the group than beyond it; (3) a conception of the equality of all members of the group organized as a civil society.”



who have all emphasized the constructed nature of the nation, that is, its existence as a collective representation. The present work focuses on the “upper” level of this narrative process in the Republic of Turkey as it analyzes the historical representations produced by the Kemalist state elite and groups sharing its purposes, that is, army officers, major politicians, presidents, journalists and academics. As we speak about a nation, we speak about a community which is meant to be distinct from other communities on grounds of *nationality*. This nationality emerges as people, convinced of its reality, tell each other stories about their common nation. This is done by recounting how the nation was born and developed during the course of history, what different phases the nation has lived through, and what are the traits, habits and values of the common nation.

As we speak about a nation, we speak about a group of people who believe they share a common destiny. In this way, talking about a nation presupposes a concept of the nation’s history, which always takes the form of a narrative. This narrative, then, must have its narrators, but it must also have its heroes, villains, most crucial events, and a purpose. Thus, we may conclude that we have arrived at the very core of a nation’s narrative character, that is, a nation’s existence *as* a narrative. Here the mechanism of a collective reproduction of the nation reveals its totalizing character: for a conception of a nation to develop, there needs to be a unitary core in the narratives of the nation, since otherwise those characteristics separating one nation from another would become blurred and impossible to maintain. That there develops this kind of core is a consequence of the state’s crucial ability to propagate one particular narrative of the nation. In most cases, probably, there exist in society several different versions of the nation, its most crucial moments and its important and exemplary figures. However, in order for a nation to exist, one of these narratives must achieve hegemony. As only certain versions of the nation’s past become collectively accepted, the content of a nation becomes, in time, quite vigorously determined.

In this sense a nation is most of all a hegemonic discourse which has enforcing power in relation to individuals, and which is in most respects automatically given. This assertion naturally invokes the classical sociological debate of actors versus structures, and one could easily criticize my claim by noting that these structures are not automatically given but rather result from active affirmation. However, nation as a narrative is an institutionalized structure which can be affected by individual actors in only a very limited way. As Jerome Bruner notes, the accounts of the protagonists and events that constitute a narrative are selected and shaped in terms of a putative

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<sup>61</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. New and Revised Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), especially page 8, where Hobsbawm notes that it is no easy task to define what constitutes a nation, concluding that “as an initial working assumption any sufficiently large body of people whose members regard themselves as members of a ‘nation’, will be treated as such.”

<sup>62</sup> Thomas H. Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. Second edition (London: Pluto Press, 2002), especially page 104, where Eriksen notes that, “At the identity level, nationhood is a matter of belief. The nation, that is the ‘Volk’ imagined by nationalists, is a product of nationalist ideology; it is not the other way around. A nation exists from the moment a handful of influential people decide that it should be so, and it starts, in most cases, as an urban elite phenomenon. In order to be an efficient political tool, it must nevertheless eventually achieve mass appeal.”

story or plot that then “contains” them. At the same time, the “whole” (the mentally represented putative story) is dependent for its formation on a supply of possible constituent parts.<sup>63</sup> Once shared culturally, Bruner concludes, “narrative accruals achieve, like Emile Durkheim’s collective representation, ‘exteriority’ and the power of constraint.”<sup>64</sup> Now, political legitimacy in a modern nation-state is reproduced inside the hegemonic narrative of the nation, understood as having the “power of constraint.” The commonly accepted version of the nation’s past carries with it socially accepted explanations for the existence of power relations within the political community. The hegemonic narrative of the nation has the ability to produce naturalized conceptions of society’s power relations and reasons that initially produced them. The hegemonic version of the nation’s past, then, demonstrates why those who hold power are justified in maintaining their position in society. This is constructed by showing how the independence and continuous existence of the nation – once achieved at a heavy price at some point in the nation’s glorious past – can only be secured by those in power. The concept of the “common good” (in a modern nation-state “national will”) thus looms at the bottom of political legitimation. The “common good” is the reason why people have different opportunities, resources and powers in society. The powerful, this narrative suggests, use their powers not only for their own benefit, but also for the benefit of the whole nation. What is the common good, on the other hand, is grounded on the wisdom acquired from the nation’s past – which is determined quite effectively by the power holders. Thus we have a cyclical mechanism at work here: the legitimacy of power relations in a given society can only be demonstrated by accounts of the nation’s past. The past of a nation, on the other hand, is a hegemonic narrative reproduced most vehemently by the state through its socialization organs, such as the school and the army.

How this rather generalized analysis of legitimacy relates to the particular case of the Turkish Republic? As suggested above, it is important to conceive the analysis of political legitimation simultaneously with the analysis of the nationalistic discourse of the Turkish nation-state. In the nationalistic discourse reproduced in the Republic of Turkey, the legitimation of power is indeed based on the idea that the citizens compose a unified nation, and that the state is an organ that makes decisions that represent the “general will,” or “common good,” of that nation. This presupposes that a citizen truly sees himself as part of the nation and accepts decisions made for the benefit of that nation even when they limit his individual freedom or demand sacrifices (for example, taxes and military service). Thus, the values presupposed by the legitimation of power in the Turkish nation-state are values represented as “national.”

In the case of Turkish nationalism and Turkish nationhood, we have good grounds for seeing them as the product of a nation-building project engineered by the military-bureaucratic elites of Turkey.<sup>65</sup> That is, in the case of Turkey, the sense of

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<sup>63</sup> Jerome Bruner, “The Narrative Construction of Reality,” *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Autumn 1991): p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>65</sup> Reşat Kasaba, “Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities” in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1997): p. 27.

nationhood is clearly the product of nationalistic politics.<sup>66</sup> It is a well established fact that even during the Anatolian Resistance Movement in 1919–1922 people understood themselves as Ottoman Muslims fighting in order to save the traditional rights of the Anatolian Muslim community and the remaining parts of the Ottoman state. The Ottoman elite saw themselves as *Osmanlılar* (Ottomans), whereas “Turk” was a pejorative term referring to uneducated Anatolian peasants. The name of the state was *Osmanlı Devleti* (the Ottoman state) and the state language was *Osmanlıca* (the Ottoman language), which was a mixture of Turkish, Arabic and Persian. Even those who spoke Turkish did not identify themselves as Turks and hardly ever used the term consciously until the beginning of the twentieth-century.<sup>67</sup> The Committee of Union and Progress and its regime preceding the foundation of the Republic started the creation of a Turkish nation, but during its years in power did not try to transform the Islamic empire into a secular nation-state. It was only after World War I that the nationalist cadre under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk made a radical break from their predecessors on the definition of the national project, which led to the complete rejection of the Empire as a political entity. After that there emerged a nationalist project that aimed to define a new territorial state and a homogenized Turkish nation.<sup>68</sup>

This study demonstrates that the Turkish-nationalistic interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement must be seen as the main vehicle for producing a collective national consciousness among the Turks. This interpretation of history is originally derived from Atatürk’s Six-Day speech of 1927, and reproduced thereafter in numerous Kemalist texts. It represents the Anatolian Resistance Movement of 1919–1922 not as an effort to secure the traditional rights of the Anatolian Muslim community and the continuing existence of the Ottoman state, but as an effort to establish a modern Turkish nation-state as part of the millenary mission of constructing the enlightenment in Turkey. Purpose of this study is to demonstrate that what has been crucial in the case of the Republic of Turkey has been the ability of the Kemalist elite to produce a regime conceived as legitimate not only by the so-called “historical bloc,” that is, members of the army, bureaucracy, and wealthy landowners, but also by various groups of professionals, such as teachers and lawyers. It is the changing composition and social status of these groups and their nationalistic discourse that is fundamental in explaining why the Kemalist basis of the state was not seriously challenged in Turkey before the beginning of the 1980s. What is analyzed in this work is, firstly, the ability of the Kemalist regime to produce those “texts” and “narratives” that legitimated it, and secondly, how and why this totalizing enlightenment meta-narrative as a legitimation tool transformed as Turkish society developed from the 1930s to the 1980s.

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<sup>66</sup> Umut Özkırımlı and Spyros A. Sofos put this neatly by noting that “What Mustafa Kemal and his associates created was a state based on ‘Turkish’ nation within a clearly demarcated territory. The new state was premised on the principle of national sovereignty, but the nation from which the legitimacy of the state emanated was not yet aware of its historical role.” Umut Özkırımlı and Spyros A. Sofos, *Tormented by History: Nationalism in Greece and Turkey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 55–56.

<sup>67</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962) , pp. 323–324; Ayla Göl, “Imagining the Turkish nation through ‘othering’ Armenians”, *Nations and Nationalism* 11 no.1 (2005): p. 125; Güvenç 1993, pp. 22–23.

<sup>68</sup> Göl 2005, p. 130.

A sense of nationhood is reproduced through communication on many different social levels. In the Republic of Turkey this discourse was initially produced by the military-bureaucratic elite in an effort to construct a new state which it saw as its rightful possession. In order to legitimize this new regime it was declared as the nation-state of the Turks, the ethnic majority of the Anatolian populations and which the political elite conceived as their people. Even more, in order for Turkish nationhood to develop, it was crucial to represent the Turkish nation as an eternal community that after centuries of deprivation under the Ottoman yoke had finally established its own nation-state via the Anatolian Resistance Movement which in the collective consciousness came to be seen as a Turkish War of Liberation and a Turkish Revolution that brought the enlightenment to Turkey.

To summarize what has been said this far: in the Republic of Turkey the legitimation of power and the nationalistic discourse are indissociably linked to each other. The sense of belonging to a national community has been the only reason why most Turks have most of the time felt obliged to obey the regime based on Kemalist principles. Not a minor aspect of this sense of obligation is derived from the conception of the heroic national struggle led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk that saved the Turks from a foreign yoke and secured the future development of the nation under the guiding ideology that synthesizes the basic principles of the “Father,” the immortal Atatürk.

One could claim, however, that at least during the one-party regime of the Republican People’s Party (CHP) from 1925 to 1945, “legitimacy” was not a relevant term at all since there was no expression of popular consent to the regime. Rather, there were expressions of obvious resistance, which were brutally suppressed by the central power.<sup>69</sup> As Jean-Marc Coicaud argues, “the identification of power with right endures so long as consent exists. If consent be withdrawn, that is the sign of a lack of political legitimacy.”<sup>70</sup> Does this mean that in the Kemalist Turkey of the 1930s and the 1940s there was no legitimacy, only brutal force? This issue is necessarily more complicated. The concept of “legitimacy” should not be taken as a dichotomy between totally existing or not existing at all. As David Beetham argues, “what is common to legitimate power everywhere is the need to ‘bind in’ at least the most significant members among the subordinate, through actions or ceremonies publicly expressive of consent, so as to establish or reinforce their obligation to a superior authority, and to demonstrate to a wider audience the legitimacy of the powerful.”<sup>71</sup> A very similar kind of assessment is made by Joseph Rothschild. He first asks whose consent, or support and compliance, is actually significant in legitimation. As Rothschild notes, the “public” expressing the acceptance or resistance is not a monolithic whole, but is rather composed of “different publics with different values, intensities and weights.” In his opinion, which I support, it seems to be the case that those publics which are parts of the elite or of the dominant social categories are more crucial than others in that their withdrawing of consent is

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<sup>69</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp. 184–185.

<sup>70</sup> Jean-Marc Coicaud, *Legitimacy and politics: a contribution to the study of political right and political responsibility*, transl. and ed. David Ames Curtis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 14.

<sup>71</sup> Beetham 1992, p. 19.

likely to “spill over” and produce general delegitimation in society.<sup>72</sup> Thus, “legitimacy” should not be taken as an irrelevant concept even when focusing on the Kemalist one-party era of 1925–1945. We could say that legitimacy is always contested by someone. On the other hand, there may simultaneously be groups that do perceive the regime’s existence as justified.

The concept of the “Kemalist regime” obviously refers not to a government or parliament of some particular period but to the constitutional status of the Kemalist principles, the bureaucracy committed to those principles, and, since the 1960s, the constitutional role of the military, representing itself as the guardian of Atatürk’s legacy. As Metin Heper stresses, the new constitution established after the military intervention of 1960 included provisions that clearly aimed to regulate democracy in Turkey. The 1961 Constitution stacked the civil bureaucratic elite against the representatives of the nation. According to Article 153 of the Constitution, no provision of it was to be interpreted to nullify certain specific laws which were passed during the Atatürk era. The clear intention of this, according to Heper, was to maintain Atatürkian thought as a political manifesto, and to put an end legally to the supremacy of the parliament. The article 2 specifically mentioned “the reforms of Atatürk” as the core of all fundamental principles expressed in the Constitution. The Constitution of 1982 established by the military junta of the day, on the other hand, made sure that the military, and not the civilian bureaucracy, became the ultimate guardian of the state – and the interpreter of fundamental Kemalist principles.<sup>73</sup>

Thus, the army and the bureaucracy together constitute what, as already noted, may usefully be called state elite, wielding power over and above any democratically elected government of the day. These state elites cannot however, in the long run, maintain their power in a vacuum but rather need “narratives of legitimacy” to justify their hold on power. These “narratives of legitimacy” are produced by a number of civil society organizations favorable to Kemalism, such as political parties (most of all *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), newspapers (most of all *Cumhuriyet*), and a wide range of academics and intellectuals. It is these narratives with which we are concerned in the current study.

As will be demonstrated, to a large degree Kemalist political discourse is committed to an all-encompassing concept of progressive modernity. That is, inherent in Kemalist discourse is a meta-narrative of universal and continuous progress. Kemalist writers understood themselves as representatives of a universal Enlightenment project, characterized by progress. The struggle in the years of 1919–1922 came to be represented in Kemalist Turkey as *Milli mücadele* (a national liberation war of the Turkish nation which was fighting in order to construct a Turkish nation-state in the form of the Turkish republic). As I shall demonstrate, this conception of history brings together two all-encompassing narratives of enlightenment and nationalism, and represents them as fundamentals of the

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<sup>72</sup> Joseph Rothschild, “Political Legitimacy in Contemporary Europe” in *Legitimation of Regimes: International Frameworks for Analysis*, ed. Bogdan Denitch (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1977): pp. 50–51.

<sup>73</sup> Heper 1988, pp. 6–7.

Anatolian Resistance Movement. Only part of this formulation (the struggle in the years 1919–1922 as a national liberation war of the Turkish nation), however, has been able to work as a common ground for both the Kemalist secular-modernist version of nationalism, and the more traditional and Islam-oriented form of Turkish nationalism that was developed especially since the 1950s, in the discourse of center-right political parties, from the Democrat Party of the 1950s to today's Justice and Development Party. Thus, what has not been challenged until now is the idea of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a Turkish collective effort for national salvation. What has been challenged, however, is the Kemalist interpretation of history, which presents this effort as a radical modernization effort.

I have decided to call the Kemalist representation of history “the enlightenment meta-narrative.” In the vocabulary of critical social theory a *meta-narrative* is a concept developed in postmodern theorizing. As Alex Callinicos notes, the most influential account of postmodernity was provided by Jean–François Lyotard, who defined “postmodern” as incredulity towards meta-narratives, that is, science that legitimates itself with reference to a meta-narrative.<sup>74</sup> As this suggests, in this study the concept of the enlightenment is understood not as a historical period or process, but as a Lyotardian meta-narrative, that is, *a totalizing narrative which claims truly to represent a universal historical process, that is, the emancipation of humanity through science and rational thinking*. What the concept of “the enlightenment meta-narrative” aims to express in a deeper sense, becomes clear, hopefully, in chapter 2.1., where I shall analyze the process by which totalizing cultural narratives in general are formed.

The primary question, then, is how the enlightenment meta-narrative was constructed and reproduced, and how and why this all-encompassing model established itself as a legitimation tool of Kemalism in Turkey? In order to answer this main question, we need to ask several others: What different interpretations has this idea of history been given? Why were the basic presuppositions of this idea of history perceived to be functional in very different contexts? Why can it be claimed that the basic presuppositions of this totalizing narrative were not totally abandoned even during the 1980s when the military opted for a more religious-oriented ideology? What kind of legacy have Kemalist writers producing the enlightenment meta-narrative left for contemporary Turkish political culture? And finally, as the Enlightenment discourse was originally a European phenomenon, internalized later by the Kemalist state elite, what can we say about the relation between the European political tradition and the Turkish Kemalist tradition?

As these questions imply, the goal of this study is indeed to analyze how the enlightenment idea of history has been utilized in Turkey as a legitimation tool of the Kemalist regime. This means that my purpose is not to elaborate a critique of the Kemalist notion of the enlightenment *per se*. However, the research strategy is such that a certain critical endeavour is built inside the overall analysis; unearthing the way in which the enlightenment idea of history is reproduced and utilized as a tool of political power relativizes the Kemalist claim according to which the Turkish

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<sup>74</sup> Alex Callinicos, *Social Theory: A Historical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p. 2.

revolution and the Kemalist regime established the Enlightenment's ideals in Turkey. We have already observed that the Kemalist project has been forcefully challenged in contemporary Turkey. According to Halil M. Karaveli, a very significant part of this criticism comes from within the secularist-modernist camp itself. This estrangement from the political universe which should be its asylum, in other words, western-minded liberal intellectuals fighting against a discourse which is supposed to be a westernizing-modernizing ideology, results, according to Karaveli, from the historical context in which Kemalism was initially formed. In Karaveli's words "the secularizing enterprise in the Ottoman/Turkish realm was never sustained by the kind of social dynamics that had given impetus to Western Enlightenment; it has made Turkish secularists intrinsically non-disposed toward identifying their creed with liberal, Western ideas and symbols."<sup>75</sup>

The criticism of the Kemalist modernization project takes place in a cultural context which, at first sight, seems to have abandoned the Enlightenment's discourse of universal rationalism. This is described by, for example, John Gray when he claims that we live today amid the dim ruins of the Enlightenment project, and that "our patrimony is the disenchantment which the Enlightenment has bequeathed us." In Gray's words, "contrary to the hopes which buoyed Enlightenment thinkers throughout the modern period, we find at the close of the modern age a renaissance of particularisms, ethnic and religious."<sup>76</sup> However, the current postmodern political philosophy cherishing the ideas of ethnic and religious particularisms is epistemologically somewhat problematic: the whole postmodern criticism of the Enlightenment project presupposes an Enlightenment-originated conception of universal rationality. This is put explicitly by, for example, Bryan S. Turner who has noted that a postmodern sociology is impossible because a postmodern critique of sociological reason is forced to depend on and presuppose the logical criteria of modernity.<sup>77</sup> In short, in order to make a universally valid truth claim according to which the Kemalist enlightenment project has been erroneous, we must presuppose the Enlightenment-originated conception of universal rationality.

## 1.4 Materials, Periodization, and Method

This thesis focuses on Kemalist texts produced in Turkey from the 1930s to the 1980s. This period starts with Atatürk's famous Six-Day speech (the *Nutuk*) and ends with the dissolution of the Kemalist monopoly in Turkish intellectual debate, as demonstrated above. The material to be analyzed includes official speeches and statements of presidents and politicians, works on Turkish social and political history, political manifestoes or analyses grounded on an interpretation of Atatürk, articles on Atatürk, and lectures given originally in universities. Apart from one book by Turgut Özal, all the texts are in Turkish. All translations are mine. Direct

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<sup>75</sup> Karaveli 2010, p. 88.

<sup>76</sup> John Gray, *Enlightenment's Wake* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 216.

<sup>77</sup> Bryan S. Turner, *Max Weber: From History to Modernity* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 12.

quotations from the original Turkish texts are presented in English translation, with a footnote providing the original Turkish version.

As is obvious, the texts included represent a choice, not a necessity of any kind. I have tried to select texts which manifest the different interpretations of Kemalism in different decades and contexts. These can be seen as “key texts,” that is, they synthesize, more clearly than others, important aspects of Kemalist discourse in different contexts. On the other hand, these texts are chosen precisely because they are typical: their narratives of legitimation are such that can be found – with certain minor variations – in a whole corpus of texts produced within the Kemalist political tradition during the period concerned. My purpose is such that I have not tried to analyze thoroughly as many Kemalist texts as possible, but instead to focus on this relatively small group in order to reveal their narrative structures, suggesting that what they are able to construct vastly exceeds the single act of reading or hearing one particular presentation. What I mean by this is that these narrative structures, and the legitimation emerging out of them, construct a whole tradition of understanding the central issues of history, community, and Turkey’s place in the modern world.

Another issue worthy of emphasis at the outset is that the method chosen here implies that this study is *not* mostly concerned with the authors and their intentions but focuses much more on the question of how a text manages to have certain effects, that is, the analysis is conducted at the level of the text. This does not mean that the authors’ intentions are irrelevant, but it does mean that the kind of reading of the present study which focuses on the question whether or not the authors selected are the most representative, most influential, or most significant, misses the point. It can even be claimed that the texts of Kemalist authors generally considered not to be the most influential can nevertheless be seen as very important for my argumentation as they demonstrate how the inter-textually reproduced totalizing narrative is at work on the outer skirts of the discourse concerned. In the present study Faruk Güventürk’s book *Gerçek Kemalizm* can be taken as this kind of text reproducing the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative “on the margins” of the Kemalist movement.

The present study focuses on four clusters of texts involved in the process of legitimizing the Kemalist regime by the usage of the “enlightenment idea of history” in Turkey from the 1920s to the 1980s, and these form the main structure of the current work (sections 3, 4, 5, and 6), each phase being analyzed in its own section:

1. The initial construction of fundamental Kemalist principles and the beginning of the Kemalist interpretation of history in the Great Speech (*Nutuk*) delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1927, representing the Anatolian Resistance Movement as the Turkish Revolution and the execution of the enlightenment project in the nation-state of the Turks.
2. The effort to produce a systematic ideology called “Kemalism” and the consolidation of the Kemalist idea of history as the enlightenment project,



produced in the writings of Mahmut Esat Bozkurt and Recep Peker, who worked as major ideologues of the Kemalist one-party regime in the period 1930–1945, in order to justify both the usurpation of the legal constitutional government of the Ottoman sultanate, and the subsequent establishment of the authoritarian Kemalist one-party regime and its radical reforms. The main reason for analyzing the works of these two writers is not that both actively participated to the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and then occupied central positions during the Kemalist one-party regime, but the fact that their works contain the line of argumentation which can be found even in contemporary Kemalist discourse, such as the idea that the principle of the sovereignty of the people implies the absolute rejection of the sovereignty of God. Thus, unlike the highly imaginary formulations of Turkish antiquity provided by the composers of the Turkish History Thesis, some of which had already been silently forgotten during the 1950s even by the Kemalists themselves, Peker's and Bozkurt's formulations have had a lasting impact on both Kemalist ideology as well as its political praxis.

3. The new leftist interpretation of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history in the context of multi-party democracy, emphasizing the Turkish revolution as a struggle against western imperialism and the internal feudal and capitalist structures co-operating with it; legitimation based on this new anti-imperialistic mission, stressing the enlightenment as the emancipation and empowerment of the masses during the 1960s and 1970s.
4. The conservative-republican interpretations of Kemalism from the 1960s to the 1980s; an effort to legitimize Kemalist principles and the Kemalist regime as the executor of the enlightenment project which transforms Turkey into a progressive and prosperous capitalist society by demonstrating the need to internalize western science and rational thinking, simultaneously opposing the leftist interpretation perceived as a threat.

Now, it can be argued that narratives indeed are historical forces – makers of history – just as much as individual persons, communities, or social and economic

structures. In a sense, narratives are the historical forces, since all the above mentioned become meaningful only through constantly produced narratives among societies. It should not be thought, then, that narratives open some sort of window or path along which one can analyze the “real” historical events or processes behind these narratives. On the contrary, narratives themselves very much constitute past reality as an experienced reality and are, therefore, historical forces that possess a great amount of “explanatory power” in historical research. From this angle, then, the question of “how things are said to have been” is just as significant for historical analysis as the question of “how things really were.” This becomes obvious if we consider the relationship between the independently existing external world of the so-called “critical realists” and the socially constructed world of the so-called “social constructionists.” One can argue that “material conditions provide the ground in which discourses may take root, but once constructed those discourses channel action which itself then transforms the nature of the real world.”<sup>78</sup> As this implies, the reality constructed through narrative is in no sense “less real” than the reality which initially generated that narrative.

The narratives produced in the past, therefore, can tell us a great deal about the reasons for past events and about the reality as it is constructed socially. In this work I have consciously selected group of narratives from Kemalist writers committed to Kemalist ideology in which presentations of the past have a central role to play in the justification of a particular political system. None of these texts, however, were produced by professional historians. There are several reasons for this kind of text selection. Firstly, the effort to construct the so-called Turkish History Thesis by the Turkish History Foundation during the Kemalist one-party regime has already been well documented and analyzed in Büşra Ersanlı’s above-mentioned work. As Suavi Aydın notes, the effort to construct a new collective identity during the early decades of the Republic led to a process of “othering” the Ottomans and their history in relation to the Turks. In a sense, this meant that the Ottoman past was written out of the Turkish national history. The core of this mission was the emphasizing of the “Turkishness” of the Anatolian populations and the exaltation of the pre-Islamic Turkish cultural and political achievements. Islam in this projection was a deviation which debased genuine Turkish culture. Aydın further notes that this “searching for a national core” was part of a new idea of history which led to a new way to writing history. This new history writing was a constructed narrative that was based on the idea of great historical civilizations, taking human progress onwards, from Mesopotamia to contemporary Western civilization. Implicit in this picture there also was the idea of counter-progress, that is, those backward forces represented by backward tribes to whom civilization had to be carried by the civilized.<sup>79</sup> As will be shown in section 3, all of these themes were elaborated already in Mustafa Kemal’s Six-Day speech of 1927.

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<sup>78</sup> Vivien Burr, *Social Constructionism*. Second edition (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 100.

<sup>79</sup> Suavi Aydın, “Cumhuriyet’in İdeolojik Şekillenmesinde Antropolojinin Rolü: İrkçi Paradigmanın Yükselişi ve Düşüşü” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce; Cilt II: Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnsel (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 354.

Aydın further notes that the two most prominent sociologists of the early Republic, Ziya Gökalp and Necmettin Sadak, made a clear distinction between national culture and international civilization, understanding national culture, in accordance with German idealist thought, as composed of an eternal “national soul” (*içtimaî ruhu*). From this conception there was formed in Turkey the tradition of “national sociology”, in which social reality was divided into two categories. On the one hand there was the great Kemalist ideal of “reaching the level of contemporary (western) civilization,” on the other hand there was the hardly-at-all-changing unique Turkish culture, “the national soul.”<sup>80</sup>

Of this two-sided construction the historians working on the Turkish History Thesis concentrated more on laying down the “scientific” foundations of Turkey’s ancient civilizational grandeur. The politicians and party ideologues of the one-party regime, on the other hand, concentrated on propagating the idea of “reaching the level of contemporary (western) civilization,” thereby placing the Turkish Revolution in the context of contemporary universal history characterized by human emancipation through science and rational thinking. Later, from the 1960s onwards left-wing Kemalist ideologues like Doğan Avcıoğlu produced texts where recent Turkish history was reinterpreted along Kemalist lines within a new context of rapid social transformation, a line of argumentation which on its part was then resisted by conservative-republican Kemalist ideologues and politicians from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Excluding Turgut Özal’s book *Turkey in Europe* which is briefly referred to in section 6, all the texts analysed in sections 3–6 participated in the reproduction of the enlightenment idea of history. These texts (or narratives) are political forces which can be conceived as significant explanatory elements to the question why Kemalism was not seriously challenged in Turkey before the 1980s. The “key texts” analyzed here, then, are seen as central producers of the meta-narrative in question. I try to demonstrate that this narrative was constantly consolidating itself: every single Kemalist “speaker” or “producer” analyzed in this work perceived himself as part of a historical process. In this situation an interpretation quite easily emerged according to which the present was a natural continuation of some process perceived to have been started in the past – the emancipation of humanity through science and rational thinking. In this way Kemalist historical presentations strengthened each other as older versions of this common narrative were passed on to the new generation, which, quite probably, lived in a very different social context. Thus, through this kind of mechanism there developed a “historical self-understanding” of the Kemalist discourse, which was, in other words, a relatively well organised conception among Kemalist writers of what they represented, what it was that they were doing, and what they conceived as the “historical mission” of the Turkish nation.

In analysing Kemalist texts, I will employ the following concepts, which can be called “narratological”: author, narrator, plot, story, goal, hero, tools, obstacles, adversaries, event, entity, implied reader, diegesis, and character. I must emphasize that some of these concepts, although all originally established in the discipline of

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<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 349–351.

narratology, are utilized here in a modified way and for a specific purpose only. Narratology is a term used since 1969 to denote the branch of literary study devoted to the analysis of narratives, and more specifically of forms of narration and varieties of narrator. Narratology as a modern theory is associated chiefly with European structuralism, although older studies of narrative forms and devices, as far back as Aristotle's *Poetics* (fourth-century BC) can also be regarded as narratological works. Modern narratology may be dated from Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), with its theory of narrative functions.<sup>81</sup>

Before going any further, it must be noted that the decision to analyze Kemalist texts with narratological concepts implies that another important, and in many ways complimentary, method – rhetoric – has been mostly ignored here. Although both narratological analysis and rhetorical analysis deal with texts, the difference is that narratology is almost obsessed with the structural components of the text, whereas rhetorical analysis is more interested in scrutinizing the interplay between the text and the audience. In this sense narratological analysis and rhetorical analysis have often been practiced separately, and only recently have there been serious efforts to bridge the theoretical gap between these two approaches.<sup>82</sup> In short, the classical definition of rhetoric described it as the art of persuasion, whereas in contemporary rhetorical analysis the scope has been broadened to investigate the ability of a discourse to produce effects on an audience in certain specific historical settings. However, as will soon be presented in detail, the discipline of narratology has produced a concept of an *implied reader* which can, after bringing this concept to close relationship with a more general argument concerning the relationship between human experience and narrative, offer a convincing model of how the individual receiver accepts the subject position offered by an ideological text.

The most important merit of narratological analysis is its ability to offer tools which help us to understand the relationship between a totalizing meta-narrative – such as human emancipation through science – and one particular text as a concrete manifestation of the structures which establish this narrative as credible during a single act of reading or hearing. The reason for choosing a narratological instead of rhetorical analysis becomes obvious by emphasizing that it would clearly be contrary to my purposes to speak about “meta-rhetoric” as rhetoric is about persuasion tactics and tools, whereas meta-narrative is ultimately about certain highly influential “second order” totalizing representation of the world that “explains” more particular stories and events.

However, it must be stated explicitly that in the present work the analysis of narrative's structural components is only one half of the method, the other concentrating to describe the social and historical contexts and interrelated political ideologies functioning as the “material base” that generates the meta-narrative in question. Thus, the method chosen can be called “contextualizing narratology,”

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<sup>81</sup> Chris Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 146.

<sup>82</sup> For a good discussion on these issues, see Michael Kearns, *Rhetorical Narratology* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), pp. 1–9.

which serves to uncover how a certain meta-narrative exists in consequence of both narrative accruals established by an individual text, and a socio-political context that generates this socially constructed discourse. This means that during the overall analysis, the employment of narratological concepts is often taken over by accounting the socio-political context which formed the basis of the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative.

What matters most in the current work is that narratological analyses frequently highlight *how the text manages to have certain effects and explain why these occur*, and that a narrative can be defined as the *representation of real or fictive events and situations in a time sequence*.<sup>83</sup> This would suggest that the narratological concepts are equally well suited for analyzing *non-fictive* as well as fictive narratives. However, it seems rather obvious that narratology as a discipline has confined itself, as one of the most distinguished scholars in this field, Gérard Genette admits, “a little too blindly to the study of fictional narrative.”<sup>84</sup>

Nevertheless, as Porter Abbot has noted, the difference between events and their representation is the difference between a *story* (the events or sequence of events) and narrative discourse (how the story is conveyed),<sup>85</sup> and this holds true for both fictive and non-fictive narrative, such as history writing. As Porter Abbot further notes, despite the powerful advantages of fiction, non-fiction narratives enjoy one attraction that fiction lacks, and that is their claim to tell a story that is factually true. In both kinds of narrative, the factors of story and discourse are at play, but in non-fiction narrative there is an additional defining factor, absent in fiction, of reference to the real world. According to Porter Abbot, this can be expressed with the following model

Fiction: Story – Discourse  
Non-fiction: Reference – Story – Discourse

After this basic distinction, we can ask, as Porter Abbot does, must then history always and only tell the truth? The obvious answer is “no.” It is not “absolute truth” that most audiences expect in historical narrative but the intent to tell the truth. The common expression for this is that non-fictive narrative is falsifiable, that is, that it makes sense to test the accuracy of such a narrative as a representation of what actually happened. By and large, Porter Abbot rightly observes, non-fiction accounts are tested by seeking corroboration, that is, additional evidence that supports the narrative, “just as lawyers hope to find more than one witness of the same series of events.” But, an interesting point is that, as Porter Abbot notes, the narratives that are offered in support could still all be wrong.<sup>86</sup> In any case, for a historical analysis as

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<sup>83</sup> Gerald Prince, *Narratology: The Form and Function of Narrative* (Berlin and New York and Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1982), p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*. Transl. Jane E. Lewin (New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 15.

<sup>85</sup> H. Porter Abbot, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 15.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 146–147.

this one (that is, an analysis of other historical narratives), I have felt it important to choose carefully those concepts which are in one way or another helpful, and then utilize them with my “own responsibility,” regardless of, if necessary, the way these concepts have been commonly used in literary theory.

Now, after these remarks, I can define the meaning of the above listed concepts in this particular work. The two first ones, author and narrator, should be seen in close relation to each other. For example in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Six-Day speech the symbolic figure of the “Father” (Ata) is shown to be present in the speech by using the concept of narrator. A narrator is the one who tells the story in a given narrative. Narrators vary according to their degree of participation in the story. In first-person narratives, like Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, they are involved as witnesses or as participants, or both, in the events of the story. For our purposes it is important that the narrator is the imagined “voice” transmitting the story, and is distinguished from the real author.<sup>87</sup> I propose that in the Six-Day speech the real author (Mustafa Kemal) has utilized a certain kind of narrator (Atatürk). This enables us to treat the narrator of the speech as fixed and given, while the real author must be seen as multi-dimensional and changing in time. Thus, the narrator is a “mask,” or persona, who transmits the story, and should not be seen as synonymous with the real author.

The plot and the story are also closely interconnected. The plot can be defined as the pattern of events and situations in a narrative work, as selected and arranged to emphasize relationships, usually of cause and effect, between incidents. The plot is thus the selected version of events as presented to the reader or audience in a certain order and duration.<sup>88</sup> It is important to notice that a narrative will consist of a set of events, that is, the story, recounted in a process of narration, in which the events are selected in a particular order (the plot). The concept of the goal, on the other hand, is utilized for example in an effort to demonstrate how Atatürk’s famous speech establishes an unquestioned “truth” about the purpose of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, this way creating a tradition of historical representation which became the absolute presupposition of the Kemalist political ideology. The same can be said about the concepts of hero, tools, adversaries and obstacles. These should be understood as commonly utilized structural components of narratives, employed in this work to demonstrate how Kemalist texts construct conceptions of significant national characters and their methods, and the internal and external enemies of the Turkish nation. Besides these concepts, we can note that there are two components to every story: the events and the entities involved in the events. As Porter Abbot has noted, as a term, “entity” seems cold and abstract, especially when applied to characters (entities that act and react more or less like human beings). A character, then, is an entity with a capability to act intentionally.<sup>89</sup> In this work it is important to ask whether the recurrent expression “Turkish nation” to be found for example in Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, should be seen as a character or an entity. In the *Nutuk*, the “Turkish nation” is sometimes presented as acting intentionally, thereby picturing it as a character, and other times as an object of a political manipulation, now

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<sup>87</sup> Baldick 1990, p. 146.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>89</sup> Porter Abbot 2008, p. 19.

suggesting that we should understand it as an entity. Which one of these became dominant, has obvious significance to the nature of Turkish political culture.

Much more than the other concepts defined above, the implied reader and diegesis have significant theoretical importance in the current work. However, it must also be noted that it is only after the definition of these two concepts that we can really perceive the meaning of character. With these concepts, I must also engage in a bit more serious discussion with the definitions given to them in the theory of narratology. According to Gérard Genette, a narrative fiction is produced fictively by its narrator and actually by its (real) author, and every type of textual performance can be attributed only to one or the other, depending on the level chosen.<sup>90</sup> Genette goes on to note that the (real) author of a narrative, like every author, addresses a reader who does not yet exist at the moment the author is addressing him, and may never exist. According to Genette, the implied reader is the idea, in the real author's head, of a possible reader. Thus, Genette argues that every real author can address only a possible reader. On these grounds Genette then suggests that the implied reader should be re-named as a potential reader.<sup>91</sup>

It can be argued, however, that it is quite irrelevant to say that the implied reader is a potential reader. Is not the idea expressed by the concept of a potential reader already presupposed by the act of narrating itself? When we write or narrate anything at all, are we not already presupposing that there is a possible reader? I think this is indeed the case, and, therefore, I don't find the concept of a potential reader of much use for my own analysis. On the contrary, the "original" idea of the implied reader seems much more fruitful for my own work. The concept of an implied reader was first introduced by Wolfgang Iser in 1974.<sup>92</sup> According to an early evaluation, for Iser this concept is an intermediary between two consciousnesses, the author's and the reader's. It is located in the reader's mind, but called into being by the text, which asks to be read in a particular way.<sup>93</sup> Iser asserted that the critic's task is to explain not the text as an object but rather its effects on the reader. The implied reader is thus "a reader whom the text creates for itself and amounts to response-inviting structures which predispose us to read in certain ways."<sup>94</sup>

In any case, I have given myself the freedom to design concepts that seem functional for my analysis of non-fictional narratives, such as Atatürk's *Nutuk*. Thus, in this study the concept of the implied reader is understood as an ideal reader, as a position offered by the author to the actual reader. In this work the concept of the implied reader must also be seen in close relation to my idea of the discourse of nationalism, defined earlier as a certain hegemonic narrative, which is a collectively accepted version of the "core" ingredients of the narrative expressing the national entity. Thus, the technical term implied reader does not suggest that the real reader, by

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<sup>90</sup> Genette 1988, pp. 139–140.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, pp. 149–150.

<sup>92</sup> Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: patterns of communication in prose fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1974).

<sup>93</sup> Robert Scholes, "Cognition and the Implied Reader," *Diacritics* 5 no. 3 (Autumn, 1975): p. 13.

<sup>94</sup> Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson, *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), p. 55.

accepting the position of an ideal reader, internalizes in every detail the message incorporated into the narrative by the author, but that he or she learns to read its core message, that is, the narrative of nationality. Thus, the implied reader is a technical term expressing the process already depicted earlier in more general terms as a process where one national narrative achieves hegemony inside the nation-state. The fact that the position of the implied reader is taken more often than not results from the inter-textual power of the discourse in question: several narratives offer the same kind of position of an ideal reader, which is the “us” of a national narrative. We can define, then, that in one particular narrative the implied reader is constructed by those contents and structures in the narrative that systematically produce the “us” structure, or nationality, through the various devices listed above (narrator, plot, story, goal, hero, tools, obstacles, adversaries, event, character, entity). In this study the concept of an implied reader refers not only to a position taken during the single act of reading, but also to a result position internalized through a reading (or hearing) of a whole corpus of nationalist narrative. It is a formula of identification, internalized through socialization, leading to a situation where the actual reader accepts the position of an ideal reader, seeing him/herself as one of “us,” that is, a member of a given nation – a nation which, in effect, is constructed in this very process.<sup>95</sup>

Thus, the concept of the implied reader should be seen in close relation to that of “ideology.” Both refer, ultimately, to something that can most properly be described as a world-view. As I have proposed, in a modern nation-state political legitimacy demands more or less well-defined narratives of collective identity grounded on nationality, suggesting that there is a direct link between political legitimacy and the concept of the implied reader. As the implied reader is an ideal reader in the sense that it is a position taken by the receptor which most effectively secures the reception of the “core message” of the text, it becomes closely attached to the representation of an “ideal type” of some particular nation reproduced in a national narrative.

The inter-textuality of nationality is a process which must, if we follow the idea of nationalism as a hegemonic discourse proposed in this study, construct a relatively widely accepted “core” of the national narrative. This in its turn establishes a tradition of interpretation which during the single act of reading and hearing takes the form of an implied reader. In the context of nationalistic discourse, then, the concept of an implied reader should be understood as a more widespread and general phenomenon than originally assumed in the theory of narratology. In the context of nationalistic discourse, the implied reader becomes the manifestation of an ideology internalized on a micro-level, that is, during the single act of reading or hearing one particular text. One could claim that it would be wiser to use the concept of

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<sup>95</sup> In a sense, my definition of the *implied reader* comes very close to the idea of *interpellation* developed initially by Louis Althusser. In this tradition, all texts speak to an implied reader, that is, an ideology can address us indirectly by constructing subject positions through an *ideal* or *implied reader*, encouraging us to adopt those positions. *Interpellation* is the name given by Althusser to the process by which ideology constructs subject positions. For recent usage of Althusser’s idea of interpellation, see, for example, *Critical Theory and Performance*, ed. Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph R. Roach (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2010), pp. 263–264; Leah Bassel, “Citizenship as Interpellation: Refugee Women and the State,” *Government and Opposition* 43 no. 2 (2008): pp. 293–314.



“collective representation” instead of “ideology” in this definition. However, I have preferred “ideology,” as it refers to the idea of power relations involved in this process of constructing nationality. The concept of “ideology” thus serves as a reminder that this process of accepting the position of an implied reader is not an innocent one but a consequence of a process of legitimation which is propagated by a certain group of people in some definitive space and time: the legitimation of power is a process involving real people in real societies, occupying vastly different positions of power and privilege.

Besides the implied reader, the concept of diegesis has special importance for the current work. In its contemporary usage, diegesis is used to refer to the “story-world,” the world created by the narration. Narratologists also speak of levels of diegesis, and for our purposes it is significant that the so-called “diegetic-level” consists of all those characters, things, and events that are in the story-world of the primary narrative.<sup>96</sup> Why is this important for the present study? The initial significance stems from one of the major problems concerning the epistemology of history. Is the world that the historian represents in his account really existing, or is it, in the final analysis, a mental construction, created in the process of historical inquiry? According to historian and philosopher Robin George Collingwood, the “historical past” (that is, the past known by a human intellect) is a world of ideas, created in the present by evidence that has survived from the actual past. Thus, Collingwood argues, in a historical thinking we do not move from our present world to the past world, because it always takes place in relation to ideas existing in the present. This leads, according to Collingwood, to a somewhat paradoxical result in that the “historical past” is not a past at all, it is all about the present.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Collingwood argues that the human mind is what this mind does, and as far as the concept of a human mind refers to anything real, it refers to human action, the ability to act intentionally, and “history,” thus, refers to the process where a certain kind of human nature is acquired. Thus, Collingwood says, the historical process consists of something whereby a human being creates for himself a specific kind of nature by creating, through thinking, that past whose legacy he has received and which he then carries forward.<sup>98</sup> Obviously the past world does not exist anymore. However, we usually assume in this context that it did exist in the past. But, as Collingwood’s ideas reveal, the past of the historian is never the whole past, only a representation of it, including only those aspects that are perceived as relevant for the research problem. In this sense the past as it is represented in a historical account is very similar to the “story-world,” that is, diegesis, created by narrative fiction.

Thus, whether the narrative is *fictive* or *factual*, that is, whether it claims to refer to the real world or not, the created narrative is all the same a construction, consisting of characters, things and events. It is from this perspective, then, that I have chose to evaluate Kemalist texts using the concept of diegesis. Thus, in this work diegesis refers to that past world which is created in the narrative, and its purpose is to demonstrate that this past, including its characters, things, events, and the whole

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<sup>96</sup> Porter Abbot 2008, p. 231.

<sup>97</sup> Robin G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 154.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.

spatial and temporal context, is not to be confused with some absolute “real past”: it is a representation of certain selected aspects of the past, this way constructing its own “story-world,” which is “true” only inside the narrative, and capable only in some, more or less ambiguous, relation to the “actual past.”

This then quite naturally leads to the problem of characters. Porter Abbot raises this question by wondering how and where characters exist. Do they exist in the real empirical world or do they exist in the way we usually conceive stories to exist, as constructions that reside only in a mental realm? As Porter Abbot notes, this indeed would seem to be the case for fictional narratives. But, if we try to analyze the notion of character in reference to *non-fictional* narrative, reference to the realm outside our imagining would appear to be inevitable. But are real people characters at all, or is a character something that only exists in narrative? In answering this question Porter Abbot refers to Jean-Paul Sartre’s evaluation that a character can be seen as an idea imposed on human beings, creating a sense of “clarity and crispness” that does not comport with reality.<sup>99</sup> This is important for us mainly because of two reasons. Firstly, it is fruitful to treat real people represented in historical non-fictional narrative as characters since they are necessarily represented in a one-dimensional way. The historical representation cannot, even at its best, make justice to the chaotic mental and physical movements which in reality construct a human being. Secondly, it is useful to treat the people represented in historical narratives as characters for the reason that they are frequently depicted as symbols of certain types, such as hero, traitor, friend, or enemy. Thus, for these reasons I have chosen to utilize the concept of character, in addition to, and in close relation to that of diegesis.

I want to emphasize that it is not my intention to analyze all Kemalist texts systematically with all these concepts. Rather, these concepts are an analytical repertoire, from which I will choose those which seem especially helpful for understanding a given text. Ultimately, then, the reason to analyze Kemalist texts as narratives is my conviction that this enables us to bring to the surface *mechanisms reproducing justification for the system of power relations* in the Republic of Turkey. It is possible to analyze these structures only from a limited group of texts, since this type of analysis demands that even quite long passages from the original texts are offered to the reader quite often. Thus, as noted above, I decided to concentrate on a group of Kemalist texts which I have found to be the most significant ones. I must also emphasize that the method chosen here strives for a *theoretical understanding* of how political legitimacy was constructed in Kemalist Turkey through nationality-as-narrative. In other words, this is not an empirical study in the sense that it would try to demonstrate how large group of people participate to reproduce certain ideological narratives in various levels of social interaction. Rather, this work is an analysis of both the tools (narrative accruals), and the socio-political contexts of these accruals, framed as a necessary precondition for a collective reproduction of specifically Kemalist-secularist nationality in the Republic of Turkey.

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<sup>99</sup> Porter Abbot 2008, pp. 134–136.

## 2 Intellectual and Political Contexts of the Kemalist “Enlightenment Idea of History”

### 2.1 The Formation of Totalizing Cultural Narratives

In order to understand the intellectual presuppositions of the Kemalist “enlightenment meta-narrative” we must have an idea about the formative process of large-scale and totalizing cultural narratives, such as “Europe” and “the Islamic world.” Here we shall concentrate on analyzing the formation process and characteristics of the narrative of “Europe.” The reason for this is the fact that the overall goal declared by the Kemalist Revolution was to “reach the level of contemporary civilization,” understood as the contemporary Europe.

The origins of the name “Europe” are such that, as Roberta Guerrina proposes, it suggests that the idea of Europe has developed through a process of exchange between European and non-European civilizations. On the other hand, the adoption of the concept of Europe by classical European civilizations, particularly the Greeks, was driven by the need to differentiate Hellenic traditions from those of their neighbors and, most importantly, “it sought to establish classical Greece as the centre of civilization in the Mediterranean.” As Guerrina further notes, the definition of Europe as the continent located between the Atlantic and the Ural mountains is not only a geographical definition, but was also created in order to define social and cultural as well as political boundaries. That is, over the years these boundaries have been vested with social and political value, and the idea of Europe’s borders today seems to refer to something greater than geographical location. Thus, they serve to define the boundaries between “us” and the “other.”<sup>100</sup> Defining these kinds of boundaries, then, seems to be at the core of totalizing cultural narratives.

If we trace the cultural origins of the idea of Europe and its boundaries, it can be said that the legacy left by the Greco-Roman world to Europe was primarily based on the creation of the “barbarian other.” The concept of the barbarian was essential to the creation of a sense of civilization and “must be seen as one of the most enduring legacies of the Greco-Roman tradition to contemporary constructions of the idea of Europe.” For its part, Christendom further developed the concept of the barbarian, associating it with the infidel and particularly the Islamic world.<sup>101</sup> Thus, these two large-scale totalizing narratives of “Europe” and the “Islamic world” have been with us for a very long time indeed. The unity of Europe through Christianity, however, was badly shaken by the Reformation and the secularization process engendered by the scientific revolutions and the Enlightenment. Guerrina further argues that the Renaissance’s rediscovery of Greco-Roman philosophy and the Enlightenment pursuit of reason led to the rediscovery of the dichotomy between civilization and barbarianism. She also proposes that the Enlightenment as the Age of Reason was predicated upon the assumption that reason could historically only come to maturity

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<sup>100</sup> Roberta Guerrina, *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies* (London: Arnold, 2002), pp. 2–4.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27–28.

in modern Europe. Thus, during the Enlightenment era, European civilization became the apex of civilization.<sup>102</sup> Here, then, is the initial starting point for the Kemalist “enlightenment idea of history,” that is, the claim that something crucial for the development of humanity was born in Europe, and that this crucial “contemporary civilization” was predestined to conquer the whole world.

As these evaluations demonstrate, the question of identity formation – including collective identity formation – is in the final analysis based on the dichotomy between the “self” and the “other.” According to Iver B. Neumann, it was Hegel who most clearly established this binary opposition as the basis of the analysis of identity formation. Hegel’s conceptualization was then incorporated by Marx into his dialectical system, in this way placing the idea of dialectical identity formation at the core of Western social theory.<sup>103</sup> Neumann observes that in the European ethnographic tradition an analysis was established according to which ethnic groups were reproduced by the very maintenance of boundaries that separate them from other groups, who were seen to be constituted as the other by their lack of this or that trait. Thus, it was vigorously established that the process of identity formation was a product of social interaction.<sup>104</sup> What emerges from this is the fact that the constructions of the “self” and the “other,” so vital in the process of identity formation, are products of various different social representations aiming for generalization in international relations during the course of history. The concept of “Europe,” then, must be seen not only as constantly transforming, but also in close relation to other grand generalizations, such as the “Islamic world.”

In their analysis of the enduring importance of the notions of the Left and the Right in global politics, Alain Noël and Jean-Philip Thérien argue that many political scientists are reluctant to use these concepts in any strict analytical sense, seeing them, firstly, as too varied across space and time, and secondly, as being too essentialist (a perspective that assumes phenomena have inherent, distinctive features, which give them their true and universal meaning). This reluctance is however misplaced because of the undeniable reality of the left–right dichotomy as a genuine social fact, and because the left–right distinction makes perfect sense even though its specific contours change over time and across space. The power of the left–right division can be seen functioning as a memory tool, creating continuity in histories that are discontinuous and uniting political families through time and space in society-wide conflicts that can appear perennial and meaningful. This analytical perspective implies, Noël and Thérien argue, that we need not worry too much about essentialism. History, Noël and Thérien argue, “provides the best safeguard against loose essentialist arguments. Indeed, the left–right distinction has a well-established genealogy, anchored in the travails of the French Revolution and in the development of democracy and socialism in Europe.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 36–37.

<sup>103</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: the “East” in European Identity Formation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 3.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., pp. 4–15.

<sup>105</sup> Alain Noël and Jean-Philippe Thérien, *Left and Right in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 11–12.

I have outlined these thoughts here because they also reveal very well the current habit of judging all large-scale cultural generalizations in the social sciences as examples of “essentialism.” One major arena of these accusations of essentialist thinking is that pointed towards the western discourse employing concepts like the “Islamic world” or “the East.” Immanuel Wallerstein relates how the European “world-system” spread from its Euro-American base to encompass more and more parts of the world in order to incorporate them into its division of labor. Wallerstein argues that initially Europeans felt that they could learn something from the Middle-Eastern civilization, but soon concentrated on subordinating it politically and economically. It was also declared that only European “civilization” could have produced “modernity.”<sup>106</sup> According to Wallerstein, this mentality implied that “there must be, there must always have been, something in the non-European high civilizations that was incompatible with the human march toward modernity and true universalism.”<sup>107</sup>

Wallerstein notes that this thesis was put forward by those European scholars that were called “Orientalists.” However, after 1945 these “Western conceptions of the Orient” were put under criticism. It was declared, basically, that the Orientalists had constituted an abstract entity, the Orient, as an object of study, and adopted an essentialist conception of this object. As Wallerstein observes, this criticism then became more widely known in the West with the publication of Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* in 1978.<sup>108</sup> Said told us that the essentialist discourse of Orientalism was far from the reality of the regions about which Orientalists were writing, especially as this reality was lived by those who were the subalterns being studied and catalogued “by the powerful of the world.” Said called us not to reject “grand narratives” but to return to them. For his part, Wallerstein sees this as a need, firstly, to assess critically the claims of those in power and their supposedly “universal values,” and secondly, to ask whether there can be such universal values, and if so under what conditions.<sup>109</sup>

On the other hand, Rodolphe Gasché notes that, at the same time that European values (such as universality and rationality) have served to justify the exploitation and humiliation of much of the rest of the world, these very concepts and ideas have also made it possible for Europe to question its own traditions and the crimes that have been committed in their name. Whether or not, Gasché writes, “this undeniable phenomenon of self-criticism, with the Enlightenment as one of its most prominent historical expressions has gone far enough, such self-criticism is something quite unique that sets Europe apart.”<sup>110</sup> What is interesting in this respect, as Gasché observes, is that it indeed seems to be the case that any critique of Europe must ultimately seek its resources in the theory and practice of self-questioning that is

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<sup>106</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 33.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39.

<sup>110</sup> Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task* (Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 6–7.

itself a characteristic of European “identity.”<sup>111</sup> However, according to Gasché, it is important to understand that “Europe” is a conception that is always only in the making, never closed off, and structurally open to future transformation and change.<sup>112</sup> Thus, in this respect one could just as easily say that those who have labeled others as producing the western conception of an essentialist Orient are only making the same mistake when they postulate a “Western world” as if it was capable of perceiving the Middle-East through some a-historical and commonly internalized lenses. In any case the whole logic of speaking about identity in itself presupposes a certain fundamental need to *make a distinction*, and when we speak about cultures we necessarily commit ourselves to some kind of generalization. As Thomas Diez notes, “identities are always constructed against the difference of an other. Identity is unthinkable without such a difference: it would make no sense to say ‘I am European’ if this did not imply a difference from being ‘Asian’, ‘African’ or ‘American.’”<sup>113</sup> This also becomes clear when we notice that Muslim thinkers of the Middle-East have also produced an “essentialist” conception of the Occident.<sup>114</sup> Thus, not only is there “Orientalism” as “essentializing” western conceptions of the Orient, but also “Occidentalism” as “essentializing” Muslim conceptions of the Occident.

I am convinced that, similar to the left–right dichotomy, “Europe” and “Islamic civilization” have an undeniable reality as enduring collective representations, and, because of this, as *social facts*. In other words, large numbers of people have seen – and still see – the world through these great cultural narratives – a fact that has had a huge effect on the history of international relations. Thus, I don’t know if “Europe” and “Islamic civilization” have “inherent, distinctive features, which give them their true and universal meaning,” but in the very act of pronouncing these terms we already assume they have. As we now continue to observe further the characteristics of the narrative formation of “Europe,” we need to do so with these remarks in mind.

Jean-François Lyotard argues that scientific knowledge, especially in the last few centuries, has sought to legitimate itself not by validating its own internal procedures but by appealing to a narrative outside itself, a “grand narrative,” or “meta-narrative”. Among these Lyotard lists narratives driven by the dialectics of the Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth.<sup>115</sup> In general, Lyotard sees two grand narratives at work in the legitimation of science. One is associated with the Enlightenment and is concerned with human emancipation from bondage and oppression; the other is the philosophical narrative associated with the development of a more self-conscious human being or an evolved “Spirit.” In short, Lyotard claims that scientific

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<sup>111</sup> Gasché 2009, p. 7.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>113</sup> Thomas Diez, “Europe’s Others and the Return of Geopolitics,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 no. 2 (July 2004): p. 321.

<sup>114</sup> Mohammad Fazlhashemi, *Occidentalism: Idéer om väst och modernitet bland muslimska tänkare* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2005), p. 7.

<sup>115</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Transl. G. Bennington and B. Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), p. xxiii.

knowledge has justified itself by referring to, and placing itself within, a narrative of progression to some greater human good.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, the meta-narrative of “human emancipation from bondage and oppression” can be seen as legitimating the scientific practices of the West. In order to understand more clearly what the concept of “the enlightenment idea of history” designates, it is tempting to make a separation between disciplines which, for example, Joseph McCarney in his analysis on Hegel’s philosophy of history calls the “critical” and “speculative” philosophies of history. The critical philosophy of history takes for its subject matter “history” in the sense of the activities and achievements of the historian. It is most of all an inquiry into the nature of the truth and objectivity that the historian can attain. The subject matter of the speculative philosophy of history, on the other hand, is “history” conceived as the actual course of events. Its purpose is to explain whatever meaning or pattern there may be in those events taken as a whole, also attempting to discover the conclusion towards which they tend. This is often accompanied by an interest in the question whether there may be some justificatory purpose at work in them. This question, McCarney explains, “gets its force from the fact that, as it has seemed to very many observers, what the record of events most obviously shows is monstrous and pervasive evil and suffering.” It would not be too much, McCarney concludes, to say that “the will to redeem these features, and so, as far as possible, to reconcile human beings to their past, and by implication their present, has been the primary impulse of the entire enterprise.”<sup>117</sup>

However, one could also easily claim that this distinction is a result of a fundamental misunderstanding of “history” as a cultural institution and praxis. It is only when we crudely impose the nineteenth-century positivist conception of value-free science over the praxis of history that this kind of distinction becomes meaningful. As we noted in the introductory chapter, for Robin George Collingwood “the historical past” as a past known by the human intellect was in its essence about coming to terms with the human intellectual tradition. From this perspective, claiming that there is some kind of scientific history without any sense of overall meaning attached to it is the same as denying the whole praxis of writing history. Thus, it would be wiser not to make the separation between the “critical” and “speculative” philosophies of history more than a loose analytical distinction. This is something which also challenges Lyotard’s critical evaluation of meta-narratives. Meta-narratives (or grand narratives) are second-order narratives which seek narratively to articulate and legitimate some concrete first-order practices or narratives. Typically, a grand narrative will make reference to some ultimate *telos* and will seek to place existing practices in a position of progress toward an ultimate end.<sup>118</sup> As we have noted, it was most of all Jean-Francois Lyotard who declared postmodernity as the age that ended the credibility of meta-narratives.

However, we can argue that Lyotard eventually ended up with just another meta-narrative. In the words of J. M. Bernstein, “of course, even the deracinated social

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<sup>116</sup> Paul Copley, *Narrative*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 187.

<sup>117</sup> Joseph McCarney, *Hegel on History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 12.

<sup>118</sup> J. M. Bernstein, “Grand Narratives” in *On Paul Ricoeur. Narrative and Interpretation*, ed. David Wood (London and New York: Routledge, 1991): p. 102.

world of capital, governed, tendentially, by temporary contracts, is still a world, social and historical in its roots; and so inevitably legitimates itself through grand narratives repeatedly retelling the story of the end of grand narrative, the end of ideology, the end of metaphysics, from Descartes to Lyotard.”<sup>119</sup> J. M. Bernstein also reminds us that “to prohibit grand narration is to prohibit us from ‘living’ historically.”<sup>120</sup> A very similar kind of criticism of Lyotard’s argument is given by Krzysztof Brzechczyn, who first notes that, “Postmodernism emerged from the critique of modernism and the philosophy of Enlightenment. Further, postmodernism views modernity as a formation dominated by rationalist fundamentalism, universalism, optimism, and absolutism of truth, naive trust in progress, worship of science and technology, a differentiation between the object and subject of cognition, exclusivity and contempt for inferior civilizations. A feature of Modernism is the generation of a meta-narrative constituting its ultimate legitimation.”<sup>121</sup> However, as Brzechczyn underscores, Lyotard has formulated claims about the impossibility of constructing a meta-narrative based on statements already derived from a kind of meta-narrative – the postmodernist meta-narrative. This is because the postmodern characterization of social reality, modernism and a description of a postmodern society constitute a kind of meta-narrative.<sup>122</sup>

This said, we can assert that the concept of “universal history” does not just refer to the entire past of the whole of humanity, but also to the idea that this past has some special meaning and direction. In this study the idea of universal history concerns the concept of “the enlightenment.” In this respect “the enlightenment idea of history” can be understood, with the above mentioned reservations, as a Hegelian idea of “speculative” history. As such, it is most of all a cultural meta-narrative trying to explain what the human experience is experiencing as a whole. The idea of universal history is, more than anything else, a naturalized presupposition of the Western intellectual tradition. It is, of course, well established in Christian cosmology, as an explanation of the fate of entire humanity. In its modern version, universal history took a secular form, now explaining the development of human rationality (or, in Hegelian terminology, *Freedom*, or *The Spirit*).

According to Robert Nisbet, this kind of synthesizing world history took a highly secular character for the first time in the book called *Discourse on Universal History* published by a French bishop Bossuet in 1681. Even though his book in principle vested the synthesizing role – similar to earlier religious world-histories – into the idea of Providence, bishop Bossuet’s book includes many passages that completely ignore the religious explanation in accounting for the course of human history, even though he explicitly declares that his book on universal history is meaningless without the presence of God.<sup>123</sup> It is useful to repeat in full length the citation from Bossuet’s book, taken here from Nisbet’s account:

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>121</sup> Krzysztof Brzechczyn, “In Defence of Metanarrative in the Philosophy of History,” *Interstitio. East European Review of Historical Anthropology* 2 no. 1 (March 2008): p. 16.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>123</sup> Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (London: Heinemann, 1980), pp. 140–144.



This kind of universal history is to the history of every country and of every people what a world map is to particular maps. In a particular map you see all the details of a kingdom or a province as such. But a general map teaches you to place these parts of the world in their context; you see what Paris or the Ile-de-France is in the kingdom, what the kingdom is in Europe, and what Europe is in the world.

In the same manner, particular histories show the sequence of events that have occurred in a nation in all their detail. But in order to understand everything, we must know what connection that history might have with others; and that can be done by a condensation in which we can perceive, as in one glance, the entire sequence of time.

Such condensation...will afford you a grand view. You will see all preceding centuries developing, as it were, before your eyes in a few hours; you will see how empires succeeded one another and how religion, in its different states, maintains its stability from the beginning of the world to our own time...

It is the progression of these two things, I mean religion and empires, that you must impress upon your memory. And since religion and political government are the two points around which human affairs revolve, to see what is said about them in a condensation and thus to discover their order and sequence is to understand in one's mind all that is great in mankind and, as it were, to hold a guiding line to all the affairs in the world.<sup>124</sup>

As Nisbet notes, from Bossuet on, the tendency to place separate times, places, events, and personages into a grand design that will give meaning to each and to all has been the justification of numerous universal or world histories.<sup>125</sup> With the initial conception of secular universal history established during the seventeenth-century, all was ready for a full-blown *enlightenment meta-narrative* to emerge in subsequent centuries of Western modernity. Thus it happened that during the period 1750–1900 the idea of *progress* as the content of universal history reached its zenith in the Western mind. According to Nisbet, from being *one* of the important ideas in the West progress became the dominant idea. It now became possible for men like Turgot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon, Comte, Hegel, Marx, and Spencer to show that all history could be seen as a slow, gradual, but continuous and *necessary* ascent to some given end. Clearly, Nisbet notes, “any value that can be made to seem an integral part of historical necessity has a strategic superiority in the area of political and social action. The relatively small things which can be achieved in one generation toward the fulfillment of the idea or value are greatly heightened in importance when they are perceived as steps in the inexorable march of mankind.”<sup>126</sup>

It is obvious from the above quotation that for bishop Bossuet universal history was still a manifestation of Divine Providence. However, subsequent Western thinkers finally altogether abandoned religion in their universal histories, in this way creating a secular grand narrative of human progress. As Nisbet observes, this period from the middle of the eighteenth-century to the twentieth-century is characterized by the secularization of the idea of progress, detaching it from its long-held relationship

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<sup>124</sup> Quoted in Nisbet 1980, p. 142.

<sup>125</sup> Nisbet 1980, pp. 142–143.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

with God, making it a historical process maintained by purely natural causes. The process of the secularization of the idea of progress which essentially began in the eighteenth-century, Nisbet writes, “steadily gained momentum during the next two centuries, and has without doubt reached its height in the second half of the twentieth-century.”<sup>127</sup>

Nisbet further observes that during the period 1750–1900 there occurred in the Western intellectual tradition a very peculiar attachment of the idea of progress to that of *power* and *community*. In nationalism, statism, utopianism, and racism, the perspective of future progress was often linked to power. Names like Rousseau, Fichte, Hegel, Saint-Simon, Comte, Marx, and Gobineau are among those Nisbet lists as propagators of this kind of vision of progress. There is, according to Nisbet, a wide chasm separating the idea of freedom espoused by the above mentioned persons from the one represented by men like Turgot and Herbert Spencer, for whom freedom always meant *freedom from any kind of oppression*. The idea of freedom represented by Hegel, Comte, and Marx, on the other hand, is inseparable from some proffered community – political, social, or other – and also inseparable from the uses of coercion and strict discipline, when needed.<sup>128</sup> For Spencer, Nisbet continues, freedom is always connected with individuals *as they actually are*; but for Marx, freedom is inseparable from membership in some collectivity or community, and also inseparable from the creation, through absolute power if necessary, of *a new type of human being*. The conception of “utopia,” Nisbet rightly observes, is relevant in this context. The utopian thinkers of the nineteenth-century were apocalyptic and millenarian in character. According to Nisbet, nowhere in the nineteenth-century are there to be found more devoted and influential expositors of theories of progress, of the stage-by-stage, inexorable, and necessary advancement of mankind from past to future. Utopianism, Nisbet asserts, “at its most influential is, then, an expression of both power and faith in progress.”<sup>129</sup>

As noted, the great goal presented by Kemalist ideology has been “reaching the level of contemporary civilization,” understood most of all as contemporary European civilization. As we saw, “Europe,” on the other hand, has been historically constructed to a great degree against the “other” represented by “the East.” This “East” was, for centuries, manifested by the Ottoman Empire, an entity Europeans called “Turkey.”<sup>130</sup> Thus, there seems to be enormous cultural narratives at work here: on the one hand there is the narrative of “Europe” in relation to the “East” (an entity represented most of all by the Ottoman state), on the other, a Kemalist narrative of the Republic of Turkey claiming to bring the Turks into a scientifically-oriented European civilization. So, what we have in front of us is a group of large-scale cultural narratives which aim to capture the past in its entirety, by constructing the idea of a road to modernity.

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., pp. 237–238.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp. 238–239.

<sup>130</sup> Sedat Laçiner, “Possible Impacts of Turkey’s Full Membership to EU’s Foreign Policy,” in *European Union With Turkey: The Possible Impact of Turkey’s Membership on the European Union*, ed. Sedat Laçiner, Mehmet Özcan and İhsan Bal (Ankara: ISRO Publication, 2005), pp. 16–17.

It is useful to notice here that the core project of the Enlightenment was indeed the displacement of local, customary or traditional moralities, and of all forms of transcendental faith, by a critical or rational morality, which was projected as the basis of a universal civilization. Whether it was conceived in utilitarian or contractarian, rights-based or duty-based terms, this morality would be secular and humanist and it would set universal standards for the assessment of human institutions. The core project of the Enlightenment was thus the construction of such a critical morality, rationally binding on all human beings, and, as a corollary, the creation of a universal civilization.<sup>131</sup> The “enlightenment idea of history” is therefore the name given here for the Western meta-narrative of universal history. It establishes an interpretative scheme according to which world history is on a predestined march towards human emancipation through scientific knowledge. Europe, or the “West,” has marched furthest on this path of emancipation, but other cultures are on their way to assimilating it at a later stage. This meta-narrative explains historical events and reveals the future of humanity. The “end” is achieved when all humanity has totally internalized “the enlightenment” and abandoned “superstitions.” One must note that this “end,” again, is a Hegelian historical end. As such, this historical “end” is not the same as the final destruction of the universe. The historical “end” is the stage where the whole of humanity has become emancipated and no longer suffers the evils of “superstition” and “ignorance.” This is, in the vocabulary of Kant, the moment when the whole of humanity has reached its “intellectual adulthood.”

According to Eva T. H. Brann, what was characteristic for the Enlightenment was that it was not “illumination,” that is, a process of getting touch with some inner knowledge. The Enlightenment was concerned with knowledge that was more commonly accessible. The “light” of the Enlightenment was the same as for Descartes: it was the light of human reason, and as such not a special gift but a consistent human capacity.<sup>132</sup> On the other hand, Gerhart Niemeyer argues that the characteristic trait of the Enlightenment was its *universal cult of reason*. The entire eighteenth-century, particularly in France, seems, Niemeyer notes, bent not so much on knowing reality but on knowing and admiring the human mind. Thus, there emerged a unified attitude toward reason, the attitude of regarding it as an instrument, an agency, or a force. To put it more clearly, reason in the Enlightenment was perceived, more than anything else, as a *tool for power*. Reason was, thus, no longer experienced as a partnership between the human soul and the divine inspiration. It was now man’s exclusive possession and favorite and powerful tool. The Enlightenment idea of reason thus meant ultimate control not only of nature but also of the social order.<sup>133</sup> This new concept of reason then gave eighteenth-century man an utter confidence in his ability to shape human life according to whatever

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<sup>131</sup> John Gray, *Enlightenment’s Wake* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 185–186.

<sup>132</sup> Eva T.H. Brann, “The Roots of the Enlightenment” in *The Ambiguous Legacy of the Enlightenment*, ed. William A. Rusher with Ken Masugi (Lanham & New York & London: University Press of America, 1995), pp. 3–4.

<sup>133</sup> Gerhart Niemeyer, “Enlightenment to Ideology: the Apotheosis of the Human Mind” in *The Ambiguous Legacy of the Enlightenment*, ed. William A. Rusher with Ken Masugi (Lanham & New York & London: University Press of America, 1995), pp. 43–44.

design he had in mind. The Enlightenment, Niemeyer emphasizes, focused on the mind's power as its chief project. Thus it was that reason no longer appeared as a partnership between the human and the divine, but as a self-sufficient faculty possessed by man, a force that, according to Niemeyer, "could be turned even against nature, tradition, God, so that the kingdom of God could be replaced by the kingdom of human reason."<sup>134</sup>

Thus, we can claim that a conception of reason as a tool for power became the driving force for producing the European "self" in contrast to the Islamic "other." Europeans were able to colonize the rest of the world, and this was due to the fact that they alone, ultimately, had reached the highest power, that of critical reason. We have already seen that the idea of "Europe" as the cradle of civilization against the "barbarism" of the "Islamic world" had been common ever since the Middle-Ages. In the modern era, this dichotomy was then consolidated by this new interpretation of Western, or European, superiority as the cradle of science and progress, which were now represented as the necessary purpose of human history. On this basis we may claim that "the enlightenment meta-narrative" is a form of universal history where religion finally came to be conceived as the opposite of the freedom of intellect and rationality.

Now, according to Anthony D. Smith, neither at the sociological nor at the ideological level can *nationalism* be compared with, or derived from, millennialism, whether of the medieval or of more recent varieties. They belong, Smith claims, "to different worlds of thought and action, and are divided not just by 'modernity' but, more radically, by the particularism of ethnic history, culture and territory."<sup>135</sup> Millennialism, Smith observes, seeks to abolish the past, and replace it wholly by the future. Nationalism, in contrast, seeks to fashion a future in the image of the past. It is the past that must be rediscovered and resurrected to provide a blueprint for the community's destiny.<sup>136</sup>

This, I must claim, is a very narrow definition of "millennialism." Let's take the Turkish case at hand: in what follows, we will see that in Kemalist ideology Turkish nationalism was clearly a mixture of the Enlightenment universal utopianism and a particularistic conception of Turkish national history. These two were equally important ingredients of Kemalist national ideology. As already hinted, the scientific revolution of the seventeenth-century undermined the stable concept of time in which the relationship between the past and present remained constant. The new conception suggested that time was pregnant with novelty and directed toward the future rather than repeating the past. As Gerald Edelman has noted, at the end of the Enlightenment epoch Herder formulated a theory of progress according to which each nation, while following its organic development, brings humanity closer to its

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>135</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 112.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

ultimate destiny.<sup>137</sup> Thus, the idea that the Turks, with the Kemalist Revolution, would join universal history heading towards the enlightenment – that is, the emancipation of humanity by means of rational science – was clearly a millennialist utopia of a new world and a new man freed from the superstitions and tyranny of religion. However, it was simultaneously indeed presupposed in Kemalist ideology that this universal emancipation of humanity with science could only be realized in a territorial and homogenous nation-state.<sup>138</sup> As we will soon discover in detail, in Kemalist ideology the nation-state was represented as the *utopia materialized*.

## 2.2 The Ottoman Empire in the Global Context

Throughout the Islamic world European domination resulted in the construction of centralized bureaucratic territorial states. Ira Lapidus emphasizes that, as was the case with previous empires, religions, and civilizations, during the modern era Europe challenged existing elites, forcing them to define their own versions of modernization.<sup>139</sup> The impact of Europe on Muslim societies worked through the collaboration or resistance of these indigenous elites. The changes that took place in Muslim societies were forged in terms of the interests, perceptions, and responses of internal elites to the pressure and incentives generated by European power and by their desire to exploit European influences in the internal power struggle.<sup>140</sup> As we will see, in the case of Turkey the military-bureaucratic elite produced a totalizing narrative of national enlightenment that was based on a conception of “one path to modernity,” and which became an important tool for political legitimation.

According to Ira Lapidus, the history of the modern transformation of Islamic societies falls into several phases and exhibits certain common features throughout the Muslim world. The first phase was the period from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth-century, mainly characterized by the breakup of the Muslim state system and the imposition of European commercial and territorial domination. In this phase Muslim elites attempted to define new ideological and religious approaches to the internal development of their own societies. These responses generated a second phase of development, the twentieth-century formation of national states through which the elites of Muslim countries tried to give a modern political identity to their societies and to promote economic development and social change. The phase of national state building began after World War I and persists to the present. The consolidation of independent national states in turn introduced a

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<sup>137</sup> Gerald Edelman, *Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 187–189.

<sup>138</sup> One can observe this same process in Europe. Gerard Delanty and Patrick O’Mahony define this with the following statement: “The European Enlightenment was divided between the universalistic tenets of rationalism and positivism on the one side and, on the other, the quest for feeling and the emotions that was typical of historicism and romanticism and which tended to emphasize social context. This ambivalence at the heart of modernity would be of great significance for nationalism, which was the paradigmatic example of the use of universalistic ideas to justify particularism.” Gerard Delanty and Patrick O’Mahony, *Nationalism and Social Theory* (London & Thousand Oaks & New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002), p. 7.

<sup>139</sup> Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 455–456.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 456.

third phase in the development of almost all Muslim countries: the rise of Islamist or Islamic revival movements and conflict over the ultimate role of Islam in the development of these societies.<sup>141</sup> All the Kemalist texts we will analyse in this study can be initially situated into the second phase of this overall chronology. However, the material analyzed in section six also shows marks of the third phase, that is, the re-evaluation (in official state ideology) of the role of Islam in the collective identity formation of the Turkish nation.

As Lapidus points out, it is often presumed that in Muslim societies state and religion are unified and that Islam is a total way of life, which defines political as well as social and familial matters. This, according to Lapidus, indeed is the original Muslim view embodied in the ideal of the Prophet and the early Caliphs, “who were rulers and teachers, repositories of both temporal and religious authority, and whose mission was to lead the community in war and morality.” Yet, most Muslim societies did not and do not conform to this ideal, and many were and are built around separate state and religious institutions. This separation was not, however, clear. In many Muslim communities the state was conceived as having a religious value based on the regime’s role as the defender and supporter of the Muslim worship, education and law. Also, on many occasions the state was conceived as the direct expression of God’s will for the ordering of human affairs. In the pre-modern era there were two alternative concepts of Islamic society. One was the “Caliphate,” which presented politics and religion as inseparable whole. The second was the “Sultanate,” or secular state, which ruled over quasi-independent religious associations considered as the true bearers of Muslim religious life. Many Islamic societies were ambiguous amalgams of these two concepts. Thus, the legacy of pre-modern Islamic societies to the modern era was not a well-defined structure of state and society, but a spectrum of variation and inherent ambiguity about the relations between the two.<sup>142</sup> Against this background, the elites in the Muslim societies adopted first Islamic modernist, then secular nationalist conceptions of national transformation, and often became committed to secular or even Western concepts of state and society.<sup>143</sup> I think it reasonable to claim that in Turkey this secular nationalist conception of state and society was established more vehemently than in any other Islamic society.

The history of the Ottoman Empire can be traced back to the year 1281, when *bey* (warlord) called Osman, who belonged to *Türkmen* (Turkmen) tribe, inherited a principality in north-west Asia Minor, and started to expand his lands at the expense of Byzantium. The territories on the eastern side of Osman’s principality in the central Anatolian plateau had already been conquered by the *selçuk* (Seljuk) Turks. At first the conquerors called their new possessions *Rumeli* (the land of the Romans). Later, however, this term referred to the territories conquered by the Ottomans from Europe, and Asia Minor was called *Anadolu* (Anatolia). The Europeans, on the other hand, started to call the lands occupied by the Ottomans as Turkey, based originally on the Italian term *Turchia*. As noted already, the Turks themselves did not call

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 456.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 815–817.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 817.

themselves Turks or their state Turkey. They saw themselves as Muslims who ruled *dari'l-Islam* (Lands of Islam), in where they had established *devlet* (state), later in a more specifically bureaucratic sense *Devlet-i Aliyye* (An Exalted State), or alternatively, *Memalik-i Mahrusa* (Divinely Governed Realm).<sup>144</sup>

One can claim that of all the nations who adhered to Islam, none went further than the Turks in forgetting their separate ethnic roots when joining the Islamic community. According to Bernard Lewis, the Turks' self-perception retained very little marks of their pre-Islamic past in the period stretching from the eleventh - century to the middle of the nineteenth. Until the beginning of the nineteenth-century the Ottomans conceived their state as the culmination of two historical processes: the first of these began with the mission of the Prophet Mohammed, the rise of Islam, and the establishment of the caliphate. The other one started with the rise of the Ottoman dynasty and the construction of their empire. The linkage between these two was the territorial conquests of the Seljuk Turks and their states in Persia and Anatolia. These events, then, compose the main bulk of Ottoman historiography, and the history of the pre-Islamic Turks was altogether ignored in these writings until the middle of the nineteenth-century.<sup>145</sup> Thus, under the influence of the dynastic and Islamic heritage, a conception of a separate *Turkish* collective could not emerge.<sup>146</sup>

The revolution which occurred in the Ottoman Empire in 1908 is commonly known as the *Young Turk* revolution. It can be said that for the Turks the twentieth-century began with this event, as the Ottoman Constitution, proclaimed on 23 December 1876 at the end of the so-called *Tanzimat*-reforms and then almost immediately nullified by Sultan Abdülhamid II, was restored. The Young Turks was a heterogenic movement whose only unifying element was the desire to overthrow the autocracy of Abdülhamid II. Its leading body was a political organization called *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (The Committee of Union and Progress). The ideological commitments of this Young Turk organization are a good example of the somewhat confusing propositions concerning communal identity offered by the reforming political and military elites. We can note that something like a *Turkish cultural nationalism* had started to develop during the latter part of the nineteenth-century when Ottoman high society began to explore pre-Islamic Turkish traditions as a consequence of the new European discipline of *Turkology*, based mostly on Chinese sources.<sup>147</sup> For the Committee of Union and Progress, forced as it was to execute well-balanced policies between various interest groups in its effort to secure the political independence of the Ottoman state, Turkish nationalism was a very problematic ideology. The vast majority of Young Turks internalized Turkish nationalism during the early part of the twentieth-century, and it became, on an emotional level, a basic component in this group's mentality. As an official state ideology, however, Turkish nationalism was a logical impossibility as long as the

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<sup>144</sup> Mango 2004, p. 4.

<sup>145</sup> Lewis 1962, pp. 323–324.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 326–327.

<sup>147</sup> Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 260–261.

aim was to safeguard the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire – which indeed was the obvious aim of the Young Turks.<sup>148</sup>

It is most important to understand that not only during the Balkan wars and the First World War, but also during the so-called “Turkish War of Independence” the Ottomans mobilized the population on the grounds of *Muslim solidarity*.<sup>149</sup> It is also important to recognise that from 1908 to 1918 the vast majority of the Arab inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire also supported it. An enduring loyalty to the Ottoman state and perceptions of the sultan-caliph as protector of the *ummah* (universal Islamic community) were the chief elements of this support. Too often, as William Cleveland emphasises, “the years from the Young Turk revolution in 1908 to the outbreak of World War I have been viewed as the gestation phase of Arab nationalism or as the preparation for the end of a doomed empire and the rise of separate nation-states in the Middle East.”<sup>150</sup> Different groups inside the Young Turk movement had envisioned different grounds for the future character of Ottoman society, but as they confronted the immediate struggle for the state’s survival, they readily allied themselves with Muslim solidarity, a collective sentiment which could provide mass support amongst Ottoman subjects in the forthcoming war effort. In this period the term *millî* (national) became the dominant term in Young Turk ideological vocabulary, but, as Erik J. Zürcher underscores, “the context shows that the term at the time had strong religious overtones and that, in fact, the nationality it was intended to describe was that of *Ottoman Muslims*, not of *Turks*.”<sup>151</sup> By 1923, the Anatolian Muslim population had managed to secure the continued existence of a state of their own in Anatolia. Only then, from 1923–1924 onwards, did the Kemalist leadership of the republic abandon the traditional Muslim solidarity that had been utilized during the preceding ten years, now choosing far-reaching secularization and Turkish nationality.<sup>152</sup>

Thus, the Republic of Turkey was one of the new nation-states born in the crisis situation produced by the First World War. The armistice between the Allies and the Ottoman state was concluded at Mudros on 31 October 1918 and it meant that the Ottomans’ fate was now in the hands of the Allies. The 25 articles contained provisions such as the military occupation of the straits of Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, control by the Entente of all railway and telegraph lines, demobilization and disarmament of nearly all Ottoman troops, and the surrender of all Ottoman troops in the Arab provinces. As Zürcher notes, “the most dangerous clause from the Ottoman point of view was article seven, which stipulated that the Entente had the

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<sup>148</sup> Şükrü M Hamioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks 1902–1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 296.

<sup>149</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, “Fundamentalism” as an Exclusionary Device in Kemalist Turkish Nationalism” in *Identity Politics in Central Asia and the Muslim World: Nationalism, Ethnicity and Labour in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Willem Van Schendel and Erik J. Zürcher (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2001): p. 209.

<sup>150</sup> William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Second Edition (Boulder San Fransico: Westview Press, 2000), pp. 138–139.

<sup>151</sup> Zürcher 2001, p. 209.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.



right to occupy any place in the Ottoman Empire if it considered its security to be under threat.”<sup>153</sup>

### **2.3 The Anatolian Resistance Struggle and the Establishment of the Kemalist Republic**

According to Feroz Ahmad, had the Allies been able to maintain a unity of purpose, Turkey’s situation would have been “totally hopeless.” However, the Allies could not agree on how to divide the spoils of war. They concentrated instead on preventing each other from obtaining territory which would give any of them a strategic advantage, resulting in a situation where they were unable to crush the newly emerging Ottoman resistance in Anatolia. After the signing of the armistice and the flight of the Young Turk regime’s leaders to Europe, there was a political vacuum which the sultan and the old ruling class rushed to fill. They seemed to be prepared to accept any terms the Allies wished to impose so long as they were left in power. It was with this state of mind that the sultan’s government signed the Treaty of Sèvres on 10 August 1920, which permitted only a truncated Turkish state under the dominance of Britain, France, and Italy.<sup>154</sup>

However, the sultan could remain in power only if the resistance movement failed. The sultan’s power was hardly present outside Istanbul, but as a caliph he still enjoyed a great following as the spiritual leader of the Muslim community. The sultan used this authority against the resistance coalition, denouncing its members as godless atheists waging war against the caliph. According to Feroz Ahmad, Mustafa Kemal and his comrades took great pains to counter this religious propaganda for they understood the powerful influence of Islam in Turkish society. Their task became easier when Istanbul was occupied by Anglo-French forces and they could describe the sultan-caliph as the captive of Christian powers waiting to be liberated. The leading cadre of the resistance movement also understood the value of Islamic discourse as a means for providing maximum unity among a mixed population of Circassians, Lazes, Arabs, Kurds, and Turks, communities they wanted to mobilise for their own cause.<sup>155</sup>

The resistance movement was built on the organisational foundations of the Committee of Union and Progress which was still intact despite its dissolution. Mustafa Kemal’s great contribution was to restore unity after the flight of the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress. He was himself a member of the Committee of Union and Progress of long standing. Mustafa Kemal’s appointment as Inspector-General of the armies in Anatolia, whose de-mobilisation he was to oversee,<sup>156</sup> placed him in an ideal position to organise resistance against imperialist

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>154</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 47–48.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>156</sup> Even though the emerging resistance force was not the same thing as the Ottoman army, it was nevertheless composed not only of irregular volunteers but also of those regular (Ottoman) army units which were still intact. In a sense, then, a certain number of Ottoman army units were transformed into a “National army.” Cemalettin Taşkıran, “Osmanlı Ordusu’nun Yıkılıp Millî Ordunun Kurulması

intervention. Resistance groups calling themselves “Defence of Rights” associations had been formed in Thrace and Anatolia as soon as local landlords and merchants realised that Turkey was to be partitioned among former subject peoples. These local landlords and merchants had made great gains in the past ten years and they were willing to fight to preserve them. Unlike the sultan, they refused to accept the annexation of western Anatolia by Greece or the creation of Armenian and Kurdish states in the east. By January 1920, pro-resistance forces controlled the last Ottoman parliament in Istanbul, having won elections a month earlier. The Allies, alarmed by the growing strength of the resistance forces even in Istanbul, occupied the city on 16 March 1920. They arrested a significant number of well-known members of the resistance movement and deported them to Malta. Two days later, parliament prorogued itself in protest. Mustafa Kemal responded by calling for the election of a new parliament which would sit in Ankara, the headquarters of the resistance. On 23 April 1920, the new parliament calling itself *Büyük Millet Meclisi* (The Grand National Assembly) met in Ankara. In May this parliament appointed its own executive committee with Mustafa Kemal as its president. The resistance coalition thus had a separate government though the fiction that it was fighting to liberate the sultan from captivity was maintained.<sup>157</sup> The year 1920 proved critical. The resistance forces were simultaneously fighting against external forces, that is, Greek, Armenian, and French troops, and internal ones, since the sultan-caliph came out openly against the resistance coalition, with the so-called Army of the Caliphate, denouncing its members as enemies of Islam.<sup>158</sup>

By the Allied conference in February–March 1921 it became clear that the Allies were unable to impose terms of the Treaty of Sèvres. All the powers had domestic problems, making active intervention in Turkey unpopular. The Italian and French governments therefore reached agreements with the resistance coalition, ending the already fragile Allied co-operation. The British were left alone to support the Greek army which was unable to keep territory it had conquered in Anatolia. The Turkish–Greek war continued into 1922 with the Turks launching their decisive offensive in August and recapturing İzmir on 9 September. The Lausanne treaty recognising the creation of an independent Turkish state with virtually the same borders as those demanded in the National Pact<sup>159</sup> of the resistance movement was signed on 23 July 1923, marking the successful culmination of the liberation struggle.<sup>160</sup>

After victory in the war of liberation and the signing of the treaty of Lausanne, Mustafa Kemal enjoyed tremendous prestige as the national hero. The new situation, however, immediately brought to the fore the controversial issue of what manner of state was to be established. With the sultanate gone, many in the parliament wished to see the caliphate vested with political power. This, however, was unthinkable to

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ve Savaş Stratejisi Açısından Nutuk” in *Yetmişbeşinci Yılında Büyük Nutuk’u Anlayarak Okumak. Bilgi Şöleni 17–18 Ekim 2003 Ankara Bildiriler*, ed. Dursun Ayan and M. Alper Parlak (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2003): p. 42.

<sup>157</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 48–50.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>159</sup> The National Pact (*Misak -ı Milli*) was the document outlining the basic demands of the Anatolian Resistance Movement.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51.

Mustafa Kemal, who pushed through his vision of the people's government, and so the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed on 29 October 1923. The following spring the caliphate was also abolished. This was followed by the closing of the *sharia* courts, a unification of the laws and educational system, and the closure of the *medrese* (mosque schools). With these and other radical reforms, Mustafa Kemal and his allies crushed the *ulema* (Islamic doctors of law) by removing the financial basis of its power and eliminating the institutions through which the *ulema* had worked.<sup>161</sup>

It can be stated that the Kemalist one-party regime built after 1925 imitated the authoritarian Ottoman state tradition in a new, nonreligious guise. The new state was established by imposing political, economic, and social modernization from above. As Heinz Kramer notes, the Turkish republic was run by the state bureaucracy and military-turned-civilian politicians backed by a caste of urban intellectuals with European-influenced education who entertained an organic understanding of state and society. These groups had hardly any relations with the masses. The masses had to be educated by the elites into their new status as citizens with a Turkish national identity, and in this sense the establishment of the republic was not only a political task but also an undertaking in national education that still continues.<sup>162</sup> Mustafa Kemal thus wanted to create a new ideology which would enable Turkey to progress rapidly in the twentieth-century. This task was given a major boost in February 1925 when a Kurdish rebellion broke out in eastern Anatolia and spread rapidly. As Feroz Ahmad stresses, there may have been a strong Kurdish nationalist element in this rebellion but the terms in which it was launched and sustained was entirely religious. It seemed indeed to confirm the fears of a religious reaction and counter-revolution. This perception was followed by a law that gave the government virtually absolute powers in order to re-establish its control. This law was then effectively used to crush all opposition, and after 1925 all political activity outside the ruling Republican People's Party was banned.<sup>163</sup> Thus, the Republican People's Party became the political instrument through which Atatürk ruled the new Turkey. After the initial struggle over the form of government had been settled, Atatürk led Turkey through an intensive period of reforms designed to root out the Ottoman past and replace it with a Western orientation in all areas of national life. These reforms can be seen as radicalized versions of the transformation begun in the Ottoman state in the nineteenth-century.

As noted in the Introduction, the reforms of the Atatürk era are synthesized in the six principles of Kemalism – reformism, republicanism, laicism, nationalism, populism, and etatism. Reformism pervaded the entire Atatürk era, and it stood for openness to innovation in political and social life. Republicanism, on the other hand, was understood as an ideal of absolute popular sovereignty in contrast to the individual rule of the Sultan-Caliph.<sup>164</sup> Laicism was a central element in Atatürk's platform, and his Westernizing drive was unparallel, as Cleveland notes, in modern Islamic

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<sup>161</sup> Douglas A. Howard, *The History of Turkey* (Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 91–94.

<sup>162</sup> Heinz A. Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), pp. 4–5.

<sup>163</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 56–58.

<sup>164</sup> Cleveland 2000, pp. 176–177.

history. Secularization started with the abolishment of the caliphate in March 1924. This was followed by the abolishment of the office of *shaykh al-Islam*, (the chief religious judge), the closing of the religious schools and the elimination of the Ministry of Religious Endowments. In 1926 the Grand National Assembly also abolished the *sharia*, that is, the religious law. In its place, the Swiss civil code was adopted, along with penal and commercial codes modeled on Italian and German examples. This, perhaps more vehemently than any other single action, was a break with the Ottoman-Islamic past. Even with the introduction of new legal codes during the Tanzimat and Young Turk eras, Cleveland emphasizes, the civil code – which included family law – continued to be based on the *sharia*. With the legislation of 1926, “the laws of God were replaced in all spheres of human relationships by secular European laws.”<sup>165</sup> Laicism affected not only official institutions but also the religious practices of the common people. The Sufi orders were dissolved, and worship at tombs and shrines was prohibited by law. Measures of secularization and Europeanization also included the prohibition of the fez, the replacement of the Muslim lunar calendar by the Gregorian in 1926, and the adoption of Sunday in place of Friday as the weekly day of rest.<sup>166</sup>

The principle of nationalism was, in short, an attempt to create pride in Turkishness and to promote symbols of cultural identity for the new state. The habit of glorifying Turkish antiquity in historical research – a theme already mentioned in the introductory chapter – was naturally a consequence of this nation-building program. Atatürk’s efforts to forge a uniform Turkish national identity which left no room for cultural pluralism – or, as will be demonstrated in detail in this study, for an alternative interpretation of the national past – caused him at times to strain the institutions of republicanism, as already mentioned above in relation to Kurdish separatism. The principle of nationalism went hand in hand with that of populism. For Atatürk, creating a new Turkish nation was more or less equal to creating an educated nation. Atatürk was indeed driven by the belief that one of his major tasks was the formation of an educated cadre of Turks committed to his reforms and capable of administering them after his passing. Since sovereignty now rested with the people, it was important to develop a literate and informed general public. Although the battle against illiteracy in rural Turkey was to be a long-lasting process, it was evident that the Kemalist regime, at least in principle, broke away from the elitist educational tradition of the Ottoman era and established the principle of universal and compulsory elementary education.<sup>167</sup>

The last of the Kemalist principles, etatism, can be seen as a development of the 1930s. It is possible to state, as Cleveland does, that during the early years of the Atatürk Revolution economic policy was not a high priority. With the onset of the worldwide depression in the 1930s, however, Turkish planners concluded that the country would have to become less dependent on imports and that this could be achieved through the development of an industrial base. Local private capital was perceived as insufficient for this purpose, so the government decided to intervene

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., pp. 177–178.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., pp. 178–18.

directly in the economy and to divert state funds to the construction of major projects. Etatism, usually defined as state capitalism, began with the announcement of a five-year plan in 1933. Over the course of the plan, large-scale textile and steel plants were constructed, along with such light industries as paper, glass, and cement factories. The development of the country's industry was conducted at the expense of agriculture.<sup>168</sup>

## 2.4 Political Process in Turkey after the Establishment of the Multi-Party Regime

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk died on 10 November 1938. On the following day the national assembly elected İsmet İnönü as the second president of the republic. İnönü was determined to continue the basic policies of his predecessor.<sup>169</sup> By the end of the Second World War, however, İnönü's government had lost the support of important elements of the "Young Turk coalition" on which the Kemalist movement had been built. The bureaucracy, the rising indigenous bourgeoisie, and the wealthy landowners all saw their interests unsatisfied by the end of the 1940s. Already before the end of the Second World War, in which Turkey managed to avoid any actual fighting, İnönü started to allude that a more democratic system might be possible for Turkey.<sup>170</sup> Then, as a consequence of internal and external pressure, Turkey's one-party regime came to an end, and the *Demokrat Parti* (Democrat Party, DP) was officially registered on 7 January 1946. Its leaders were prominent Kemalists, such as Celâl Bayar. In the elections of May 1950 the Democrat Party won 53.4 percent of the votes. Under the Turkish electoral system of the day this meant that the DP received 408 seats in the new parliament against the CHP's sixty-nine seats.<sup>171</sup>

According to Zürcher, the Democrat Party's landslide election victory in May 1950 should be seen as a "watershed in modern Turkish political history." Zürcher backs his argument by noting that the composition of the new Grand National Assembly was very different from the old. The social characteristics of the DP representatives differed significantly from those of the one-party period. When compared to the CHP representatives, the Democrats often had local roots in their constituencies, were less likely to have had a university education, and far more likely to have background in commerce or law. The most striking difference compared to the CHP was the virtual absence of representatives with a bureaucratic and military background. So, according to Zürcher, it is clear that in 1950 a very different political elite was emerging in Turkey.<sup>172</sup>

However, as Feroz Ahmad emphasizes, initially the emergence of the DP had caused no sense of panic in CHP circles, since its leaders were all Kemalists espousing the same basic philosophy as their opponents with only a difference in emphasis. As Celâl Bayar agreed, there were no ideological differences between the Democrat Party and the CHP, and both parties were committed to the program of developing a

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<sup>168</sup> Cleveland 2000, p. 180.

<sup>169</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp. 192–193.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 215–219.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 217–227.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

modern and prosperous Turkey. It can be stated that the Democrats were in a hurry to move Turkey forward and were unwilling to tolerate any obstacles that might stand in the way of their program. Thus Kemalism, which many in the CHP viewed as a dogma, was seen by the Democrats as a flexible ideology to be interpreted in the light of changing circumstances.<sup>173</sup>

By the 1957 elections, however, the DP could not escape using religious vocabulary in order to legitimize its rule in the context of a severe economic crisis and dissatisfaction among the educated middle-classes. This allowed the opposition a reason to blame the DP for using religion for political purposes and of threatening the secularist principles of the state. According to Zürcher, the DP's attitude towards religion was ambivalent. The Prime Minister Adnan Menderes used appeals to Islamic sentiments, but the DP did not, however, try to give Islam a greater role in the administration or legislation of the country. What the Democrat leadership according to Zürcher was tacitly admitting by its attitude towards Islam was that religion was not necessarily incompatible with development. To the civil servants, teachers, academics and officers strongly identifying with Kemalist ideology and the positivist worldview underlying it, this more relaxed attitude for traditional and religious mentalities seemed to jeopardize their cultural hegemony and privileged social status.<sup>174</sup>

The Democrats' rule ended on 27 May 1960 with an intervention by the Turkish Armed Forces, and a secret military organization of junior army officers installed a junta headed by General Cemal Gürsel. The military's supremacy over the civilian society was thereby reaffirmed and the elitist order revived: developments that according to Turkish historian Kemal H. Karpat proved totally incompatible with the emerging pluralistic political order.<sup>175</sup> The period 1950–1960 had been dominated by Adnan Menderes. He was dedicated to material progress and had a good intuitive understanding of the Turkish peasantry and their cultural and economic aspirations. Besides promoting his own interests, Menderes promoted his policies in order to satisfy the desire of villagers and the lower classes for both material progress and spiritual nourishment in the form of religion. According to Kemal H. Karpat, Adnan Menderes was, like most Turkish leaders, authoritarian by nature, and regarded democracy not as a goal in itself but only as a means by which he might acquire power and use it for his own designs.<sup>176</sup>

By 1960, it must be noted, Turkey had undergone rapid industrialization, accompanied by massive rural-to-town migration that had begun to erode the traditional patterns of society. What the country needed after 1960, according to Karpat, was a degree of liberalization to permit the gradual emergence of a pluralist political and social order that could create new rules and customs suitable to the modern nation. In Karpat's evaluation, "the small, ultra-liberal group that was

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<sup>173</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 103–109.

<sup>174</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp. 243–245.

<sup>175</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Turkish politics and society: selected articles and essays by Kemal H. Karpat* (Boston: MA Brill, 2004), p. 115.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

mainly responsible for the provisions of the Constitution of 1961 was out of touch with the Turkish society and culture.” According to Karpat, the country’s economic underdevelopment was completely ignored by these well-educated elites, as they sought to collect ideas and organizational schemes from Western countries to be embodied in the new constitution and imposed on their own society in the name of progress.<sup>177</sup>

By the mid 1960s the legacy of the Democrat Party was gathered around *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party, AP), headed by Suleiman Demirel. The Justice Party, as most center-right parties before and after it, was a coalition of industrialists, small traders and artisans, peasants and large landowners, religious reactionaries and Western-oriented liberals, thus having very little ideological coherence. Its electoral base consisted of farmers and small businessmen, but its policies increasingly served the interests of “big business.” In time, this left many of its voters disillusioned and they became the targets for the radical politics represented by Islamic and ultra-nationalist parties.<sup>178</sup> By early 1971, Demirel’s Justice Party’s government seemed to many to be powerless to stop the increasing political violence on the campuses and in the streets. In this situation, on 12 March 1971, the chief of the general staff delivered a memorandum to Demirel, demanding the establishment of a strong and credible government which would be able to end the “anarchy” and carry out reforms “in a Kemalist spirit.” If the demand were not met, the army would “exercise its constitutional duty” and take power itself.<sup>179</sup> After this Demirel resigned and the military saw to it that a “more suitable” government was formed.

By the summer of 1973 a new military-backed regime had accomplished most of its political tasks. The constitution was amended so as to strengthen the state against civil society. This included the formation of special courts which now dealt directly with all forms of dissent quickly and ruthlessly. Besides, the universities had been harnessed in order to eliminate the radicalism of both students and teachers, and the trade unions pacified and left in an ideological vacuum with the dissolution of the Workers’ Party by the government in 1970. As a kind of response to these restrictions, the old political forces began to gather around the new social democratic CHP under Bülent Ecevit’s leadership.<sup>180</sup> So it happened that the military intervention only managed to create a political dead-lock, characterized by weak coalition governments during 1973–1980. The one solution which could have yielded a government with a large and stable majority, a AP–CHP coalition, proved impossible to realize, leading to the disproportionate influence for small extremist groups.<sup>181</sup> The end of the 1970s almost saw a civil war in Turkey as the political process was unable to pass urgently needed legislation and various extreme groups on both left and right sought to bring the country to the brink of anarchy. In this situation the Turkish army intervened for the third time, now more vehemently than ever before. The generals who came to power on 12 September 1980 took their time in laying the foundations of the new order. For three years the country was ruled by

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>178</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp. 263–265.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>180</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 156.

<sup>181</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp 275–276.

the high command of the armed forces. General Kenan Evren, the chief of the general staff, became head of state. Law and order was restored, as Andrew Mango rightly says, “by draconian means.” Nearly 180,000 people were detained, 42,000 sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, and 25 found guilty of political murder and hanged. After restoring public order, the generals turned their attention to a new constitution. The country had been driven by ideological conflict during the 1960s and 1970s and the military decided that the remedy lay in confining politics to the inner councils of a few, preferably only two, polite parties, just as religion had been confined to the interior of mosques under state control. In sum, society was to be depoliticized. Trade unions, voluntary organizations of all kinds, and universities were forbidden to have anything to do with politics.<sup>182</sup>

An advisory council produced Turkey’s longest and most detailed constitution. It outlawed any activity which could be construed as a threat to the indivisible unity of the state and nation. The new constitution was submitted to a referendum on 7 November 1982 and approved by 91 percent of the voters. The unusually high “yes” vote had a simple explanation: rejection would have meant the continuation of a military rule. In the elections in November 1983, Turgut Özal’s newly founded *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party, ANAP) won an absolute majority. In the local elections the following year, Özal increased his share of the vote at the expense of the Nationalist Democracy Party that had been created by the generals. Thus, Özal succeeded in reuniting the center-right forces of Turkey, which had ruled the country for most of the preceding thirty years. During Özal’s first four-year term of office, the economy grew by an average of 7 percent a year. The export driven policy proved a success, and the opening up to the outside world encouraged a spirit of enterprise which spread through the country. Özal’s policies were in line with the neo-liberal ideology of the Western world, particularly propagated by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. This was the ideology of the open society, of free enterprise and free markets, and eventually of globalization. These policies had their victims, and in Turkey it was the wage earners and for example schoolteachers who had to supplement their income by having several jobs.<sup>183</sup>

According to Feroz Ahmad, the 1980s witnessed an acceleration of the process that had started to develop since the 1950: the provincial bourgeoisie emerged slowly and cautiously after the defeat of the one-party regime. This class finally came into its own after 1980 when the generals removed the entire existing political elite. This provincial bourgeoisie has been in power since 1983. According to Ahmad, it is ostentatiously devout since it has been raised in a milieu where the discourse and cultural values are still religious. In Ahmad’s words, “this group’s exposure to the secular world has been limited to their professional lives and they tend not to have much familiarity with the culture of the West, only its technical civilisation.”<sup>184</sup> Despite a significant broadening of the political space after World War II, Erik J. Zürcher stresses that the old Kemalist bureaucratic-military elite always kept a watchful eye on things, determined that the basic tenets of the Kemalist state –

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<sup>182</sup> Andrew Mango, *The Turks Today*. (London: John Murray, 2004), p. 81.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81–86.

<sup>184</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 208.



national unity, a western orientation and state control over religion – should be adhered to.<sup>185</sup> According to Metin Heper, however, the state elite of the 1980s did not presume that they were an inherently superior group in sole possession of the truth. Atatürkian thought was not, after 1983, regarded as the source of all public policies. According to Heper, it was taken as a *technique* and not as a *manifesto* concerning public policies.<sup>186</sup>

Thus, we may conclude this short overview by noting that modern Turkish politics demonstrate a cycle which began at the early nineteenth-century with efforts to modernize the army and the political institutions of the Ottoman Empire, including its collective identity which was based on the concept of Ottomanism. This was followed by enormous turmoil during the First World War and the subsequent foundation of a Turkish nation-state in Anatolia. The intellectual debates of this long period can be roughly summarized by saying that the initial effort to modernize Islam was followed by a tight Kemalist laicism and the abandonment of the religious base of the Anatolian community. This tight Kemalist ideology was then in its turn transformed into a synthesis of secularist institutions and a conservative and religiously-oriented re-interpretation of official nationalism during the 1980s.

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<sup>185</sup> Zürcher 2001, p. 218.

<sup>186</sup> Heper 1988, p. 8.

### 3 Atatürk's Nutuk Defining the Presuppositions of the Kemalist "Enlightenment Idea of History"

#### 3.1 Enlightenment as a Telos of History

In 1927, when Mustafa Kemal delivered his Great Speech, he had secured his sovereign status as a leader. In the early months of 1927 Atatürk's closest circle was able to witness how their leader wrote his Great Speech fervently night and day. At times standing and at times sitting Kemal personally composed his presentation, occasionally checking through a vast pile of relevant documents. Atatürk also read his texts to his comrades, now and then stopping to ask for their comments. These comments might then induce him to re-write even quite long passages. Working in this way, it took several months to complete the speech.<sup>187</sup> As mentioned, Atatürk then delivered his Great Speech during the first six days (15–20 October 1927) of the Party Congress of *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*<sup>188</sup> (The Republican People's Party), held in Ankara in 1927. Kemal spoke for approximately six hours each day, and the overall length of the speech was 36 hours and 31 minutes.<sup>189</sup>

Turkish newspapers reported on Atatürk's Great Speech daily, sometimes further denouncing persons Atatürk had criticized in his speech. Journalists writing for these newspapers were also in the habit of glorifying the meaning and value of Atatürk and his speech, so that Mustafa Kemal soon became an almost supernatural character. Newspapers also further consolidated the conception expressed in Atatürk's speech according to which Mustafa Kemal was the only person capable of leading the Turks to salvation in its moment of crisis. In this way the press immediately participated in producing a collective understanding of the *Nutuk* as the truth about the birth of the new Turkey.<sup>190</sup> From the moment of its delivering the *Nutuk* has been extremely influential in determining the presuppositions of history writing and teaching in Turkey, especially when one considers the way in which the

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<sup>187</sup> İsmail Arar, "Büyük Nutuk'un Kapsamı, Niteliği, Amacı" in *Atatürk'ün Büyük Söylevi'nin 50 Yılı Semineri Bildiriler ve Tartışmalar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1980): pp. 123–125.

<sup>188</sup> According to Bernard Lewis, in the vocabulary of Islamic political discourse, all terms referring to "leaving" or "out" have had a strongly negative connotation. On the other hand, all those words meaning "community" and "harmony" have been interpreted very positively. The best example of this is the Arabic word *jama'a* which means "to come together" or "to gather," conveyed by the Turkish word *cemiyeti*. A negative connotation, on the other hand, is attached to the Arabic term *faraqa*, meaning "separate" or "divide." Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 13. This *faraqa* is the ground for Ottoman-Turkish word for political party, *fırka*. In this respect it is interesting that when Atatürk established his political party after victory in the Resistance Struggle was secured, he named it *Halk Fırkası*. Atatürk wanted his party – its name included – to represent the unified and classless Turkish nation. Thus, it seems, for Atatürk *fırka* no longer referred to "separation" or "divide," but marked a party which claimed to represent the entire Turkish nation. At a later stage, as a result of vigorous efforts to purify and modernize the Turkish language, *fırka* was replaced with *parti* and Atatürk's party thus became the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*.

<sup>189</sup> Arar 1980, pp. 126–127.

<sup>190</sup> Hakan Uzun, *Atatürk ve Nutuk* (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2006), pp. 30–32.

events of the years 1919–1927 have been collectively perceived.<sup>191</sup> Ever since its delivering, the Six-Day speech has been on the political agenda, and on some occasions it has even defined that agenda.<sup>192</sup>

Originally Atatürk wrote his speech in Ottoman-Turkish, a language that was written with Arabic letters. Arabic letters were used in Turkey until 1928 when they were replaced by Latin ones. In his article on Atatürk's *Nutuk*, İsmail Arar refers to Mustafa Kemal's contemporary Turkist nationalist ideologue Yusuf Akçura who has noted that the first version of the speech printed in Arabic letters, one year after the speech had been delivered, was printed in a way that was identical to the original speech, without titles indicating chapters or sub-sections, so that even the characteristically spoken expressions utilized by Kemal to mark a new phase or an important part, such as *Efendiler, Muhterem Efendiler* (Gentlemen), were also included in the printed form.<sup>193</sup> However, the first version printed in Latin letters in 1934 was with headings placed in the marginal of the page, and this practice was then usually followed in later versions. Arar notes that as Mustafa Kemal was still alive in 1934, these headings on the margins were most probably accepted personally by him.<sup>194</sup> The number of copies of the first printed version in Latin letters was one hundred thousand. At the time not even the biggest Turkish newspapers reached that kind of circulation. The population of Turkey at the time was, on the other hand, approximately 14 million, out of which about one million were able to read. This means that one in ten of those able to read could in principle possess the speech in a printed form. According to Hakan Uzun, this suggests that nearly all of those who belonged to the intellectual class had the speech in their home.<sup>195</sup> Now it is time to look closer at this epic of Atatürk's.

Atatürk asserts that the events he describes in his speech took place in the previous nine years.<sup>196</sup> As noted, Atatürk delivered his speech on October 15–20, 1927. The armistice of Mudros between the Ottoman State and the Allies was signed on 30 October 1918. This means that, according to Atatürk, the Turkish Revolution – which was, as will be demonstrated in detail in this chapter, the subject of his speech – started approximately at the time of the armistice. Kemal starts his speech by describing how he landed at the Black Sea coastal town of Samsun on 19 May 1919. According to him, the general state of affairs was as follows:

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<sup>191</sup> Erik J. Zürcher has described this in the following way: “One can discern in Turkey an ‘official’ or ‘orthodox’ historical tradition which has developed since the mid-1920s on the basis of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s own version and which has ever since been canonized in an endless stream of schoolbooks, official publications and popular histories and guarded jealously by the Türk Tarih Kurumu.” Erik J. Zürcher, “Young Turk Memoirs as a Historical Source: Kazım Karabekir’s *İstiklal Harbimiz*,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 22 no. 4 (October 1988): p. 562.

<sup>192</sup> Uzun 2006, pp. 147–153.

<sup>193</sup> Arar 1980, p. 137.

<sup>194</sup> Arar 1980, p. 138.

<sup>195</sup> Uzun 2006, pp. 122–123.

<sup>196</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk (Söylev)* (Istanbul: Kitap Zamanı, 2006), p. 17. As the Speech was originally delivered by Mustafa Kemal in 1927, references to the Speech are throughout marked as: Atatürk [1927] 2006. There is no single standard or, “official,” version of the Speech in contemporary Turkish. I have utilized several older and more recent versions printed in contemporary Turkish, but all references and direct quotations presented in this study are from the version mentioned here.

The group of nations to which the Ottoman State belonged has been defeated in the First World War. The Ottoman army is being damaged on all fronts, and an armistice with harsh provisions is being signed. After the long years of war, the people are exhausted and in need. Those who brought their nation into the war have now escaped, their main concern being their own safety. Vahdettin, the one carrying the titles of sultan and caliph, is only looking for ways to save his throne. The government headed by the grand vizier Damat Ferit Paşa is powerless, fearful and without honour, acting according to the wishes of the sultan, ready to accept anything to save its own place.<sup>197</sup>

What should we think about the fact that Atatürk's Great Speech begins with an event on 19 May 1919? According to Ismail Arar, the fact that Atatürk begins his account from this date does not mean that he wanted to hide his earlier attempts to become the War Minister of the Ottoman government. Arar claims that these attempts were excluded from the *Nutuk* because Kemal had already described them in his memoirs published a little earlier.<sup>198</sup> This interpretation is plausible, at least in some respects. In his memoirs concerning the years 1917–1919 Kemal vehemently criticizes the decisions made by the government run by the leading cadre of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), especially the decision to rely so heavily on German officers. Kemal proclaimed it a mistake to rely on the Germans as the operational ability of Ottoman troops was being commonly questioned at the time. According to Kemal, he visited the leaders of the CUP and expressed his warnings about the emerging circumstances, but his advice was totally ignored.<sup>199</sup> In this respect the *Nutuk* can indeed be seen as the logical next step in Kemal's public account of events, concentrating on events not yet narrated, and emphasising Kemal's farsightedness. In other words, in his memoirs Kemal is trying to convince his audience that had he been given the opportunity to lead the Turkish war efforts, the subsequent catastrophe could have been avoided.

Hakan Uzun points to another reason for starting with 19 May 1919. He notes that this date was a kind of turning point, both in the personal life of Mustafa Kemal, and in the history of the Anatolian Resistance Movement. After this date, Mustafa Kemal came to occupy a central role in the resistance, and even started to lead that very resistance.<sup>200</sup> The fact is that immediately after the armistice of Mudros on 30 October 1918, efforts were made in Anatolia to continue the resistance. As already mentioned, members of the main Young Turk organization, The Committee of Union and Progress, took the initiative in activating public opinion in the provinces.

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<sup>197</sup> Osmanlı Devleti'nin içinde bulunduğu topluluk Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda yenilmiş, Osmanlı Ordunu her yanda zedelenmiş, şartları ağır bir ateşkes anlaşması imzalanmıştı. Savaşın etkisiyle uzun yıllar boyunca, millet yorgun ve yoksul bir durumda bırakılmıştı. Milleti ve ordu bu büyük savaşa sürükleyenler, kendi başlarının çaresine bakmak için neredeyse millet düşünmez hale gelmişler ve yurttan kaçmışlardı. Padişah ve halife olan Vahdettin, kendini ve tahtını koruyabilecek yollar arıyordu. Damat Ferit Paşa'nın başkanlığındaki hükümet, güçsüz, onursuz, korkak, yalnız padişahın isteklerine uymuş ve onunla birlikte kendilerini koruyabilecek herhangi bir duruma boyun eğmişti. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 7.

<sup>198</sup> Arar 1980, p. 129.

<sup>199</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Atatürk'ün anıları 1917–1919*, ed. İsmet Bozdağ (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1982), pp. 14–19.

<sup>200</sup> Uzun 2006, p. 75.

The twelfth of President Wilson's *fourteen point programme*<sup>201</sup> promised the Turkish areas of the Ottoman Empire sovereignty. This declaration induced the Ottomans to convince the Allies that the areas in danger of being partitioned were inhabited by Turkish-speaking Ottoman Muslims who were eager to remain part of their homeland. In order to back this argument with a demonstration of local activity, Committee of Union and Progress branches in provincial capitals founded societies called *müdafaa-i hukuk-u milliye* (the defence of national rights).<sup>202</sup>

As expected, those regions where Greek or Armenian claims were most loudly expressed saw the earliest formations of these voluntary organizations. In Thrace a "Society for the Defence of Rights" was founded in November 1918. İzmir followed with its own regional organization in December. In eastern Anatolia, the first organization was founded in Kars in November 1918, followed by Trabzon and Erzurum, both in February 1919. In the south, one was founded in Urfa in December 1918.<sup>203</sup> Erik J. Zürcher notes that there were also many smaller organizations in Anatolia acting in the same way. It was characteristic for these organizations that the Committee of Union and Progress activists persuaded local notables and religious dignitaries formally to lead these societies in order to emphasize their "national" character and to promote mass support. In Anatolian towns this often proved a successful tactic as the Muslim landowners and traders were ready to support the "Defence of Rights" organizations. As already noted above, many of them had become wealthy through government contracts and by taking over land, property and businesses of the deported Greeks and Armenians for next to nothing, thus having strong incentive to resist the Greek and Armenian claims.<sup>204</sup> All this shows that the active core of the resistance movement was a coalition of officers, Anatolian merchants, wealthy landowners, and local religious leaders.

Thus, we can say that the Anatolian resistance organizations had already gone through their preliminary phase when Mustafa Kemal came to Anatolia on 19 May 1919. The main reason for Atatürk to start his Great Speech from this date, then, is the fact that according to him, the Anatolian resistance organizations that had been in action before his central arrival were engaged in much more modest efforts. In fact, their very nature was different from the one ascribed to them by Atatürk. According to Atatürk, the resistance organizations prior to his engagement were local and did not have a "national character."<sup>205</sup> In fact, Atatürk even hints that these local organisations were useless. Their leaders thought – much too optimistically – that their salvation could be achieved by sending information about local conditions to

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<sup>201</sup> While meeting the people of Ankara on 28.12.1919 Kemal used the opportunity to give an account of the events of the last few years. He picked up the "fourteen point program" made by President Woodrow Wilson, the twelfth article of which expressed the need to secure the independence of the Turkish part of the Ottoman Empire, on condition that the rights of minorities were granted. According to Kemal, this was not a problem, since the status of minorities had always been good in the Ottoman state. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Atatürk'ün Söylevleri (Bugünün Diliyle)*, ed. Behçet Kemal Çağlar (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1968), p. 11.

<sup>202</sup> Zürcher 1998, p. 153.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., pp. 153–154.

<sup>204</sup> Zürcher 1998, p. 154.

<sup>205</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 8–10.

the Allies.<sup>206</sup> This assertion by Atatürk concerning the nature of the resistance organizations before his pivotal role needs, in order to be inherently logical, an analysis of the “goal” which, according to the *Nutuk*, was to be accomplished. As Taha Parla states, *Nutuk* is not a simple chronological account or history. It is a story about the realisation of a thought-out plan, and an account of the execution of a military-political project that had already been decided.<sup>207</sup> This project was a rebellion against the existing political order, state, and government. It is also about calling the army and the nation to oppose the old regime in order to create a totally new state where political sovereignty would be unconditionally vested in the people.<sup>208</sup> Thus, the goal of the Anatolian Resistance Movement, according to the *Nutuk*, was a revolution that would lead to the Republic of Turkey. Because of this, the *Nutuk* starts from 19 May 1919. At that date the project that had already been decided on October 1918 would be set in motion, and at that date also the Anatolian Resistance Movement acquires its historically meaningful character as a *Turkish Revolution*.

But, the events described in the *Nutuk* do not all fit into the time-frame of the above mentioned nine years. As a matter of fact, the *Nutuk* includes many time levels, which are in my view fundamental to the overall message of the speech. As Hakan Uzun rightly points out, Kemal occasionally provides an account of events that actually happened before the armistice of Mudros, for example, events during the First World War. Besides this, the speech also includes parts describing far more distant events, for example, things concerning the early history of Islam, the history of ancient Turkic states, and still others concerning the Seljuks and the Ottomans.<sup>209</sup> Thus, the narrative of the Turkish Revolution presents a historical canvas against which Kemal can highlight the “present” of the story in terms of both an alluring continuity, and a definite break with, the past. This presentation of various historical periods then leads to another one in which the years of the Resistance Struggle and the creation of the Turkish Republic are presented as a *historical necessity*:

The aim of the national struggle was to save the fatherland from external attack. It was an unstoppable historical stream to reach step by step right up to the present moment the government constructed by the will of the people. With the traditional mentality, the padişah<sup>210</sup> sensing this unstoppable historical stream was its ruthless enemy right from the start. I also sensed and understood this historical stream from the beginning.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>207</sup> Taha Parla, *Türkiye’de Siyasal Kültürün Resmî Kaynakları Cilt 1: Atatürk’ün Nutuk’u* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1991), p. 27.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., pp. 27–28.

<sup>209</sup> Uzun 2006, pp. 75–76.

<sup>210</sup> The Ottoman Sultan.

<sup>211</sup> Ortaya çıkan millî mücadelenin tek amacı, vatani dış saldırıdan kurtarmak olduğu halde bu mücadelenin, başarıya ulaştıkça; millet iradesine dayanan yönetimin bütün ilkelerini ve şekillerini aşama aşama bugünkü döneme kadar gerçekleştirmesi mümkün ve kaçınılmaz bir tarih akışı idi. Bu kaçınılmaz tarih akışını, geleneğe gelen alışkanlığı ile, hemen sezen padişah soyu, ilk andan itibaren millî mücadelenin amansız bir düşmanı oldu. Bu kaçınılmaz tarih akışını, ilk anda ben de de gordüm ve anladım. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 17.

And the same necessity is repeated in another paragraph, originally to be found in a message sent to the speaker of the last Ottoman parliament in Istanbul, and then included in the Great Speech in 1927

There is no power, no authority, which could prevent our nation from carrying out this obligation ordered by history. Only a government enjoying the full confidence of the nation can satisfy the sacred anxiety of this nation, filled as it is with a readiness to sacrifice itself for the sake of the independence of the nation and the safety of the fatherland. During these historic days the whole nation waits impatiently for a government expressing the full force of the national will to work with the utmost determination. In the eyes of history and the fatherland, while the whole world watches you carrying the burden of heavy responsibility, let it be known to you, gentlemen, that if you base your decisions on the sacrificial determination of the nation, and work patriotically, the whole nation shall support you.<sup>212</sup>

Thus, according to the *Nutuk*, the national struggle is an outcome of an *unstoppable historical stream* and even *ordered by history*. In this interpretation offered by the *Nutuk*, history seems to be a predestined struggle between two major forces, absolute good and absolute evil, that is, between the sovereignty of the nation and the sovereignty of the sultan. During the years of the national liberation, this historical struggle intensifies and reaches its climax as the nation overthrows the sultan and creates the republic. Furthermore, it is argued that history itself is there at the place of national ordeal, watching how the representatives of the nation carry out their task. We do not need to claim that the Hegelian idea of speculative history, that is, history conceived as a process of human self-emancipation, alluded to in this passage, was part of Mustafa Kemal's world-view. What is significant is the fact that the implied reader (a position, as we recall, supposedly taken by anyone reading or hearing the story of the *Nutuk*) of the Speech is an actor who understands the world-historical significance of the events described. In this way, the Turkish audience, called to participate in the *Nutuk*'s narrative of an enlightened nation, is depicted as being on a historical mission thus vested with a national "purpose."

The *Nutuk* also includes a speech that Kemal originally delivered at the opening of the Grand National Assembly on 23 April 1920. In that speech Kemal asserted that the governing methods and political principles of the Ottoman state could no longer serve as guidelines for the new Turkey. This is followed by a Social-Darwinist presentation of various nations' struggle for survival. In this it is stated that first the nations of the "East" attacked the nations of the "West" and that this was one of the major episodes of history. Of all eastern peoples the Turks were one of the mightiest. Before and after the acceptance of Islam, Turks invaded the heartlands of Europe.

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<sup>212</sup> Hiçbir güç, hiçbir yetki, milletimizi tarihin emrettiği bu görevden alıkoyamayacaktır. Vatan ve milletimizin istiklâli korumak için her fedakârlığa hazır olan halkımızın, kutsal heyecanını ancak milletin tam olarak güvenini kazanmış bir hükümetin işbaşına getirilmesi yatıştırabilir. Bütün millet, bu tarihî günlerde, millî iradesinin mutlak vekillğini üzerine almış bulunan milletvekillerinin kararlarını sabırsızlıkla beklemektedir. Vatana ve tarihe karşı, üzerine aldığınız büyük sorumluluğu ve bütün dünyanın kürsülerinize çevrilmiş olan dikkatli bakışlarını düşünerek, milletin azim ve fedakârlığına yaraşır kararlar alınacağına güvendiğinizi ve vatan uğruna yaptığınız çalışmalarda bütün milletin yanınızda ve yardımınızda olduğunu arz ederiz. Ibid., pp. 312–313.

But, Kemal emphasized, an attack was always followed by a counter-attack. Those not prepared for this were doomed to be destroyed.<sup>213</sup> Kemal then continued his speech at the opening of the Grand National Assembly by recalling how the Empire of the Huns expanded all the way to the territories of Rome, and how the Ottoman state was erected on the ruins of the Seljuk Empire, soon conquering Byzantium. Some of the Ottoman sultans wanted to rule the “whole world of Islam,” others even wished to include Europe in to their domains. According to Kemal, the counter attack of the West, the inner rebellions of the Islamic community, and the impossibility of bringing nations that were very different from each other together, all led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>214</sup> Thus, Kemal presented his audience, composed of the delegates of the Grand National Assembly, with a picture of a series of expansionist Turkish warlords that extended from Attila the Hun (406–453) to the Ottoman sultans. As we will soon see more clearly, in this context 19 May 1919 really is a re-opening of national time, a continuation of the time of the pre-Islamic Turks.

The speech is full of references to similar kinds of documents from the years of the resistance struggle. When these documents are presented inside the main narrative, they begin to obtain a meaning within this overall narrative context. They also give us an impression of truthfulness: the narrator is grounding his claims on original documents. These documents, however, also reveal to the critical reader that Atatürk’s Great Speech produces a self-consolidating circle of narrative reality. This means that it is a story that includes many earlier stories, which are told from one particular perspective. The *Nutukian* narrative thus creates something that is familiar to most contemporary historians: narratives of the past – especially when based on “original documents” – seem to create a sense of conviction that a “historical reality” is being truthfully represented in the narrative’s account. It is also important to note that these accounts initially to be found in documents produced during the Resistance Struggle era, and then later included in the Six-Day speech, participate not only in the construction of Kemalist “national history” itself but also, as we saw above, in the reproduction of the totalizing and generalizing cultural entities like “Europe” and the “Islamic world.” In this way they on a very basic level offer Turkish citizens an interpretative frame that presupposes that these kinds of large cultural entities are real and distinct, in that are held up as being part of the natural order of the universe. Thus, seeing the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a Turkish Revolution is based on the assumption that “Europe” and the “Islamic world” are two conflicting totalities, and that the Turks could not choose to be part of both, but needed to decide between them.

The above mentioned *Nutukian* concept that Attila was a Turk, although incorrect, has some correspondence to reality. According to the current knowledge, the Huns and Turks have a common pedigree in the *Xiongnu* people of Central Asia mentioned in Chinese sources.<sup>215</sup> Atatürk’s concept of the Turks playing an important role in the pre-Islamic era was based on the scholarly discipline of

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 343.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., pp. 343–344.

<sup>215</sup> Carter Vaughn Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 21.



*Turkology* established in nineteenth-century Europe. This new knowledge about the states and cultures of the pre-Islamic Turks soon found a positive response among the Ottoman elite. In the 1920s, ideas of a glorious Turkish antiquity had already been thoroughly accepted by the whole Ottoman upper classes.<sup>216</sup> More than anything else, the concept of Turkish history in terms of continuity was the product of Ziya Gökalp, the main Young Turk ideologue of Turkish nationalism and the founder of Turkish sociology. According to Ali Güler and Suat Akgül, with Gökalp the Turks' concept of history took a real turn.<sup>217</sup> Gökalp was interested in bringing the various phases of Turkish history into the public domain and in demonstrating the role the Turks had played in the development of civilization. Ziya Gökalp's project was grounded on a categorical division between *hars* (culture) and *medeniyet* (civilization). According to Gökalp, the common property of civilization, namely, science and technology, was to be imported from the West, whilst the imitation of the culture – values and norms – of other nations would only cause degeneration.<sup>218</sup>

According to Ziya Gökalp's definition, the Turkish term *Osman* (Ottoman) was the name of the state, whereas the term *Türk* (Turk) referred to the nation that had founded and subsequently occupied a dominant position that state.<sup>219</sup> In Gökalp's presentation the original Turks were nomadic peoples, whose community organization was nevertheless highly sophisticated. The level of community-formation among those Turkish nomads had always been on the level of the state, whereas Arabs, Kurds, and Berbers were mere tribes. The communal organization of the Turks already during the nomadic period was that of "a small nation."<sup>220</sup> According to Gökalp, in the Ottoman period the culture of the Turks was heavily divided into two separate parts: there was, first of all, the official high culture with its own specific modes of language, literature, ethics, law, and economy, which were totally different from the ones produced among the masses. This was, according to Gökalp, a trait peculiar to the Turks alone, since other nations' modes of high and popular cultures were not manifestly divided in this way. The reason for this strong divide among the Turks was that the Ottoman *divan teşkilâtı* (court culture) was a totally artificial elite-culture, whose practitioners had forgotten their national traditions.<sup>221</sup>

In the final analysis, Ottoman court culture represented Ottoman civilization, which was an amalgam of Turkish, Persian, and Arab national cultures, Islam, eastern civilization, and traits of western civilization.<sup>222</sup> In Gökalp's interpretation, during their entire history, the Turks had been part of various different civilizations, but they had nevertheless always simultaneously possessed *hars*, their own national culture. The Ottomans were, according to Gökalp, part of eastern civilization, which

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<sup>216</sup> David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876–1908* (London: Frank Cass, 1977), p. 25.

<sup>217</sup> Suat Akgül and Ali Güler, *Atatürk ve Türk İnkılâbı* (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2003), p. 21.

<sup>218</sup> Kushner 1977, pp. 99–100.

<sup>219</sup> Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün esaslar*, ed. Mehmet Kaplan (Istanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1976), pp. 4–5. (First edition: 1923)

<sup>220</sup> Ziya Gökalp, *Türk Medeniyeti Tarihi*, ed. Kâzım Yaşar Koprıman and Afşar İsmail Aka (Istanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1976), p. 27. (First edition: 1926)

<sup>221</sup> Ziya Gökalp, *Makaleler VIII*, ed. Ferit Ragıp Tuncor (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1981), pp. 5–6.

<sup>222</sup> Gökalp [1923] 1976, pp. 36–37.

they had absorbed so thoroughly that they forgot their own Turkish culture.<sup>223</sup> Now, Atatürk's concept of history was based on this idea of national history as a *continuity*. In his rhetoric the Ottomans were usurpers who had managed to seize the sovereignty, which originally belonged to the Turkish nation. In the *Nutuk* Atatürk writes as follows:

I took my turn to speak and I declared loudly: Gentlemen, power and sovereignty are not given from one person to another by scholarly debates or polemics. Sovereignty is taken by force. The Ottomans took the sovereignty of the Turkish people by force. These usurpers managed to rule for 600 years. Today the Turkish nation has reclaimed that sovereignty for itself. This is an accomplished fact.<sup>224</sup>

Here Kemal states that the Ottomans (*osmanoğulları*, literally, the sons of Osman) took by force the sovereignty that belonged to the Turkish nation. Implicit in this assertion is the idea that the Ottomans and the Turkish nation are two *separate entities* that have existed simultaneously. Here is constructed the rhetorical concept of Kemalist history: the 600 years of Ottoman rule was a period of usurpers, but now, in the heroic days of national awakening, this degenerated period ends as the Turkish nation reclaims its sovereignty with the use of revolutionary violence. In the *Nutuk*, this presentation of history as the manifestation of the national consciousness is rhetorical most of all because its function is to justify the revolution. The revolution is legitimate because it is executing the popular will. We will see in the following chapters that some later Kemalists were keen to stress that the people's government was a form of governance familiar to the Turks from both their Turkish and Islamic traditions. In the *Nutuk* this kind of interpretation is not offered. It is hinted, however, that the Turks were an ancient nation that had possessed sovereignty before the Ottoman era.

Atatürk had already given a very negative evaluation of the Ottoman regime in 1923 as he visited the towns of Eskişehir and İzmit. For the representatives of Eskişehir, Kemal emphasized that the politics of the Ottoman Empire did not reflect the will of the nation but the individual will of the sultan.<sup>225</sup> The idea of Ottoman regime as a negative thing for the Turks is indeed expressed in many of Atatürk's speeches and thus should not perhaps be taken merely as rhetoric needed in the Six-Day speech of 1927 to justify current policies. For example, in his opening speech at the İzmir Economic Congress in 1923 Kemal emphasized that during the Ottoman period all manner of resources were used to support the expansionary efforts of the empire. This, Kemal underlined, did not at all reflect the needs of the populace but was meant to satisfy the personal ambitions of the sultans. The economy, Kemal stressed,

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid., pp. 25–37.

<sup>224</sup> Yüksek sesle şu konuşmayı yaptım: Efendim, dedim, hakimiyet ve saltanat hiç kimseye, hiç kimse tarafından ilim ve gereğidir diye, görüşme ve tartışmayla verilmez. Hakimiyet, saltanat, kuvvetle, kudretle ve zorla alınır. Osmanlıları, zorla Türk milletinin hakimiyet ve saltanatına el koymuşlardır. Bu zorbalıklarını altı yüzyıldan beri sürdürmüşlerdir. Şimdi de Türk millet bu saldırganlara isyan ederek ve artık dur diyerek, hakimiyet ve saltanatını fiilen kendi eline almış bulunuyor. Bu bir oldubittidir. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 529.

<sup>225</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk'ün 1923 Eskişehir-İzmit Konuşmaları*, ed. Arı İnan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982), pp. 27–28.

was the key factor in the lives of communities. The Turks, however, had totally neglected the economy in the past. The reason for this was that during the Ottoman period the Turks were not yet a genuine national community, and as slaves of the sultan they were not free to engage in economic enterprise in a way that was characteristic of free nations.<sup>226</sup>

One can claim that these assertions of the economy's importance are not just an attempt to cast a negative shadow over the Ottoman sultanate. Many of Kemal's public speeches are "commemorations" that describe events that had already happened. Fortunately, there are other kinds of material too, for example the statements Atatürk gave during his inspection of the towns of Eskişehir and İzmit in 1923. In discussions with the officials of Eskişehir, Kemal emphasized the great importance of forestry and demanded that the forests of the district be counted and plans made to utilize them more effectively.<sup>227</sup> Kemal was also interested in the condition of the roads in Eskişehir. When he heard that the roads were in a bad condition, he again emphasized the importance of the economy and infrastructure for the country's development. He noted that "our country was rich but it sank into poverty." For this there were many reasons, but one of the most important was economic stagnation. In Kemal's own words "We did not built roads. In the rest of the world, on the other hand, roads and railways have been constructed vigorously."<sup>228</sup> As an example Kemal noted that Turkey had wheat in various storage facilities, but no roads to transport it. For this reason wheat was brought to the town of İzmir from the United States as it was impossible to transport the country's own wheat from domestic storage sites. Thus, it was less expensive to ship wheat from America. Kemal concluded his statement by noting that it was necessary to produce well-thought out plans in order to bring the roads up to modern standards.<sup>229</sup>

In a sense it is possible to claim that, in the final analysis, what bothers the "narrating-I" of the Six-Day speech was not so much the Ottoman conquests of past centuries after all. These were, until the failures experienced before the gates of Vienna, a presentation of the Turks' glorious military history. What the narrator in the *Nutuk* detests is the inability of his own generation Ottoman politicians to defend the Turks' interests against Western imperialist powers. Thus, the expansionist imperialist policies of the Ottoman state needed to be downplayed in order to represent Kemal's current actions as the only truly patriotic ones. It was also very much a question of acknowledging the realities at hand, and turning them to good account: the Turks could no longer maintain their empire, so it made sense to present the whole Ottoman expansionist war policy as harmful for the Turkish nation. This interpretation becomes significant when we notice that on certain occasions Kemal was very eager to glorify past Ottoman conquests as evidence of the Turks' greatness as a nation. For example, while explaining the Allies' breaking of the armistice agreement to the people of Ankara, Kemal portrayed the 600 years of the Ottoman Empire as evidence of the Turks' ability to construct and maintain their own

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<sup>226</sup> Atatürk 1968, pp. 99–100.

<sup>227</sup> Atatürk 1982, pp. 12–13.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

civilized state. According to Kemal, the Ottoman state was not ruled by the sword only, but was also a sign of the Turks' progress in governance.<sup>230</sup>

On the other hand, in Atatürk's interview with Istanbul journalists in January 1923, the Caliphate is presented as a historical form of regime which was in no way obligatory for a Muslim society. During the history of Islam, the Caliphate had never covered the whole of the Islamic world, in other words, political power in Muslim societies had never been vested in a single person carrying the title of Caliph. According to Kemal, the Caliphate was synonymous with government. Thus, the only important question concerned what sort of government was legal according to the religious law, the *sharia*. The answer, according to Kemal, was that any type of regime could be legal or illegal. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey was vested with those powers and duties which were proclaimed obligatory by *sharia* law. The Grand National Assembly functioned as Turkey's government, so there could not be another government – the Caliphate – sitting beside it.<sup>231</sup> Thus, in 1923 it was still necessary for Atatürk to justify the act of abolishing the political powers of the Caliphate with a reference to the religious law, the *sharia*. However, even the ceremonial Caliphate was abolished on 3 March 1924, simultaneously with the closure of religious schools. Thus, while narrating in the *Nutuk* how the men of religion in the Grand National Assembly wanted to secure the Caliph's position as the leader of the whole Muslim world, Atatürk made clear what the revolution was all about

Gentlemen, I do not consider it necessary to repeat those words of Şükrü Hoca and his comrades. These men are totally ignorant and unaware of the realities of the world. They present all kinds of erroneous opinions as if they were tenets of Islam, while they are only trying to deceive our nation. Unfortunately, however, I am obliged to speak about this treacherous activity because, as has been the case for centuries, in the same way, we today come across numerous persons who try to use religion for personal and political benefits and thereby exploit the general ignorance and fanaticism of nations. Until humanity has been purified with the light of science and technology we shall encounter those who try to deceive people with religion.<sup>232</sup>

Here, then, all precaution is already unnecessary. Institutionally, Islam was, by 1927, brought under strict state-control, and Atatürk was able to exhibit explicitly his antipathy towards religious politics. With these remarks we can claim that the *Nutuk* includes *four time levels*: the time of the pre-Islamic Turks (the original national

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<sup>230</sup> Atatürk 1968, pp. 14–15.

<sup>231</sup> Atatürk 1982, pp. 63–65.

<sup>232</sup> Saygıdeğer efendiler, bu kadar kara cahil, dünya şartlarından ve gerçeklerden bu denli habersiz Şükrü Hoca ve benzerlerinin milletimizi kandırmak için, İslâmî hükümler diye yayınladıkları safsataların, gerçekte tekrarlanacak bir değeri yoktur. Ancak, bunca yüzyıllar boyunca olduğu gibi, bugün de, milletlerin cahilliğinden ve bağınazlığından yararlanarak binbir türlü siyasi ve şahsî amaçla çıkar sağlamak için, dini âlet ve vasıta olarak kullanma girişimde bulunanların memleket içinde ve dışında da var oluşsu, ne yazık ki, daha bizi bu konuda söz söylemekten alıkoyamıyor. İnsanlık dünyasında, din konusundaki uzmanlık ve derin bilgi, her türlü hurafelerden arınarak gerçek bilim ve tekniğin ışıklarıyla tertemiz ve mükemmel oluncaya kadar, din oyunu aktörlerine, her yerde rastlanacaktır. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 543.

era), the time of the Ottomans (the degenerated era without national consciousness), the time of the National Struggle (the heroic time of national awakening), the future time of the Turks as a nation purified with the light of science (a time conditional on the nation always following the path shown by Atatürk). Three of these four can be described as fully *rhetorical*. The time of the pre-Islamic Turks, the time of the Ottomans, and the future time of enlightened Turks are rhetorical devices employed to convince the audience that the National Struggle had an absolute value in the history of the Turks. All these “times” are essentially of *universal history* since all humanity has suffered, like the Turkish nation, from deceitful dark forces abusing religion for personal and political purposes.

There are more paragraphs in the *Nutuk* where it is emphasized that the Turkish nation in executing its revolution is part of a universal history heading towards emancipation. For example in a protest announcement sent to the Allies’ representatives on 16 March 1920 and later included in the *Nutuk*, Kemal strongly emphasized that national self-determination, freedom, and patriotism were core values of the civilized world in the twentieth-century. According to Kemal, it was obvious that the Turks would fight for their natural right to independence.<sup>233</sup> Thus, according to the *Nutuk*, the time of the Independence Struggle was a time of national awakening worldwide. The Turks were doing what all real communities were doing, namely, they were gathering around the sacred ideology of nationalism. This was to say that dependence on an Ottoman dynasty preventing the development of national sovereignty was treachery against the nation. It was also a mark of backwardness and inability to comprehend the current stream of the national ideal expressing itself worldwide.

Thus, in the *Nutuk*, the years of the Independence War and the creation of the Turkish Republic are heroic times, times of courage and virtue. The heroic time of the National Struggle is the antithesis of the degeneration of the Ottoman period. What happens in the *Nutuk*, really, is that time is being divided not only into four levels but also into before and after Atatürk’s landing in Anatolia. At that moment the Turkish nation was reborn. In a sense, 19 May 1919 becomes year zero when everything starts anew.<sup>234</sup> When attached to the overall message of the *Nutuk* this description of a new era carries with it progressive ideas cherished by the European Enlightenment. The national awakening of the Turkish nation is the local manifestation of a universal history which is common to all mankind, and heading towards progress. The Turkish nation is involved in this general development and is,

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 329.

<sup>234</sup> Feroz Ahmad emphasizes that during the early years of the national movement, the emphasis of the Kemalist leadership was on revolutionary change. According to Ahmad, there was an acute awareness that the Turks were in the process of making a fresh start and abandoning their decadent Ottoman past. This attitude was in keeping with the influence of the French revolutionary tradition on radical thought in Turkey. Thus, Ahmad, writes “the Allied occupation of Istanbul in March 1920 was seen as not merely the de facto end of the Ottoman state but the beginning of a new age marked by what Mustafa Kemal described as ‘the first national year’ (*birinci millî sene*).” Feroz Ahmad, “The Political Economy of Kemalism” in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981): p. 149. However, one should add that it was most probably Mustafa Kemal alone who during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle era saw the events this radically.

now, at the time of National struggle, taking its proper place in it. As we saw earlier, according to the *Nutuk*, the Turkish Revolution bringing independence and the enlightenment to the Turkish nation, is an *obligation ordered by history*. That is, the enlightenment is conceived as the *telos* of history. The enlightenment, on the other hand, as the above quotation from the *Nutuk* suggests, is conceived in such a way that it is the equivalent of secularization and progress achieved through science in an independent nation-state.

It can be claimed (as already demonstrated in chapter 2.1.) that *progress* became the catchword of nineteenth-century Western culture, and that the narrative of this progress became an essential element of Western self-understanding. Outside the Western world, on the other hand, progress was not the characterizing element of societies. As a matter of fact, the whole concept was usually perceived as an external threat. For the majority of non-European peoples progress meant most of all a cavalcade of foreign values and habits that seemed to destroy the existing order formed by traditional values.<sup>235</sup> It can even be asserted that *Western hegemony* was accomplished, besides militarily, also in more subtle ways by creating in the periphery local elites that had accepted the concepts of “modernity” and “progress.” This is the critical stand taken toward modernity when seen as a Western hegemonic project. If we analyze Atatürk’s *Nutuk* in light of this critical idea, we may say that it is a text that at one and the same time carries with it the concept of Western modernity and calls for a fight against Western hegemony. It is because of this dualistic message that Kemalist discourse simultaneously strives for complete Western modernity conceived as the enlightenment, and is anxious not to sacrifice the political and economic independence of Turkey in the face of Western demands. Of these two elements the concept of the enlightenment is, in the final analysis, the strongest. In the temporal setting offered by the *Nutuk*, “the enlightenment-as-telos” is the fundamental assumption. This is because the Turkish Revolution usurped the legal constitutional order of the Ottoman Empire in order to bring the enlightenment to Turkey. If this concept of the enlightenment, conceived as secularization and progress achieved through science in an independent nation-state, is abandoned, the Republic of Turkey loses its legitimacy and reason for existence. In section five we will see, however, that in the 1960s and 1970s Kemalist writers made the critical stand their *leitmotif*, attacking the West because of its economic imperialism. Even they, however, did not abandon the presupposition of the enlightenment as the universal purpose of history.

The generation of which Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was a member can be described as the “Young Turk generation.” It was consisted of people who had reached their adulthood during the years of the autocracy of sultan Abdülhamid II, executed the “Young Turk revolution” of 1908 that had restored constitutionalism, lived under growing pressure from the European Great Powers, and witnessed the loss of vast Ottoman territories in the wars that culminated in the First World War. At the same time this was a generation that endlessly sought a solution to the problem, as they saw it, of their state’s obvious backwardness. The most commonly proposed cure was the adoption of the scientific and rational culture of the West. In the leading

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<sup>235</sup> Eric J.Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire* (London: Sphere Books, 1989), pp. 30–31.

circles of the Young Turk movement there was no doubt that the “modernization” of the state was the only solution. Only the method and degree of the modernization was disputed among various persons and groups. As Hakan Uzun has proposed, this dispute over the method and scale of modernization can be taken as the general intellectual context for Atatürk’s Six-Day speech. According to Uzun, Mustafa Kemal understood modernization as a project of total transformation during which the Turkish state as well as society would be brought to the level of contemporary Western civilization. By 1927 Kemal had already realized the modernization of the state apparatus. Now it was society’s turn.<sup>236</sup> The modernizing carried out in a short period of time after success in the Independence War was rapidly altering the political, social, and economic conditions of Turkey, sweeping aside the old Ottoman social order. According to Uzun, it is clear that this transformation was not easily digested by the Turkish populace. The radical measures involved were also causing opposition in the circle of Atatürk’s closest companions. Both inside and outside parliament, an opposition movement created tremendous tension in society.<sup>237</sup>

In other words, Atatürk’s speech was delivered at a time of great political tension. This tension is obviously reflected in the *Nutuk*. The first sign of this is Atatürk’s decision, as already mentioned, to start the account from 19 May 1919. Another is the strong emphasis on the early years of the period, that is, 42 percent of the total text of the *Nutuk* is concerned with events that happened during the last six months of 1919 whereas least than one percent describes events in the period 1924–1927.<sup>238</sup> This means that the events described in the early part of the speech are very detailed, whereas later events are only summarized. The detailed account of the early phase of the resistance is understandable given that Atatürk in 1927 obviously had a political need to describe himself as the one and only real organizer of a country-wide movement, which he wanted to be perceived by the public as a revolutionary movement led by him, first, as Atatürk explicitly states it in his speech, as a “national secret.”<sup>239</sup> The detailed description of the early phases also provides him with an opportunity to show how those opposing him in 1927 had already made some serious mistakes in 1919–1920.

As suggested, inherent in the time-space setting of the *Nutuk* is the concept of a universal history characterized by progress. This idea of progress is, in its fundamentals, the Enlightenment-originated concept of developing humanity, marching towards a rational and scientific future. In the *Nutuk* this progressive-teleological idea of history is the fundamental base that, in the final analysis, produces the Turkish Revolution. As we will see, it is this *Nutuk*-given idea of history that works as the unquestioned presupposition of Kemalist political discourse. We need to understand that once the narration of the enlightenment was

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<sup>236</sup> Uzun 2006, p. 3.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., pp. 3–4.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>239</sup> After Atatürk had proclaimed that it was a necessity to establish a government representing the people’s sovereignty, he concluded that it was also obligatory to take the necessary steps carefully one by one, keeping future actions at first only in his own mind, as a kind of “national secret” (*bir millî sır gibi*). Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 17–18.

asserted by such a sovereign national figure as Mustafa Kemal, in an account of events that were quite legitimately perceived as a life-and-death situation, later Kemalist narratives could never question its validity.

The Kemalist discourse is most of all constructed on the charismatic vision of Atatürk. This can be interpreted as a vision which points to a future goal and a future identity in a critical standing with the present. It can also be interpreted as yet unaccomplished and in a way “never-ending.”<sup>240</sup> In Kemalist political discourse this “never-ending” vision is “to reach the level of contemporary civilization”, in other words, it is modernization understood as westernization. Even though there are clear continuities between the late Ottoman Empire and the new secular Turkish Republic – the Young Turk military-bureaucratic elite and its statist ideology being the most obvious one – I agree with Andrew Mango who has cautioned against overestimating this continuity. Ultimately, the society Mustafa Kemal Atatürk shaped was qualitatively different from the cosmopolitan Ottoman society. According to Mango, Atatürk also recognized that Turkish society was different from the societies of the advanced Western countries that he wanted to emulate. Mango emphasizes that Atatürk was convinced that the difference laid in the Turks’ lack of material means and modern knowledge and skills. But, once this lack of knowledge was overcome through a modern education in positive sciences, Turkey would resemble the West, and advance with it.<sup>241</sup>

Modernity, on the other hand, can be seen as an empirical condition, or, as proposed in chapter 2.1., as the “enlightenment meta-narrative” of the Western world. In Kemalism, modernity/enlightenment is the fundamental goal. This is the absolute presupposition of Kemalism and it explains why there was a Turkish Revolution. In the *Nutuk*, the Anatolian Resistance Movement of 1919–1922 that set out to save some of the Ottoman Empire’s territory transforms itself into a Turkish Revolution that produces the Turkish Republic. The Republic, on the other hand, is depicted as the only way to reach the enlightenment. Thus the *Nutukian* narration produces a self-justifying circle that became extremely hard to avoid in the political realities of Turkey during the twentieth-century. One aspect of this story of national regeneration, however, offers a path to critical reading of the *Nutukian* narrative. This is the interpretation of the Atatürk-Revolution as a “never-ending” mission. It is indeed very significant that the *Nutuk*, which laid down all the core aspects and unquestioned presuppositions of Kemalism, already manifests its dual nature as a narration of the “achieved-already” and the “yet-to-be-accomplished,” a kind of dichotomy which, as we will see later, came to have profound significance during the 1960s and 1970s. The first of these, the “achieved-already,” refers to the *Nutuk*’s assertion that the enlightenment project was realized in Turkey with the foundation of the Republic, and that the “sacred duty” of the future generations was to secure it. The second concept, the “yet-to-be-accomplished,” on the other hand, refers to the *Nutukian* objective of “reaching the level of contemporary civilization,” which is implicitly described in the Speech as an *eternal mission*. This dual message seems to

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<sup>240</sup> Bagdonas 2008, pp. 101–102.

<sup>241</sup> Andrew Mango, “Atatürk” in *The Cambridge History of Turkey Vol 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): p. 170.



be the only feature of the *Nutukian* narrative that allows one to reach beyond its enclosed discourse of a unitary and predestined history. As we will see, it was not, however, used in any determined way during the period from the 1930s to the 1980s. The only departure was the anti-imperialist and, thus, critical stand towards the West which is described as a capitalist exploiter in left-wing Kemalist literature during the 1960s and 1970s.

The major ideological mission expressed in the *Nutuk* is thus the transformation of a backward and traditional society into a scientific, secularized, and developed modern nation-state. What different Kemalist narratives analyzed in this study have in common is a view of Atatürk and his reforms. In the following chapters we will see that Kemalist-minded politicians, writers, officers, and intellectuals from the 1960s to the 1980s all argued that the main principles, policies, and institutions of Kemalism were as valid in their own period as they were in the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, Turkey's entering into a Western-oriented process of the enlightenment should indeed be seen as a never-ending Kemalist mission. This mission carries with it the unquestioned assumption of a universal history that is predestined to produce progress for mankind. This concept, on the other hand, is ultimately based on the idea of a rational man. This trust in the natural rationality of man is also a product of the Enlightenment. I want to emphasize once more that the "absolute truth" of Kemalist discourse is the assertion found in the *Nutuk* that there was no alternative to the founding of the new Turkish Republic in the years 1919–1923. After describing various proposals of salvation, Kemal proclaims the following:

Gentlemen, I did not believe in any of these proposals. The reason was that all of them were based on rotten and unconvincing grounds. In reality, in those days the foundations of the Ottoman state were already destroyed, and its life was at an end. There was left only pieces of fatherland protected by the Turks. Finally, even this land was to be partitioned. The Ottoman State, the sultan, the caliph, the government, these were all meaningless concepts. Whose independence was to be saved? In this situation what could be considered as the right decision? Gentlemen, in this situation there was only one possible way to proceed. That was the creation of a totally new, in every aspect independent Turkish state, based on the principle of national sovereignty.<sup>242</sup>

This is followed by an evaluation of the Republic as the only possible institution capable of securing the Turkish nation's absolute desire for the enlightenment

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<sup>242</sup> Efendiler, ben bu kararların hiçbirini doğru bulmadım. Çünkü, bu kararların dayandığı bütün deliller ve mantıklar çürük ve temelsizdi. Gerçekte, içinde bulunduğumuz o günlerde, Osmanlı Devleti'nin temelleri çökmüş, ömrü tükenmişti. Osmanlı Devleti, bütünüyle parçalanmıştı. Ortada bir avuç Türkün barındığı bir ata yurdu kalmıştı. Son olarak, bunun da paylaşılması için uğraşılıyordu. Osmanlı Devleti ve bağımsızlığı, padişah, halife, hükümet, bunların hepsi kavramı kalmamış birtakim anlamsız sözlerdi. Neyin ve kimin dokunulmazlığı için ve nasıl bir yardım istenmesi düşünülüyordu? Bu halde sağlam ve gerçek karar ne olabilirdi? Efendiler, bu durum karşısında bir tek karar alınabilirdi. O da millet egemenliğine dayanan, kısıntısız, koşulsuz, bağımsız yeni bir Türk Devleti kurmak. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 15.

We had already made this decision while still staying in Istanbul, and then started to implement it the very moment I landed on the Anatolian soil in Samsun. The logic of this decision was based on the fact that the Turkish nation ought to live in honor, and that this was possible only with full independence... Because of this, independence or death! Later, it would have been a tremendous offence against the Turkish nation not to abolish the institution of the Sultanate in Turkey. Because, no matter how determinedly the nation had fought for its freedom, its independence would have been under constant threat with the sultanate still in place... And when it comes to the Caliph, was not this an entirely ridiculous figure in a world enlightened by science and knowledge.<sup>243</sup>

Now, here we finally have in an explicit way the foundation of the Kemalist *enlightenment idea of history* asserting that the purpose of the Anatolian Resistance Movement was the creation of the Republic of Turkey. This idea of history soon became the official view of history in the Turkish Republic. Because this conception carries with it the idea of the Turkish Revolution as a process which executes the enlightenment in Turkey, it stands or falls with the concept of the enlightenment as an absolute value. I said earlier that “modernity” can be seen as a concept referring to certain empirical conditions, but that we can also say that this concept refers to a certain highly influential *cultural narrative* which is supposed to give us an adequate description of what has happened in the world since the Enlightenment. According to this narrative, one of the main characteristics of modernity is the emergence of a secularized state.

In a secular state, religion and politics are separated, but one can argue that in the Turkish case something more is at hand. The Turkish state’s position on religion (*laiklik*) is, as Andrew Davison has emphasized, more accurately translated as one of “laicism,” the subordination of religion to the state, than one of “secularism,” a separation of church and state. The laic state in Turkey has controlled the education of religious professionals and the content of religious education. In the early republican period the state established control of religious affairs and institutions, although independent religious brotherhoods continued their work underground.<sup>244</sup>

According to the presuppositions of the Kemalist discourse constructed in the *Nutuk*, the Turkish nation-state will fall apart if it abandons the core Kemalist principle of laicism. As Ergun Özbudun and Ali Kazancıgil rightly observe, the emphasis on secularization stems directly from Atatürk’s rationalist and positivist outlook. If

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<sup>243</sup> İşte, daha İstanbul’dan çıkmadan önce düşündüğümüz ve Samsun’da Anadolu topraklarına ayak basar basmaz uygulamaya başladığımız karar, bu karardır. Bu kararın dayandığı en sağlam düşünce ve mantık şu idi: Temel ilke, Türk milletinin onurlu ve şerefli bir millet olarak yaşamasıdır. Bu ancak tam bağımsız olmakla sağlanabilirdi... Öyleyse ya bağımsızlık ya ölüm. Sonra, Osmanlı soyunu ve devletini sürdürmeye çalışmak, elbette Türk milletine karşı en büyük kötülüğü yapmaktı. Çünkü; millet, her türlü fedakarlığa başvurarak bağımsızlığını sağlasa da, padişahlık kalkmazsa, bu bağımsızlık güvenli sayılmazdı... Halifelğe gelince, bunun ilim ve tekniğin ışığına boğduğu gerçek medeniyet dünyasında gülünç sayılmaktan başka duruma kalmış mıydı? Ibid., pp. 15–16.

<sup>244</sup> Andrew Davison, “Turkey, a ‘Secular’ State? The Challenge of Description,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102 no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2003): p. 337. See also, Jenny B. White, “Islam and politics in contemporary Turkey” in *The Cambridge History of Turkey Vol. 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); p. 357.

necessary, it is indeed possible to reduce Kemalism to rationalism. Regarding the relationship between rationality and religion in general, and in the context of Islamic society in particular, Kemalism has maintained that *rationalization necessary involves secularization*. From this perspective it is possible to claim that Islam, having been born simultaneously as a religion and a state, regulates a large area of social, economic, political, and legal relations, out of which emerged the system of Islamic law called the *sharia*. Consequently, Özbudun and Kazancıgil note, “it is deemed highly problematic for Islamic societies to modernize their social and political structures without a substantial measure of secularization.”<sup>245</sup>

Thus far I have proposed that the narrative of the *Nutuk* is implicitly attached to the concept of the enlightenment as a *telos* of history. I have also hinted that the *Nutuk* can be seen as constructing the idea of a “never-ending” mission to fully achieve the enlightenment in Turkey, and that in the Kemalist discourse the enlightenment represents rational thinking, science, secularization, and continuing progress. On these grounds the presuppositions of Kemalism constructed in the *Nutuk* define political Islam as *an extreme threat*, because it means, ultimately, regression and decline. This is so because in the *Nutukian* narrative political Islam means moving back in time to the traditional religious politics of the Ottoman period. In this sense, the concept of the enlightenment inherent in Kemalist ideology is absolutely necessary for the legitimacy of the Kemalist regime. And because Kemalism became, in the eyes of the establishment, synonymous with the *raison d’être* of the state, abandoning it and its concept of the enlightenment was conceived, as we will see later, synonymous with the break-up of the Turkish Republic. In this sense there is the unquestioned assumption of the enlightenment as a *telos* of history constructed in the *Nutuk*, which is then repeatedly reproduced by Kemalist discourse. It has also been suggested here that it is possible to interpret the *Nutukian* narrative as an expression of the “yet-to-be-accomplished.” This, however, is on the level of narrative only: the *Nutukian* story-world gives a certain inducement for appreciating rational thinking and individual emancipation, but the practice of Kemalism has been very reluctant to go beyond the “achieved already,” meaning that the nationalist “host” narrative of Kemalism – concentrating on securing the authority of a unified state – has always crushed any real effort to liberate the individual or open up Kemalist ideology to critical re-assessment.

### **3.2 The Anatolian Resistance Movement as the Turkish Revolution**

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Great Speech is, obviously, a story. It is an account of real-life events including real-life persons. The speech purports to be an account of events that took place in the period 1919–1927. How these events are organized and what their relation is to each other is a question concerning the plot of the story. The plot is here understood as a theme that ties the individual event-units together. In the *Nutuk*, as I shall demonstrate, the theme that brings all particular event-units together is the *salvation of the Turkish nation*.

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<sup>245</sup> Ergun Özbudun, and Ali Kazancıgil, “Introduction” in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981): p. 4.

The speech begins with nation in jeopardy: the political independence and sovereignty of the Turkish nation is about to be lost. The only way to prevent this outcome is to fight the external enemy in a state of national unity. This unity, however, does not exist. Because of this, the only way to save the nation is to unite it. This is achieved through the efforts of a national hero, who has the wisdom to bring his community together and organize it in a new way. This effort brings success, the nation finds its unity, and is in this way able to expel the external enemy. The effort is accomplished, however, only when the internal enemies of the “national will” have also been defeated. This is achieved at the end of the story.

To transform the local “Defence of Rights” groups into a united front to resist the Allies and the Ottoman government required Atatürk to cooperate with those elements of society capable of bringing the populace into the resistance movement. As Baskın Oran points out, Atatürk managed to form a chain of dependencies that functioned as a resistance coalition. This coalition included other army commanders committed to continuing the armed resistance, landlords, religious leaders, Anatolian *petit bourgeois*, Muslims of various ethnic origins, socialists and other leftists, and finally the Anatolian peasants. For the further character of the Turkish Revolution it was significant that this coalition set limits to the degree to which society’s modernizing was possible in the years to come. An unwritten agreement between Kemal and the Anatolian landlords was forged whereby the Kemalist movement was allowed to start radical modernization in the cities, as long as the paternalist social order was left untouched in the countryside.<sup>246</sup>

The army commanders, Anatolian landlords, and local religious leaders formed the basis of delegates at the Erzurum Congress (23.7.–7.8.1919), which can be, according to Andrew Mango, considered as reasonably objective expression of the real will of the populace of the seven most eastern Anatolian provinces. The Congress of Sivas (4.9.–11.9.1919) was, on the other hand, a meeting organized by Atatürk, and its delegates were mostly officers who had taken their places independently.<sup>247</sup> In the *Nutuk*, however, it is strongly emphasized that the Sivas Congress too, including its time and purpose, was the result of the will of the nation, not of a personal decision by Atatürk.<sup>248</sup> This is quite a claim considering the fact that the Sivas Congress was, indeed, the result of Atatürk’s own determined efforts. In the *Nutuk*, however, the Congresses of Erzurum and Sivas are both presented as the manifestations of the will of the nation. As such they are represented as obviously legal, unlike the Ottoman government that tried to prevent these congresses. Kemal strongly emphasizes that the congresses represent the whole populace of Thrace and Anatolia, an entity which in the narrative of the *Nutuk* is transformed into a *Turkish nation*. As this idea of a Turkish nation became a collective representation, or social fact, in Republican Turkey, it is necessary that we look more closely at how this transformation is constructed in the *Nutukian* narrative.

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<sup>246</sup> Baskın Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1997), p. 214.

<sup>247</sup> Mango 2004, p. 244.

<sup>248</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 54.

The speech includes many descriptions of Atatürk's energetic efforts to strengthen the national resistance by bringing it under one command, that is, Atatürk's. The story thus includes something that can be called "organizing-journeys." These are Mustafa Kemal's movements between various places in Anatolia. The journey from Erzurum to Sivas is one of these. On this journey the narrator-hero of the story shows his determination and courage. There are rumours that Kemal and his entourage are arrested on the way to Sivas. The hero is not, however, shaken by these efforts, ordered by the Istanbul government. The hero will continue his journey no matter what, as only a few Kurdish tribes are working on behalf of the degenerate Ottoman government. This is something much too haphazard to prevent the "man on the mission."<sup>249</sup>

The Ottoman government tried indeed to take action against Mustafa Kemal and the Anatolian Resistance Movement by various ways, none of which were very well prepared. The interior minister Ali Kemal seriously tried to get rid of Kemal in the summer 1919. On 23 June he sent a circular to provincial authorities, forbidding them to take any commands from Mustafa Kemal. This could not, however, stop the Sivas congress.<sup>250</sup> Apart from Ali Kemal, a man called Ali Galip, a supporter of the Ottoman government, was, according to Atatürk, responsible for inciting the Kurdish tribes of Dersim to attack him. In the *Nutuk*, Ali Galip is said to have been working on behalf of the sultan himself, with the help of foreign money. This state of affairs, however, was not made public at the time, as a picture was still being presented according to which the sultan was kept unaware of the treacherous actions of the Damat Ferit government ruling in Istanbul at that time. According to the *Nutuk*, the sultan was sent a telegraph demanding the resignation of the Damat Ferit government. The telegraph also stated that "the nation" would not have any communication with Istanbul until a new government possessing the nation's full confidence was in power. Furthermore, the government was accused of inciting Muslims to attack each other, and of helping the partition of the fatherland by inciting Kurdistan to rebel.<sup>251</sup>

Even though some Kurdish tribes did support the Ottoman government in the civil war that developed in Anatolia, most were on the side of Kemal. When the Ottoman army was forced to retreat from Syria and Mesopotamia in 1918, it became evident that the borders of the Middle East had been radically re-drawn. The first plans between the Arabs and British concerning the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were drawn up during the war. In November 1917 the Bolsheviks made public the details of the so called Sykes–Picot plan, which proposed that most of Anatolia would be taken from the Turks. According to this plan, as payment for its cooperation with the Allies, Russia would have been given Istanbul, the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, and the eastern provinces of Anatolia. The Sykes–Picot plan also promised an area for Italy in south-western Anatolia, and Izmir for the Greeks. The Bolsheviks not wanting anything of this kind made these secret

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., pp. 56–58.

<sup>250</sup> Mango 2004, p. 232.

<sup>251</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, 101–103.

agreements public. Embarrassed, the British and French hurried to fill the vacuum created by the Russian withdrawal, making the Caucasus, Armenia, Georgia, and Kurdistan their own zone of influence.<sup>252</sup>

The First World War left Kurdistan in total chaos as the Turks, Russians, and British marched one after another through the area. In the spring of 1919 there were roughly three different political opinions among the Kurds. First of all, there was a group favouring cooperation with the Turks in order to prevent the eastern provinces being handed over to the Armenians. The second group envisaged self-rule under the British mandate. Thirdly, there were those, mostly the Dersim Kurds, who wanted total independence. It is worth mentioning that in this extremely uncertain situation a large group of Kurds did not commit themselves to any of these alternatives.<sup>253</sup> However, the events of May 1919 destroyed all Kurdish hopes for autonomy or independence. When the Italians and Greeks intruded into Anatolia, the whole Muslim population was shocked. This threat pulled a majority of the Kurds on to the side of the Turks. Besides this, Kurdish hopes for self-rule were dashed by the resistance movement headed by Mustafa Kemal, which declared to defend the entire Anatolian Muslim community against the territorial claims of the Allies.<sup>254</sup> All this demonstrates that the resistance force fighting against foreign forces during the years 1919–1922 was not at the time proclaimed as being one composed of Turks but of *all Anatolian Muslims*.

Atatürk's threat to cut off communications with Istanbul was put into force on 12 September 1919. The reason for this was Istanbul government's refusal to open a direct communication channel to the sultan. This meant, according to Atatürk, that the will of the nation could not be transmitted to its sovereign.<sup>255</sup> In the *Nutuk*, this cutting off of communications with the Istanbul government is depicted as a justified act on the grounds that the "will of the nation" was being ignored by the government. This rebellious act was based on the declarations of the national congresses, which are presented in the *Nutuk* as genuine expressions of the people. In the *Nutuk*, then, this event marks the preliminary transfer of political sovereignty from Istanbul to the resistance movement in Anatolia. This cutting off of communications signalled Atatürk's final falling out with the Ottoman government. Kemal had tried, as mentioned earlier, to become War Minister in the Ottoman government after the armistice of Mudros had been signed on 30 October 1918. When he was unable to do this he moved to Anatolia and became a rebel. However, despite this he tried to maintain relations with Istanbul for as long as possible. When it became clear that it was not going to be possible to change the Istanbul government's policy, Kemal had no choice but to start a rebellion in Anatolia.<sup>256</sup> This interpretation presupposes a definite goal that Kemal was determined to reach no matter what. This goal prerequisite that political power was vested in the hands of

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<sup>252</sup> David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997): p. 115.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>255</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 104.

<sup>256</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Atatürk as an institution-builder" in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancigil and Ergun Özbudun (London: Hurst & Co, 1981): pp. 62–65.

an enlightened elite that was capable of transforming a traditional society into a progressive nation-state. In the *Nutuk*, as we will see a bit later, Kemal is the only person far-sighted enough to carry the burden of the leadership.

It is worth considering how Kemal came to see that the Turks' future lay in a Turkish nation-state, and when did he make this conclusion. It is reasonable to propose that the eagerness to find a solution to the perceived backwardness and degeneration of the Ottoman state was the starting point for envisioning a new nation-state. As already hinted above, Atatürk's generation's life-experience was shaped by the fear of losing the state. This fear produced many, sometimes contradictory reactions. The most dominant was the "westernizing-modernizing" method that can be roughly defined as a "preventing modernization." Atatürk surely came to this conclusion. To him accepting the western civilization was a life-and-death matter.

But, even in the case of Atatürk, this modernization was first conceived inside the Ottoman state. As Rachel Simon has convincingly showed, when Mustafa Kemal in 1908 was propagating the policy of the Committee of Union and Progress in Libya, he still fully perceived the Ottoman Empire as the object of all modernizing efforts.<sup>257</sup> Between this mission to Libya and the 19 May 1919 there is a period of eleven years, filled with wars, territorial losses, internal power struggle inside a malfunctioning constitutional sultanate, and separatist movements. This eleven year period ended in anti-climax with complete defeat in the First World War. The preliminary conditions for Atatürk's vision of a new Turkish nation-state were thus formed between the years 1908–1918. It is natural to assume that the experiences of these years *and* the options available in Anatolia after the Great War finally led to Atatürk's revolutionary actions during the resistance movement. All the hesitations and calculations concerning the relevant action are nevertheless lacking from the 1927 Great Speech. In the *Nutuk* we come face to face with a determined man-on-a-mission.<sup>258</sup>

As we have seen, in the Six-Day speech Mustafa Kemal does not give much value to the "Defence of Rights" associations prior to his personal engagement. The real "national" struggle begins, according to the *Nutuk*, when Atatürk takes the lead of these embryonic organizations and turns them into a nation-wide revolutionary movement. The first hundred pages of the *Nutuk* are devoted to an account of the

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<sup>257</sup> Rachel Simon, "Prelude to Reforms: Mustafa Kemal in Libya," in *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): pp. 17–18.

<sup>258</sup> It is rather interesting that these hesitations are depicted as part of Atatürk's personality during the Resistance Struggle in, for example, the memoirs of one of the leaders of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, Rauf Orbay, who says that he met Mustafa Kemal in 1919 whilst with the American commission sent to eastern Anatolia to investigate its demographic facts in order to decide the Allies' policy in the region. According to Orbay, Mustafa Kemal tried to explain, via an interpreter, to the Americans the goal and purpose of the movement under his command, and that the National congresses had been organized to gather various local resistance groups under one leadership. According to Orbay, Mustafa Kemal on this occasion asserted that the aim of the resistance movement, in the final analysis, was to secure the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, preferably under an American mandate. Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni. Siyasi Hatıralarım* (Istanbul: Truva Yayınları, 2004), p. 289.

organizing of the national congresses of Erzurum and Sivas. In this section the *Nutuk* gives a detailed account of who was the real organizer of the resistance and what its goal was. The purpose of this is to show that the Anatolian Resistance Movement manifests the historical struggle between the Turkish nation and its enemies. The external enemy is the imperialist West, while the internal one is a degenerate Ottoman government complying with the Allies' demands. But these enemies are only symbols of a much more fundamental struggle, namely that between national enlightenment and traditional backwardness. If read closely, one can see that the fight against the external enemy is just a frame inside which the speech is a story of the Turkish Revolution and its internal enemies. After Atatürk's *Nutuk*, Turks have collectively conceived the battles of 1919–1922 as a *Turkish national struggle* aiming to create a nation-state of the Turks in the form of the Republic of Turkey. This is to say that there are indeed mechanisms at work in the *Nutukian* narrative which offer certain kinds of “we” structures, claiming that this “we” refers to the Turkish nation. Now we need to look at this more systematically.

In 1919 the Ottoman state was, according to the Six-Day speech, replete with different political associations, all aiming to influence post-war political developments. Some of these organizations, for example the so-called *İngiliz Muhipler Cemiyeti* (Society for the Friends of England) were working with the enemy, trying to eliminate *millî şuuru* (national consciousness).<sup>259</sup> One can ask what, exactly, the “national consciousness” was in this context. Did it even exist? According to Baskın Oran, national consciousness was initially non-existent but came to fruition as an outcome of Mustafa Kemal's actions during the struggle for liberation. Oran stresses that an independent nation-state was Mustafa Kemal's goal from the beginning, though not the goal of the Anatolian peasants or even that of the landlords and merchants supporting the resistance movement. These groups were ready to act, to the degree they eventually did, because of the territorial demands of the Anatolian Christian minorities, the Armenians and the Greeks. According to Oran, the resistance organizations established in different places in Anatolia were not born in response to the occupation schemes made by the allies but in response to the perceived threat felt in the face of the demands for land and property in Anatolia by the Christian minorities.<sup>260</sup> Oran's account of the reasons that sent Anatolian Muslims into action is basically correct. It should not, however, be understood in the way Oran himself proposes. As noted, Oran claims that Turkish national consciousness in the sense of modern nation-state was born during the years of the liberation struggle. Yet it seems more likely, as will be soon demonstrated, that the possibility of an ethnically Turkish national consciousness acting as a collective identity for the masses was born only after Mustafa Kemal, in his Six-Day speech, defined the struggle of 1919–1922 as a struggle fought by the Turks, and as a collective effort to re-build the Turkish state as an independent nation-state.

According to the *Nutuk*, the occupation of Istanbul by the Allies was synonymous with the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire as a sovereign state. This state of affairs legitimized the founding of an assembly in Anatolia with extraordinary

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<sup>259</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 10–11.

<sup>260</sup> Oran 1997, pp. 125–126.



powers.<sup>261</sup> According to Kemal, the Allied occupation of Istanbul and the opening of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara marked the beginning of the second part of his Six-Day speech; from now on he is giving an account of things that are already “common knowledge.”<sup>262</sup> The plot of the speech thus presents a picture according to which the congresses of Erzurum and Sivas (and all the “Defence of Rights” societies) were part of the same historical process as the Congress of the Republican People’s Party at which Kemal delivered his Great Speech in 1927. National congresses are also presented as forming a preliminary phase of the Republic. This turn to a description of events concerning the time of opening of the Grand National Assembly can fruitfully be interpreted as a *plot-turn*, that is, a point in a story where the plot is given a new direction or a point of view. A story’s plot establishes a link between the start, the middle, and the end, giving all of them meaning as parts of a whole. This is to say that the plot is about cause and effect: it presents a course of events (actions) that produce a certain outcome. In the *Nutuk*, the plot is *teleological*: all particular events receive their meaning at the end of the story. The dynamic of *Nutuk*’s plot is such that the outcome colours all that happened earlier. This helps us to understand something crucial about narrative representation in general, and about the relation between the narrative of the *Nutuk* and the enlightenment in particular. Narratives are indeed about cause and effect, and their power is such that teleology very easily creeps into the picture. In this case there seems to be two identical narrative forms to hand. On the one hand the *Nutukian* narrative is constructed on teleology in the sense that the establishment of the Turkish Republic is the purpose of all the events that occurred during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. On the other hand the enlightenment meta-narrative presents the all of human history as a process heading towards the enlightenment, so that this ultimate goal gives an explanation to all human experience, including the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. In the *Nutuk* the theme bringing all the particular event-units together is the *salvation of the Turkish nation*. This salvation is more than just the securing of the political and economic independence of a Turkish state. As demonstrated earlier, in the *Nutuk* the Turkish nation is depicted as a community joining the Enlightenment’s project of universal progress. In Kemalist practice this became conceived as synonymous with the total westernizing of society.

Thus, in the spheres of economy, politics, and culture, Turkey was to resemble the West. In the context of an Anatolian rural population lacking any real influence on policy-making, the scope of westernizing reforms was a compromise between the Kemalist elite and the conservative landlords and businessmen. The war against the Allies and the radical westernizing that took place right after the war produced a kind of identity crisis for the military-bureaucratic elite. In Kemalism, this identity crisis resulted in the habit of accepting the West whilst at the same time exalting pre-Islamic Turkish culture. As we saw in the introductory chapter, the result was an imaginary story that saw the world’s major civilizations as originally Turkish, while at the same time Turkey was defined as a Western state.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 330–343.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 342.

<sup>263</sup> Oran 1997, pp. 117–118.

Now, it can be claimed that the salvation project is constructed in the *Nutuk* most of all by descriptions of the “internal enemy” and “degenerated mentality.” As Aysel Morin has suggested, the “internal enemy” theme got its power from the deep-structures of Turkish culture. When Mustafa Kemal rose to lead the resistance movement in spring 1919, the stories and myths of ancient Turks, as well as the conception of the Turks as a separate ethnic community, were already very much part of the elite’s worldview. According to Morin, Atatürk used these myths to consolidate his political power. One of these myths was the myth of the “internal enemy.” As Morin suggests, the concept of the internal enemy is used most of all as a label for those who do not have faith in the Turks’ ability to survive independently, and who thereof supported the idea of a foreign mandate. In the *Nutuk* the internal enemy is constructed by a negation. Kemal brings to the surface models of the ideal Turk that can be found in ancient Turkic writings, such as the Orkhon inscriptions. These models include a strong love for one’s homeland, the willingness for personal sacrifice for the common good, national honour, freedom and independence, and a categorical refusal to accept the humiliation of a foreign yoke. In the *Nutuk*, those who do not fit this model of the ideal Turk – for example the mandate-seekers – are depicted as degenerate, despicable, weak, and treacherous.<sup>264</sup> According to Aysel Morin, the myth of the internal enemy is targeted most of all against those who sought a foreign mandate. These included right from the beginning the Damat Ferit Paşa government as well as Sultan Vahdettin, and, at later stage, those who according to the *Nutuk* so eagerly spoke for a foreign mandate during the Sivas congress, such as Refet Bele.<sup>265</sup>

Aysel Morin’s idea of the “internal enemy” as the central theme of the *Nutuk* can be further developed by analyzing which of the various groups wanted to, according to the Speech, resist Atatürk’s actions. Hasan Cicioğlu has presented the following list of this opposition: 1) the Allies who invaded the Ottoman territory after the armistice of Mudros, keen to secure their own interests; 2) the Ottoman dynasty with its close circle of family-members and officials; 3) Ottoman governments; 4) journalists, religious scholars, writers, and intelligentsia close to the dynasty; 5) certain officers who started the Independence War with Kemal, but who later expressed different ideas; 6) those who declared themselves friends of the resistance movement but in reality worked against it; 7) those who, under Allied inducement, worked for the destruction of the Ottoman state, trying to create other states inside Ottoman territories; 8) those who resisted Kemal on religious or Islamic grounds.<sup>266</sup> It is interesting that out of this list only the first represents an *external enemy* (the Allies); all the other groups opposing Mustafa Kemal are groups within Ottoman society, and therefore represent the *internal enemy*. This is particularly significant given the influence of Atatürk’s speech subsequently. First of all it shows that, even though the *Nutuk* can rightly be understood as a story of the Turkish War of Liberation, its

<sup>264</sup> Aysel Morin, *Crafting a nation: The mythic construction of the new Turkish identity in Atatürk’s “Nutuk”* (January 1, 2004). ETD collection for University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Paper AAI1326958. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/dissertations/AAI1326958>, pp. 140–146.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 146–147.

<sup>266</sup> Hasan Cicioğlu, “Atatürk’ün Büyük Nutuk’ta Adları Geçen Muhalifleri, Muhalefet Gerekçeleri, Atatürk’ün Cevabı” in *Yetmişbeşinci Yılında Büyük Nutuk’u Anlayarak Okumak; Bilgi Şöleni 17–18 Ekim 2003 Ankara Bildiriler*, ed. Ayan and M. Alper Parlak (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2003): p. 113.

presentation of the so-called enemy concentrates on the *internal forces* opposing Kemal. Thus, the *Nutuk* is primarily an account of the internal enemy of the Turkish Revolution.

The “internal enemy” in the *Nutuk* is, more than anything else, a marker of *degeneration*. In the *Nutuk* it is stated that Turkey had for a long time suffered from a poisonous mentality. This mentality belittled the Turks’ ability to stand on their own without constant advice from foreigners. It was because of this false mentality that Turkey was degenerating at an increasing pace. The most serious aspect of this was the fact that the degeneration was not material only, but also moral and intellectual. This false and corruptive mentality was the key reason why Turkey was now so vulnerable.<sup>267</sup> In order to understand the crucial function of the devices of *obstacles* and *adversaries* in the *Nutuk* we must be aware of the recurring expression of these “internal enemies.” The latter part of the speech describes how the internal enemies were finally forced to demonstrate that they were sincere republicans, while they were in reality simply trying to crush the republican regime in its infancy. In reference to the liberal journalists criticizing Atatürk’s regime, the Six-Day speech states:

Gentlemen, what the purpose of these writings was is quite clearly understood in the present. Tomorrow they will be even more deeply comprehended. Future generations should not become paralyzed as they analyze these writings, as they come to ask why those calling themselves “republicans” were so eagerly attacking the Republic at the time of its birth. On the contrary, the enlightened children of a future Turkey must closely observe the true intentions of these men.<sup>268</sup>

In the *Nutuk*, Atatürk only occasionally speaks explicitly about the degeneration of the Ottoman Empire. This does not mean, however, that the conception of degeneration is absent from the *diegesis* (story-world) of the Six-Day speech. It is more the case that the idea of Ottoman degeneration is a general presupposition for Atatürk’s account of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. For this reason we need to understand this idea of cultural degeneration more clearly. That this kind of idea was also more generally part of Mustafa Kemal’s thinking can be found in Kemal’s other speeches. In order to celebrate the victory achieved in the Independence Struggle, Kemal had gathered a group of school teachers from Istanbul in the city of Bursa on 27.10.1922. In a speech addressed to the teachers, Kemal emphasized that the real salvation of the nation had not yet been accomplished. This would be achieved only when the maladies in the social structure had been cured. It was the teachers’ patriotic duty, Kemal underlined, to purify the young generations of false and

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<sup>267</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, 497.

<sup>268</sup> Efendiler, bu yazıların anlamı ve bu düşüncelerin nasıl bir amaca dayandığı bugün kolaylıkla anlaşılacaktır. Yarın, daha açık olarak anlaşılacaktır. Gelecek nesillerin, Türkiye’de cumhuriyetin ilân edildiği gün, ona en insafsızca saldıranların başında, “cumhuriyetçiyim” diyenlerin yer aldığı görerek asla şaşıracalarını sanmayınız! Aksine, Türkiye’nin aydın cumhuriyetçi çocukları, böyle cumhuriyetçi geçmişlerinin gerçek düşüncelerini tahlil ve tespitinde hiç de kararsızlığa düşmeyeceklerdir. Ibid., p. 634.

degenerate ideas. More than anything else, this meant destroying concepts opposed to rational thinking, which prevented the healthy progress of the nation.<sup>269</sup>

This idea of moral degeneration of the Ottoman regime works as an explanatory context to the *Nutuk*'s descriptions of the misgivings of politicians during the Anatolian Resistance Movement. Besides the "mandate-seekers," two concrete examples of moral corruption in the Six-Day speech are Damat Ferit Paşa and Cemal Paşa. Damat Ferit Paşa served as the Interior Minister of the Istanbul government during the resistance era. The *Nutuk* describes how the people of Sivas crowded onto the streets, shouting "down with the occupation!" after the British had retreat from the towns of Merzifon and Samsun. These events were then reported in the local newspaper *İrade-i Millîye*. After this, Damat Ferit Paşa had advised the *vali* (local governor) of Sivas that newspaper including expressions such as "down with the occupation!" were not suitable as they contradicted the official government's policy. As Kemal had demanded an explanation for this compliant policy, War Minister Cemal Paşa had told him that the Ottoman government needed to use "soft words" and respect foreign nations. This is followed by a severe criticism from Kemal, who cannot accept that the War Minister presented the foreign troops attacking Turkey as "visitors."<sup>270</sup>

Another example of the same narration of Ottoman degeneration is found in conversation Mustafa Kemal had with Abdülkerim Paşa, an old brigadier general who was made the negotiator for the Istanbul government after Mustafa Kemal had suspended communication between Anatolia and Istanbul. For Abdülkerim Paşa Mustafa Kemal made it clear that the enemies' more agreeable attitude was not a result of the Istanbul government's willingness to compromise, but was the result of the nation's determination to protect its fatherland.<sup>271</sup> This episode is, then, another example of the "false mentality" characteristic of Ottoman politicians in the capital. In the *Nutuk* these are confirmations of the "fact" that the Sultan, the government, and the whole Ottoman political elite were nothing but naive dreamers inhabiting the age-old and picturesque corridors of the once magnificent imperial residences, which now symbolized only ignorance and degeneration.

There is one very interesting aspect of this discourse of degeneration employed in the *Nutuk*. Ottoman society was traditionally divided into two parts; those who governed (*askeri*, literally "soldiers") and those who were governed (*reaya*, literally "flock").<sup>272</sup> To be part of the governing elite it was obligatory to know how to speak and read the official language of the Ottoman high-society, the *Osmanlıca*, that is, the Ottoman-Turkish language comprising Turkish, Arabic and Persian words, which differed greatly from the Turkish language of the Anatolian peasantry.<sup>273</sup> Among the Ottoman governing elite the increasing power of Christian Europe since the

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<sup>269</sup> Atatürk 1968, pp. 85–86.

<sup>270</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 181–182.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>272</sup> Albert Hourani, *The History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber & Faber, 1991), p. 219.

<sup>273</sup> Suraiya Faroqh, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2005), p. 4.

eighteenth-century led to considerable self-criticism. Some members of the elite had expressed opinions of moral degeneration already during the sixteenth-century, when it was proclaimed a need to return to the right-minded governance of the early centuries of the dynasty.<sup>274</sup> In a sense, then, we can argue that in the *Nutuk* Mustafa Kemal recycled a very old Ottoman cultural schema of degeneration. For Atatürk, this degeneration was obviously interpreted in a different way than previously, since for many in the Ottoman elite of the earlier centuries the “degeneration” was the result of weakening in the relationship to the original Islamic way of government. In the *Nutuk*, these Islamic methods were seen as the very reason for degeneration.

As already mentioned, the representations of the “internal enemy” and “degenerated mentality” in the Six-Day speech can also be situated in the *problem of the mandate* during the Sivas Congress. The polemic around the mandate occupies a very significant number of pages in the *Nutuk*. In short, it concerned whether the Ottomans should accept an American or British mandate over Ottoman territories in Anatolia. One can ask why Mustafa Kemal wanted to present this polemic over the mandate with such thoroughness. One answer can be found in the idea of “internal enemy” or “degenerated mentality.” By accounting the arguments made in favour of the mandate – an option which never materialized – Atatürk was able to show how those resisting him in 1927 had been wrong even during the resistance struggle.

The mandate polemic, however, also gives us an opportunity to highlight the differences of opinion between Mustafa Kemal and other political figures of the resistance struggle. According to Baskin Oran, during this period the political elite did not share a common mindset. The political elite was roughly divided into those who supported decentralization (*itilafçılar*) and those who supported strong central power, the unionists (*ittihatçılar*, a term referring to *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, that is, the Committee of Union and Progress). Oran claims that this division was so strong that it manifested itself much later periods in the division between those supporting democracy and liberalism (*Demokrat*) and those who favoured statism and populism (*Halkçı*).<sup>275</sup>

One feature common to the entire Ottoman cultural and political elite during the Resistance Struggle era, on the other hand, was a habit to admire the West and perceive it as a model. This mindset led to the fact that after the Great War the last thing anyone wanted was to confront the West as a political or military enemy ever again. It was this mentality, more than anything else, which clearly spoke on behalf of a British or American mandate in the difficult post-war situation.<sup>276</sup> Oran stresses that Mustafa Kemal did not believe in an idea of progress in the context of foreign mandate. This, Oran suggests, was a consequence of his fundamental *realism*. But, as Oran admits, it did not seem very realistic to believe that the Turks could resist the Western allies militarily after a long war that had just been lost. However, it was on the other hand very realistic indeed to think, as Mustafa Kemal obviously did, that reaching the level of the Western nations and securing an egalitarian relationship

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<sup>274</sup> Hourani 1991, pp. 249–250.

<sup>275</sup> Oran 1997, p. 101.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

with them first demanded the establishment of an independent nation-state. This was possible only if the population was willing to defend Anatolian territories by force.<sup>277</sup> Oran further emphasizes that in a situation where the masses were exhausted after a long war, discouraged, and without national consciousness, and as the political elite was divided and unwilling to confront the West militarily, it did not seem very logical to suppose that there would emerge in Anatolia a resistance force capable of fighting for the country's national sovereignty. In this situation, Oran argues, the leadership of Mustafa Kemal became absolutely crucial. According to Oran's interpretation, Atatürk was able to throw over board the solution initially conceived as dominant, the mandate, and secure the principle of *Derhal Bağımsızlık!* (Independence now!). Thus, in Oran's interpretation, the Anatolian Resistance Struggle in 1919–1922, as a result of Atatürk's determination, was transformed from a movement struggling to safeguard the traditional communal rights of the Anatolian Muslim population into a nationalistic popular movement aiming to establish a modern nation-state.<sup>278</sup>

Thus, Baskın Oran seems to propose that the national congresses by accepting the call for “Independence now!” were transformed into a nationalistic movement aiming for an *independent Turkish nation-state*. It can be argued, however, that the idea that the independent Turkish nation-state was the goal of these congresses was an idea constructed in the *Nutukian* narrative, which ethnic Turks, Oran included, have subsequently internalized through socialization. One crucial thing backing this argument is that the documents produced in the national congresses do not speak of Turks but about *Müslüman halkın tarihi ve millî haklarını* (historical and national rights of the Muslim population),<sup>279</sup> and, as Oran himself points out, about *osmanlı-islam ekseriyet* (the Ottoman-Muslim majority).<sup>280</sup> One of the most important differences between the Ottoman sultan and the Anatolian Resistance Movement concerned what each considered to be the priority in negotiations with the Allies. Sultan Vahdettin ordered that the delegation chosen to negotiate with the Allies be given instructions that the rights of the caliphate, the sultanate, and the Ottoman dynasty should be safeguarded. These conditions show, according to Andrew Mango, that the sultan feared that the dynasty and the institutions which it embodied might perish in the turmoil of defeat. It was also a sign that Vahdettin put his throne before anything else.<sup>281</sup> The Anatolian Resistance Movement, on the other hand, demanded in its declaration of the National Pact that all the areas inside the 1918 armistice lines were an integral part of the Ottoman state and could not in any circumstances be annexed.<sup>282</sup>

This demand of integrity for the areas under Ottoman control in 1918 when the armistice was signed should be seen the starting point for all further discussions of the spatial setting of the *Nutuk*. This area was not an outcome of some primordial or “natural” concept of a Turkish fatherland but was instead the result of historical

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<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>279</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 9.

<sup>280</sup> Oran 1997, p. 136.

<sup>281</sup> Andrew Mango, *Atatürk* (London: John Murray, 2004), p. 188.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

conditions that were in essence purely random. Many ethnic groups lived inside the armistice lines, and large number of Turks lived outside them. The *Nutuk* includes the following words delivered by Atatürk at the Grand National Assembly in 1922:

The Ottomans were forced to retreat from the gates of Vienna because they were blinded by their lust and badly prepared. After this they had to retreat from Budapest and Belgrade. They also lost the Balkans. After this they abandoned Rumelia. They left us a country surrounded by enemies. If we are to save this last piece of the fatherland, we have to keep our emotions in check. There is no other way than to beat our enemy with all our energy.<sup>283</sup>

After the caliphate had been abolished on 3 March 1924 Kemal took a tour of the country in order to remove the anxiety felt over the removal of the caliph. According to the *Nutuk*, on one occasion he asked the people in rhetorical manner:

For centuries our nation was governed using duplicitous methods. What was the result of this? In every corner we left millions of men. Are you aware of the number of Anatolian children who perished in the deserts of Yemen? In order to defend Syria, Iraq and Egypt, in order to stay in Africa, do you know how many lives were wasted? And can you see what the result of this is?<sup>284</sup>

Well, according to Kemal, as we saw above, the result was a piece of fatherland surrounded by the enemy. Herein lies one of the *Nutuk*'s crucial aspects. The expansionist policies of the Ottomans were madness that unnecessarily burdened the Turkish Nation. Talking about the "children of Anatolia" in this context was meant to show that Anatolia was the real homeland of the Turks, which was finally secured. In the *Nutuk* securing this Anatolian homeland becomes the duty of all real Turks. This territory was won with a heavy price, and securing it demands national unity. National unity, on the other hand, is possible only in a homogenized nation-state. In the *Nutuk* Atatürk says:

Gentlemen, the most important backbone of a state's foreign policy is its internal structure. Foreign policy must be in harmony with the inner structure of the state. The inner structure of a state founded on a mixture of different aspirations and wishes of the eastern and western peoples, having different mentalities and cultures, is without a doubt rotten and lacking

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<sup>283</sup> Osmanlılar, yapacakları askerî harekâtın genişliği ölçüsünde hazırlıklı ve tedbirli davranmadıkları ve daha çok duygu ve hırslarının etkisi altında hareket ettikleri için, Viyana'ya kadar gittikleri halde, geri çekilmeye mecbur kalmışlardır. Bundan sonra Budapeşte'de de duramadılar, geri çekildiler. Belgrat'ta da yenilerek geri çekilmeye mecbur edildiler. Balkanlar terk ettiler. Rumeli'den çıkarıldılar. Bize, içinde daha düşman bulunan bu vatani miras bıraktılar. Bu son vatan parçasını kurtarıırken olsun, hırslarımızı, hislerimizi bir yana bırakarak ihtiyatlı olalım. Kurtuluş için... İstiklâl için, eninde sonunda düşmanla bütün varlığımızla vuruşarak onu yenmekten başka karar ve care yoktur ve olamaz. Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 496–497.

<sup>284</sup> Milletimiz, yüzyıllarca bu anlamsız ve boş görüşten hareket ettirildi. Fakat ne oldu? Her gittiği yerde milyonlarca insan bıraktı. Yemen çöllerinde kavrulup yok olan Anadolu evlâtlarının sayısını biliyor musunuz? dedim. Suriye'yi, Irak'ı elden çıkarmamak için, Mısır'da barınabilmek için, Afrika'da tutunabilmek için ne kadar insane telef oldu, bunu biliyor musunuz? Ve sonuç ne oldu görüyor musunuz? dedim. Ibid., pp. 544–545.

stability. In a state like this, the foreign policy must also be rotten and lacking stability. Because the inner structure of a state like this is not national, neither can its political structure be national. Because of this, the policies of the Ottoman state were not national but crisis-ridden, undetermined, and ephemeral.<sup>285</sup>

Now, here we have, in a crystallized form, Atatürk's conception of a nation-state and its value. Only a state which has strong internal structure can have a convincing foreign policy and external security. Internally strong state, on the other hand, is possible only in so far as it is harmonious and consistent. This is the case in a state that is composed of one nation, that is, a modern nation-state. Here we have, not only an idea of a re-born Turkish nation that in the state of unity is capable of defending its security against external threat, but also the core of the Kemalist concept of a homogenous nation. In this doctrine we also find the iron logic of a unified state: harmonious nation-state secures the external security of its nation-citizens, so to shake this unity from within with separatist ideologies is high treason, and separatist ideologies include all those who reject the discourse of homogeneity.

In the Republic of Turkey the concept of *vatan* (fatherland) experienced semantic change. It no longer meant one's place of birth in a particular local community, nor did it refer to the territory under Islamic rule. Now the fatherland referred to the territorial nation-state of Turkey (*Türkiye*). After securing victory in the national liberation war, the Kemalist regime strictly abandoned all irredentist ideas proclaiming political unity of all Turkish peoples, and all pan-Islamic ideas of Muslim political brotherhood. The new regime devoted itself safe-guarding the boundaries of the new territorial state. These borders were first defined after the Balkan Wars in 1913, and they were laid down in the National Pact. These borders were then sanctified as eternal borders of Turkey.<sup>286</sup> The National Pact, which had been adopted by the last Ottoman parliament on 28 January 1920, advocated, however, not Turkish national sovereignty but that of all Muslim Ottomans. This meant Turks and Kurds, as well as smaller groups like Laz and Çerkez.<sup>287</sup> This means that the area demanded by the Anatolian Resistance Movement was considered as an area of an Ottoman Muslim community constituted by different ethnic groups. In the narrative of the *Nutuk*, however, this territory is presented as the *Turkish* homeland. Also the concrete resistance and its goal are presented as an effort fought and accomplished by the *Turkish nation*. This is clear when we look the following sentence of the *Nutuk*:

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<sup>285</sup> Efendiler, dış siyasetin en çok ilgili bulunduğu ve dayandığı temel, devletin iç teşkilâtıdır. Dış siyasetin iç teşkilâtla uyumlu olması gerekir. Batıda ve Doğuda, başka başka karaktere, kültüre ve ülküye sahip birbirinden farklı unsurlarını tek sınır içinde toplayan bir devletin iç teşkilâtı, elbette temelsiz ve çürük olur. O halde, dış siyaseti de köklü ve sağlam olamaz. Böyle bir devletin iç teşkilâtı özellikle millî olmaktan uzak olduğu gibi, siyasî ilkesi de millî olamaz. Buna göre, Osmanlı Devleti'nin siyaseti millî değil, belirsiz, bulanık ve kararsızdı. Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>286</sup> Ahmet Yıldız, "Kemalist Milliyetçilik," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 211.

<sup>287</sup> Zürcher 1998, p. 144.



The most explicit desire stemming from the heart of the Turkish nation was absolutely clear: Salvation... This shout echoed in all corners of the Turkish land.<sup>288</sup>

When the territory demanded in the National Pact – which is, actually, the area of the Republic of Turkey agreed in the Lausanne peace conference in 1923 – is linked with the *Nutuk*'s message of the new state as a Turkish state, it is obvious that there is no room for other nationalities inside the territorial borders of Turkey. Thus, the *Nutuk* constructs a concept whereby all Muslims living inside Turkey are Turks. The Kemalist discourse stressing the one-state-one-nation doctrine carries with it unquestioned convictions regarding the spatial dimension of the Turkish nation. According to Kemalist ideology, there is a one Turkish nation living inside the boundaries secured in National Struggle of 1919–1922. The *Nutuk* constructs a picture of Turkey's boundaries as natural boundaries. These boundaries are undisputedly Turkish and they have been secured with the blood of the Turkish nation.

However, during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle it was the *Ottoman Muslims* who were always perceived as a unified collective fighting for its traditional rights and territory. In the context of 1918 *millî sınırlar* (national borders), an expression used in the Six-Day speech,<sup>289</sup> meant borders within which lived a one and indivisible Muslim community. This becomes absolutely clear from the next passage, delivered by Mustafa Kemal himself in a closed session of the Grand National Assembly on 3.7.1920 – a speech which, significantly, is *not*, unlike many others, included in the Six-Day speech

The general principle is that all populations living inside the borders defined as national, who respect each other's race, customs and districts, peoples totally mixed up with each other, are true brothers. If anything is clear in our view, it is the fact that all Muslim populations living inside the national borders, whether Turks, Kurds, Lazes, Circassians or any other, have a common interest to defend here. These groups have decided to fight together and nothing else has been proclaimed. These populations share a unity of brotherhood based on a common religious bond.<sup>290</sup>

Thus, the community defending its national rights in 1919–1922 was a Muslim community determined to keep areas within the 1918 armistice lines as part of the Ottoman motherland. As already noted, this also is evident when we look the actual documents of the period. The *Misak-i Millî* (National Pact) does not speak of Turks

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<sup>288</sup> Türk milletinin kalbinden, vicdanından doğan ve ilham alan en köklü en belirgin istek ve inancı belli olmuştu: Kurtuluş... Bu kurtuluş feryadı Türk yurdunun bütün ufuklarında yankılanmaktaydı. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 281.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>290</sup> Suret-i umumîyede prensip şudur ki: Hudud-i millî olarak çizdiğimiz daire dahilinde yaşayan ve anasır-ı muhtelif-i İslamiye yekdiğerine karşı ırkî, muhitî, ahlâkî bütün hukukuna riayetkâr öz kardeşlerdir. Binaenaleyh, onların arzuları hilâfında bir şey yapmayı biz de arzu etmeyiz. Bizce katî olarak muayyen olan bir şey varsa o da hudud-i millî dahilinde Kürt, Türk, Lâz, Çerkes vesair bütün İslam unsurlar müşterek-ül-menfaadır; beraber çalışmaya karar vermişlerdir. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Gizli Oturumlarda Atatürk'ün Konuşmaları*, edited by Sadi Borak (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1977), p. 109.

but of *osmanlı-islam ekseriyet* (Ottoman-Muslim majority).<sup>291</sup> What the resistance movement was defending is even stated in the *Nutuk*. It is the national and historical rights of the Anatolian Muslim community (*Müslüman halkının tarihî ve millî haklarını*) that are at stake.<sup>292</sup> This is important because Turkish nationalist historiography, developed since 1930s, depicts, to a large degree because of the *Nutuk*, the struggle of 1919–1922 as the prehistory of the Turkish republic.<sup>293</sup> Even though the *Nutuk* mentions the original aim of the resistance organizations, a different aim is ascribed to these organizations after Atatürk’s involvement. After the Allies had officially occupied Istanbul, Mustafa Kemal sent a bulletin to the nation on 16 March 1920. This bulletin is also included in the *Nutuk*. In the bulletin Atatürk asserts that Istanbul had been occupied by force and that this ended the 600-year-old independence of the Ottoman state. The bulletin then continues with the following phrase:

Thus, today the whole Turkish nation was called to save its right to life and independence, its right to justice and civility, and to secure its future.<sup>294</sup>

Then while giving an account in the *Nutuk* of the final victorious battle won over Greek forces in August 1922, Kemal did not hesitate to define this victory as an achievement of the *Turkish nation*:

This battle so very well prepared and planned, so skilfully organized, will be written into the history books as a magnificent thing. The attack manifested the strength and heroic quality of the commanders and soldiers of the Turkish army. This victory is an immortal monument to the love of freedom and independence of the Turkish nation. I am extremely happy that I am a child of this nation, and the commander-in-chief of its army.<sup>295</sup>

Kemal also in *Nutuk* emphasizes the nation’s duty to shape its own destiny:

The affairs of the state and nation cannot be advanced by asking for justice and mercy, by begging for pity. This is not the way to secure the nation’s independence...begging for pity and justice cannot be considered as principles. The Turkish nation, the children of tomorrow’s Turkey, this you should always remember.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Oran 1997, pp. 136–137.

<sup>292</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 9.

<sup>293</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, “The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Science* 137 (1999): p. 81.

<sup>294</sup> Yani, bugün Türk milleti, medenî kabiliyetin, yaşama ve bağımsız kalma hakkının ve bütün bir geleceğin savunulmasına çağrıldı. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 331.

<sup>295</sup> Her safhasıyla düşünülmüş, hazırlanmış, idare edilmiş ve zaferle sonuçlandırılmış olan bu harekât Türk ordusunun, Türk subay ve komuta heyetinin yüksek kudret ve kahramanlığını tarihe bir kere daha geçiren muazzam bir eserdir. Bu eser, Türk milletinin hürriyet ve istiklâl düşüncesinin ölümsüz bir âbidesidir. Bu eseri yaratan bir milletin evladı, bir ordunun başkomutanı olduğumdan, mutluluk ve bahtiyarlığım sonsuzdur. *Ibid.*, p. 519.

<sup>296</sup> İnsaf ve merhamet dilenmekle millet işleri, devlet işleri görülmez. Bu şekilde milletin ve devletin şeref ve bağımsızlığı korunamaz... İnsaf ve merhamet dilenmek gibi bir ilke yoktur. Türk millet, Türkiye’nin gelecekteki çocukları, bunu bir an akâllarından çıkarmamalılar. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

The Speech is full of similar expressions describing the Anatolian Resistance Movement as *an effort of the Turkish nation*. In the examples above, there is no mention of the “Ottoman-Muslim majority” as an agent of the resistance movement. Thus, we must initially conclude that the *plot* of the *Nutuk* is such that it presents the events of 1919–1922 from the viewpoint of the Republic. In the narrative structure of the speech all the events receive their meaning as necessary steps required in the founding of a Turkish nation-state. In the *Nutuk*, the Anatolian Resistance Movement is represented, firstly, as a genuine revolution bringing the enlightenment process to Turkey. Secondly, the narrative mechanism works in such a way that the Anatolian Muslim community is transformed into a Turkish nation. I have already suggested that this nation is represented in the *Nutuk* as executing a historical struggle, the aim of which is to construct the enlightenment process in a Turkish nation-state. As a revolutionary process, it demands the elimination of the internal enemy, that is, those who in one way or another resist this process *ordered by history*. It is interesting to note that already in March 1923 while meeting the craftsmen of Adana, Atatürk noted how the Ottoman rulers had not understood the importance of craftsmen, declaring them unsuitable for Muslim military honor. Kemal then said that he had heard that even in Adana craftsmanship had been the monopoly of foreigners. But, Kemal declared, foreigners had no rights to the productive Turkish soil. Kemal went on to state that

The Fatherland is yours. It belongs to the Turks. This land was Turkish in the past, it is Turkish today, and it shall be Turkish until the end of time.<sup>297</sup>

Now, this explicit definition is from 1923. It is a remarkably clear indication of a change in Kemal’s vocabulary. As soon as the Independence Struggle had been won, it was no longer necessary to represent the community as one of all Muslims and as a struggle for the rights of the whole Anatolian Muslim community; now Atatürk is free to talk about *Turkish land* and *Turkish rights*. On the same occasion Atatürk declared that Anatolia was originally a land inhabited first by the Turks immigrating there from the Turan. Only later did other peoples – from the Persians to the Romans – occupied it, until the Turks of Central Asia finally brought Anatolia back under the original rulers, the Turks. Neither the Armenians nor any other nation had any right to Anatolia, which was a genuine Turkish land.<sup>298</sup> It is worth mentioning that Atatürk indeed said these words in Adana, in a district which had been one of the main areas of Armenian inhabitants for centuries.

We can conclude this section by first noting that it is pretty natural that battles that demanded the sacrifice of large number of human lives came to be seen as holy sacrifices in the collective memory. A battle fought in order to rescue the continuous existence of a collective is usually perceived as “sacred” in all human communities. In the case of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, the battles demanding this “blood price” came to be seen as the Turkish War of Independence” (and as the Turks’

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<sup>297</sup> Ülkeniz, sizindir. Türklerindir. Bu ülke tarihte Türktü, bugün de Türktür ve sonsuzluğa kadar Türk olarak yaşayacaktır. Atatürk 1968, p. 109.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

blood price) only after Atatürk's Six-Day speech produced a ground for a collectively reproduced idea of the struggles in 1919–1922 as Turkish national struggle. However, Kemal had started “the republican interpretation of history” even before the Six-Day speech of 1927. The representation of the struggles of 1919–1922 from the republican perspective started already on 30 August 1924 in a speech commemorating the final victory over the Greeks on the plain of Afyonkarahisar-Dumlupınar on 30.9.1922. Kemal proclaimed that in the glorious military history of the Turkish nation there was no victory as glorious as this one. He went on to declare that this particular victory secured the new Turkish state and the foundations of the young Republic. According to Kemal, the blood shed on the battle field and the martyrs now exalted in heaven were immortal guardians of the Republic.<sup>299</sup> Thus we can say that the republican interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle started almost immediately after the proclamation of the Republic. This interpretation was then becoming collectively reproduced and highly naturalized part of Turks' historical consciousness through Atatürk's Six-Day speech of 1927. In conclusion, then, it is very hard to see how the congresses that produced the above mentioned documents could have been aiming for a Turkish nation-state. On the other hand, it is very easy to understand why Mustafa Kemal in his Six-Day speech of 1927 wanted to present the goal of the national movement in this way.

The narrative of the *Nutuk*, as it has been canonized in a massive stream of publications, both popular and academic, has naturalized the concept of Turkish territory. It is significant that, when attached to the unquestioned conviction of the enlightenment as the *telos* of history, Kemalist discourse defines the territory of the Turkish Republic as a territory of a *civilization project*, controlled and executed by the state. While the *Nutuk* symbolically constructs the territorial homeland of the Turks, it simultaneously sets out the demand that the project of the enlightenment must be executed in every corner of the country. This means that there is inherent in Kemalist discourse the idea of one path to modernity, to be employed everywhere in the country. The territory of Turkey is, according to this presupposition, a space where a highly legitimized modernizing project is to be accomplished. This Kemalist assumption leads to the view that the modernization of the country cannot be halted until the whole area of the Republic is living in the time of modernity and enlightenment. In the south-east of Anatolia this means that until the Kurdish tribes have been “modernized,” the state's great mission remains unfulfilled.

### 3.3 The Birth of the “Father” (Ata)

In the Republic of Turkey – and most of all in Kemalist discourse – Mustafa Kemal is the father of the nation, *Atatürk*. This chapter scrutinizes why it can be claimed that this concept of a “Father” was already constructed in the famous *Nutuk*, and how this symbolism works as an ingredient in the Kemalist idea of history.

One of the few efforts to analyze the narrative “I” of the *Nutuk* critically is that of Hülya Adak. According to Adak, the *Nutuk* can be described as a self-narrative of

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., p 136.

the “new individual,” who represented the history of his life by inscribing it in the narrative of the nation. In the Ottoman context, the new individual was a Napoleonic figure, with the aim of bringing his nation to the zenith of “European civilization” and “progress.” Adak emphasizes that the “new individual” was a new concept to the Ottoman literati of the nineteenth-century, but it has many antecedents in the Western autobiographical tradition. Within this tradition, the writing of history and narrative, the representation of the growth of nations, the temper of the times, and the political and cultural *zeitgeist* were all represented by the “exemplary man.” In this tradition, Adak writes, “the man in the autobiographical texts is the mirror of his time, and history can be told as the story of this exemplary self.”<sup>300</sup>

However, even though the *Nutuk* has many similarities with Western autobiographies, Adak underscores that it differs from that tradition structurally. In the eighteenth-century Western context, human reality was seen to be profoundly historical, which necessitated an analysis of the self as an analysis of how the self became what it was. Often, history was associated with a story of progress. From this perspective, the self experienced a “development” or “Bildung,” moving from childhood to gradual maturation. The *Nutuk*, on the other hand, is a linear, progressive account of historical events beginning in 1919, not a narrative of developing self. The *Nutuk* is essentially a repetitive account of the self with a prophet-like calling to rescue the nation. In Adak’s words, “the self of *Nutuk* had *a priori* knowledge on how history would unravel even before historical events took place. The transcendent, unchanging self of *Nutuk* is prior to and above history and does not undergo linear historical development during the period *Nutuk* narrates.”<sup>301</sup> Taha Parla describes *Nutuk* and its narrator in very similar way as Adak. According to Parla, the narrating “I of the *Nutuk* has a ready-made plan. While executing this plan this history-making and history-writing person does not change as the events unfold: he is the same self right from the beginning, knowing the course and goal of action *a priori*. The one developing, or, more rightly, developed by the narrating self, is the nation. It is as if the nation is the hero of a developing-roman. But the original hero, however, is the development-producing, nation’s latent progress ability sensing, and nation’s rescuer, the narrating “I”, Atatürk.”<sup>302</sup>

These characterizations of the *Nutuk* as an autobiography have brought us to the question of *genre*. The question of genre may look, at first, trivial for our purposes. One can wonder what difference it makes in to which pre-labeled category the *Nutuk* belongs when our aim is to analyze its role in the construction of Kemalist presuppositions. However, the question of genre is taken here as a way of bringing to the surface all those various interpretations concerning *what the Nutuk is*. Many different answers to this question have been given in previous studies, and it can be argued that those answers have produced the analytical limits within which the speech should be interpreted. To put it shortly, in previous studies the habit of first defining the genre of *Nutuk* has unnecessarily limited the relevant possibilities for the analysis of the speech. In what follows, my purpose is not to determine once and

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<sup>300</sup> Hülya Adak, “National Myths and Self-Narrations: Mustafa Kemal’s *Nutuk* and Halide Edib’s *Memoirs and The Turkish Ordeal*,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102 no. 2/3 (2003): pp. 513–514.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 515.

<sup>302</sup> Parla 1991, p. 30.

for all the genre of the the *Nutuk*, but to propose one fruitful concept which allows a better understanding of the *Nutuk*'s central place in Kemalist discourse.

In an article discussing the contents, type, and purpose of the *Nutuk*, İsmail Arar observes that it has been noted, for example, that the speech does not fit in any of the categories of Turkish literature, namely the novel, poetry, the short story, or essay. According to Arar, it is important to keep in mind that the *Nutuk* is, first of all, *bir hitabe*, a speech. It is one of the finest examples of the art of Turkish eloquence, or *Türk hitabet*, meaning precisely the ability to speak eloquently (*güzel söz söyleme*). Arar notes that to find equivalences to *Nutuk* one must turn to other speeches of Mustafa Kemal himself.<sup>303</sup> Arar quotes Yusuf Akçura – himself an important ideologue of Turkish nationalism – who was present at the time Atatürk delivered his Great Speech. According to Akçura, Atatürk fully mastered the language, making no grammatical errors. His style was original, and it did not derive from any “school.” Even though Kemal had received his preliminary lessons from Namık Kemal<sup>304</sup>, he had developed his own style, going beyond his mentor.<sup>305</sup> Contemporaries like Yusuf Akçura understood the *Nutuk* as a primary source for the history of the Liberation War and early Republican era, while for example professor of literature Mustafa Nihat Öziün defined the *Nutuk* as a history book. Arar turns down the proposition that the usage of archive documents makes Mustafa Kemal a historian: Julius Caesar, Bismarck, or De Gaulle were not historians even though their memoirs included narratives of the recent past.<sup>306</sup> These characterisations of the *Nutuk* as the memoirs of a great statesman, although appropriate, are not however sufficient to catch the very particular nature of the *Nutuk* as a special type of *autobiography*.

In Western literary discourses of the nineteenth-century, memoirs and autobiography were separated on the grounds that the latter presupposed critical self-reflection, while memoirs often lacked this. According to early critics of autobiography, their duty was to search those writings in which a self-reflective person asks “who am I?” and “how did I become what I am?”<sup>307</sup> Because – according to the claim emanating from the *Nutuk* – the will of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and that of the Turkish nation was one and the same, the *Nutuk* as an autobiography of Atatürk is at the same time a *national autobiography* of the Turks. As we saw above, according to Adak and Parla, the *Nutuk* does not include any narration concerning the personal maturing of its protagonist. It does however, in my view, include a clear development-story of the Turkish nation. In the *Nutuk*, the Turkish nation becomes aware of its existence through the “Father” (*Ata*), that is, Mustafa Kemal. And this “becoming aware” is precisely the main function of autobiography. It can be argued that with the *Nutuk*, Atatürk gives the Turkish nation a national autobiography in which the nation through its Father asks “who are we?” and “how did we become what we are?” What

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<sup>303</sup> Arar 1980, p. 152.

<sup>304</sup> Namık Kemal (1840–1888) was a famous poet, journalist, and translator. He was also one of the leading figures of the Young Ottomans, a group which – although advocating constitutionalism and social reform – opposed the bureaucratic oligarchy during the Tanzimat-reforms.

<sup>305</sup> Arar 1980, p. 153.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155–156.

<sup>307</sup> Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 19.

is most crucial for the development of the Kemalist “enlightenment idea of history,” however, is that the *Nutuk* as a national autobiography not only asks these fundamental questions, but also answers them.

Here we have some preliminary characterizations of the *Nutuk* and its narrator. Before going any further, we should remind ourselves that the *Nutuk* is a non-fictional narrative presenting a real-life story by a real-life person. This fact could easily make us think that there is no reason to make a separation between the *author* and the *narrator* of the *Nutuk*. We must, however, make a distinction, for the sake of analysis, between Mustafa Kemal the author (actual writer) and Atatürk the “narrating I” of the *Nutuk*. This is because the two are not identical. Although Mustafa Kemal was not given the honorary name of “Atatürk” (the Father Turk) officially until 24 November 1934, in the *Nutuk* Mustafa Kemal is already Atatürk: the narrator of the *Nutuk* already possesses signs of the “Father.” Thus, the actual writer (author) of the *Nutuk* is Mustafa Kemal (a real-life person) but the narrator of the *Nutuk* is “Atatürk,” a *literary construction*. The narrator – Atatürk – is inside the text and will live forever there. He comes to life every time someone reads the *Nutuk*, or when the story of the *Nutuk* is presented in whatever “text” or media. The assertion that the image of the Father Turk was born in the *Nutuk* and has been at the center of the symbolic universe of the Turkish political culture ever since is, with the idea of the enlightenment as a telos of history, the most important argument for claiming that the basic legitimation tools employed by the Kemalist state elite were constructed in the *Nutuk*.

Thus, while narrating the *Nutuk* in 1927, Mustafa Kemal could freely choose how to present himself as an “experiencing I.” He could, for example, describe himself as confident and full of faith in a situation when in fact he actually was feeling depressed and experiencing a lack of faith. Here we do not try to find an objective truth about Mustafa Kemal’s real thoughts and actions during the period 1919–1927, but those mechanisms in the *Nutuk* that construct him as *Ata* (Father). Apart from his representation of the “self,” Mustafa Kemal was of course free to choose what he wanted to include in his Great Speech. Some interesting subjects were excluded from the speech. There is no mention of the invitation of Veliâht Abdülmecit Efendi<sup>308</sup> to Ankara; that Atatürk organized the founding and closure of the Turkish Communist Party;<sup>309</sup> that he was in communication with the former leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress working outside the country, trying to utilize party’s organization for the national cause, while at the same time working to prevent its future role in the Turkish politics; the murder of some prominent opposition personalities.<sup>310</sup> According to Arar, these examples prove that the *Nutuk* should not

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<sup>308</sup> The last Ottoman caliph, Abdülmecit was selected as the caliph by the Grand National Assembly on 18 November 1922. After the Sultanate was abolished on 1 November 1922, Abdülmecit only carried the title of caliph (*halife*), not that of sultan (*sultan*).

<sup>309</sup> In order to prevent a Bolshevist communist party being established in Turkey, Atatürk ordered the interior ministry to register an official Turkish Communist Party on 18 October 1921. A Bolshevist Turkish Communist Party had already been founded in Baku in September 1920 by Mustafa Suphi, to whom Atatürk made clear that social changes in Turkey would be decided by his government alone. Mango 2004, pp. 293; 302.

<sup>310</sup> Arar 1980, pp. 136–137.

be taken as an all-encompassing general history of the Independence War era, but rather as memoirs presenting the story of the Turkish Revolution by its main protagonist.<sup>311</sup>

There are, of course, both intra-textual and extra-textual factors contributing to the image of saviour and guide constructed in the *Nutuk*. We are mainly concerned with investigating the ones belonging to the first category, but we have to be aware of the second category too. One of these extra-textual factors – that is, factors that do not derive from the speech itself – is the social-psychological phenomenon of a longing for a “leader,” “guide,” or “saviour.” According to Murat Belge, who refers especially to the comments made by a prominent Kemalist Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, the generation that was in its early adulthood when the Independence Struggle started possessed a collective longing for a heroic character that would lead the nation out of darkness and desperation. They finally found (or, one could even say *founded*) that hero in Mustafa Kemal.<sup>312</sup> After securing the independence of the Turkish state, there was an overall prestige ascribed to Kemal. Inside this militarily achieved authority, Mustafa Kemal was able to consolidate his political powerbase in a state that was now a new republic. When Mustafa Kemal in 1927 delivered his grand speech, there were no longer challengers in the political field with enough prestige to usurp him.<sup>313</sup>

In order to better understand the authority of Kemal, it is fruitful to discuss the traditional cultural expressions of military heroism among the Anatolian population. This study is grounded on the conviction that the narrative of the Turkish nation was very consciously produced by the Young Turk military-bureaucratic elite that was committed to a Western concept of modernity. When compared to the theoretical approaches of nationalism, this view is close to the “modernist school” of thought represented for example by Elie Kedourie. According to Kedourie, nationalism is, in short, a political ideology born in Europe during the earlier part of the nineteenth-century. As such, the doctrine of nationalism is in rather straightforward causal relation to the emergence of the modern state.<sup>314</sup> It seems that there really is nothing in Turkish nationalism that we could claim as an evidence of collective identity of a *longue duree*. As noticed, the pre-republican Anatolian Turkish-speaking population perceived itself as a Muslim community, not a Turkish one.

This should not, however, prevent us from seeing those cultural expressions that lingered on after the empire in the republic. One traditional cultural form that was provided a new interpretation in the republican context was the so-called *gazi*-mentality. It was an important element in a religious discourse forming a bond between the elite and the masses. As Şerif Mardin has pointed out, in the Ottoman Empire religion was not working only through the official institutions of the *ulama* and *medrese*, but also formed a shared discourse between the elite, representing the

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<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>312</sup> Belge 2002, pp. 35–37.

<sup>313</sup> Uzun 2006, p. 69.

<sup>314</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., enl. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 1.



state, and the masses.<sup>315</sup> The *gazi*-mentality was a popular conception of the Ottoman Turks as brave soldiers of Islam, predestined by God to conquer vast territories. It was shaped by the military successes that had stamped the earlier centuries of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>316</sup> On these grounds, one can quite easily imagine that after the victorious liberation struggle fought against the powerful Western nations, in the eyes of ordinary Anatolian men and women Mustafa Kemal was seen as a *gazi*, a victorious military hero who had saved the independence of the Muslim community. In this situation, all those heroic characters appointed to Mustafa Kemal by himself in his Six-Day speech were greeted with enthusiasm and idolatry. Now the *Ata* appeared in the Kemalist discourse, partly because this was given life in the *Nutuk*, and partly because the cadres around Kemal wanted this hero to exist. This was further consolidated by the concept of Mustafa Kemal as a brave soldier of Islam, the *gazi*, among the populace at large.

According to Atatürk, history never denies a nation's right to exist. Because of this, those who set themselves against the nation and fatherland were doomed to fail.<sup>317</sup> We have already seen in chapter one that this "history" in the narrative of the *Nutuk* is a universal history heading towards progress. But, besides this, "history" has in the *Nutuk* also another, more specifically argumentative function. Let's look, for example, at the following statement in the *Nutuk*:

Gentlemen, history proves indisputably, that success in great efforts requires one able and determined leader. At a time when elites were feeling hopeless and powerless...when the whole nation was in darkness without guidance, at a time when everyone called himself a patriot, while the meetings and summits are filled with a multitude of different views and aspirations, all these attached to different memories and effects, would it have been possible to achieve that goal so very hard to reach? Does history show us any one case where a positive outcome was reached in this manner?<sup>318</sup>

This appeal to history can really be interpreted as an *argumentation*. Argumentation is all about getting or strengthening an audience's approval of or support for the claims presented, and thus it purports to influence the audience. Argumentation does not aim to win intellectual approval only. Often its goal is action, or at least a readiness for action. In this respect it is significant that for example according to Taha Parla, Mustafa Kemal was very skilful in presenting his goals as objective matters of fact, which, as such, were comprehended by all as universal truths. In the *Nutuk* this is manifested, for example, in Atatürk's habit of not writing "my idea

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<sup>315</sup> Mardin 1997, p. 72.

<sup>316</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), p. 57.

<sup>317</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 43.

<sup>318</sup> Efendiler, tarih, söz götürmez bir biçimde ortaya koymuştur ki, büyük işlerde başarı için gücü ve yeteneği sarsılmaz bir başkanın varlığı çok gereklidir. Bütün devlet büyüklerinin umutsuzluk ve güçsüzlük içinde, bütün milletin başsız olarak karanlıklar içinde kaldığı bir sırada, "yurtseverim" diyen bin bir çeşit kişinin, bin bir türlü davranış ve inanç gösterdiği kargaşalı bir zamanda danışmalarla, birçok hatırı sayılır kişilerin sözlerine uyma zorunluluğuna inanmakla; korkusuz, kuşkusuz ve hele sert yürünebilir mi ve en sonunda ulaşılması çok güç olan hedefe varılabilir mi? Tarihte böylece amacına ulaşmış bir topluluk gösterilebilir mi? Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 47.

expressed the will of the nation” but by saying “that idea expressed the will of the nation.” Kemal presented the ideas he supported, not as a polemic between his own and his opponent’s assertions, but as a struggle between unquestionable truths and his opponent’s claims.<sup>319</sup> The *Nutuk*’s first line, however, makes it clear who is the “maker” of the Turkish Revolution:

I landed in Samsun on 19 May 1919. The overall situation was as follows...<sup>320</sup>

Here, in the first line of the speech, we come face to face with the narrator of *Nutuk*. In this way Atatürk takes possession of the critical situation: he has come to the people, now he will show them the way out of darkness. This is followed by an *abstract* or introduction. As we saw earlier, this abstract is short and efficient. According to it, the Ottoman state has been defeated in the First World War and is now under the tyranny of the Allies. The Ottoman sultan-caliph or the government formed after the armistice is doing nothing to defend the independence of the country. The people are in darkness, without guidance, waiting fearfully what will happen. The *Nutuk*’s introduction is then constituted by the definition of the nation’s path to salvation. A leader, Mustafa Kemal, has rightly internalized the predetermined course of history, which in a latent form is waiting to be pushed on. A leader has decided the path to salvation whilst in Istanbul, and immediately after landing in Samsun and joining the “righteous” people of Anatolia, he determinately, one step at a time, starts to realize that decision.

Taha Parla makes the same kind of interpretation when stressing the fact that the narrating-I of the *Nutuk* is an unerring leader who senses the unstoppable course of history, even helps this history to fulfil itself. In this way, the narrating-I becomes the midwife of history. When compared to the unerring leader, the nation is erratic and easily misled. It cannot comprehend the “right path.” Because of this, the leader cannot declare what the right path is in all its complexity in the beginning, but has to proceed step by step and with great deliberation.<sup>321</sup> As Parla further stresses, in the narrative of the *Nutuk* the nation is a “child” that needs to be educated. The right path can not be understood by the immature child; only the “Father” (Atatürk) knows it. Ultimately, then, the narrator of the *Nutuk* does not receive his authority from any external source but is himself the source.<sup>322</sup>

As Hülya Adak has noted, after 1927 the *Nutuk* became the only accepted account of the Anatolian Resistance Movement. Alternative versions of these events were not allowed to be published during Atatürk’s lifetime, and perhaps the most challenging account by one of Atatürk’s closest war-time comrades, Kâzım Karabekir, only received permission to be published in 1960. Adak stresses that in Turkey the man (Mustafa Kemal) the speech (the *Nutuk*) and the nation-state (the Republic of Turkey) composed a tripartite unity. To analyze critically one element of this triangle

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<sup>319</sup> Parla 1991, pp. 37–38.

<sup>320</sup> 1919 yılı Mayıs ayının 19. günü Samsun’a çıktım. Genel durum ve görünüş şöyle idi... Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 7.

<sup>321</sup> Parla 1991, pp. 30–31.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., pp. 35–36.

logically leads to a critical assessment of them all. This, however, was for decades conceived as a treacherous act.<sup>323</sup>

Even though we are not here concerned so much with the “historical truth” of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, it is nevertheless fruitful to take a quick glance at how for example Kâzım Karabekir depicts the initial phase of the resistance movement. In his massive work *İstiklal Harbımız (Our Independence War)* Kâzım Karabekir notes that after he had received permission to move to Eastern Anatolia, he met, before leaving, among others Kemal Paşa (Mustafa Kemal) and İsmet Paşa (İsmet İnönü) on 11 April 1919. According to Karabekir, he told Mustafa Kemal that on the next day he would depart for Erzurum, because nothing could be done in Istanbul to repair the situation. Karabekir says that first he emphasized that keeping silence meant destruction, and then he advised Mustafa Kemal also move to Anatolia as an army commander. He also emphasized that the key for salvation was in eastern Anatolia, because “there all was still possible.” According to Karabekir, he told Kemal that they would establish national government in the east. To this Kemal responded that “this was one possible idea.” Karabekir, on the other hand, stresses that he convinced Kemal that it was not “just an idea,” but a definitive decision. Karabekir also says that it made him very anxious that Mustafa Kemal was aiming to get a position in the sultan’s government in Istanbul at a time when he himself was already building the basis of a national government in the east.<sup>324</sup>

Karabekir also describes his role in organizing resistance in ways very similar to how Atatürk represents his. According to Karabekir, he encouraged people to join the resistance, assuring people that rumours concerning new military operations on behalf of the English and the French were not true, and that he met leaders of the local “Defence of Rights Organizations” and tried to secure the participation of the Kurdish tribes in the national resistance coalition. According to Karabekir, he had already started these preparations at the beginning of May 1919, that is, before Mustafa Kemal had arrived in Anatolia.<sup>325</sup> Now, it is obvious that Karabekir’s version challenges the very premises of the *Nutuk*’s claim that Atatürk was the only leader capable of leading a national resistance struggle.

But, Mustafa Kemal came out of the Resistance Struggle – and the internal political power struggle that followed it<sup>326</sup> – as a sovereign leader. There had already

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<sup>323</sup> Adak 2003, pp. 510–517.

<sup>324</sup> Kâzım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz* (I). Genişletilmiş yeni baskı. (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 1995), pp. 108–109. (First edition: 1960).

<sup>325</sup> Karabekir [1960] 1995, pp. 119.

<sup>326</sup> The struggle between various political groupings already during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle is well documented in the memoirs of Ali Fuat Cebesoy, who was one of Atatürk’s closest comrades in organizing resistance, but who, like Kazım Karabekir, Rauf Orbay, and Refet Bele, opposed Kemal later on. Cebesoy notes that before the battle of Sakarya, the Grand National Assembly handed over its sovereign power temporarily to Mustafa Kemal, making him the commander-in-chief of the whole resistance army. According to Cebesoy, this produced a situation where *Müdafaa-I Hukuk Grubu* (“Defence of Rights Group”), gathered by Kemal to direct the workings of the Assembly, was split in two. There appeared the so-called “Second Group” (*İkinci Grup*), whose members perceived that Mustafa Kemal was quickly becoming a dictator given his new powers. Cebesoy notes that during 1922, when *Müdafaa-I Hukuk Grubu* had split into two competing sections, a committee composed of

developed a public image of Kemal as a hero, but after 1927 this heroic representation acquired new philosophical dimensions. Kemalist ideology produced a narrative of great men and their crucial role in history by adopting Thomas Carlyle's idea that world history was shaped by heroic, great leaders. Atatürk himself read Carlyle and became completely convinced of his own position as a national hero. Kemalist discourse was stamped by the idea that Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish nation were identical: the leader, Mustafa Kemal, represented the national will.<sup>327</sup> As Hakan Ünder proposes, this concept of a national will manifested in the thoughts and actions of a national leader presupposes a Hegelian metaphysics characterized by such terms as "world-soul" or "national soul." This easily leads to the idolatry of those expressing this national soul, that is, the national hero. This adoration just as easily develops into the presentation of the hero as a god-like figure, who is placed above the common man.<sup>328</sup> We will see in the next chapter that this is exactly what happened in Kemalist Turkey during the 1930s.

One can also say that the inducement to this kind of leader-cult was largely constructed in the *Nutuk*. The speech not only presents Mustafa Kemal as the leader of the National Struggle, it also paints a picture of Mustafa Kemal as the progenitor of the Turkish Nation. While the preparations for the Sivas congress were being made, the *vali* (local governor) Reşit Paşa became anxious about the reactions the congress might produce in the Allies. He was worried that the French would occupy the whole city if the nationalists gathered there. Kemal replied:

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members from both sections presented a program according to which sovereignty belonged unconditionally to the people. Thus, Cebesoy notes, this draft proclaimed that in accordance with the spirit of the "constitution" both the executive and legislative powers were vested in the people. After prolonged quarrels, the draft was abandoned. According to Cebesoy, it was interesting that the religious scholars (*hocalar*) whom could be found in both camps, adopted a common stance in this situation and declared that sovereignty should not belong to the people but to the religious law of *sharia* (*Hocalar, hâkimiyetin millet değil, şeriatı bırakılmasını istiyorlardı*). Cebesoy also asserts that he was very anxious about the fact that during his time as party group leader, the gap between the two rival sections widened even further. According to Cebesoy, the attempt to put all state institutions in full harmony with the Constitution (*Teşkilât-ı Esasiye Kanunu*) split the party into those wanting a republic (*cumhuriyet*) and those who wanted to secure a constitutional monarchy (*meşrutiyet*). Most of all, Cebesoy says, he was very concerned that this split would also divide the army. According to Cebesoy, Mustafa Kemal's position was that without the nation's sovereign ability to decide its own destiny, independence would be jeopardized. Thus, it was obligatory that the second article of the party decree made it crystal clear that constitutional monarchy as a form of regime was essentially rotten. Besides, Cebesoy notes that the religious scholars and conservatives in both groups became anxious about the modernization drive launched by Mustafa Kemal. According to them, progress had to be grounded on a much more sophisticated Islamic culture and religious law, rather than western models. Copying the Western world had only been harmful to the Ottoman state. Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Siyasi Hatıralar: Büyük Zaferden Lozan'a, Lozan'dan Cumhuriyete Cilt: I-II* (Istanbul: Temel Yayınları, 2007), pp. 63–73.

<sup>327</sup> Hasan Ünder, "Atatürk İmgesinin Siyasal Yaşamdaki Rolü," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 145.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

I want to emphasize that I am not one of those degrading myself by asking for help from the French or anyone else. The greatest shelter and advice stems from the heart of my nation.<sup>329</sup>

This statement might lead us to think that the “nation” comes before Mustafa Kemal in the narrative of the *Nutuk*. This is not the case. The “nation” in the Six-Day speech is an ignorant mass that does not yet possess an independent existence. Atatürk writes:

After I had first spent one week in Samsun, and then stayed in Havza from 25 May to 12 June, I went to Amasya. During this time I informed the civil servants and army commanders of the need to establish national organizations throughout the country. It is worth mentioning that the nation had not yet been informed about the occupation of Manisa and Aydın by the enemy, and that the nation had not yet expressed any anxiety or resistance in the face of this horrible attack. Because of this, it was most crucial to shake the nation into action.<sup>330</sup>

This piece of text is very typical of the *Nutuk*. The narrator informs the army and nation of the critical situation and the action to be taken in the face of it. The “narrating-I” is the one who informs his nation and actively calls the people to join to the resistance movement pre-planned by the leader. It can even be argued that as the Ottoman government in Istanbul is defined as an enemy of the nation, Mustafa Kemal comes to represent political sovereignty, first as the only person possessing the legitimate power to represent the will of the nation, later through the institution of the Grand National Assembly, whose existence, as Atatürk explicitly declares, is solely dependent on him.<sup>331</sup> Thus, according to the *Nutuk*, the history-making and history-writing Atatürk is the reason for the existence of the national assembly that is vested with legislative and executive powers. Thus, on this ground it is not an exaggeration at all to say that, according to the *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal is the reason for the existence of the Turkish nation. Here, then, the Father of the Turkish nation (*Atatürk*) is truly born.

We will see in detail in the next chapter that after the free-party experiment with the *Serbestçi Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Free Republican Party) had brought the unpopularity of the Kemalist regime to the surface, during the world-wide economic depression of the beginning of the 1930s, the Republican People’s Party’s leaders became convinced that the revolution had not rooted itself in the Turkish society. The main line of reasoning evolved around the virtues of the revolution that had to be absorbed

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<sup>329</sup> Burada şunu da bilginize sunayım ki, ben ne Fransızların ve ne de herhangi bir yabancı devletin yardımına razı gelecek değilim. Benim için en büyük barınak ve yardım kaynağı milletimin kucağıdır. Atatürk [1927] 2006, p. 54.

<sup>330</sup> Bir hafta kadar Samsun’da ve 25 Mayıs’tan 12 Haziran’a kadar Havza’da kaldıktan sonra Amasya’ya gittim. Bu süre içinde bütün yurtta milli örgütler kurulması gerekliliğini bir genelge ile bütün komutanlara ve sivil örgütlerin yöneticilerine bildirdim. Dikkate değer ki, İzmir’e ve daha sonra Manisa’ya ve Aydın’a düşmanın girişi ve yapılan her türlü saldırı ve zulüm hakkında millet daha aydınlanmamış ve millî varlığına vurulan bu korkunç darbeye karşı açıkça hiçbir üzüntü ve direniş göstermemişti. Milletten bu haksız darbe karşısında sessiz ve durgun kalması, elbette millet için iyiye yorumlanamazdı. Bundan dolayı, milleti uyarıp harekete geçirmek gerekiyordu. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 511.

before multi-party democracy could be introduced; until there had developed a populace enlightened by revolutionary ideals, that is, progress and secularism, the one-party regime securing these ideals had to be kept intact. The result of this conclusion was a radicalized concept of state-society relations, now more than ever conceived as a top-down relationship between a paternalist state and the badly behaved masses.<sup>332</sup>

One can argue that even though this ever more increasing effort to socialize the masses into genuine republicans was the outcome of the crisis mentality felt by the CHP regime at the beginning of the 1930s, it echoed the example set forth in Atatürk's *Nutuk* a few years earlier. It is no exaggeration to say that the *Nutuk* – which was, after all, becoming the basis for all official history writing of the Republic – produced a paradigmatic model for the relationship between the leader and the people, the elite and the masses. All this was to a large degree a continuation of the Young Turk world-view which was stamped with elitist theories of modernization. At its core was a strong believe in science, which resulted in the interpretation of human history as a struggle between religion and science.<sup>333</sup> To spread this scientific world-view to the masses was seen as the duty of the enlightened elite. As Şükrü Hanıoğlu says, one of the most salient characteristics of the Young Turk world-view was indeed its elitism. The Young Turks depended largely on Gustave Le Bon's ideas, which were vulgarized versions of the theories of Tarde and Durkheim. All the most important Young Turks shared Abdullah Cevdet's view that those who wished to be the "social doctors" of the nation must be familiar with Le Bon's ideas. Many Young Turks came to see society in accordance with Le Bon's pyramid, with the elite having the duty of moulding the masses in accordance with the requirements of general progress.<sup>334</sup>

These elitist theories of the Young Turks were actually radicalized by Atatürk. In the *Nutuk* it is no cadre of enlightened men that is to guide the nation to salvation, it is Mustafa Kemal alone. This is confirmed with his usage of first-person narration in the story of a Turkish revolution. The narrator of the speech alone represents the enlightened elite in the days of darkness, and he alone is capable of looking beyond the meagre horizons of the armistice days. According to the *Nutuk*, this looking beyond was a prerequisite for the ability to understand the Turks' future in a Turkish nation-state at a time when the masses were attached heart and soul to the Ottoman sultanate and to the Islamic theocracy it represented. Because Atatürk-the-narrating-I can relatively freely determine the way in which Atatürk-the-experiencing-I is depicted in the Great Speech, Mustafa Kemal in the *Nutuk* is presented as full of faith and courage during the desperate days of the armistice and foreign occupation.

Thus, we can define the narrating-I of the Six-Day speech as a self-assured charismatic narrator who is the only agent fully controlling the events told in the

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<sup>332</sup> Ertan Aydın, "Peculiarities of Turkish Revolutionary Ideology in the 1930s: The Ülkü version of Kemalism, 1933–1936," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40 no.5 (2004): p. 59.

<sup>333</sup> Şükrü M. Hanıoğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902–1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 290.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 308–309.

narrative. This is, of course, the general advantage of a first-person narrator. It is claimed that the “I” of the narrative sees beyond the limits of his context, knowing the true path of salvation for his nation. This claim carries with it one of the central aspects of Kemalism, namely, that Mustafa Kemal knew from the start what was good for the people. When we look at Kemalist ideology as it developed in 1930s in the next chapter, we find this “knowing-all leader” at the heart of it. This narrative of one superior leader and national hero became the “truth” in Kemalist Turkey. Then, from the 1930s, there developed a historiography of the Turkish Revolution which was straightforwardly based on the historical representation given by Mustafa Kemal. Ever since the delivering of the *Nutuk*, Kemalist writers have found it extremely hard not to reproduce the image of Mustafa Kemal as the sole hope of the nation, and the only one who could comprehend and put into words and deeds the “national will.” In this way, the image of the *saviour* has worked not only as a comforting idea for a depressed generation (as mentioned above), but also as an *enduring source of authority* for various political aspirations. We will see (in chapter 6.3.) that even during the 1980s as the military junta of the day was eager to reconstruct political legitimacy after its military intervention, the image and legacy of the “Father” was the single most important ingredient in their discourse of national reordering. The image of the “Father” thus needs to be seen as a highly effective formula for political legitimation efforts in Kemalist Turkey. Its power stems from the fact that the concept of the “Father” has been accepted not only by Kemalist cadres but also by a majority of the population, and found emotionally appealing by both the elites and the common people.

### 3.4 Atatürk’s *Nutuk* as a Relegitimation Tool

In concluding this section, we may say that Kemal Atatürk’s famous Six-Day speech produced some basic assertions that started to function as unquestioned presuppositions of the Kemalist idea of history. The first and probably the most important presupposition is the conviction of the enlightenment as a telos of history. According to the *Nutuk*, Turkish history is, firstly, a continuum, and secondly, a genuine part of universal history heading towards progress. In the National Struggle, the Turks are taking their proper place in this universal history as a modern nation. This concept of the enlightenment inherent in the *Nutuk* is necessary for the legitimacy of the Kemalist regime and the Republic of Turkey. The enlightenment as the telos of history is represented as the utmost good for the Turkish nation, since it is attached to an absolute value, that is, the prosperity of the nation. The enlightenment, on the other hand, is conceived in such a way that it equals westernization, secularization, and the progress that can be achieved through science in an independent nation-state.

Secondly, the concept of a homogenous nation-state as the territory for the enlightenment project is constructed in the *Nutuk*’s representation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement of 1919–1922 as an effort by the *Turkish nation* to produce a secular nation-state for the *Turks*. This nationalistic idea of a homogenous nation-state together with the Enlightenment’s ideal of continuous progress equals to the *Turkish Revolution*.

Thirdly, according to the *Nutuk*, the nation itself does not initially comprehend that this is the right path. Atatürk, however, manifests the wishes of the nation since he personifies these wishes. Atatürk, the “Father” and the original progenitor of the Turkish nation thus symbolizes legitimacy. This concept of Atatürk and his vision of the enlightenment as authoritative can be seen as the third major presupposition of the Kemalist idea of history initially constructed in the *Nutuk*. These three unquestioned presuppositions taken together finally produce a phenomenon that can be called the Kemalist “enlightenment idea of history.”

Thus, we can claim that there is an obvious process of *relegitimation* at work in Atatürk’s Six-Day speech. We may say that initially the Kemalist regime built after the foundation of the Republic in 1923 represents *illegitimate power*. According to David Beetham, illegitimate power is a type of power that is acquired through a breach of the constitutional rules. This is the case for example in revolutions. Thus, it can be said that revolution constitutes a clear and indisputable negation of the first condition of legitimation, which is *legality*. The term *illegitimacy* thus conveys the idea of a manifest illegality, the definitiveness of the break with an established order, and a task or programme of *relegitimation* that may or may not be successfully carried out.<sup>335</sup>

The Turkish revolution was this kind of clear break with an established constitutional order, namely, that of the Ottoman Sultanate. It can be claimed that Atatürk’s *Nutuk* is a comprehensive attempt at relegitimation, that is, it purports to present a new basis of legitimacy. In the *Nutuk*, this new legitimacy is anchored to the conception of the enlightenment as a telos of history. In the final analysis, what the *Nutuk* is claiming is that the Ottoman Sultanate not only disgraced itself by cooperating with an external enemy, but also prevented the Turkish nation from executing its historical mission. According to this claim, the Turkish nation was obliged to reclaim its sovereignty. This sovereignty, on the other hand, was possible only in the context of a secularized and homogenous nation-state committed to scientific practices. What is thus created is a narrative which draws together two fundamental concepts of “nation” and “enlightenment,” representing them as the core elements constituting the purpose of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a historical event. This, then, is the *diegesis*, the “story-world” of the *Nutukian* narrative. As we recall from the introductory chapter, this diegesis should not be confused with the actual past. It can indeed be claimed that Atatürk’s speech constructs the inner world of the narrative in which events take place, and within of which events and actions are named and defined. In this process a unitary and closed narrative world is constructed, which is perceived as a logical whole with its relations of cause and effect. For the readers (and for all subsequent Turkish generations receiving, through whatever media, the story of the *Nutuk*), this world expresses itself as a credible one. But the historical past is, in reality, precisely the opposite, as it is boundless and open to all directions, and as its events and actions are not well-defined, either temporally or spatially, but consist of various chains of

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<sup>335</sup> Beetham 1992, p. 206.



events that are in many respects unrelated to each other, and become related to each other only through human interpretations.

Thus, the actual historical past is always “open” whereas the historical narrative, with its beginning, middle, and end, is “closed.” The past, however, becomes a human past only through these closed narratives, in which the original separateness, discontinuity, and multi-intentionality is replaced by the narrative’s connectedness, continuity, and common purpose. It is as an extension of this closed narrative that human individuals and collectives place their lives in any given present, as they aim to conceptualize the surrounding world, including its relations of power – a process whose grounds are in the narrative representations of the past, and the interpretations attached to this narrative.

## 4 Great Ideologues of the Kemalist One-Party Era – Establishing the “Sociology of the Turkish Revolution” in the Lectures of Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt

### 4.1 Setting the World-Historical Context of the Turkish Revolution

In the words of Erik J. Zürcher, “the monolithic political system established after 1925 left very little room for the ventilation of competing ideas within the leadership, and none at all for the expression of social discontent from without.”<sup>336</sup> At the same time, Zürcher underscores, the authoritarian behavior of the CHP, the lack of civil liberties, and the reform policies of the government, created widespread resentment. Zürcher also notes that by the end of the 1920s this was compounded by the world economic crisis, which hit Turkey very hard, and the fact that the CHP had no real means of managing this discontent other than suppressing its expressions. Its authoritarian structure left it without a means of communication with the mass of the population.<sup>337</sup> It should be noted that the original *Büyük Millet Meclisi* (Grand National Assembly) of 1920 had included representatives of nearly all political persuasions, from the Marxist left to the conservative religious right. In the case of the extreme left, Atatürk managed to silence its partisans by using regular army units in January 1921, and the People’s Communist Party of Turkey was suppressed in November 1922. On the other hand, the “liberals” willing to represent more conservative circles in a western-type parliamentarism were crushed by June 1925, when the opposition *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Progressive Republican Party) was outlawed following the suppression of the Kurdish revolt in south-east Anatolia, which the opposition party was seen as having supported.<sup>338</sup>

On the one hand the crisis in the country was not reflected in the assembly’s debates; on the other hand Mustafa Kemal was at least initially aware of the widespread discontent of the population. This motivated Kemal to encourage his close comrade Fethi Okyar to establish a loyal opposition party, as a kind of controlled channel offered to population through which its voice could be heard. After Fethi Okyar had been promised by Atatürk that the new party would be dealt neutrally, as long as it did not question the official ideology, he founded *Serbestçi Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Free Republican Party).<sup>339</sup> The crisis of the 1930s had both economic and political dimensions, as well as both domestic and international roots. Economically, the peasantry had recently recovered from the drought of the late 1920s only to be hit by the collapse of agricultural prices caused by the world depression.<sup>340</sup> In this context

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<sup>336</sup> Zürcher 1998, pp. 185–186.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>338</sup> William Hale, *The Political and Economic Development of Modern Turkey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1981), p. 34.

<sup>339</sup> Zürcher 1998, p. 186.

<sup>340</sup> Hale 1981, p. 53.

the new party was welcomed with widespread enthusiasm and when Fethi Okyar visited Izmir early in September 1930, he was met by huge and ecstatic crowds. This episode ended with wounded citizens on the streets. According to Zürcher, this was a turning point in the very short history of the Free Republican Party. The CHP leaders became anxious and demanded that Mustafa Kemal should state openly that he was and would remain the head of their party, which he did on 10 September 1930. After this the Free Republican Party was closed down.<sup>341</sup>

The extent of resistance to the CHP regime, proved by the Free Party episode, also crucially affected the policies of the CHP. After that experience Mustafa Kemal and his allies tightened their hold on the country by bringing under their direct control all the country's entire cultural and intellectual life, suppressing those independent social and cultural organizations that had survived from the pre-republican era.<sup>342</sup> Mustafa Kemal and his closest allies agreed that the reforms introduced had not taken root and that the somewhat practical attitude to ideological indoctrination was not working. The mass of the people seemed suspicious and unable to identify with the new order. Kemalists also soon noticed that the decades of war and social upheavals had left the people and the country in an economic malaise. The remedy, it was thought, was to have the state assume full responsibility for economic development. At the same time, the party began to produce a new ideology which was labelled *Kemalizm* (Kemalism). With it the CHP ideologues hoped to encourage rapid progress and then win the allegiance of the people.<sup>343</sup>

By the 1930s liberalism and democracy were seen as failures by many Kemalists. As they looked to the Europe of the time, they saw an attractive example of a single-party regime in fascist Italy. As we will soon discover in more detail, Kemalism and fascism shared two important doctrines, that is, a hatred of class conflict and a love for nationalism. Fascism legitimized the primary role of the state ruled by a party, and "that was the direction in which the Kemalists were moving."<sup>344</sup> In May 1931 the ideology of Kemalism was officially launched when the Third Party Congress adopted the six fundamental and unchanging principles of Republicanism, Nationalism, Populism, Statism, Secularism, and Revolutionism/Reformism. These principles became *altı ok* (six arrows) of the CHP, the symbol of the party, and they were finally incorporated to the constitution in 1937.<sup>345</sup>

Thus, at the beginning of the 1930s as world-wide economic crisis hit Turkey and the populace was seemingly unsatisfied with the Kemalist regime, the leaders of the CHP saw it necessary to create a mass cultural and political transformation. They launched stricter policies concerning state-society relations until the citizens would truly internalize the ideals of the new regime. In the words of Aydın Ertan, "the leaders of the republic sought, in short, to substitute enlightened reasoning for

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<sup>341</sup> Zürcher 1998, p. 187.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>343</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 61; Hale 1981, p. 53.

<sup>344</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 61.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid., 1993, p. 61–63.

Islamic dogma.”<sup>346</sup> To put these efforts in wider analytical context, we see that their purpose was to achieve moral authority in Turkish society. As David Beetham has stated, whereas the legitimacy of the individual derives from the rules, the rules themselves, and the power arrangements they define, can only be justified by moral considerations that go beyond them.<sup>347</sup>

According to Sefa Şimşek, by the time of the Great Depression, the Kemalist regime had completed all its major reforms. But, the goals of rapid economic growth and of “reaching the level of contemporary society” had not been realized. Şimşek argues that military victory in the “Turkish War of Independence” was too far in the past to produce the kind of legitimacy which was urgently needed by the government. Thus, according to Şimşek, the government was at, the beginning of the 1930s, alone in its path, devoid of popular support.<sup>348</sup> However, it was important that the Kemalist leadership be in a position to interpret the Anatolian Resistance Movement in a politically valuable way. As we have seen, Atatürk had presented his epic narrative on the resistance movement as the “Turkish War of Liberation” and as the “Turkish Revolution.” What the newly consolidated one-party regime needed in the beginning of the 1930s, was to gather a loyal cadre of influential elite groups, then to reproduce this rationally and emotionally convincing *Nutukian* narrative of the “Turkish nation” and its past, and then to see to it that this narrative found its proper place in official education and the public media. We saw in the introductory chapter that the effort to construct a glorious pre-Islamic Turkish antiquity was in full force by the beginning of the 1930s. However, at least as important was the construction of a narrative of the crucial historical significance of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as the Turkish Revolution. It is the contents and certain structural components of this narrative that we are interested in here. The negative features of power relations (exclusion, restriction, compulsion) call for justification, and the representation of the past, as we have already seen in reference to Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, is the arena in which the moral authority of the central power can be re-built.

It was in this political context that one of the main ideologues of the Kemalist one-party regime, Recep Peker, delivered his lectures on the Turkish Revolution in the universities of Istanbul and Ankara in 1934–1935. Peker’s lectures were part of an entire institutionalization of education concerning the Turkish Revolution. The first academic lectures on the Turkish Revolution had been already given by Mahmut Esat Bozkurt in January 1926 in the Ankara Law School.<sup>349</sup> The next big step was the foundation of *Türk İnkılâbı Enstitüsü* (Institution of the Turkish Revolution) in the summer of 1933. The first lectures on Turkish Revolution in this new institution were given by the Education Minister Yusuf Hikmet Bayur on 4 March 1934.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Aydın 2004, p. 59.

<sup>347</sup> Beetham 1992, p. 57.

<sup>348</sup> Sefa Şimşek, ““People’s Houses” as a Nationwide Project for Ideological Mobilization in Early Republican Turkey,” *Turkish Studies* 6 no. 1 (March 2005): p. 74.

<sup>349</sup> Mustafa Oral, “Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü (1933),” *Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 27-28 (2001): p. 323.

<sup>350</sup> Yusuf Hikmet Bayur gave an account of the Turkish revolutionary reforms executed upto 1934. He divided his subject to three main categories: a Military and Political part: the Liberation Struggle fought against the invading powers and the Ottoman government; a (Juridical) Modernization part:

Bayur noted that the history of the Turkish Revolution was too large an issue to lecture for one man, and this is why other prominent figures of the liberation struggle, among them İsmet İnönü,<sup>351</sup> also started to lecture on the subject, now also in the Ankara Law Faculty.<sup>352</sup>

At the beginning of his *İnkılâp Dersleri (Lectures on the Revolution)*, Recep Peker stresses that his lectures concern *Türk inkılâbı* (the Turkish Revolution) which had universal meaning, and which lifted the Turkish nation from poverty to well-being and from shame to dignity. This statement must be taken as the starting point for an academic systematization of the revolution and the utopian vision attached to it. Certainly, most Kemalists knew that the Turkish nation had not yet been lifted from poverty to well-being, but the claim of national dignity was much harder to ignore. Prosperity was conditional, as Atatürk had implicitly noted in his Great Speech, and it would become a reality if the nation followed the path shown by the “Father.” For his audience in the universities, Recep Peker could already envision a future prosperous society, since to the new enthusiastic students even this seemed plausible. Peker pointed out that his lectures dealt with the internal politics of the revolution and the character of the new political concepts emanating from it. The final, major purpose was to guide the young generation to internalize the spirit of the revolution.<sup>353</sup> Peker writes the following:

A nation composed of various groups must possess a clearly defined principle. The groups composing contemporary Turkish society, that is, scholars, merchants, artisans, all individuals, must commit to such fundamental principles that the basis of our existence, the revolutionary faith, shall never collapse...All nations must possess a common idea.<sup>354</sup>

Here the students are called to participate in the crucial mission of creating this “common idea.” This calling is constructed on the idea of tools, that is, “fundamental principles” which are needed to secure the “revolutionary faith.” The systematic effort to produce this “common idea” in more grass-roots educational institutions started during the CHP party congress in May 1931 where it was decided to found new education centers with the mission of making the masses into a more “enlightened.” For this aim, *Halkevleri* (People’s Houses) were founded on 19 February in 14 different cities.<sup>355</sup> In the opening speech to the People’s Houses, Recep Peker, then the general secretary of the CHP, argued that the state should nourish and train people through cultural studies in order to transform them into a collective mass with the aim of establishing national unity.<sup>356</sup> It has been stated that

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transforming the state institutions from those of the Middle Ages to those of a modern state; and an Economic part: the transformation from artisanship to modern industry. Ibid., p. 328.

<sup>351</sup> Şerafettin Turan, *İsmet İnönü: Yaşamı, Dönemi ve Kişiliği* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2003), p. 164.

<sup>352</sup> Oral 2001, p. 328–329.

<sup>353</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılâp Dersleri* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1984), p. 13. (First edition: 1935)

<sup>354</sup> Bir ulus ifade eden her kalabalığın muayyen bir fikri sabiti olmalıdır. Bugünkü Türk sosyal heyetini teşkil eden hakim hekim, tüccar, esnaf, her fert, öz inanış olarak köklü fikirlere bağlanmış olmalıdır ki, bugünkü ana varlığın özü, inkılâp fikri sürümüne olmasın... Her ulusun müşterek bir inanç istikameti olmalıdır. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 14.

<sup>355</sup> Hale 1981, p. 54.

<sup>356</sup> Aydın 2004, p. 60.

the Kemalist elite executed a revolution “from above” and it did this with mentality described as *halk için halka rağmen* (for the people despite the people). The creation of the People’s Houses demonstrates, however, that the Kemalist elite sincerely tried to get the masses to accept its message of revolution.<sup>357</sup> This shows us that the Kemalist elite was, obviously, very much concerned with its popularity. It would indeed be strange to claim that the principle of “for the people despite the people” entailed a lack of anxiety in relation to popular acceptance. All regimes are concerned with their popular acceptability, and the Kemalist one-party regime was surely no exception.

We will discover that the effort of Recep Peker and his comrades in the 1930s to produce – basically through education – a unified nation imbued with rational thinking presupposed the now familiar conception of *universal history* characterised by progress. As we saw in the previous section, Kemal Atatürk’s Six-Day speech had constructed an authoritative narration of this kind of universal history of progress, offering an interpretative tradition for other Kemalists to follow. The texts of Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt analyzed in this section can indeed be seen as early efforts of historical sociology or a sociology of revolution, aiming to synthesize the revolutionary process of Turkey in the context of world-history. Peker, for example, describes how the rays of civilization begun to shine over the world after long period of darkness in the middle of the fifteenth-century:

Our participation in this re-born civilization was not as fast and widespread as it should have been. We received the printing machine three hundred years too late.<sup>358</sup>

According to Peker, one major aspect of the progress of civilization was the popular demand for various freedoms. Peker makes a categorical distinction between two main historical types of revolution: *hürriyet inkılâbı* (freedom-revolution), and *sınıf inkılâbı* (class-revolution). A freedom-revolution occurs when people rise up against their rulers in order to secure their life, property and personal dignity. According to Peker, as a widespread phenomenon, this kind of action became possible after the early-modern period had established *knowledge* as a basis of enlightened philosophy of life.<sup>359</sup> It seems, then, that the all-encompassing cultural narrative of the enlightenment had also crept in Peker’s lectures. Here Peker claims that there was an early-modern period which brought knowledge to mankind, and that this enabled humanity – a very universalistic conception – to struggle for its freedom. It becomes obvious from Peker’s remarks that the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was no mere independence war but a struggle with universal meaning, attaching the Turks to the process of modernity launched by the great European revolutions. Thus, the *story* of Peker’s representation is the same as that already found in Atatürk’s Six-day speech. There is, according to this story, a universal world-history characterized by the intentional human struggle for emancipation and freedom, which originated in Europe, and then spread to all humanity. As we noticed, Peker speaks about

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<sup>357</sup> Yeğen 2002, pp. 60–61.

<sup>358</sup> Dünyanın yeni doğan medeniyet hareketine iştirakimiz istenildiği kadar çabuk ve geniş olmadı. Matbaayı üç yüz yıl kadar sonra alabildik. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 15.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., pp. 25–26.

participation in a “re-born civilization,” thus suggesting that the Ottoman period had represented a kind of degeneration of civilization.

Surely we must acknowledge that the texts analysed in this section could initially reach only a very small proportion of the populace. However, these texts should not be seen as irrelevant for the future character of Turkish public self-understanding. It was with this narrative of justified national struggle, and its re-telling by those who received it, that a peculiarly Turkish national public sphere begun to emerge. Even though these narratives at first were absolutely meaningless for the bulk of the uneducated Anatolian peasants, the peasants nevertheless became, in the years to come, more and more acquainted with the state’s civil servants who saw Turkey’s situation through these narratives of development. In time, these conceptions also started to affect more numerous groups through media and education. That is why all evaluations of these narratives as purely intra-elite cultural expressions unable to penetrate the masses in any way cannot be considered correct in the long run. The story of the enlightenment slowly but surely constructed a *goal* which is to be achieved, and this goal was established as the legitimating element of a revolutionary movement. In Peker’s lectures this story created a concept of humanity’s onward march to “freedom”:

One area by time, the aristocratic cartels of oppression formed by kings and religious institutions were being crushed as humanity took its first steps towards freedom. This movement started in Europe with the English Revolution, followed by the revolution in France. Other nations soon followed their example.<sup>360</sup>

The initial *adversaries* of this emancipatory movement are thus kings, religious institutions, and the aristocracy. I noted above that Peker’s characterization of the Turkish Revolution presupposes a narrative of human development produced during Europe’s modernization. Peker’s idea of “freedom-revolution” and its origins further confirms this evaluation. This immediately brings to mind the construction of a dichotomy of a “civilized core” and a “barbarian periphery” where Europe is seen as the core and areas outside it as the periphery. Thus, the sociology of the Turkish Revolution established in Recep Peker’s lectures participates, quite explicitly, in the ongoing discourse of different civilizational entities.

Of course, Peker was not alone in placing the Turkish Revolution in the same lineage as the revolutionary tradition of Europe. Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, who published his major work *Atatürk İhtilali (The Atatürk Revolution)*<sup>361</sup> in 1940, also consistently referred to the European revolutionary tradition in his effort to define the legitimacy of the Turkish Revolution. Hans-Lukas Kieser defines Bozkurt as “an ethno-nationalist rightist revolutionary who believed in modern progress, in a nation

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<sup>360</sup> Yer yer kral ve din müesseselerinin kurduğu aristokrasi ve zulüm kartelleri yıkıldı, insanlık hürriyete ilk adımlarını atmaya başladı. Bu hareket Avrupa’da İngiliz ihtilali ile başladı, arkasından Fransız ihtilali geldi. Başka yerler benzer yollarda mesafe aldılar. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>361</sup> Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, *Atatürk İhtilali* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1995), p. 31. (First edition: 1940.)

defined ethnically, and in the necessity of using violence to achieve modernity.”<sup>362</sup> On the eve of the First World War Bozkurt was in Geneva finishing his education. At that time Geneva was one of the main centres of Ottoman Young Turks in Europe. In Geneva Bozkurt participated to the Young Turks’ political club called *Foyers Turc*. The goal of this group was, according to Kieser, “to carry out a salutary social revolution in ethno-national terms. Such a revolution was considered the means to save a Turkish nation that would otherwise perish in the face of European imperialism. Achieving this, however, required the internalizing of European civilization first.”<sup>363</sup>

Bozkurt writes that according to John Locke, the people can legitimately execute a revolution if 1) the executive power does not respect existing laws; 2) if the working of the representative assembly is obstructed; 3) if there are efforts to influence the election results; 4) and if the Fatherland surrenders to an enemy. On the basis of these criteria put forward originally by Locke, Bozkurt states that the people had the right to execute a revolution in Turkey in 1919 when Sultan Mehmet Vahdettin VI ignored the will of the people and in cooperation with the enemy crushed the representative assembly.<sup>364</sup> Thus, Bozkurt first of all refers to the people’s right of resistance laid down by John Locke in his book *Two Treatises of Government*, a work written at a time “when the big question being asked in England was was it ever right to resist a sovereign, and if so when?”<sup>365</sup> Locke’s work “was not originally written in order to justify the successful revolution of 1688 in England, but almost wholly to incite a future one in the early 1680s.”<sup>366</sup> In this work, Locke’s concern was to construct an argument which justified, in exceptional circumstances, the expulsion of a ruler who had ceased to act constitutionally. It was not an argument against monarchy as such, nor did Locke, according to Iain Hampsher-Monk, want to base his arguments on principles which might lead to such position. The main focus of Locke’s political argument was simply to demonstrate the right of resistance and the circumstances in which it could be exercised.<sup>367</sup> So Bozkurt, by referring to Locke, first of all places the Turkish Revolution in the great European revolutionary tradition, suggesting that it was an expression of a universal and legitimate right to resist tyranny, and secondly, categorizes the Kemalist movement as representing the “people,” thus claiming that this was a politically conscious collective in Anatolia in 1919.

Considering these kind of statements, one can hardly overestimate the importance of men like Mahmut Esat Bozkurt for the maintenance of the Kemalist regime during its initial years. As we will discover from his writings, he was a fine example of Ottoman elite, which had received a European education, and was stamped by the

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<sup>362</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, “An ethno-nationalist revolutionary and theorist of Kemalism: Dr Mahmut Esat Bozkurt (1892–1943),” in *Turkey Beyond Nationalism: Towards Post-Nationalist Identities*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006): p. 20.

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>364</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, pp. 122–123.

<sup>365</sup> Iain Hampsher-Monk, *A History of Modern Political Thought: Major Political Thinkers from Hobbes to Marx*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 70.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72–73.



nationalistic terminology in his effort to re-define the Ottoman heritage in the age of European imperialism. That he had read European political thinkers, such as Locke, put him in a position to reinterpret Ottoman history with the vocabulary of European politics. This vocabulary of the European political tradition was then quite successfully utilized in the Kemalist interpretation of the resistance organizations that had developed in Anatolia in 1919. Thus an interpretative model was created which in time enabled the Anatolian Turkish-speaking population to conceive itself as a Turkish nation which had secured its political community in a war against foreign invaders. Implicit in this inter-textually upheld conception was the idea that the successful effort to resist the foreign invaders was achieved because the revolutionary movement had vested sovereignty in the people, represented by the Republican People's Party.

Apart from the argument from Locke, Bozkurt also refers to the French Revolution as he offers justifications for a nation's right to execute a revolution. According to Bozkurt, the French people used its right with great wisdom, initially trying to secure the abolition of social anomalies within the existing order. It was only after the king Louis XVI had ignored the people's modest wishes several times that he was killed and the kingdom turned into republic.<sup>368</sup> Bozkurt then goes on to clarify the Turkish nation's obvious right to replace sultan Mehmed Vahdeddin VI

Let us consider one of the most famous traitors in history, that is, the last sultan Mehmed Vahdeddin VI. This man totally betrayed the oath given to the nation. He crushed the representative assembly and sent the delegates – through enemy hands – to Malta. He had Şeyhülislam Dürrüzade Abdullah to declare a fetva against the patriots fighting for the fatherland, sentencing them to death. He ordered capital punishment for Atatürk. He shut his ears to all the benevolent advice that was nevertheless sent to him. When the fatherland was finally saved and the nation achieved its freedom and independence, he escaped with the enemy... The sultanate was abolished and the Republic was founded. Can there be any more justified way for the nation to use its right to revolution? It is to be accepted, thus, that those arguing against Locke do not consider authentic proof but base their opinions on their subjective ideas. Realities prove their ideas erroneous.<sup>369</sup>

Here, then, universal narrative structures are again full at work. Bozkurt's account establishes the "great villain," or adversary, of the story, the last Sultan Mehmed Vahdeddin, who is depicted as the arch-enemy of the popular will. Wholly ignored is the historical fact that the Anatolian population initially participated in the Anatolian Resistance Struggle in order to secure the sultan's regime. The hero of this story is

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<sup>368</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, p. 126.

<sup>369</sup> Tarihin meşhur haini son halife Sultan Mehmed Vahdetin VI'yı ele alıyorum. Bu adam, millet huzurundaki yeminini çiğnedi. Millet meclisini düşmanlara dağıttırdı. Milletvekillerinin ileri gelenlerine yine düşman eliyle yabancı memleketlere, Malta'ya sürdüdü. Şeyhülislamı Dürrüzade Abdullah'a verdirdiği fetvalarla vatani kurtarmaya çalışan mücahitlerin ölümünü şart koştu. Atatürk'ü idama mahkûm etti. Bütün bunlara rağmen kendine tekrar tekrar yapılan nasihatlar kulak asmadı...Saltanat kaldırıldı ve Cumhuriyet ilan oldu. İhtilal hakkını bir millet bundan daha meşru bir surette kullanabilir mi? Demek oluyor ki, Locke'un muarızları, olgulara değil, sübjektif fikirlere dayanmaktadırlar. Realiteler bunları yalana çıkarmaktadırlar. Ibid., pp. 127–128.

naturally Atatürk, who represents the true will of the nation. The revolution is a natural outcome of this will, and its legitimacy is thus, according to Bozkurt, beyond any doubt. The argument is then backed by reference to Locke again, a great political thinker and authority, whose name here represents the whole tradition of justified revolution in the modern world. However, this account also brings to the fore the two-sided enemy category which in the end helps to explain why these narratives based on European revolutionary tradition, both in Peker's and Bozkurt's lectures, were ultimately accepted by the Anatolian populace. Although the last Ottoman sultan is obviously depicted as the "great villain," the same can be said about the Western allies, that is, the European Great Powers. Even though these great ideologues of the Turkish Revolution needed to refer to the European revolutionary tradition in their legitimation efforts, they were also able to depict the Western powers as enemies of the Turkish nation. This helps us to understand the final success of the narrative in question: the Turkish nation in executing the Revolution is participating in a universal history of progress, thus establishing the "freedom-revolution" on its own territory, while it *simultaneously* resists the European invaders who despite the Turks' obvious resistance are attempting to conquer the Turkish homeland, thereby in a sense betraying their own legacy of justified popular revolution.

Naturally this whole narrative is thus also grounded on *nationalism*. Bozkurt goes on to consider Kant's ideas according to which a revolution must be seen as a *backward* step in the development of humanity. Bozkurt admits that if the right to stage a revolution is exploited too often, it can have negative consequences. Bozkurt gives, however, the following assessment

Historical facts show us that nations do not abuse this right of theirs. Thus, there is nothing to be feared in this issue. On the contrary, it would be disastrous to deny this right of nations. It would result in nations' obligatory humiliation under unbearable regimes. And, one must agree that, surrendering under any kind of regime whatsoever is the death of a nation.<sup>370</sup>

Bozkurt then emphasizes that Turkey's own history is a fine example of the fact that a nation's right to execute a revolution can produce a positive outcome:

If the Turkish nation had not used its right to execute a revolution in 1918, we would not witness the present day. There would be no Turkish homeland, no Turkish Republic, not even Turkishness.<sup>371</sup>

Now, in all its simplicity, this is how the narrative of nationalism works. Bozkurt declares that there is, again, a consciously working Turkish nation, not a circle of

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<sup>370</sup> Fakat tarih ve tarihin realiteleri gösteriyor ki, milletler bu hakkı kötüye kullanmıyorlar. Bu sebepten bunda korkacak bir şey yoktur. Korkulacak şey, böyle bir hakkı milletlere inkâr etmektir. Böyle bir hakkın milletlere inkâr edilmesi, onları her türlü idareye karşı iki büklüm bir itaate, uyuşukluğa, alçalmaya yöneltmektir. Her idareye, her emre başüstüne demeye alıştırılmış bir millet ölmüştür. Bozkurt [1940] 1995, pp. 130–131.

<sup>371</sup> Türk milleti 1918'de İhtilal hakkını kullanmasaydı, bugünkü yaratamazdı. Ne Türk'ün vatani, ne Türk Cumhuriyeti, hatta ne de Türklük kalırdı. Ibid., pp. 133.

power-hungry junior Ottoman officers, that executes a revolution and in this way manages to safeguard the future existence of the Turkish nation. When you read and hear this narrative many times, there really is no reason to reject it. As the community is bound together through the central state and all those modern tools available to it to spread its unifying narratives, it becomes harder and harder not to participate in this collective narrative, which starts to work through socialisation.

Bozkurt concludes that he has read a number of works concerning the right of revolution. Some of the writers have accepted the principle of a nation's legitimacy to stage a revolution, while others have refuted it. On the basis of these various convictions, Bozkurt asks whether a revolution should be considered a positive or negative thing, and writes the following:

I do not know the answer to this, and it is not even necessary to spend time thinking. One thing I know is that nations achieve their rights through revolutions. This can be right or wrong, but it is the product of history. It cannot be reversed.<sup>372</sup>

Here we have clear echoes of the predestined view found in the *Nutukian* narrative that claims that there was no alternative to the Turkish Revolution and the Republic of Turkey. In this passage Bozkurt does not want to evaluate whether revolution as such is right or wrong, although a few lines earlier he tried to convince his audience that the denial of the right to revolt would have disastrous consequences for the lives of nations. In the case of Turkey, without this justified revolution the whole nation would have perished. What Bozkurt obviously wants to do, is to convince his audience that the Turkish Revolution was a necessary outcome of history, and that any effort to deny it is not just wrong but also useless. According to Bozkurt, a revolution is all about replacing the old with the new. This is synonymous with replacing what is wrong with something better. Bozkurt states this in the following manner: "A revolution is a kind of good in which a nation acquires, in comparison to the old, a higher level both spiritually and materially."<sup>373</sup> He continues by stating that all eras have their specific right-mindedness, and that this defines which political, social, and economic novelties are good ones. These emanate from the general quality of civilization of the era in question. From the political perspective, progress means that the people decide their own faith as much as possible. In economic and social relations, on the other hand, progress is the nation's increased spiritual and material well-being.<sup>374</sup>

A crucial point in the writings of Peker and Bozkurt is their manifest unwillingness to continue the tradition of synthesis-making between European political tradition and Islamic political thinking. One must note that there was in Ottoman political experience this kind of effort, conducted by the so called Young Ottomans of the

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<sup>372</sup> Bunu bilmem, fazla uğraşmayı de gerekli görmüyorum. Bildiğim bir şey varsa o da şudur: Milletler haklara ihtilal ile kavuşuyorlar. Bu, doğru veya eğri olabilir. Fakat, tarihin verimidir. Dönmez ve şaşmaz bir verim. Ibid., pp. 147–148.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

second half of the nineteenth-century.<sup>375</sup> It is this abandonment of the Young Ottoman synthesis as the basis for argumentation concerning the “right to resist” that particularly highlights the Kemalist self-understanding as a revolutionary movement. As Bozkurt only refers to Locke and other major thinkers of the European political theory, he simultaneously rejects the idea of continuity with the Ottoman “synthesis-makers.” Islamic political tradition is crucially rejected, underscoring the novelty of the Kemalist revolution. This must be considered as an inherently consistent idea: the Kemalist revolution was executed in order to produce the enlightenment in Turkey; the revolution was necessary as the Ottoman political entity could not produce this enlightenment; thus, there could be no path to the enlightenment on an Islamic basis, or even with the synthesis between Islamic and European political theory.

Obviously Bozkurt’s evaluations are the product of an immediate need to justify what was happening in Turkey at the time of their writing. We have noted that the population at large did not during the 1930s comprehend or accept the reforms executed by the powerful state, which now penetrated much further into the lives of the rural population through tax collector and local governors implementing the orders given by the CHP leadership. I have proposed that educating an elite cadre capable of spreading the republican message demanded that it be given a theoretical context within of which the Turkish Revolution could be taught to new generations of civil servants and hopefully larger sections of the population. During the 1930s and 1940s as the material well-being of the population was not at sight, it became even more crucial to produce a convincing narrative of future development achieved through the Kemalist revolutionary project. What this narrative asserted, in short, was a conviction that if the Revolution was abandoned, a prosperous future would be lost forever.

Thus, it is this ultimately utopian discourse which characterises the whole project of political legitimation during the Kemalist one-party era.<sup>376</sup> For its survival, it was necessary that a significant portion of the dominant social groups, such as doctors, teachers, lawyers, and journalists made this utopian project their own and believed in it. To highlight more clearly what was at stake here, it is useful to refer to Siniša Malešević’s idea of the ideological appeal of nationalism. Malešević emphasizes, in reference to Ernest Gellner’s work, that in the modern age the two main pillars of political legitimacy are the ability to generate economic growth and nationalism. Still, we lack a coherent account of the machinery of nationalism, that is, its inner

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<sup>375</sup> Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: a study in the modernization of Turkish political ideas* (Syracuse New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000), pp. 91–94. (First edition: 1962)

<sup>376</sup> The idea of *utopia* should not be labeled as romantic escapism or pure “day-dreaming,” but as an integral element of social thinking. As Krishan Kumar has noted, “Utopia’s value lies not in its relation to present practice but in its relation to a possible future. Its ‘practical’ use is to overstep the immediate reality to depict a condition whose clear desirability draws us on, like magnet...the commonly accepted boundary of the possible is always contingent, always dependent on the particular circumstances of time and place. Utopia breaks through that boundary. It attempts to lift the veil both for its own time and, conceivably, for all time. Utopia describes a state of impossible perfection which nevertheless is in some genuine sense not beyond the reach of humanity. It is here if not now.” Krishan Kumar, *Utopianism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1991), p. 3.

workings and logic. Malešević argues that in order to understand the potency of the ideological appeal of nationalism, it is essential to dissect the two principle layers through which political ideologies operate, that is, the realm of the “normative” and that of the “operative.”<sup>377</sup> The domain of the normative is articulated in ideal typical terms. It is built around principles outlining fundamental goals and values as well as providing a blueprint for the realization of these goals. The normative realm, Malešević notes, contains a strong kernel of utopian thinking, a set of ideas that “transcend the present” and are geared towards the future. In it, what is offered are “well-elaborated statements and diagnoses regarding the structure and organization of the past, the present and the future of an entire society.” The realm of the normative, according to Malešević, defines itself through reason and ethics and is most likely to challenge other world-views by demonstrating their faults. Also, the normative layer of ideology is most often deduced from authoritative texts and scriptures, such as religious holy books, influential publications of mystics, prophets, scientists or documents with powerful legal, ethical or semi-sacred status, political and party manifestoes, and so on.<sup>378</sup>

In Kemalist Turkey the normative layer of ideology obviously found its authoritative text in Kemal Atatürk’s Dix-Day speech. In the educated culture of Turkish dominant social groups a certain crucial mechanism was at hand: these people had witnessed modern European progress, and they saw that the rational science was its foundations. The world, it seemed, would in time become like contemporary Europe, that is, prosperous, educated, and secular. Atatürk had managed to wipe out the traditional forces hindering this development in Turkey, and now it was a national duty not to lose sight of this opportunity. Thus a national enlightenment narrative was constructed that from now on legitimized the power of the Kemalist elite as it was devoted to realizing this utopian vision in Turkey. Here we witness a very crucial aspect concerning the relation between *narrative* and *reality*. As educated Kemalist cadres saw European modernity producing progress, this consolidated their adherence to the Kemalist enlightenment project. On the other hand, the Kemalist narrative of the national enlightenment, especially its interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a Turkish Revolution expressing the general tendency of universal history, produced a conceptual frame within which to interpret reality. In this way we can argue that the relationship between narrative and reality operates through a hermeneutic circle, in which the reality defines the narrative, and the narrative simultaneously constructs reality. It is only by postulating this kind of interpretative hermeneutic circle, which builds the foundations of a particular world-view, that we can understand the mindset even of today’s Kemalist-oriented Turkish secular middle-classes.

The operative realm defined by Siniša Malešević, on the other hand, works somewhat differently. It is an arena of everyday life with all its complexities. The operative realm is expressed in institutional as well as extra-institutional arenas of individual and social life. It is also the way that ideas and values operate in the routine circumstances of daily life in any given society.<sup>379</sup> Thus, Malešević’s

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<sup>377</sup> Malešević 2006, pp. 91–92.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid., pp. 92–93.

“operative realm” comes very close to the concept of the implied reader utilized in this study. The implied reader of the narratives produced by Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt is thus in position to confirm, during a particular act of reading/hearing, the truthfulness of these national narratives. This position of an implied reader as an *ideal reader*, as noted earlier, is closely attached to the concept of “ideology”; it is a technical term given to the process of internalizing ideology at the micro-level (or, in other words, at the *individual* level) during the particular act of reading or hearing a national narrative. The justification for postulating this concept of an implied reader and the proposed process of internalization of ideology attached to it stems from the observation that even a cultural meta-narrative like the one ascribed here – the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative – must have its individual and particular manifestations. In other words, a narrative like this cannot just “float” over the political community, but needs to have concrete acts of production and reception in everyday life. These take place in the process described here with the concept of the implied reader.

Mahmut Esat Bozkurt further asserts – this time by referring to Fichte – that a nation has a natural right to change things, and remove obstacles hindering its progress. He writes that

Especially *the thesis that there are no unchanged principles*, and that it is unacceptable to surrender, is manifestly true. Even the religious doctrines, considered as eternal, must be abandoned in the face of the changing demands of time...the Old Testament, the Bible, as well as the Quran. Even the “God” who sent these books is transformed. He practically disappears. As the Russian communists have put it, God vanished into history! And philosophers and sociologists, like Voltaire and Pareto for example, have stated that man was not created by God; it was man who created God.<sup>380</sup>

Thus, by now we have discovered an initial definition of the Turkish Revolution, based on European theories of a revolution. It is, first of all, a genuine representative of the “general quality of the civilization of the current era,” that is, grounded on a Western concept of modernity. Secondly, the Turkish revolution manifests one of the most obvious characteristics of modernity, namely, *change*. During the Turkish Revolution, which is the executor of modernity, the traditional criteria for truth are replaced by a new one. In other words, knowledge of the holy book is replaced by the knowledge acquired in the process of finding answers “in the face of the changing demands of the time.” According to Bozkurt, then, “God” is now considered just a product of the human intellect.

Like Bozkurt, Recep Peker and his circle saw that Islam was responsible for the socio-economic, political, and cultural backwardness of Ottoman society. The only

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<sup>380</sup> Hele *değişmez prensip yoktur* tezi, bükülmek kabul etmez, taştan bir hakikattir. Ebedi olduklarını iddia eden Gök kitapları bile yerlerini zamanın icaplarına bırakıyorlar...İşte *Tevrat*, işte *İncil*, işte *Kur'an*. Hatta bunları gönderen “Allah” bile anlamını değiştiriyor. Bazen büsbütün yitiriyor. Rus komünist ihtilalinde duvarlara yapıştırılan levhalarda: “Allah tarihe karıştı!” ibareleri görülüyordu. Voltaire, Pareto gibi filozof ve sosyologlar, “Allah insanları değil; insanlar Allahı yaratıldı” diyorlar. Bozkurt [1940] 1995, pp. 140–141.

possible way to become an integral part of the civilized world, that is, the West, would be a total breaking away from the past (Ottoman-Islamic civilization) and from those manners that contradicted progress and science, particularly positivism. To replace Islam, they attempted to describe new principles for both state and society, which in large part were inspired by the French revolutionary model. As Aydın rightly points out, this was the basis of Kemalist *laicism* which called for a process of secularization covering all spheres of life. Science and reason instead of religious thought would provide the legitimate basis for power. Secular conversion was to go hand in hand with the justification that the republic would bring civilization and prosperity to those who had hitherto lagged behind because of the “scholastic mentalities” of the Dark Ages. As Aydın stresses, the authoritarian nature of strict social control and the emancipatory ideals were not perceived contradictory by Peker and his comrades. Authoritarian measures were indeed deemed necessary to make the traditional and “backward” segments of the population capable of becoming involved in the republican way of life.<sup>381</sup>

We have already noted that Peker was in the habit of glorifying the European revolutionary tradition, which he divided into the “freedom-revolution” and the “class-revolution.” The two are, however, closely related, as the threat of the latter is the reason for constraining the former. The ultimately negative evaluation, as we will soon discover more clearly, of political freedoms in Peker’s thought was at least partly the consequence of his conception of party politics. According to Peker, parliamentarism and multi-party politics were, first of all, products of “freedom-revolution.” They did not, however, necessarily benefit the nation. Peker writes the following

One product of the freedom-revolution has been parliamentarism. It was born as a consequence of the freedom of assembly and gathering, which then produced political parties. The fact that the government is responsible for the parliament strengthens the power of the state in multi-party systems... In the first phase, various political parties were formed to unite different opinion-groups while negotiating the organization of laws concerning the budget and taxes. This is how multi-party parliamentarism was born. As these parties became more numerous, a professional group of politicians was also created. The useful site of determining legal rights of the nation was soon replaced by useless quarrel. Thus, parliamentarism turned into a class struggle and class-revolution, which in its turn produced the re-emergence of the authoritarian state labelled as the enemy of democracy.<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Aydın 2004, pp. 68–69.

<sup>382</sup> Hürriyet inkılâbının getirdiği neticelerden birisi de, parlamenterizmdir. Parlamenterizm hürriyet inkılâbının getirdiği toplanma ve cemiyet kurmada serbestlik hakkı üzerine birçok siyasal partilerin kuruluşundan doğmuştur. Hükümetin parlamentoya karşı meşul olması ve parlamento tarafından mürakabe edilmesi işi, çok fırkalı memleketlerde devlet çalışmasını güçlendirmiştir... İlk hamlede vergi ve bütçe kanunlarını tanzim etmek hakkı elde edilince, bunun neticesi olarak da birçok noktai nazarlar bir araya birleşerek siyasal partiler vücut buldu. Ve bu suretle muhtelif partili parlamento hayatı meydana geldi. Bu partiler çoğalınca politika işlerini meslek edinmiş birtakım türedi adamlar belirdi ve devletlerin, milletlerin hakları için muayyen prensipleri ileri götürecek bir çalışma yerine, vakit kaybeden gayesiz çarpışan ve birbirini boğazlayan bir didişme başladı, muayyen hedeflere giden kısa yollar uzatıldı, iç dedikoduları kilükaller aldı yürüdü. Bu suretle parlamenterizm, sınıf

Before any further analysis of this evaluation, we must note that the characterisation given by Mahmut Esat Bozkurt is not dissimilar. Who executes a revolution? According to Bozkurt, a revolution is executed by the intelligentsia with the help of the people, in such a way that the result manifests the highest interest of the nation.<sup>383</sup> A “charlatan” is the name given by Bozkurt to those in Turkey who questioned the Turkish nation’s maturity in the form of a republican regime on the grounds that the state was governed by one person instead of many. People questioning this were, according to Bozkurt, representing regression that ought to be suppressed. Bozkurt writes the following:

Even the most advanced mob, left on its own, cannot reach a consensus regarding its own good. Whatever is the nature of a group, it necessarily needs a leader. It is the leader who provides the direction and success of the revolution.<sup>384</sup>

And Bozkurt continues by claiming that:

The mob gathered in front of Versailles wanted the king to provide bread, shouting “give us bread and stay our king, dear King and Queen.” What about in Turkey? During the congress of Erzurum Atatürk wandered in a public park one day, and the people started to gather around him. They stared him in the eyes and shouted “long live the Republic!”... Let us consider once more who shouted this? Yes, it was the genuine Turkish nation.<sup>385</sup>

What is most characteristic of these presentations of the nature of the Kemalist political ideal during the 1930s is this ability to ignore even the *rhetoric of democracy*. For both Peker and Bozkurt, “freedom-revolution,” executed in Turkey during the Anatolian Resistance Movement, was *in itself* a comprehensive demonstration of the popular will. After the revolution had been successfully launched, all that was needed to safeguard its continuity is a strong party. There can be no question that “the people” would, or should, ask for something else. In this operation of legitimation, “the people” are persuaded to believe that multi-party politics and a widening of the political participation could only lead to what had just been left behind, that is, humiliation and a loss of independence as a consequence of internal disunity. Peker continues his criticism of parliamentarism and multi-party democracy with the following remarks:

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kavgalarının, sınıf inkılâbının ve daha sonra demokrasiyi düşman sayan otorite devletlerinin yeniden vücut bulmasına sebebiyet verdi. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 27.

<sup>383</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, p. 148.

<sup>384</sup> En ileri halk kümeleri dahi kendi başlarına bırakılırsa, kendi menfaatlerini bulup ayırmakta anlayamayacaklardır şüphesiz. Kümenin mahiyeti ne olursa olsun, mutlaka şeflere ihtiyacı vardır. İşte bu şeflerdir ki, ihtilale yön verirler ve onu başarılı kılarlar. Ibid., pp. 148–149.

<sup>385</sup> Versay sarayına giden halk kraldan ekmek istedi. “Ekmek ver ve basımızda kal iyi Kral, iyice Kraliçe!” diye bağırdı. Bizde nasıl oldu? Erzurum Kongresi sıralarında, bir gün, Atatürk, Erzurum Millet bahçesinde gezinirken, millet, etrafını almaya başladı. Atatürk’ün yüzüne bakan halk, bir ağızdan bağırdı: “Yaşasın Cumhuriyet!”...Düşünelim bir kere, bunu bağırان kimdi? Türk halkı...hem de öz Türk halkı. Ibid., p. 153.



The system of parliamentarism and multi-party politics, supposed to represent the people and lead the country, was degenerating into a situation where there was not any strong party. This made stable government impossible.<sup>386</sup>

In the representation of world history given by Peker – to be more precise, Peker is actually giving a presentation of the history of Europe, but this is depicted as synonymous with the history of the whole world – government forms develop from the feudal to the absolutist, and, then, through the “freedom-revolution,” to the liberal state. However, in Peker’s interpretation the liberal state is just a temporary phase that collapses as a consequence of permanent internal anarchy. This is followed, as the case of Turkey shows, by a nation-state within which citizens form a unified entity to strengthen the power and glory of the nation.<sup>387</sup> Thus, Peker wants us to conceive the liberal state and the nation-state as two different types. One must notice, also, that in the vocabulary of Peker, the “liberal state” is very much the classical *laissez faire* state of nineteenth-century political philosophy represented as a conglomeration of fully independent and self-sufficient citizens. It is this form of state that Peker interprets – mainly because of its extreme individualism – as the road to dysfunction and anarchy.

Thus we can say that for Peker parliamentarism and multi-party politics were not institutions representing the enlightenment of the nation. On the contrary, they were, with the technical language of narratology, *obstacles* in the national narrative. That is, parliamentarism and multi-party politics were not a *goal* to be sought after. The real goal is “enlightenment” and achieving it requires, according to this narrative, a totally different tool. This tool needed is, obviously, the Republican People’s Party, as it alone is capable of securing the great mission established by the “Father.”

One could also say that Recep Peker was part of a whole worldview which saw European liberalism as a way leading to extreme individualism and social degeneration. For example Murat Belge and Taha Parla have both emphasized that Ziya Gökalp – who had a major influence on Kemalist social and political thought – had already taken a firm stance against the European liberal tradition, especially its tendency to give an absolute value to the individual. Gökalp’s model was based, more than anything else, on the ideology of *corporatism*. This criticism of liberalism was mostly evident in Kemalist writers such as Yunus Nadi, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Recep Peker, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt and Ali Çetinkaya. It can even be stated that for the Kemalist one-party regime liberalism was one of the main enemies, others being communism, reactionary movements, and Kurdish separatism.<sup>388</sup> Indeed, Peker vehemently attacks liberalism in his *Lectures on the Revolution*. While writing with enthusiasm about the so-called “freedom-revolution,” Peker soon stresses the limits of this freedom:

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<sup>386</sup> Millet namına iş başına gelmek iddiasında bulunan parlamenterizm çok partili hayatı, devir devir vaziyetlere düştü ki, çeşit çeşit partili parlamentoda iş yapacak derecede kuvvetli parti bulunamadı. Bu, istikrarlı bir devlet çalışmasını imkânsız bir hale koydu. Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 27–28.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., pp. 59–61.

<sup>388</sup> Belge 2002, p. 34; Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp 1876–1924* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), p. 31.

After the first idealists had lost their former influence, the results of the freedom-revolution started to produce some mistakes and maladies. The freedom-revolution was suddenly represented by libertarian concepts and liberalism. Among these results produced by the freedom-revolution, there was now also freedom of trade.<sup>389</sup>

And Peker has this to say concerning economic liberalism:

Especially from the viewpoint of free trade, liberalism came to be used as a vehicle of tyranny and domination against the people. Liberalism, which was first understood as a general concept of freedom, was turned in the economy into a weapon for crushing the living conditions of other citizens... The abuse of the concept of "liberal"... which produces agony for others is what we call economic liberalism.<sup>390</sup>

Economic liberalism became widely discredited in Kemalist Turkey during the 1930s when Peker presented his *Lectures on the Revolution*. Faced with the world depression, which coincided with what was seen as selfish behavior by their own national bourgeoisie, the Kemalists were forced to reconsider their entire *laissez-faire* policy. Thus between 1929 and 1931, the government passed a series of measures which brought the economy under state control. Statism was incorporated into the ruling party's programme in 1931. The strategy that was adopted under the heading of *devletçilik* (statism) called for the state to be the major actor in production and investment. The government began to take measures that would create a viable industrial base as entrepreneurs were unwilling to invest in ventures which did not bring quick profits.<sup>391</sup> Much was also accomplished with these measures. An infrastructure was established and the process of industrialisation set in motion. The price for these successes was paid, however, by the workers and the peasants. The shift in the internal terms of trade in favor of industry was not reflected in benefits for the workers. To prevent workers from protesting against their declining standard of living and their extremely harsh working conditions, the government introduced a Labour Law in 1934, strengthening it in 1936 with Mussolini's legislation as its model. The workers were permitted neither to form unions nor to strike, but were instead "told to live in harmony in a society in which their interests would be looked after by the state organised on the principles of corporatism."<sup>392</sup>

The statist (étatist) principle of economic development has been described as "a modernised form of mercantilism," as "an advanced type of socialism," or as "a third

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<sup>389</sup> İdealistlerin roller azalınca, hürriyet inkılâbının getirdiği semerelerde birtakım arızalar, hastalıklar yüz göstermeye başladı. Hürriyet inkılâbı liberte, liberal, liberalizm gibi mefhumlarla ifade olundu. Hürriyet inkılâbının verdiği bu neticeler arasında, ticaret serbestliği de vardır. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 26.

<sup>390</sup> Bilhassa bu ticaret serbestliği bakımından, onu yurttaşlarına karşı tahakküm aleti olarak kullanmak isteyenlerin elinde saffetini ve samimiyetini kaybetti, bozulmaya ve korkmaya başladı. Liberalizm, önce alelîtlak hürriyeti ifade eden bir manada olduğu halde, bilhassa ekonomi alanında başkalarının yaşama şartlarını bozucu bir şekil aldı... "liberal" kelimesinin manasının suistimal edilişi... yurttaşar aleyhine neticeler verdi – buna iktisadi liberalizm diyoruz. Ibid., pp. 26–27.

<sup>391</sup> Karal 1981, p. 21.

<sup>392</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 96–99.

way outside capitalism and socialism.” Its origins, William Hale notes, have been ascribed either to contemporary communism, or to fascism, or both. The Kemalist regime, however, preferred to define Turkish statist policies as a home-grown product, arrived at after an objective analysis of Turkey’s economic situation rather than a result of dogmatic ideological commitments. In any case, the move towards statism was not a smooth one, nor was there any clear agreement on what it actually entailed, even after it had been adopted as official government policy. According to William Hale, the original authors of Turkish statism can be broadly divided into two ideological categories. On the one hand, a circle of younger intellectuals associated with *Kadro* magazine, who acted as a radical group within the ruling Republican People’s Party during 1932–1934, appear to have seen statism as a permanent and preferable alternative to capitalism. Through state ownership of the principle means of production, they believed that Turkey could avoid the exploitation of labor under the capitalist system. On the other hand, a more conservative group, of which Celâl Bayar was the most prominent spokesman, appear to have seen statism as the “nursemaid” to rather than a replacement for capitalist development, whose purpose was to encourage the accumulation of capital and industrial experience.<sup>393</sup> One can conclude by noting that the most characteristic feature of statist policies in Turkey during the 1930s was the emergence of the state as the major productive and investing agent. Most of the state monopolies of the 1920s, which were administered by private firms, were gradually transferred effectively to government management, and maritime transport between Turkish ports was transformed in a state monopoly. However, Korkut Boratav notes, it was the ambitious program of state investment in industry which really characterises the period after 1931.<sup>394</sup>

Recep Peker can be seen as an enthusiastic supporter of these statist policies. For him, it seems, this was more than just a practical tool to be employed during a time of world-wide economic depression. Just as parliamentarism and multi-party politics were seen by Peker as obstacles to the historical enlightenment mission, economic liberalism was considered as a threat to the unity of this national mission because of its tendency to produce class-struggle and internal disorder. According to Peker, the Kemalist idea of populism prevented the possibility of class-revolution in Turkey, thereby securing the historical mission. Peker writes the following:

The Republic of Turkey is a populist entity. The reason for asserting populism first is that it shows our position against the class revolution... When we say we are populists, it means that we consider all individuals as equal, that is, nobody having any privileges or sovereignty over others; that all possess equal rights and dignity; that in economic relations all respect others, and that we do not allow workers to exploit employers, or employers to exploit the workers; that we do not allow that producers and consumers are conceived as enemies.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Hale 1981, pp. 55–56.

<sup>394</sup> Korkut Boratav, “Kemalist economic policies and étatism,” in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981), p. 175.

<sup>395</sup> Türkiye Cumhuriyeti halkçı bir varlıktır. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin güttüğü ana politika çizgilerinden halkçılığı ilk söylememin sebebi, sınıf ihtilali karşısında bizim vaziyetimizin ne olduğu göstermek içindir. Biz halkçıyız, halkçı demek, ulus içinde hiçbir imtiyaz ve üstünlük tanımayan ve her ferdini öteki kadar hak ve şeref sahibi sayan, ekonomik alanda birini ötekine, işçiyi patrona,

To put these words in the context of a wider tradition of political thought, it is suitable to recall the questions to which European corporatist ideology originally aimed to be an answer. The rise of corporatist thought in the second half of the nineteenth-century, Peter J. Williamson notes, was a response to the disappearance of the *ancient regime* in several continental European countries. The response was articulated by those who had lost out in the development of industrial capitalism and incipient liberal political institutions. However, the argument for corporatism was not simply a reactionary one. The emergence of industrial society seemed to jeopardize the maintenance of a peasant society altogether. Further, there was genuine concern at the industrial and class conflict engendered by the emergence of liberal capitalism. But underlying corporatist ideology was a continuous reference to the allegedly harmonious and ordered nature of medieval society where landlord and peasant were locked together in an organic community. The central idea of corporatist theorists was, therefore, to recognize the organic nature of society in the political and economic arrangements of industrial society. By transposing the social bonds between landlord and peasant to the relationship between capitalist and worker it was contended that the class conflict, and the social injustice which engendered it, would be ended. In this sense, Williamson emphasizes, “the corporatists were arguing that the political and economic arrangements to sustain a consensual society would have to be based upon a moral order that the advent of liberalism had largely destroyed. While the majority of corporatists saw their corporatist society working to serve the greater glory of ‘God’, there were also a number of secular writers who ultimately saw nationalism – serving the greater glory of the nation – as the basis of appeal that would bind society together.”<sup>396</sup>

Another significant tradition of European political thought – closely attached to corporatism – that can be seen as a founding block of Kemalist populism is solidarity. The term *solidarité* was, according to Ertan Aydın, originally conceptualized in the Third French Republic by Alfred Fouillée as a democratic ethics in order to find a middle course between the competing extremes of idealism and scientism, and of liberalism and socialism, and later by Léon Bourgeois as a political philosophy which, it was hoped, would defuse the class struggle and all potential revolutionary threats to the existing order. For Bourgeois, solidarity indicated a quest for a classless, homogenous, and organic social order based on an idea of social duty. According to Aydın, Peker and his circle adopted the ideas of social duties, the search for a middle way between individualism and socialism, and the idea of a social organism in a way that is highly reminiscent of the French solidarity tradition.<sup>397</sup>

As Aydın proposes, solidarity in its Turkish version as *halkçılık* (populism) can be seen as a form of ideological eclecticism which included Turkish nationalism, the construction of a classless, homogenous, and amalgamated mass, the cultural

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patron işçiye mahkûm edecek, müstehliki müstahsilin eline düşürecek vaziyetlere müsaade etmeyen bir varlık demektir. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 54.

<sup>396</sup> Peter J. Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective: An Introductory Guide to Corporatist Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 1989), pp. 25–26.

<sup>397</sup> Aydın 2004, pp. 66–67.

regeneration of society, and an all-encompassing project of secular moral politics. The terms *tesanüt* (solidarity), *içtimai tesanüt* (social solidarity), and *halkçılık* (populism) were, according to Aydın, constantly reiterated ideals which Recep Peker and his circle used as founding blocks of the ideology of the Turkish Revolution. What Recep Peker and his group were aiming at was, then, a cultural regeneration of the Turkish nation through a secular quest for new, revolutionary values by using the central notion of solidarity.<sup>398</sup> Being radical secularists as the first-generation Kemalists mostly were, their corporatist ideology was aimed at serving the glory of the nation, now exalted as the one and only legitimate source for all social activities. As demonstrated above, the acceptance of the “nation” as the one and only moral authority immediately produced the effort to interpret history from national perspective. As the “nation” was thus established as a source of legitimate power, it became the main occupation of the Kemalist elite to reproduce conceptions of the “national will.” However, as it was simultaneously claimed that the process which brought the Republican People’s Party to power was indeed the struggle to execute this national will, we can claim that the “national history” in effect only served to legitimize the current relations of power.

Ahmet İnel has noted that it really is no coincidence that the six principles of Kemalism do not include that of “democracy.” According to İnel, Kemalism could not absolutely ignore democracy, but it was reduced to the concept of *halkçılık* (populism) and subjugated to the doctrine of a secular republic. When Kemalist ideology was systematized during the 1930s, it was strongly influenced by the anti-democratic tendencies of those days. One can say that a strong conception of the failures of parliamentary democracy was absorbed into Kemalist thinking. The argument used in contemporary discussions that democracy needs to be limited until the populace is politically mature enough, was, according to İnel, in the 1930s represented in a different form: an economically underdeveloped country needed to be governed by means of centralization of power in order to utilise fully the few available resources.<sup>399</sup> The concept of “democracy” was, however, as we will see later, absorbed into the Kemalist discourse during the military intervention of 1960. The army took power in the name of securing the state, democracy, and the legacy of Atatürk. In this way, Çelik notes, the hegemonic Kemalist discourse absorbed democracy after the 1960 military intervention.<sup>400</sup>

As noted, the Turkish version of solidarity as *halkçılık* (populism) became one of the six principles of Kemalism. Its meaning can be further analyzed with reference to another of the six principles, namely that of *cumhuriyetçilik* (republicanism). The core idea of republicanism was the sovereignty of the people, which emanated from the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a popular movement. This discourse centered on the idea that the community was separated from the Ottoman conception of legitimate authority vested in the monarch by God. From now on the source of political authority was proclaimed to be *halk* (the people). This early republican idiom was, however, quickly transformed. In the middle of the 1920s this principle

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>399</sup> İnel 2002, p. 20.

<sup>400</sup> Çelik 2002, p. 89.

of *halkçılık* became a principle according to which the Grand National Assembly represented fully the wishes of the people, and was, accordingly, justified in ruling, as already noted, “for the people, despite the people” in the context of a one-party regime.<sup>401</sup> One significant part, then, of this discourse of “national will” was constructed by the ideals of egalitarianism, as evidenced in the quotation from Peker presented above. The discourse of social egalitarianism and harmony was aimed at further legitimizing the “necessity” of a one-party rule in Turkey. Under the heading “the birt of class consciousness” Peker writes the following:

One part of the liberal principles produced by the freedom-revolution concerns the freedom of trade and business. The capitalist class used this freedom against the working class. As a natural consequence of this, the working class composed of young people was becoming conscious of itself as a class. This produced first anger, then rage, and finally the desire for revenge.<sup>402</sup>

Peker also asserts that the fast expansion of socialism was made possible by the atmosphere generated by the “freedom-revolution”:

If the French Revolution had not established in the world this kind of wide conception of freedom, it would not have been possible for socialism to spread so wide in such a short period of time... Another reason for the expansion of socialism was economic liberalism’s inability to correct its mistakes in industrial production, or the ongoing increase of the maladies it produced.<sup>403</sup>

Thus, the one-party rule of the Republican People’s Party, with its economic policy of *devletçilik* (statism) was, according to this definition, a highly sophisticated and practical tool to prevent the maladies of economic liberalism. Besides, the one-party rule was also a sophisticated improvement of the French revolutionary tradition, as it did not allow freedom to “degenerate” into socialism and class struggle. Peker points out that as the socialist movement expanded, the original conflict between workers and employers was turned to a class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In Turkey this could be represented simply as a struggle between *rich and poor*. Peker also argued that the international working class conceived the peasantry as its closest and most easily reached ally. But, Peker argues, there was “nothing in common” in the mindset of the working class and the peasantry. Most of all, socialism was against private property, as it claimed that individual citizens should not own their houses and lands. The peasantry, on the other hand, was keen to

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<sup>401</sup> Ibid., pp. 76–77.

<sup>402</sup> Hürriyet inkılâbının getirdiği liberal fikirlerin bir kolu da çalışma serbestliği idi. Bu serbestlikten istifade eden patron tabakası, bunu işçi sınıfın hayatı aleyhine kullanıyor, tabii bunun neticesinde genç ve ve dinç kütlelerin teşkil ettiği işçi tabakasına da bu duygunun tam aksülameli olarak uyanan bir sınıf şuuru gittikçe genişliyordu. Bu, önce küsme, sonra nefret ve nefret hissi de hızını artırarak nihayet bir aç alma dileği haline veriyordu. Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 37–38.

<sup>403</sup> Eğer Fransız ihtilali, dünyaya bu kadar geniş hürriyet anlamını getirmiş olmasaydı, sosyalizm bu kadar ilerlemek, bu kadar az zamanda bu kadar fazla genişlemek imkânını bulamazdı... Sosyalizmin genişlemesinin diğer bir sebebi de ekonomik liberalizmin büyük sanayideki kötülüklerini düzeltme yoluna, bir intibah yoluna girmemiş ve her gün fenalıkların artırmış olmasıdır. Ibid., p. 41.

own its houses and fields. Peker goes on to stress the distinction between the worldview of the working class and the peasantry by stating that the socialists were internationalists unwilling to subordinate their class interests to national interest. Thus, socialists were eager to unite with working-class comrades of other nations, seeing the capitalist class of their own nation as the enemy. The peasants, by contrast, never thought this way, no matter where in the world they lived. The peasant, Peker declared, is a nationalist, seeing his own good in accordance with the “good of the nation.” Because of this, Peker concludes, peasants do not answer the proletarian call.<sup>404</sup>

When we recall that, according to Peker’s interpretation, Turkey was a classless society where a conscious working-class had not yet emerged, the peasant became the true representative of the nation. This peasant was, as we saw, for Peker a nationalist by his very nature, seeing the nation as his true community. Now, as we observed earlier, the Anatolian Turkish-speaking rural population had, during the 1930s, developed no sense of Turkishness as a communal identity. In this respect Peker’s declaration that the peasant was a nationalist was, similar to his proclamation of post-revolutionary Turkey as a prosperous society, a purely rhetorical device with a certain utopian component. Utopian in the sense that Kemalist cadres were eager to see Anatolian peasants as nationalists, and rhetorical in the sense that as long as the peasantry lacked any real opportunity to participate in the political process, it could be seen as the convenient manifestation of the “nation,” a concept which is, notoriously, open to definitions of huge variations.

This populist (that is, corporatist-solidarist) vision of society was also similar to fascist and even racist theories fashionable in the Europe of the 1930s. This becomes clear if we look more closely at the opinions of Mahmut Esat Bozkurt. Bozkurt became Minister of Justice of the newly established Republic in 1924, and two years later introduced the Swiss Civil Code to Turkey. He proved to be revolutionary in this office, directing his efforts not against non-Muslims, as was the case during the Anatolian Resistance Movement, but against *irtica* (the religious reaction), identified especially with the Kurds. As was noted earlier, the Kemalists had not accorded the Sunni Kurds the autonomy promised them in return for their collaboration during the “National Struggle.” With the Kurds particularly in mind, Bozkurt made threatening speeches promising hardship for all those who opposed the acquisition of Western civilization in Turkey. Later, Kieser points out, Bozkurt went much further, declaring a virtual “war of the races” between the masters of the country, the Turks, and others, such as the Kurds.<sup>405</sup>

In his book *The Atatürk Revolution* Bozkurt notes that “certain contemporary German historian” had noted that both national-socialism and fascism were more or less variations of the regime established by Mustafa Kemal in Turkey. According to Bozkurt, this was indeed correct evaluation. Kemalism could be defined as authoritative democracy based on people’s will. The Turkish nation was like a pyramid whose base was composed by the people, and in which the leadership was

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<sup>404</sup> Ibid., pp. 42–43.

<sup>405</sup> Kieser 2006, pp. 24–25.

vested for a man who originated from the people, called in Turkey *şef* (leader). The power exercised by the leader had been given to him by the Turkish people. According to Bozkurt, this was exactly what democracy means.<sup>406</sup> Peker, on the other hand, concludes his *Lectures on the Revolution* with the following remark:

Lastly, I want to recall that Atatürk, our Great Leader, left you two sublime concepts: Revolution and Independence. You know his speeches better than I. He reminded you that even in the most desperate times the power for securing those two values is the blood that runs through your veins.<sup>407</sup>

What conclusions, then, can we draw from the lectures of Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt concerning the Turkish Revolution? Firstly, we have seen that both writers present the Turkish Revolution as an outcome of a universal process in the form of “freedom-revolution.” Recep Peker stresses that Turkey managed to escape the “fatal next step” in the revolutionary tradition, the “class-revolution.” This was because the Republic of Turkey was *halkçılık* (populist) regime, which prohibited the development of antagonistic social classes. As we saw above, this populist doctrine also included the idealization of the Anatolian Turkish-speaking peasantry, proclaimed as the nationalist backbone of society, unwilling to respond to the internationalist call of socialism. Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, on the other hand, emphasises the “natural right” nations possess to execute a revolution. For both Peker and Bozkurt, the Turkish Revolution represents a “people’s” revolution. At the same time, however, both suggest that the “people” themselves do not necessarily understand the overall revolutionary process, and that a cadre of enlightened men is needed to lead them. We can say, then, that the initial legitimation force in the writings of Peker and Bozkurt is the nature of the Turkish Revolution as a genuine manifestation of *universal emancipation* represented as a historical necessity. It is clear, also, that both with Peker and Bozkurt we find a rhetoric that emphasizes the ethnic Turks as the true bearers of the revolutionary project. These representations, however, mostly concern an originally European intellectual context of the Kemalist vision. Next we need to analyse what was presented as the unique value of the Turkish Revolution.

## 4.2 The Exceptionality of the Turkish Revolution

Thus far it has been shown that Recep Peker represents the Turkish revolution as a local manifestation of the “freedom-revolution,” which, with corporatist-solidarist principles, prohibits the next and fatal phase, the “class-revolution.” What about his definition of the revolution itself? On what basic ideas is it grounded? According to Peker:

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<sup>406</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, p. 107.

<sup>407</sup> Bir son söz olarak, Atatürk’ün, hepimizin Ulu Önderi’nin, iki büyük mefhumu, inkılâp ve istiklâli, size emanet ettiği hatırlatırım. Onun sözlerini, kelime kelime, cümle cümle, siz benden daha iyi bilirsiniz. O, size, her şey bitti sanıldığı en düşkün zamanlarda bile onları koruyacak büyük kuvvetin, sizin asil kanınızda mevcut olduğunu söylemiştir. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 108.



A revolution means the elimination from the social structure of all that is backward, wrong and bad, all that is harmful and lacking justification. It is about replacing these with all that is right, good and useful. But, dear friends, this is not enough. The eternal condition for a successful revolution is to block the return of the bad and the harmful, that is, the true acceptance of the new ideals. If this is not done, the old habits re-emerge with increased force.

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In Peker's text we come across the idea of revolution's absolute emancipatory value. A revolution is depicted as a turning point in the history of humankind, a process that sets man and his society on a higher level. This process is a universal phenomenon of liberation, where political emancipation is essentially conceived in the tradition of European liberalism. As we have seen, however, this does not make Peker a protagonist of liberalism. For him liberalism is indeed the progenitor of an emancipatory "freedom-revolution," but it is doomed as the basis of a political community in the modern world stamped by class struggle. Thus, the presupposition in Peker's conception of revolution is the idea that Western political experience is a universally valid example for mankind. However, according to Peker, there are different species of revolutions. Peker distinguishes revolutions made from above, and those made by the people. Peker gives as an example of the first type of revolution the reforms pushed through by Peter the Great in Russia. Revolutions made by the people, on the other hand, were those done in England, France and Turkey. The Turkish Revolution is, according to Peker, the most brilliant example of a revolution by the people:

The Turkish revolution emanated from the people and directed against the monarch. But as the revolutionary force came to power, it continued from the basis of the state authority. While continuing this way, those classes of the people that did not comprehend the truth formed an opposition. The Turkish revolution required a long time to succeed. Even after fifteen years we are still working, for example, to achieve a pure national language. As the inner life of the Western Turkish nation that secured its genuine character, its outer aspects were being influenced by bad traits. We are still fighting to purge the social body of its maladies.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> İnkılâp; bir sosyal bünyeden geri, eğri, fena, eski haksız ve zararlı ne varsa bunları birden yeriden söküüp onların yerine ileriye, doğruyu, iyiyi, yeniyi ve faydalıyı koymaktır. Fakat arkadaşlar, koymak yeterli değildir. Onları öylece koyduktan sonra büyük bir sıcaklıkla davaya yapışıp sökülen şeylerin geri dönmemesini, konan şeylerin yaşamasını, yerleşmesini temin edecek bir sistem kurmak ve işletmek de inkılâbın değişmez şartıdır. Bu şart olmadıkça fenalıkların, geriliklerin... yerine iyiliklerin ve ileriliklerin... konması gelip geçici bir hâdise değersizliğine iner ve eski fenalıklar daha geniş tahrip tesirleriyle geri döner. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 18.

<sup>409</sup> Türk inkılâbı halktan gelerek otoritelere karşı yapılmıştır. Fakat inkılâp iktidar mevkiini alınca otoriteden halka doğru devam etmiştir. Bu devam esnasında halkın hakikatlere uzak kalmış tabakalarından mukavemetler ve zorluklar görmüştü. Türk inkılâbı uzun sürmüştür. Baştan beri on beş yıldan fazla zaman geçmiş olmasına rağmen, en değerli ulusal işimiz olan dil çalışmamızı bile inkılâbın yüce tesirlerine henüz uydurmakla meşgulüz. Kanının arılığı ile özü sağlam olan batı Türk'ünün iç yaşayışında olduğu gibi, dış görünüşünde de fenalıklar birikmişti. Ulus vücudunun derisini kaplayan çeşitli hastalıklarla mücadeleye mecbur olduk. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

Now here Peker obviously has some difficulty in depicting the nature of the revolution in Turkey. The revolution is, firstly, represented as an ideal type of those made by the people. Secondly, however, it is said that among the nation there were people who did not quite comprehend that the revolutionary effort was an expression of the people's will. This then meant that the state's mission was to fulfil the people's will. This contradiction in Peker's narrative is obvious given that, in reality, the Turkish revolution was, in extreme fashion, pushed through by a military-bureaucratic elite that was eager to secure its place at the top of society. Does this mean that Peker was, in this respect at least, unable to produce convincing grounds for the Turkish revolution's legitimacy as a people's revolution, contrary to his claims? To answer, we must first consider the construction of the idea of *obstacles* and *adversaries* in his lectures. According to Peker, the level of difficulty in executing a revolution correlates with the strength and prevalence of the old customs and beliefs: the older the traditions, the harder it is to replace them. According to Peker, in this sense the Turkish revolution was exceptionally difficult to accomplish:

To make a revolution often requires using force. When changes are done in the way I have demonstrated, reactionary forces rise in opposition, with weapons in their hands and a book in their pocket, with seductive words they attack in rage. Unless they are crushed down, the execution and continued existence of the revolution is impossible...In this sense too, the Turkish revolution, more than others, demanded using force.<sup>410</sup>

Thus, it is suggested that it is not the ordinary people as such who oppose the revolutionary process, but those "with a book in their hand using seductive words." This definition seems to point towards educated people, and the general context provided by the Kemalist discourse is such that we can assume it pointing especially towards religious scholars, the *ulema*. It is the reactionary opposition of these men, and their ability to "seduce" common people to rise against the revolution, that requires the use of revolutionary violence, especially in Turkey, where the social body was filled with "maladies" inherited from the Ottoman era. Thus, the core message of Peker's lectures is that there is a legitimate revolution taking place in Turkey, emanating from the people and which, because of a reactionary movement on behalf of self-interested representatives of the sultanate, is pushed on by the state authorities.

Like Peker, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt explicitly asserts that what is happening in Turkey, and what he is, accordingly, describing in his book, is indeed a "revolution," not some kind of gradual change or evolution. According to Bozkurt, an ape was transformed into a human being through an evolutionary process. This was not the case with a revolution. In a revolution, there could be nothing resembling the old, which was destroyed altogether and replaced by the new. This was, in essence, *Türk ihtilali* (the Turkish Revolution). Thousands of years old institutions and mentalities

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<sup>410</sup> İnkılâpları yapmak için çok kere zor kullanmak lazımdır. Saydığım anlamda bir değişiklik yapılırken mukavemet ve irtica unsurları, yerine göre elinde silahla veya cebinde kitapla, kafasında eskiye alışmış somurtkanlık, dilinde iğfal ve tehevürle gelip karşınıza dikilirler. Bunları vurup devirmedikçe inkılâbı yapmanın ve hattâ devirler korumanın imkânı yoktur... Bu bakımdan da Türk inkılâbı en ziyade zor kullanmayı gerektiren bir hususiyet gösterir. Ibid., pp. 18–19.

were struck down as new ones were erected in their place. Once again, Bozkurt underlined that it was not a question of *inkılap* (a gradual betterment), but a genuine revolution.<sup>411</sup>

In reference to these explicit remarks, it is interesting to note that there are numerous evaluations concerning the real character of the Kemalist reforms. For example Erik J. Zürcher has argued that the whole Young Turk generation was manifestly anti-revolutionary in the sense that it did not want to produce any kind of uncontrolled mass-movement that could have jeopardized the orderly management of society. Zürcher claims that what the Young Turks wanted was a well-organized scheme of progress and reform of the state, not a change in the social division of labor and power. According to Zürcher, the Young Turks, Mustafa Kemal and his closest comrades included, feared the “irrational” actions of the masses and were determined to produce changes from above.<sup>412</sup> All this is correct. It should not, however, prevent us from seeing the value of revolutionary rhetoric in Kemalist texts. As has been demonstrated, in Recep Peker’s writings a “freedom-revolution” is represented as a universal emancipation movement executed by the people. Thus, in rhetoric, it was most important to represent all the changes brought about by the Turkish Revolution as a genuine popular revolution driven by the people and led by the enlightened elite. The value of such revolutionary rhetoric in political legitimation becomes obvious if we consider further the writings of Mahmut Esat Bozkurt. Bozkurt begins his book *Atatürk İhtilali* by noting that he wrote it in order to explain to the Turkish nation, step by step, the Atatürk Revolution that started with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>413</sup> He proceeded by claiming that Revolution is necessary to life and that it is the first of man’s natural rights, also offering the following “philosophy of history”:

The War of Liberation was a contingent occurrence during which the caliphate, deprived of its meaning, including all those political, economic and social institutions attached to it, were evaporating, and giving place to new ones. This was a necessity. The Turkish economic, political, and social situation compelled this, to such a degree that these changes would have materialized even if the War of Liberation had never occurred. This same phenomenon can also be seen in the Russian revolution. The defeat of the tsarist regime in the First World War led to the destruction of all the institutions attached to that regime, paving the way for communism. But, change would have occurred even if there had not been a Great War. Some other event would have wiped out the tsarist regime which had already lost its meaning. What I want to say is that the reasons for a revolution lie within itself, not in any contingent occurrences.<sup>414</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, pp. 163–164.

<sup>412</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, “Kemalist Düşüncenin Osmanlı Kaynakları,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p. 51.

<sup>413</sup> Bozkurt [1940] 1995, p. 31.

<sup>414</sup> Bağımsız savaşları tesadüfî bir olaydır ki, bunu, esasen anlamını bitirmiş olan hilafet ve onun gereği olan bütün kurumlar; - ekonomik, sosyal, siyasal – bir ihtilal vuruşuyla, yerlerini yenilerine bıraktılar. Bu bir zorunluktur. Ekonomik, sosyal, siyasal Türk durumu bunu gerektiriyordu. O kadar ki, kurtuluş savaşları olmasaydı bile, bu değişiklik yine olacaktı. Son Rus İhtilalini ele alırsak, aynı gözlem ortaya çıkar. Dünya Harbinde Rus Çarlığının uğradığı yenilgi, Çarlığı ve ona bağlı kurumları temellerinden sarsınca, yerini komünizm alıverdi. Fakat Dünya Harbi olmasaydı bir başka bir olay,

Here we have again a very deterministic idea of the revolution, already familiar from Atatürk's Great Speech. According to Bozkurt, the War of Liberation as such was a contingent phenomenon, but the revolution was a necessity. Thus, in Bozkurt's representation it is no use fighting against the reforms executed in Turkey because they are the inevitable products of human development. Obviously, this kind of naturalized vision of Kemalist politics excludes any alternatives for contemplating the future. At first there seems to be, however, a striking re-interpretation of the original *Nutukian* representation of history. Contrary to that expressed in the *Nutuk*, the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, as a particular set of events during 1919–1922, is not depicted as a historical necessity. However, this does not mean that Bozkurt's interpretation in any crucial sense challenges the original *Nutukian* narrative. Even though the particular events of the resistance struggle era themselves have no necessary value, the *goal* expressed in this struggle does. In other words, what is depicted by Bozkurt as a historical necessity is the manifestation of a universal history of emancipation executed in the Turkish Revolution. Thus, the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as such may have been a contingent event, but the enlightenment process executed through the revolution was a historical necessity.

Bozkurt analyzes European revolutions and European dictionaries' definitions for the term "revolution." He finds these definitions unsound because they only speak of eliminating the old political and social structures, ignoring the importance of economic revolution. Not content with these definitions, Bozkurt sketches out better ones. According to Bozkurt, a revolution is the successful replacement of the existing political, social, and economic order with a better and more advanced one, sometimes achieved with the use of violence. Thus, for Bozkurt, a mere political revolution is not a genuine revolution at all.<sup>415</sup> Examples of "incomplete" revolutions given by Bozkurt are the Russian *duma* revolution of 1915 and the Young Turk revolution in the Ottoman state in 1908. According to Bozkurt, these efforts left the societies' economic structures and social relations untouched. Contrary to these incomplete efforts, the revolution in France in 1789, the Russian revolution of 1917, and the Turkish revolution starting in 1919 are genuine revolutions.<sup>416</sup>

To a certain degree, the function of Bozkurt's lectures is to emphasise the historically exceptional nature of the reform process started with the Anatolian Resistance Movement in 1919–1923. As noted, according to Bozkurt, the Young Turk constitutional revolution in the Ottoman Empire in 1908 was not a "genuine" revolution. The "Atatürk Revolution," on the other hand, is a genuine transformation in all areas; in politics, in the economy, and in social relations. This does not mean that Bozkurt wanted to create a social revolution executed by the masses themselves that would change the relations of power. This revolutionary discourse is purely

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anlamını yitirmiş olan Çarlığı devirecek, bunun yerini yeni bir rejim mutlaka alacaktı. Demek istediğim şudur ki, ihtilalin sebebi ve etkeni kendisidir. Yoksa tesadüfi olaylar değildir. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72.

rhetorical in this sense, aiming to legitimate the power of the Kemalist one-party regime.

According to Bozkurt, the aim of the revolution is to advance the nation in all areas. It is thus a project of general progress. Reactionary behavior (*irtica*), on the other hand, occurs when the nation is led into decline. After this assessment, Bozkurt presents a very interesting question: has a nation a right to choose this *irtica*, that is, reactionary behavior? According to Bozkurt, a nation does not possess this kind of right, even though the principle of the sovereignty of a nation declares that a nation can decide. The reason given is that advancement and novelties represent life, whereas reactionary movements are synonymous with death. To choose the death of the nation cannot be considered a choice at all, as one can only speak of a nation's right to live, never to death. Bozkurt asserts that, according to the argument he has put forward, the nation does not have a right to make a decision according to which the Turks would re-establish the sultanate, or even a constitutional monarchy, since that would entail a renunciation of the nation's sovereignty. Bozkurt admits that one can wonder if it is really acceptable that individuals and nations cannot use their natural right to decide in whatever way they please. However, he emphasizes that individuals and nations can use their rights, but only in order to advance or progress, never for regression or death. Bozkurt's final argument for denying the nation's right to choose regression is that no generation is allowed to make a decision that would leave *esaret* (slavery) as its legacy to the next.<sup>417</sup>

Thus, like Peker, Bozkurt's conception of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, and the revolutionary movement that followed it, presupposes a universal history of mankind heading inevitably toward progress – a conception which we here call the “enlightenment idea of history.” Bozkurt's evaluation of the people's rights in terms of the direction of the revolution finally brings to the surface one of the most characteristic aspects of the Kemalist modernization project. This is the discrepancy between the *emancipatory goal of enlightenment* and the *authoritarian method of achieving it*, an aspect already hinted at earlier in this section. In order to give a wider context to this phenomenon, it is useful to look briefly at how a very similar kind of process had been part of the French Revolution – an event that was used by the first-generation Kemalists to back their ideal of a revolution.

As Michael Biddis has stated, those who during the nineteenth-century drew on the ideas of the French Revolution revealed much diversity in their political attitudes. Thus they mirrored differences which were already evident through the period 1788–1794. Liberals harked back to the opening phase, when attempts at constitution making owed much to the contemplation about balance and moderation derived from Montesquieu. Enthusiasts for more radical changes admired, rather, the Jacobin era dominated by Robespierre's interpretation of Rousseau.<sup>418</sup> During 1793–1794 the revolutionary drive in France was sustained by the dogmatic Robespierre, who

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<sup>417</sup> Ibid., pp. 73–75.

<sup>418</sup> Michael Biddis, “Reason and romanticism: currents of social and political thought,” in *Themes in Modern European History 1780–1830*, ed. Pamela M. Pilbeam (London and New York: Routledge, 1995): pp. 230–231.

treated politics as an arena for essentially moral activity. Echoing both Rousseau and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, Robespierre defined the *people* as the source of all sovereign authority. He and the Jacobins strove to liberate a natural goodness whose possession by the masses had been obscured amidst the corruptive circumstances of the *ancien regime*. Under conditions of equality, it was claimed, citizens would put public benefit above private interest and, by demonstrating their *amour de la patrie*, would launch a Reign of Virtue. In reality, Jacobinism became increasingly authoritarian. Robespierre concluded that its aims must be promoted through the use of terror. However, as Biddis points out, “this temporary expedient soon hardened into a whole way of life – or, indeed, death. As Jacobin violence grew more indiscriminate, not even the undoubted personal integrity of ‘the Incorruptible’ (Robespierre) could check the frenzy of this moral fervour. By the time of his fall, Robespierre had effectively expropriated from the people that sovereignty with which he theoretically endowed them, and the fanaticism of his secular ideology had made him more of a threat to civil liberties than Louis XVI ever managed to be.”<sup>419</sup>

What we seem to have in front of us, then, both with Bozkurt and Peker, is an understanding that a “false consciousness,” similar to that found in Marxist theory, was a distinct possibility. That is, it is the people that decide, as Bozkurt says, as much as possible, but they can, however, make a wrong decision. As we saw, in Bozkurt’s writings the people are not allowed, on the grounds of the principle of the sovereignty of a nation, to make a decision that would, ultimately, limit that sovereignty. Thus, the people of republican Turkey cannot decide to re-establish the sultanate and caliphate, or to reverse the reforms enacted during the revolutionary process. Now, defined in this way, the sovereignty of the people becomes enclosed in a conception of enlightenment defined in such a way that the only possible future is that proposed by the Kemalist meta-narrative. As the example from the French revolution also seems to suggest, a revolution carried out in the name of the people – that is, in order to establish the sovereignty of a nation – is a practical dead-end. The “people” as such cannot ever decide anything. What is always needed is a plethora of institutions and communicative practices, call them “representations” if you like, that somehow define the “general will of the people.” In Kemalist discourse these institutions and “representations” have been vested, even after the establishment of a multi-party democracy in 1945, ultimately, in the military-bureaucratic elite in charge of the state.

According to Mesut Yeğen, one important question concerning Kemalism is whether there was ever a period during which Kemalism was in a truly *hegemonic* position in Turkish society. Before going any further, it must be noted that for Yeğen this kind of hegemonic position only seems to exist if all cultural representations and collective self-understandings are the product of one dominant ideology. According to Yeğen, it must be understood that (contrary to the claims made by the Kemalists themselves, I would like to add) Kemalism is really only a one possible “reading” of the wider process of Turkish modernization. Thus, modernization in Turkey should not be reduced to Kemalism, even though it became the most politically successful

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<sup>419</sup> Ibid., pp. 231–232.

stream of modernization efforts.<sup>420</sup> Now this is very important when analysing the hegemonic position of Kemalism in Turkey. Kemalism became the intellectual horizon of the military-bureaucratic elite that inherited the idea that the state was the dominant actor in politics. As Yeğen emphasises, there was a wide gap between the world-view and life experiences of the Kemalist elite on the one hand, and the majority of the Anatolian population on the other. Thus, Yeğen concludes, Kemalism was the ideology of the most powerful spectrum of the military-bureaucratic elite, while the masses continued to perceive the world in very different way. That is, Kemalism did not manage to establish a moral and intellectual dominance over the masses, not even in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>421</sup>

Observations by Sefa Şimşek concerning the already mentioned People's Houses (*Halkevleri*) which were established by the Kemalist one-party regime to propagate its message, suggest that this gap was always present. According to Şimşek, the failure of the CHP in the 1946 and 1950 elections, and the revival of traditional and religious patterns of behavior during the multi-party period both indicate that the success of the People's Houses remained far below expectations.<sup>422</sup> All this should not prevent us from seeing, however, that Kemalism has established itself as the political discourse, so to speak, of the Turkish nation-state. We have already seen how the Kemalist regime aimed to produce a new Turk, a republican citizen who had internalized the values of rationality and nationalism. To a certain degree this effort has been successful. As Şimşek emphasises, an important number of intellectuals and scholars, if not the ordinary people, internalized and further consolidated Kemalist ideology. Thus, *cultural Kemalism* came to be successful throughout the decades that followed the single-party era. Teachers, writers, intellectuals, and scholars of the 1960s and 1970s conveyed this ideology, which had been formed during their youth at the People's Houses, to new generations.<sup>423</sup>

That there were indeed people who perceived the Kemalist regime as legitimate becomes clear if we read the memoirs of those individuals who started their careers during the early years of the Republic. Esra Özyürek has interviewed retired teachers who in the 1990s were still among us and capable of telling us their life experiences. According to Özyürek, these people are called “the children of the republic.” In their narratives the Kemalist one-party era is represented as a “golden age” of national unity, filled with utopian hope for a more progressive and modernized future. For these people the one-party era, defined by many current liberal-minded scholars as authoritarian and oppressive, was a time of unselfish work in order to construct a better future.<sup>424</sup> There is no reason to question the sincerity of these personal experiences.

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<sup>420</sup> Yeğen 2002, pp. 56–57.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60.

<sup>422</sup> Şimşek 2005, p. 88.

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>424</sup> Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 32–33.

Based on these grounds, I am of the opinion that demonstrating the legitimacy of power relations in Turkey has been, more than anything else, a question concerning the *future goals of the collective*, constructed through the narratives of the past. I am here distantly referring to an idea developed by Terence Ball. According to Ball, a *political discourse* purports to be a bridging language, a supra-discourse spanning and connecting several sub-languages. It is thus the language that we supposedly share in our common capacity as citizens, not as speakers of specialized sub-languages.<sup>425</sup> It can be stated that in republican Turkey, political discourse came to be monopolized, at least during the period from the 1930s to the 1980s, by Kemalist presuppositions. Thus, no matter how far the other discourses produced by the masses were from those of the Kemalists, in matters of political expressions every Turkish citizen was obliged, sooner or later, to speak within the Kemalist vocabulary. What happened in the case of Turkey was that the Kemalist elite in power produced, during its formative years, a narrative of a nation that everyone living in the political community defined as the Republic of Turkey has been obliged to take into account. Whether or not individual citizens adhere to these values presented by the powerful, the very existence of these dominant groups in itself leads to the question of legitimacy and its origins. As there is, obviously, a group of people who claim to represent the collective as a whole, people one way or another come to assume that there was a *reason for the original division of power*. This assumption presupposes that the authority in question emanates from “something.” If that “something” is seen as acceptable at least to a certain degree, then people do not in general fight against it.

In the case of Turkey the origins of authority are seen to be situated in the victorious battle against external invaders and their internal accomplices in the “Turkish War of Independence.” This very definition of the Anatolian Resistance Movement is a part of a communicative legitimation process. In Kemalist ideology, the Anatolian Resistance Movement is simultaneously the “War of Liberation” and the “Turkish Revolution.” For example, Recep Peker states:

The tactic in securing victory is, generally, to first beat one enemy and then crush the next one. But my friends, if we are looking at the beginning of the Turkish Revolution, we notice that in order to achieve independence and revolution, the Turkish nation had to struggle on all fronts. First, the Turkish nation was obliged to fight against the sultan, various reactionary forces, and those unwilling to see the truth, and, secondly, against the external enemy. On the one hand, the enemy was the sultan, and, on the other hand, our country was occupied by foreign armies. Because of this, it was a necessity to secure the revolution and independence simultaneously.

If we look back on those events, we come to realise that it was necessary to gather the whole nation, in order to beat the external enemy, under the mission of saving the sultan. In reality, however, the palace was helping the external enemy to attack the national forces. In these circumstances, the majority of the population fighting against the external enemy could

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<sup>425</sup> Terence Ball, “Conceptual History and the History of Political Thought,” in *History and Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans, and Frank Van Vree (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998): pp. 75–86.



not comprehend the events occurring. People thought that the sultan was fighting the foreign forces. In truth, the sultan was covered by the mentality of treason. It was no easy task to explain this fact to the people.

Thus, it is most important that future generations understand the character of the Turkish Revolution as a whole composed of revolution and independence, so that the Turkish nation should never again degenerate to the sort of situation that preceded the Revolution! One cannot separate the revolution and independence. These two are the foundations of the existence of the Turkish nation, its two main concepts of life. <sup>426</sup>

As Zürcher, for example, states, the elites of authoritarian modernizing regimes, such as that of Turkey, which try to accomplish a modernization leap without broad grassroots support need to monopolize not only power but also political legitimacy. In order to push through the changes envisioned by the elite, power has to be concentrated in the hands of the dominant group, but at the same time this power monopoly must be shown to be for the good of the country and the nation. As Zürcher admits, to a certain degree this is true of all governments, “but a modernizing regime’s claim to be acting in the nation’s best interest depends on the claim that its vision of the future is correct – in other words, that it is uniquely able to identify the nation’s problems and to show the way to progress and prosperity.”<sup>427</sup>

As has been demonstrated, in the political language of Kemalism the Turkish revolution is legitimate because it brings enlightenment to the Turkish people. The people on the other hand look around the world and easily conceive that the reason for the powerful position and material wealth of the West, and those in Turkey representing the West at the national level (the Kemalist elite), must be their superior knowledge and skills. Thus, in order to achieve such wealth and escape the dominance of the West, it is obligatory to adhere to the rational science of the West. Thus, the life-experience of the ordinary man seems to confirm the claims made by the powerful in Turkey, that is, that the power of the Kemalist elite stems from their ability to lead Turkey to welfare and prosperity. In the citation above, Peker claims that the goal of the Anatolian Resistance Movement – that is, independence – could

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<sup>426</sup> Yenmenin taktik yolu düşmanlardan ilk önce birini vurmaktır, sonra da diğerini ezmektir. Fakat, arkadaşlar, Türk inkılâbının doğusu sırasındaki dünya vaziyeti göz önüne alınırsa görülür ki, Türk Ulusu muvaffak olmak için inkılâp ve istiklâli birden başarmak, bütün unsurlarla birden uğraşmak mecburiyetinde kalmıştır. Türk Ulusu bir yandan sarayla, bütün gerilik unsurlarıyla ve hakikati anlamadan onlara uyan cahillerle boğuşmuş, diğer yandan da yabancı askerler, yaban ordularla savaştığıdır. Zira bir tarafta saray ve ona uyanlar vardı ve bunlarla uğraşmak lazım geliyordu. Diğer taraftan yurdumuz yabancı orduların çizmesi altındaydı, onlara savaştık icabediordu. İşte bu yüzden inkılâbı ve istiklâli ayrı ayrı, birini ötekenden sonra başarmak mümkün değildi. Bunların ikisinin tahakkuku lazım geliyordu. O zamanın vaziyetini vaka vaka gördüğümüz zaman daha iyi anlayacağız ki, o zaman dış savaşta muvaffak olmak, halkı bu amaç üzerinde toplamak için padişah ile beraber görünmek lazım geliyordu. Halbuki saray yaban orduların, öz yurtta savaşan ulusal kuvvetlere karşı ilerlemesini tasvip ve hattâ bir bakımdan teşvik ediyordu. O sırada nispeten çokluk sayılan bir halk yığını, toprağı ayak basanlara karşı koymak lazım geldiğini anlamış beraber, asıl hakikati anlayamıyordu. Bunlar, padişah mutlaka o düşmanların aleyhindedir, zannediyorlardı. Halbuki padişah hain ve zehirli bir zihniyetin tesiri altında idi. Hakikati halk yığınına anlatmak güçtü. İşte Türk inkılâbı, hem inkılâp hem de istiklâl yönünden geleceklere aşılmalıdır ki, Türk ulusu bundan önce düşmüş olduğu şerefsiz vaziyete bir daha düşmesin! İstiklâl ve inkılâp birbirinden ayrılmaz. Bunlar Türk Ulusu için iki beka şartı ve iki büyük hayat mefhumudur. Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 21–22.

<sup>427</sup> Zürcher 2001, pp. 213–214.

only be achieved if the “Revolution” was also successfully executed. Both of them are also presented as the original aims of the resistance movement, although, as we have seen, the historical reality was quite different.

Peker underlines that even though the principle of “freedom-revolution” is universal, individual states should not try to copy other’s systems of government. According to Peker, it was fundamental that every nation adopted a system of government suitable to its own specific conditions. An example given by Peker of this “sin” of copying others is the constitutional monarchy established in the Ottoman Empire in 1877–1918. This resulted in a total crisis of the state. The reason for this was that the constitutional monarchy and the freedoms it produced were altogether unsuitable as methods for governing the Ottoman state.<sup>428</sup> Here we come face to face with the proposed nature of the Turkish nation and its form of government. According to Peker, the Turkish Revolution avoided this cardinal mistake of copying:

The Turkish Revolution represents a freedom-revolution made by the people. In the revolutionary era, we abolished all institutions harmful to the life of the state and nation. We did not allow room for hostile institutions. We abolished the sultanate and with a radical blow we ended the influence of religion in matters of state. Finally, we eliminated the destructive influence of these two institutions in the whole life of the nation. Besides, we stopped the maladies of economic liberalism with our own firm principles. Parliamentarism, with its destructive tendency to produce a plethora of parties each pulling in different direction, we banished from the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, which is functioning in a way that is suitable for us.<sup>429</sup>

Peker also writes that “Our revolution was not copying any of its aspects from others; it is original,” and then he goes on, citing the words of Atatürk: “We resemble no one but ourselves!”<sup>430</sup> Thus, in these lines we have a general justification for the Kemalist one-party state, strongly advocated by Peker. It is grounded, more than anything else, on the solidarist-corporatist model analysed above. In Kemalist discourse, Turkish society is a homogenous and classless society, represented comprehensively by the Republican People’s Party. Thus, as Nur Betül Çelik asserts, the myth of a unitary nation legitimises the one-party regime. As already hinted, Kemalist discourse is based on the conviction that there is one true path to social progress and prosperity, called modernization or westernization. The Republican People’s Party, founded by Kemal Atatürk, is the executive tool of this

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<sup>428</sup> Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 30–33.

<sup>429</sup> Türk inkılâbı, hürriyet inkılâbı tipinden bir halk ihtilalidir. İnkılâbımızın tahakkuk devri esnasında bize uzaktan yakından fena olacak müesseseleri devlet hayatı içinden, ulus hayatı içinden kaldırdık. Biz düşman müesseselerinin hululüne meydan vermedik, saray yıktık, dinin devlet üzerindeki tesirlerini en keskin ve radikal bir formül ile kaldırdık. Ve nihayet bu iki unsurun milli gidişte sürati bozucu tesirlerini kıymet ve kuvvetten bu suretle düşünmüş olduk. Biz, inkılâbımızda ekonomik liberalizmin suistimalinin, bu hürriyet inkılâbının serbest ticarete tatbikinin fena neticelerinin yurdumuzda tahribat yapmasına meydan vermemesi için lazım gelen formülleri ve presipleri önceden kabul ettik. Parlamenterizm, bu çarpışta muhtelif partilerin herbirini bir tarafa çeken tatbikatından ve tahribatından, Türkiye Büyük Meclisinin hususi çalışma tarzıyla, yeni devleti uzak bulundurduk. Ibid., pp. 33–34.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

true path. Because of this, there is no need for other parties in Turkey.<sup>431</sup> This idea is clearly expressed by Peker:

The nationalization of all aspects includes our conceptions of security and freedom. One cannot say that a human being is fully free when left on his own. In contemporary politics a citizen's ability to feel free, secure and happy, is attached to the fact that these emotions are possible only when the homeland of the citizen is free and happy in terms of international relations.<sup>432</sup>

Peker asserts that as all things were national, political parties should be national too, representing all sectors of the nation. Thus, Peker claims, the fragmented multi-party system of the liberal state was replaced by one unified national party that safeguarded the interests of all citizens.<sup>433</sup> Peker also argues that in a liberal state, produced by the "freedom-revolution," all kinds of reactionary groups could also establish their own political parties, aiming to block all change and progress. Religious parties were, according to Peker, a clear example of this.<sup>434</sup> Herein lies one of the cardinal problems of republican Turkey. As the Turkish society is defined as "classless" in the Kemalist discourse, the idea of the General Will, originally established by Rousseau, can be seen in totalizing way; it is claimed that the one-party, defined as the representative of the whole nation, is the only one needed to realise popular sovereignty. Thus, a unified nation is represented totally by the party that symbolizes the national liberation struggle.<sup>435</sup>

After offering an example concerning post-World-War-I Italy on the tragic consequences of the lack of unity within a nation, Peker states that every citizen, even one who considered himself or herself unimportant for the overall composition of a nation, had a duty to secure his country. It was indeed the nation which gives the individual his value. Peker stated that he could not give any value to a social philosophy that approved everyone's aspirations which might pull in opposite directions. Surely, a nation was composed of various elements. Nevertheless, success in the "eternal struggle of life" demanded that the nation be set above everything else, producing unity in action as well as principle. According to Peker, human beings as single individuals have no value at all. A nation which was scientifically specialized and rich in energy resources, but lacking in unity, could not be successful when faced with a unified nation. Thus, the most important thing in politics and economics was that the Turks, marching from social darkness toward the light and from degeneration to progress, always understood this unity as a matter of life and death.<sup>436</sup> Further, Peker writes that:

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<sup>431</sup> Çelik 2002, p. 76.

<sup>432</sup> Bütün bunlarla beraber, her şeyin genişleyip ulaşmasından, mefhumlara, emniyet ve hürriyet telakkilerine de dokunmak gerekir. Bir insanın tek başına hür olması tam manasıyla mesut olmasını temin edemez. İçinde bulunduğumuz yeryüzünün genel politika devrinde, bir yurttaşının kendisini hürriyet, emniyet ve saadet içinde hissetmesinin sırrı, kendi ulusun dünya içinde hü, mesut ve vaziyetinin emin olmasına bağlıdır. Peker [1935] 1984, p. 67.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., pp. 70–72.

<sup>435</sup> Çelik 2002, p. 78.

<sup>436</sup> Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 48–49.

Whatever the the value of a single individual, seen from the perspective of overcoming today's major problems, this value is zero. In contemporary life, the nation must be superior. In order for a nation to become great, it is obligatory that people with their hearts and wisdom unify around the great and original principle. It is necessary that they shall gather around the warmth of the leader.<sup>437</sup>

Lastly, Peker concludes that national unity is the precondition for the Turkish Revolution, which in its turn is a precondition for life itself.

And today, in this situation we are now, as we are eager to establish, secure, and safeguard the state that is heading onwards on all fronts, we must make sure that these steps are permanent. Today, national unity is the precondition of life. As we make an effort to consolidate the Turkish Revolution, this precondition of life is becoming all the more important.<sup>438</sup>

What is significant concerning this exaltation of the group in relation to the individual, is its attempt to utilize both contemporary European political tradition stressing the absolute value of the community (nationalism, corporatism, solidarism), and the terminology (but, significantly, not the *ideals*) of the religious discourse of Islamic tradition. As Aydın points out, Recep Peker and the revolutionary elite around the *Ülkü*-magazine aimed at the conversion of society in line with revolutionary religion, even using religious terminology to achieve this. The People's Houses were identified as *Ülkü Mabetleri* (the Temples of Ideal); the "apostles" of revolution were to be recruited for *köy misyonerliği* (village mission); the *manevi inkılap* (spiritual revolution) was said to be disseminated by the zealous efforts of the *nurlu* (saintly) devotees of Kemalism on the way to reach *Atatürk Cenneti* (the Heaven of Atatürk). There was also a great effort to portray the leader of the republic as a sacred and holy being: Mustafa Kemal was envisaged as a genius superior to the "prophets," a secular preacher, *Büyük kurtarıcı* (a Great saviour), *pek yüce varlık* (a highly exalted being), and *kutsal mihrab* (a sacred altar) of this secular religion. Besides this, Atatürk's *Nutuk* was considered to be the new *mukaddes kitap* (holy book) of the Turks.<sup>439</sup> Thus, it seems that for Peker it was justified to use all available tools in order to consolidate the Revolution. If this was achieved through the usage of religious terminology familiar to the populace, this terminology was used without hesitation. The purpose was to demonstrate, obviously, that the nation was replacing *ümmet* (the Islamic community) as the holy and omnipotent entity within which all individuals could experience the meaning of life and achieve salvation.

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<sup>437</sup> Tek insanın değeri ne olursa olsun, bugünün yüce ve zorlu işlerini başarma bakımından bu değerın verimi sıfırdır. Bugünkü yaşayıpta, ulusça üstün olmak gerektir. Ulusça üstün olmak için, kafası ve yüreği işleyen insanların bir büyük ve ana inanışta birleşmiş ve beraber olmaları ve yüce bir şefin ışığı etrafında birleşmeleri ve sarılmaları şarttır. Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>438</sup> Hattâ şimdi, bizim içinde bulunduğumuz vaziyet gibi; kurtuluş, kuruluş ve koruyuş bakımlarından her şeyi yolunda giden bir devlet için dahi ileriye doğru kazanılmış mesafelerin muhafazası için, ulusal birlik en büyük yaşama şartıdır. Kökleştirme yolunda bulunduğumuz Türk inkılâbının derinliği ve ehemmiyeti, içinde bulunduğumuz gün için, bu hayat şartını mühimleştiriyor. Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>439</sup> Aydın 2004, p. 71.

Furthermore, Peker emphasises that the Turkish Revolution carries universal significance. Firstly, because of Turkey's geographical location. Secondly, the Turkish nation is historically very important, so the revolution executed by it was also very significant. The third reason stems from the fact that the revolution was carried out in such a significant era. According to Peker, the Turkish Revolution was an awakening example to all backward societies. Inspired by the Turkish Revolution, they will start their own journey towards good, right, beauty, and justice. Seeing the Turkish example, the darkness that currently surrounds them will give away to light.<sup>440</sup> One could say, then, that here too some kind of religious mission is at work: the Turkish Revolution is like a new beacon of light that spreads its emancipatory force to all oppressed peoples. Peker continues to demonstrate the absolute value of the Turkish revolution as follows:

From the viewpoint of contemporary political, economic, and social concepts, the Turkish Revolution is the most progressive movement in the world. The political principles of the Turkish Revolution are – in theory as well as in practice – the most advanced ever. They have not been copied from elsewhere but are the most suitable for the specific structures of Turkey.<sup>441</sup>

We have already asserted that the Republican People's Party was conceived by first-generation Kemalists as the only party needed for the development of Turkish society. In the discourse of Kemalism, how are the guiding principles of this party been laid down? Recep Peker asserts that a party program for a political organisation is not produced by a group of people sitting around a table and writing a book about how matters of state should be conducted. A political party and its program are born, according to Peker, when people engaged in the destinies of the nation come together in order to systematize their thoughts, shaped by crucial events. Peker writes:

Looking from this perspective, one can say that the Republican People's Party and its program were born to unite those foundational principles guiding the establishment of the new and sublime Turkish state, rising from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. The program of the Republican People's Party is the outcome of events leading to the establishment of a new state – one which includes past events and the principles for guiding the future.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Peker [1935] 1984, pp. 55–56.

<sup>441</sup> Türk inkılâbı bugün siyasal, ekonomik, sosyal mefhumlar bakımından dünyanın en ileri hareketi içindedir. Türk inkılâbının politik mefhumları, edebiyat olarak da, realite olarak da, bizden önce gelen inkılâpları en üstün olanıdır. Onda kopya yoktur, Türkiye kendi bünyesine en uygun olan esasları almıştır. Ibid., pp. 56–57.

<sup>442</sup> Bu bakımdan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi programı, yıkılan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun enkazı içinden yeni ve yüce bir varlık olarak doğan yeni Türkiye devletinin kurulması hâdiselerinin yoğurduğu presiplerle hayata çıkmıştır. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi programının kökleri yeni devletin doğuş vakalı içinde beslenerek iş ve eser halinde bir realite olduktan sonra geçmişi ve geleceği kavrayan prensipler olarak yazılmıştır. Ibid., pp. 62–63.

Now these are very interesting passages indeed. Peker gives us – in a representation designed to be an analytical description of political parties and their programs – an interpretation of the Anatolian resistance movement of 1919–1922. This interpretation is fundamentally similar to the one offered by Atatürk in his Six-Day speech: the Anatolian Resistance Movement is the same thing as the Turkish Revolution, that is, the foundation of a new national state and far-reaching reforms, executed by the Republican People’s Party. This Party is the true crystallization of revolutionary principles – and those principles legitimating the existence of the Turkish state itself.

We can conclude by noting that in the narrative produced by Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, the Turkish Revolution is an exceptional achievement for several reasons. First of all, it is a unique expression of the universal “freedom-revolution” in the sense that it managed to prevent the next and fatal phase, the “class-revolution.” Secondly, it executed an enlightenment process in the unique cultural context of Islam, during a highly significant era. Thirdly, it was able to create a unique and highly functional regime, which, in a world characterized most of all by the omnipotence of the nation, was able to go beyond the “liberal state” to establish the most developed type of national state. And fourthly, the Turkish Revolution –as it was also a liberation struggle – became an inspiring example for all oppressed nations.

### 4.3 The Institutionalization of the Kemalist Idea of History

One can quite justifiably claim that the kind of reproduction of the *Nutukian* interpretation of history described above was a widely accepted mission of first-generation Kemalist ideologues. To offer just one more important example, we can note how Munis Tekinalp, who already in 1936 had published his book *Kemalizm*, represents the origins of the Kemalist movement. Tekinalp writes that the history of Kemalism begins with the National Liberation War which was fought on many fronts. According to him, Kemal Atatürk organized the Erzurum Congress in July–August 1919. This Congress originally adopted the so-called National Pact, which declared that *Türk yurdu* (the Turkish soil) inside the national borders was an undivided entity. It also abandoned the foreign mandate and established the national sovereignty of the will of *Türk ulusu* (the Turkish nation)), shouting “Stop right there!” to its enemies. After this definition of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a *Turkish* struggle fought on *Turkish* soil, Tekinalp referred to Atatürk’s *Nutuk* and reproduced the panorama of Ottoman degeneration which can be found in the very first lines of Atatürk’s Six-Day speech.<sup>443</sup>

Moreover, Tekinalp proclaimed that the real purpose of Kemalism was not just to bring modernity to Turkey. According to him, with Kemalism, Turkish society indeed had changed its face. This kind of transition may have happened in other places too. But in Turkey, the task was not yet finished. What was witnessed next

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<sup>443</sup> Munis Tekinalp, “Kemalizmin Doğuşu ve Amacı,” in *Atatürkçülük Nedir, Ne Değildir*, ed. Ahmet Köklüğiller (Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2007): p. 9. (Text published originally in *Kemalizm*, Istanbul 1936.)

was something never seen before in human history. Because of Kemalism, in the new Turkey even the individual citizen had changed his whole attitude, his intellectual structure, and his mentality. This meant, according to Tekinalp, that in the new phase of the Kemalist revolution, it was necessary to ground the new state on altogether new foundations. This was an enormous and difficult task, because the ground was littered with rotten structures of the past. The old structures were still there as horrifying ghosts. Kemal Atatürk, however, was not put off by this enormous task. He wanted to find the most effective method to move quickly to the desired goal. Under the guidance of the Great Leader, Tekinalp stresses, the new Turkey was to catch up, in a short period of time, with Western civilization.<sup>444</sup>

What kind of process, then, transforms these originally highly controversial interpretations into a collective understanding of the nation and its past? The idea of the sovereignty of the people, the equality of the citizens in a nation, and the creation of democratic institutions has grown out of a long, particular historical development in Europe and has since given birth to today's system of nation-states. As Helen Ting rightly points out, the modern political principles of nationhood, nationality, and citizenship as the basis of the legitimation of political autonomy and self-determination need to be understood within the realm of the specific "figured world" (that is, a particular socially produced, culturally constructed system of apprehension in which one necessarily engages as one participates in social activities or interacts with others) of nationalism. Ting describes how the activities, discourses, and emotions generated during the historical development of the nation-state subsequently become part and parcel of the figured world of nationhood of the country. Hence, despite being part of a "world culture" in reference to the common reservoir of doctrines and institutional proto-types of nation-states, "the imaginary realm of nationhood of each nation-state is peopled by concrete historical personalities, meanings articulated by means of narratives, symbols and events, punctuated with specific perspectives and political orientation in the interpretation of the significance of particular events or acts."<sup>445</sup>

Though these figured worlds are always experienced subjectively, they are nevertheless carried out, as Helen Ting asserts, in the context of power relations, concerning matters such as power, status, relative privilege, and their negation. The figured world of nationhood in particular is related to the larger, institutionalized structures of power. Its propagation and reproduction is subject to the context of the social "structure of power" in the sense of how social relations among participants of different social status and influence are played out. In Helen Ting's words "Differentiated by power relations and mediated by state institutions such as the schooling system and department of curriculum development, discourses and practices engendering a sense of nationhood such as 'national history' and civic lessons of citizenship are imparted on adolescent students as part of the nation-building project. Through the singing of the national anthem during weekly

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<sup>444</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>445</sup> Helen Ting, "Social Construction of Nation – A Theoretical Exploration," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 14 no. 3 (2008): p. 463.

assembly in schools, students internalize the understanding of their belonging to a larger political community called the nation.”<sup>446</sup>

Thus, Kemalist education policies, in which Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt were very much involved, saw to it that a particular concept of the Turkish nation, its “Independence Struggle” and “Revolution,” was established through the narrative of the Anatolian Resistance Movement as a revolution aiming to produce the enlightenment project in Turkey. This enlightenment in Kemalist ideology equals modernization and westernization. Its story is peopled by real characters, that is, those Anatolian Muslims who fought against the external enemy, and a leader, Mustafa Kemal. In the imaginary world of nationhood, these persons and actions become *characters* and *events* of a *story*, and thus, they become symbols and narrative-units in a figured world that transforms them into something else, that is, signifiers of the “Turkish Revolution.” These narrative-units became the basis of the political discourse of Kemalism, and everyone living in the Republic of Turkey is automatically involved in this discourse the moment one participates in social life. What is significant in the legitimation of the Kemalist regime, then, is the ability to picture power relations within the nationalistic discourse of Turkishness. In the texts produced by Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt we come face to face with a determined effort to give an account of the past that is defined as national. There can, and most probably does, exist many different, not state-led narratives concerning the collective identity within a given territorial state. These, however, lack the resources of the state apparatus to enable their dissemination to a wider public. The representations of the past established as “correct” and “true” are those disseminated in various official institutions, such as the school, the army, and public ceremonies.

In this way there develops a version of a “national past” which has enforcing power in relation to individuals and local collectives. Through socialization, this state-led account of the past becomes the basic version of the nation and its history. In order for a nation to exist, I have argued, one basic account of a nation and its past is more or less necessary. Thus, even though there may be different versions of the core national narrative, the existence of a nation presupposes that this kind of core indeed exists. There must be certain common characteristics, historically meaningful events, and commonly acknowledged national “ideal figures” which separate the given nation from other nations. In this way a national community is, in the final analysis, a hegemonic way of speaking and thinking. This kind of hegemonic national discourse carries with it equally hegemonic narratives concerning the initial birth, or critical securing, of the national community in question. These representations of the nation and its past produce an array of interpretative positions for citizens to follow. This means that there can only be a limited number of “nationally crucial events and persons” who signify “the national” to individuals and groups inside the territorial state. Legitimate power inside this nationalistic discourse is that which is publicly accepted as able to secure the continued existence of the values and institutions secured in the national past. That there is a cyclical mechanism at work here becomes obvious if we consider the fact that this kind of publicly accepted conception about the “nation and a legitimate power which represents it” can itself

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<sup>446</sup> Ibid., pp. 469–470.



only be reproduced by narratives of the past which define the national and its accepted materializations. So, if I defined Atatürk's *Nutuk* as an effort for *relegitimation*, the narrative produced by Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt should be seen, in addition, as an *institutionalization of the Kemalist idea of history*, providing the educated middle-class in particular with a "sociology of the Turkish Revolution."

## 5 Leftist Interpretations of the 1960s and 1970s: Kemalism as Anti-Imperialist Social Revolutionism

### 5.1 Re-interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and the Kemalist One-Party Regime

In the previous sections 3 and 4 we have analyzed, first, the way in which fundamental Kemalist presuppositions were constructed in Kemal Atatürk's *Nutuk*, and, secondly, how the major first-generation ideologues of the Kemalist movement defined the nature of the Turkish revolution in their writings. Both of these sections, thus, concerned the initial legitimation of power during the Kemalist one-party era, from 1923 to 1945. I have proposed to call this process a *re-legitimation process*, in the sense that its initial purpose was to rebuild the legitimacy of the state after the usurpation of power during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle in 1919–1923. As I have argued, this re-legitimation process was, more than anything else, based on a specific interpretation of history, which was in the process of becoming institutionalized by the state organs. The Kemalist writers analyzed in this section, on the other hand, produced their texts in a very different historical context. They had lived through the opening of the political system, the first free elections, and witnessed, as we will see, what they perceived as the “majority tyranny” of the Democrat Party (DP) during the 1950s. When the military junta seized power in 1960, Kemalist writers of the 1960s were forced to evaluate this new development in one way or another. Furthermore, they now lived in a society stamped by rapid urbanization and industrialization.

The junta which seized power on 27 May 1960 called itself *Milli Birlik Komitesi*, that is, the National Unity Committee (NUC). The NUC, however, found it hard to envision a legal basis for the future, so it entrusted academics with the preparation a new constitution. According to Feroz Ahmad, this decision to involve intellectuals in fact altered the character of the 27 May movement, transforming it from being a mere coup to an institutional revolution. The invited academics presented a report which stated that political power under the Democrat Party had been totally corrupted by personal and class ambition. They declared that the DP had come to power legally, but that the legality of a government lay not only in formal procedures but also in its respect for the constitution and such institutions as the press, the army, and the universities. The Democrats it was argued had failed to show such respect and had therefore been removed from power quite legitimately. At a stroke, as Ahmad says, “the NUC had been provided with entirely new reasons for toppling the government and legitimacy for remaining in power.”<sup>447</sup>

The 1960 military junta, supported by the intelligentsia, the bureaucracy, a substantial part of the academy, and the press, justified their intervention as a step

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<sup>447</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 126–127.

necessary to save democracy and Atatürk's reforms (especially secularism) and promised a quick return to civilian order. The 1960 military takeover was, according to Kemal H. Karpat, basically a class reaction of the old bureaucratic-intellectual-military elites to the rise of a new civilian order with its own social, political, and cultural values rooted in the traditional society and in the contemporary capitalist economic system.<sup>448</sup>

The interpretation given by Aslı Daldal adopts a similar strategy, although it brings in the more ideological aspect of this intervention. Daldal first asks the crucial question of why the Turkish armed forces intervened in the political process on 27 May 1960. Daldal suggests that it seems rather obvious that the reasons given at the time – the Democrat Party regime's actions against the press and the universities – cannot explain the military's real motives. According to Daldal, the military intervention was supported by a "progressive" urban coalition composed of managers, administrators, teachers, students, engineers, journalists, and lawyers. Apart from punishing the Democrat Party for its efforts to limit opposition politics, the urban coalition also wanted to continue the Kemalist tradition of a Jacobin modernization project inherited from the one-party regime, or even from the pre-republican era.<sup>449</sup> As Daldal rightly observes, for the "progressive" urban coalition the effort to implement traditional Kemalist Jacobin policies against the regressive conservative forces while simultaneously trying to catch up with the West were not contradictory aims but different sides of the same conception of "modernization."<sup>450</sup>

Turan Güneş, on the other hand, places the 1960 military intervention into a wider tradition of dichotomy in Turkish political culture. According to him, the Turkish political tradition has been stamped by a pervasive and uncompromising antipathy towards political opposition, a trait Güneş identifies with "the Eastern conception of power." Thus, the fact that all the sultans' subjects were equally non-free could in principle establish an egalitarian political system. However, the sovereign ruled in an absolute manner and this totally obstructed the development of the basic democratic political principle, namely, individual liberty. Thus for Güneş, Turkish political practice could not tolerate opposition or a pluralistic social order.<sup>451</sup> According to Güneş, this Eastern concept of absolute sovereign power also produced a peculiarly Turkish social dichotomy, namely, that between the people and the bureaucracy. This, then, was the genuine social cleavage in Turkish history, whether Ottoman or Republican.<sup>452</sup> From the perspective of the possibility of creating a democratic system, this tradition obstructed the development of a state based on civil society. Thus, according to Güneş, the above mentioned dichotomy between the people and the bureaucracy expressed itself even after the 1946 transition to multi-party politics, constituting a severe hindrance to genuine democracy in Turkey.<sup>453</sup> In Güneş's own

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<sup>448</sup> Karpat 2004, p. 117.

<sup>449</sup> Aslı Daldal, "The New Middle Class as a Progressive Urban Coalition: The 1960 Coup D'Etat in Turkey," *Turkish Studies* 5 no. 3 (Autumn 2004): pp. 75–76.

<sup>450</sup> Daldal 2004, p. 76.

<sup>451</sup> Turan Güneş, *Türk Demokrasisinin analizi*, ed. Hurşit Güneş (Istanbul: Agorakitaplığı, 2009), pp. 4–5.

<sup>452</sup> Güneş 2009, pp. 5–6.

<sup>453</sup> Güneş 2009, pp. 8.

words, “After the Second World War, at a time when Turkey was claiming to establish its democratic order, this bureaucracy versus the people dichotomy was Turkey’s basic social dichotomy.”<sup>454</sup> Güneş then makes his most elaborate point, emphasizing that it was this widely perceived dichotomy between the populace and the governing bureaucracy which explains the clear victory of the Democrat Party in the 1950 elections, not, as was commonly suggested, the immaturity of the population and its inability to digest modernization. It was in this context, Güneş emphasizes, that the majority of Turkish political scientists labeled the Republican People’s Party as “progressive” and the Democrat Party as “regressive” or “reactionary.” Later, during the 1960s and 1970s, this interpretation was re-written from a socialist perspective, arguing that the reactionary politics corresponded to the existing feudal-capitalist social-economic structure, where the Democrat Party represented the interests of the *ticaret burjuvazisi* (market bourgeoisie).<sup>455</sup> As we will see, this bureaucratic-intellectual-military elite, whether leftist or conservative-republican, also managed to produce quite convincing narratives expressing its right to govern.

During the 1960s, for the first time, Turkish university students started to produce social criticism, especially in the so-called *Fikir Kulüpleri* (Ideas Clubs) which introduced the concepts of “imperialism” and “underdevelopment” into Turkish domestic political discourse. According to Feroz Ahmad, these clubs were the first serious attempt to create a civil society in a country where bureaucratic control had smothered all initiative. Some members of this “new generation” joined *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (Workers’ Party of Turkey), which provided a political platform for their views. Even the Republican People’s Party, as we will soon discover, was influenced by these radical trends and, in Feroz Ahmad’s words, “was forced to respond by turning to the left if only to keep up with the times.”<sup>456</sup>

The right, Ahmad notes, became alarmed by the appeal of this new leftist-oriented nationalism. With left-wing Kemalists successfully making nationalism one of the tenets of their ideology, the right, which hitherto had monopolized nationalism, discovered Islam as a counter-force. New right-wing organisations were formed that presented Islam as an antidote to communism. Furthermore, religion became significant politically when the economic policies of import substitution marginalized an entire sector of society, parts of which sought remedy in Islamist politics.<sup>457</sup> All this suggests that the 1960s in Turkey witnessed the beginning of “radical politics.” In his analysis of radical political movements in Turkey, Jacob M. Landau defines the “radical left” as all those political groups that position themselves to the left of the Republican People’s Party. Since 1971, when the Workers’ Party of Turkey was banned, nearly all of these groups have been extra-parliamentary, and a characteristic trait of this more radical left has been its

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<sup>454</sup> ”Türkiye, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonunda ‘demokratik’ düzene geçmek kavgası verdiği zaman, toplumumuzda başta gelen çelişki bu halk-yönetici sınıf ya da zümre çelişkisiydi”. Güneş 2009, p. 8.

<sup>455</sup> Güneş 2009, pp. 8–9.

<sup>456</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 142.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

fragmentation into many small cliques following charismatic leaders, such as Mihri Belli, Mehmet Ali Aybar, Behice Boran, and Doğu Perinçek.<sup>458</sup>

The “radical right”, on the other hand, is defined by Landau as including all those groups that are to the right of the *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party), the center-right successor of the Democrat Party. The radical right in Turkey has gathered around *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party), led until 1997 by Alparslan Türkeş.<sup>459</sup> The third radical political movement in Turkey is the Islamist movement (“Islamist” defined by Landau as “Islamic involvement in politics”). Unlike the radical leftists and rightists, Islamists have not by and large engaged in physical violence. Nevertheless, political Islam has obviously been radical in its call for sweeping changes based upon extreme religious premises. The Islamists, like the rightists, have always had their own powerful party – with many different names though – led by Necmettin Erbakan. The goal of Erbakan’s movement has been the establishment of a theocracy in Turkey. Thus, Landau concludes, the radical left, the radical right, and the Islamists all aim at totally changing the status quo supported by Turkey’s two mass parties, the center-left Republican People’s Party, and the center-right Justice Party (and its successors).<sup>460</sup>

In this section we will analyze three Kemalist writers who can be labeled as representatives of left-wing Kemalism, namely Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit, who all attempted to re-interpret Kemalism from a leftist perspective while simultaneously rejecting the abandonment of the Kemalist state-ideology, a stance developed among more radical leftist groupings. The end of the one-party era and the separation of the CHP and DP produced an axis of left/right politics in a manner that is peculiar to Turkey: the left has often been associated with an attempt to conserve the existing order, whereas the center-right has been perceived as a reforming force. This divide occurred around 1946, that is, during the establishment of the multi-party regime, and it explicitly manifested that Kemalism itself was now divided in two, left and right. The rightwing, that is, the Democrat Party, was composed of people who saw Kemalism as a nation-building and modernizing project heading towards a liberal-populist order on the initiative of bourgeois middle-class (that is, Kemalism before 1932 and statist policies). The leftwing centered on the CHP, on the other hand, saw the corporatist and above-the-classes management of society under the control of a strong state, executed especially during *devletçilik* (statist) policies of the 1930s, as the “Golden Age” of Kemalism.<sup>461</sup>

By referring to Feroz Ahmad again, we can note that Turkish politics in the 1960s witnessed a clear transformation compared to the preceding decades. After 1960, Ahmad suggests, Turkey was “thoroughly politicized” as the new freedoms provided by the 1961 constitution permitted ideological politics for the first time. Also, the

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<sup>458</sup> Jacob M. Landau, *Exploring Ottoman and Turkish History* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), p. 159.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 160–161.

<sup>461</sup> Tanıl Bora and Yüksel Taşkın, “Sağ Kemalizm,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce; Cilt II: Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnsel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p. 531.

isolation of Turkey came to an end and the country became more aware of the world around it.<sup>462</sup> One issue which now started to exercise public opinion was anti-Americanism, which polarized the country into two camps. Those who made up the anti-American camp included Kemalist nationalists of all political stripes as well as leftists “and the two often overlapped.” Such people, according to Ahmad, came to see Turkey’s dependence on and exploitation by the capitalist West led by the United States as a serious predicament. In this context the history of Turkey’s War of Liberation was re-interpreted and presented as a struggle against imperialism with the Kemalists bent on establishing an independent, non-aligned state while their opponents were willing to accept foreign tutelage.<sup>463</sup>

A very influential example of this new left-wing Kemalist habit of emphasizing, much more than before, the Anatolian Resistance Movement as *an anti-imperialist struggle*, can be found in a massive book called *Türkiye’nin Düzeni (The Turkish Order)*<sup>464</sup> written by Doğan Avcıoğlu in 1968.<sup>465</sup> It can even be claimed that Avcıoğlu presented a highly revisionist interpretation of the whole of Turkish history, if compared to the one offered by, for example, Mustafa Kemal, Recep Peker, and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt. According to Doğan Avcıoğlu, the Ottoman state was by the sixteenth-century on its way to capitalism and industrialization, similar to the West. Without foreign-composed obstacles Turkey would have developed into a prosperous industrial country, and its “Westernization,” which had produced such a powerful identity crisis, would have been avoided altogether.<sup>466</sup>

In Avcıoğlu’s interpretation of Turkish history, Turkey is not “naturally” backward. This is an outcome of Western imperialism. In a world economy characterized by imperialism, Turkey was driven into the position of being a semi-colony, that is, a producer of raw materials, a status which prevented the development of her own industry and prosperity. Because of this, economic independence should not, according to Avcıoğlu, be seen as a rhetorical question of “national honor” but as an indispensable precondition to all progress and well-being.<sup>467</sup> Avcıoğlu notes that Turkish modernization started in the middle of the nineteenth-century with the so called *Tanzimat* reforms. These reforms were called “westernization” and their purpose was to allow Turkey to become “westernized” by imitating European political and military organizations. However, according to Avcıoğlu, this was a dead-end:

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<sup>462</sup> Ahmad 1993, p. 139.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>464</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye’nin Düzeni (Dün, Bugün, Yarın)* (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 2003). (First edition: 1968)

<sup>465</sup> Like most major left-wing Kemalists, Doğan Avcıoğlu (1926–1983) was a journalist, writer, intellectual, and politician. He participated to compose the new Constitution in 1961. Together with Mümtaz Soysal and Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu he founded the leading leftist journal of the 1960s, *Yön* (“Direction”) in 1961. Through this and other publications, Avcıoğlu became one of the most influential Turkish intellectuals during the 1960s and 1970s.

<sup>466</sup> Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, pp. 45–46.

<sup>467</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

The era of the Tanzimat reforms started with high hopes. The reforms executed under European protection and free trade would lead to Turkey's rapid attachment to contemporary civilization; factories would be established and agriculture would develop. But, after 10 or 15 years, anyone willing to see noticed that what had been produced was a panorama of degeneration. Tanzimat Westernization did not produce a society resembling contemporary civilization. How could this be reached? <sup>468</sup>

Avciođlu also strongly criticizes the Young Turk ideologues of the turn of the century for their total inability to understand Turkey's position as a prisoner of the imperialistic West. According to him, the Young Turks naively imagined that "freedom," that is, constitutional government, was a magic-wand that would lift Turkey into contemporary civilization and end Western intervention. In Avciođlu's evaluation, the Young Turks were convinced that the autocratic Sultan Abdülhamid II was an obstacle for progress. Their revolution in 1908 was doomed to be only superficial, since Turkey's economical structures and Turkey's position in the world was left basically unchanged. <sup>469</sup>

This evaluation by Avciođlu is however a bit unjustified. Members of the Committee of Union and Progress clearly understood the economic aspect of progress, and they aimed to end the Ottoman State's dependence on the Western powers. The CUP leadership stood for state control of the economy, and was committed to the abolition of the so-called "capitulations."<sup>470</sup> However, the critical political situation initially forced the CUP to maintain the confidence of foreign investors in their economic policy. After the Balkan Wars, even pragmatic economic policies were affected, and an anti-Western, pro-Muslim and Turkish sentiments became dominant as the CUP abandoned liberal policies in order to promote the so-called "National Economy." This was a concept influenced mostly by Friedrich List and the German historical school, which combined the principles of state control over the economy with favouritism towards the Muslim/Turkish bourgeoisie. The idea was indeed to protect Muslim and Turkish entrepreneurs and producers through the imposition of high customs tariffs, the abolition of foreign legal and economic privileges, and the creation of a new financial and transportation infrastructure in support of local manufacturing.<sup>471</sup> Avciođlu, however, interpreted the CUP's intention to establish a strong Turkish bourgeoisie as insufficient, since it left the Turkish masses dependent on the capitalist order ruled by the Western powers.

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<sup>468</sup> Tanzimat, büyük ümitlerle başlamıştı: Avrupalıların teminatına bağlanan reformlar ve serbest ticaret sayesinde, Türkiye hızla uygarlaşacak, fabrikalar kurulacak, tarım gelişecekti. Oysa aradan 10–15 yıl geçmeden, görmek isteyen her gözün görebileceđi bir çöküntü manzarası ortaya çıkmıştı. Tanzimat Batıcılığı, toplumu uygarlığa götürmeye benzemiyordu. Uygarlığa nasıl varılabilirdi? Ibid., p. 229.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid., pp. 244–259.

<sup>470</sup> Already in 1535 Sultan Süleyman granted certain privileges, known as capitulations, to French merchants. Over time these were extended to other European states, resulting in wide-ranging privileges.

<sup>471</sup> Şükrü M. Haniöđlu, "The Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1918," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Vol 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): pp. 96–97.

Avcıoğlu's re-interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was also shared by other left-wing Kemalists, such as Mümtaz Soysal and Bülent Ecevit. In a compilation of articles written between 1962 to and the middle of the 1970s, Mümtaz Soysal<sup>472</sup> accuses the Republican People's Party of making unfortunate confessions to conservative forces in various fields, such as statism, education, religion, and populism, all producing a crucial retreat from the revolution. According to Soysal, these setbacks were justified, so it was argued, in order to promote "democracy." This, Soysal declares, was a very shortsighted policy, which only destroyed the real foundations of democracy.<sup>473</sup> Soysal asks the following question:

What did Atatürk want to achieve? What did he achieve? What was left unfinished? Which of his principles are currently observed? Which have been ruined? Finally, what shall we do in order to complete the mission once started in Samsun?<sup>474</sup>

Here, it seems, a prominent left-wing Kemalist intellectual invites his audience to recall the day that Atatürk landed at the town of Samsun on 19 May 1919. There, Soysal seems to assert, a mission was launched that was crucial for Turkey and the Turks. This message, of course, is already very familiar to us from the previous chapters. It reproduces the original *Nutukian* message of a historical turning-point for the Turkish nation, which from now on started to execute a promise of history, that is, enlightenment. What is different from the original message, however, is its overall meaning. For Soysal, what was started in Samsun on that crucial day was a movement toward a never-ending revolution, now conceived as an enlightened path to emancipation through *socialism*. In this presentation, the spatial and temporal setting of Turkish history created by Kemalist ideology is once again offered as the starting point for any reasonable discussion of Turkey and the Turkish nation. The diegesis of the story to be told is thus initially defined as fundamentally identical with the *Nutukian* one. It must be emphasized that even though this temporal and spatial setting (Atatürk in Samsun on 19 May 1919) has been naturalized in Turkey – a fact that this study also in its own way purports to demonstrate – there is no necessity of any kind for this setting. The "story" of modern Turkey's history could

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<sup>472</sup> Mümtaz Soysal (1921 - ) is a lawyer and politician who was also one of the academics who wrote the 1961 Constitution. During the 1970s Soysal was accused of publishing communist propaganda and put in prison. As a politician, Soysal has always been active in left-of-center parties, the CHP and its successors. Like many other left-wing Kemalists of the 1960s, Soysal has during the new millennium re-discovered himself as an *ulusalçı* ideologue. One can claim that in Turkey's current political debate the left-wing Kemalist strand has re-invented itself in the neo-nationalist (*ulusalcılık*) movement. This has meant that its stance approaches those rightist circles which also call for rigid nationalism. In his account of the neo-nationalist movement, Hasan Kösebalaban refers most of all to Mümtaz Soysal's evaluations concerning Turkey's role in the globalized world economy. In the back of neo-nationalist minds, Kösebalaban argues, lingers an image of the country occupied following the Treaty of Sèvres, signed at the end of World War I. He further notes that for the neo-nationalists, Turkey's growing integration with global economic structures is a process which leads to colonialism and national disintegration. Hasan Kösebalaban, "Globalization and the Crisis of Authoritarian Modernization in Turkey," *Insight Turkey* 11 no. 4 (2009): p. 91.

<sup>473</sup> Mümtaz Soysal, *Güzel Huzursuzluk* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1975), pp. 11–12.

<sup>474</sup> Atatürk neler başarmak istemişti? Neler başardı? Yapmak istediklerinin hangi yanı eksik kaldı? Hangi ilkeleri bugün canlılığını muhafaza etmektedir? Hangileri soysuzlaştırılmıştır? Nihayet, Samsun'da başlayan hareketi gerçek sonuçlarına vardırabilmek için daha neler yapmak gerekir? *Ibid.*, p. 15.



construct many other, alternative story-worlds. For Mümtaz Soysal, a socialist, it should not have been inconceivable to create a story-world that took as its starting point the more or less socialist-oriented manifestations of the Anatolian resistance organizations before 19 May 1919. As Murat Belge observes, the first serious resistance group to emerge after the invasion by Allied troops of Anatolia was organized by Ethem the Circassian, whose troops included the so-called “Bolshevik Battalion.” Ethem’s undisciplined troops were however eliminated as soon as Atatürk was able to organize a regular army.<sup>475</sup>

This is of course only one possible option, as any critical inquiry could, if we went into this subject a bit deeper, give us many other possible starting points for the story of the emergence of the “new Turkey.” Here we do not engage in this kind of enterprise, but the story about Ethem the Circassian’s “Bolshevik resistance battalion” is a good reminder of the complexity of the “absolute past” when compared to the closed story-world of the Kemalist narrative of nationality. For our purposes it is crucial to notice that Mümtaz Soysal was unable or unwilling to ground his socialist project outside the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative. Thus, Soysal’s reproduction of the Kemalist idea of history demonstrates the ability of Kemalist ideology to absorb various different political world-views in its effort to build a peculiar synthesis of revolutionary reforms and a social status quo. As the narrative is simultaneously an account of past events, and a conceptual frame within which to contemplate the future, we can argue that the narrative offered by Soysal’s book closed off certain possible futures at the very moment it reproduced the Kemalist interpretation of history. Thus the left-wing Kemalist reproduction of the original *Nutukian* narrative participated in determining in an effective way the future development of leftist politics in Turkey, which have never really escaped the nationalist and undemocratic position of the 1960s. All this has much to do with the fact that left-wing Kemalist tradition was indeed an effort to secure the position of the Kemalist state elite against the “uncontrollable forces” of the masses.

As we have seen, after 1960 the Republican People’s Party started to change its ideological position by moving towards the left. This opened the way for intra-party fighting, which ended in a split as a conservative wing headed by Turhan Feyzioğlu left the party and formed the new Reliance Party in 1967. In this situation the CHP, now dominated by the statist social democrats, sought to attract all sorts of leftist voters by gradually becoming the champion of all kinds of leftist causes, especially in economic policy. This happened at a time when the leftist movement in Turkey, as well as abroad, became manifestly militant. In Turkey this also produced left-wing terrorism, resulting with a right-wing reaction, and the end of the 1960s in Turkey was stamped by increasing acts of violence by left- or right-wing militants in the streets and campuses. The leftist, and also more radically Marxist, movements in Turkey generated a counter-force, which can be described as a re-vitalization of Islamic cultural values, and a politics based on these values. All this ideological mushrooming marked an end to the uneasy but in practice compromising “grand coalition” composed of the bureaucracy, the military, and wealthy landowners,

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<sup>475</sup> Murat Belge, “Nationalism, Democracy and the Left in Turkey,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 30 no. 1 (February 2009): p. 8.

which was now unable to synthesize its component political visions in rapidly changing society.<sup>476</sup>

The Justice Party headed by Suleiman Demirel had won the elections in 1969. However, the situation in Turkey was by then characterized by political instability and violence. Radical labor unions managed to stop the whole of Istanbul from working, and the student demonstrations increasingly resembled more urban guerilla activities. Finally, the Chief of the General Staff and the commanders of the Armed Forces handed the Demirel government the so-called 12 March Memorandum (*12 Mart Muhtırası*), which held both the government and the Grand National Assembly responsible for the current situation in that they had failed to bring about the “reforms specified by Atatürk and the Constitution.” The military demanded that Turkey be headed by a strong supra-party government that could be depended on to bring about reform. In Sina Akşin’s words, “from these messages an impression had formed that a left-wing coup was about to happen. This indeed was planned, but it was tackled by the top brass of the army. What happened next was a purge in order to clean leftist officers from their positions, and a more general arrest campaign of leftist intellectuals, workers and students. The outcome of the 1971 military intervention was, then, a clear restriction of the political rights established in the 1961 Constitution.”<sup>477</sup> Thus, as the Republican People’s Party was searching for its new identity between those favoring and those opposing the ideology of the “left-of-center,” the Turkish society witnessed spontaneous acts of violence and rebellion produced by rapid modernization, urbanization and the collapse of traditional society. In this situation the Workers’ Party of Turkey managed to channel the grievances of the working class, forcing the CHP finally to determine its position between the centre-right parties and the extreme left.<sup>478</sup>

Kemal H. Karpat claims that after 1973, when the balancing influence of İsmet İnönü was brought to an end with his death, the CHP under Bülent Ecevit finally discarded Kemalism as an ideology and took a position which totally opposed the basic tenets of the republican regime. According to Karpat, after 1973 CHP tended to reject the concept of *millet* (nation) and the idea that Turkey was a *national* state. On this basis, Karpat asserts that “the deviation of the CHP to the left and its rejection of the Kemalist principles alienated the military from the CHP in general and from Bülent Ecevit in particular.”<sup>479</sup> Now, it is true, as Karpat claims, that the new social-democratic orientation of the CHP eventually devalued it in the eyes of the military. However, it is misleading to claim that Bülent Ecevit (and the CHP with him) abandoned Kemalism. What I aim to demonstrate is that the social-democratic narrative offered by Bülent Ecevit was, in spite of certain new interpretations, fully in accordance with the Kemalist enlightenment project and the vision of modernity attached to it. Thus, it was not the lack of Kemalism that caused the alienation of the

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<sup>476</sup> Karpat 1988, pp. 145–146.

<sup>477</sup> Sina Akşin, *Turkey from Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to the Present*. Transl. Dexter H. Mursaloğlu (London: Hurst & Company, 2007), pp. 271–273.

<sup>478</sup> Hikmet Bilâ, *CHP 1919–2009* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2008), p. 197.

<sup>479</sup> Karpat 1988, pp. 147–148.

army from the CHP, but its socialist-oriented ideology which seemed to jeopardize the unity of the nation with its increasingly class-based legitimation effort.

One year before the military intervention of 1971, Bülent Ecevit published a book called *Atatürk ve Devrimcilik (Atatürk and Revolutionism)*, which put together his various writings from the 1960s. At the beginning of this book, Bülent Ecevit suggests the following:

While we are executing new revolutions on a path given by Atatürk, in a state founded by him, we must evaluate Atatürk and his revolutions also in the context of our own time, not only in the context of Atatürk's era.<sup>480</sup>

This kind of argumentation sounds familiar to us after our analysis of the narratives produced by Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal. Is Ecevit's text offering a similar kind of left-wing Kemalist vision? At first sight this indeed seems to be the case. Ecevit asserts that in evaluating Atatürk one should not worship him but, as Atatürk had pointed out himself, to crush all those idols that had held Turkish society back for centuries. According to Ecevit, the progressive cadres executing the revolution were in the habit of turning to conservatism on reaching positions of power. The reason for this is that every society aims to secure its status quo. Besides, those who make the revolution are also eager to secure the new order by establishing some stable structures. These tend to have a conservative character.<sup>481</sup> The main assertion Ecevit tries to demonstrate, then, is his interpretation of Atatürk's revolution as a *never-ending mission*. According to Ecevit:

Atatürk's revolutionarism includes two aspects. The first part includes all those reforms that were executed in his lifetime. These are the ones concerning the form of government, law, secularism, language, women's rights, changes in clothing, abolition of privileges. Above all these there is, of course, the securing of the political and economic independence of the Turkish nation... Secondly, Atatürk wanted Turkish society to progress in revolutionary leaps. Thus, the Atatürkian revolution does not mean only the concrete revolutions executed during his lifetime; it supposes continuing revolutionarism. This is the abstract part of Atatürk's revolution.<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>480</sup> Atatürk'ün kurduğu devlette ve Atatürk'ün çizdiği yönde devrimci atılımlar yaparken, Atatürk'ü ve Atatürk devrimciliğini, yalnız Atatürk'ün kendi yaşamış olduğu dönemin koşullarına göre değil, yaşadığımız dönemin koşullarına ve sorunlarına göre de değerlendirmek zorundayız. Bülent Ecevit, *Atatürk ve Devrimcilik* (Ankara: Tekin Yayınevi, 1973), p. 11. (First edition: 1970)

<sup>481</sup> Ibid., pp. 12–14.

<sup>482</sup> Atatürk devrimciliği iki yönlüdür. Bir yönüyle, Atatürk devrimciliği, onun, sağlığında yapmış olduğu devrimleri kapsar. Devlet biçiminde, yasa düzeninde yapılan devrimler, lâiklik, yazı devrimi, kadın hakları devrimi, giyim kuşamla ilgili devrimler, belirli kişilere tanınmış ayrıcalıkları kaldıran devrimler, bu arada sayılabilir. Bunların hepsinin üstünde de Türk Ulusunun siyasal ve ekonomik bağımsızlığını sağlayan Kurtuluş devrimi gelir... Öte yandan, Atatürk, Türk toplumunun evrim yoluyla değil, devrimci atılımlarla ilerlemesini öngörmüştü. Buna göre, Atatürk devrimciliği Atatürk'ün sağlığında yapılmış somut devrimlerle sınırlı kalmamakta, sürekli bir devrimcilik niteliğini kazanmaktadır. Bu da, Atatürk devrimciliğinin soyut yönüdür. Ibid., pp. 17–18.

Now, it is this fundamental secularist and progressive message of all Kemalists – and all those within the CHP, whether before or after its social democratic re-orientation – that is seen by the military as one of the core values of Atatürk’s mission, the other being national unity. It is the changing balance between secularist and progressive emancipation and national unity that determines the actions taken by the military, perceiving itself as the guardian of Kemalism. On any occasion that the military has seen new ideological and economic trends threatening its own social status or its interpretation of Kemalism, it has been prone to intervene in the democratic process. Until the 1980s this intervention took the form of pro-CHP intervention, since the CHP was perceived as the political organ securing Atatürk’s legacy. As we will see, however, since the middle of the 1970s the social-democratic orientation of the CHP was conceived by the military more and more as a threat to the unity of the nation. In this situation, analyzed more deeply in the next chapter, the military favored center-rightist parties, and even controlled religious indoctrination, as the best means to safeguard the Atatürkian legacy. However, as the military opened the way for a more religiously-oriented ideology, it unleashed forces that were not quite in its power to control.

In the above citation from Bülent Ecevit, we find the emphasis on continuing revolutionism, already familiar to us from the writings of Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal. Ecevit stresses that true Kemalists are those who never stop searching for more enlightened ways to organize social relations. He accuses other Kemalists of turning to conservatism, that is, their habit of closing the “revolutionary door,” so to speak, to any future “openings.” Thus, we can assert that the left-wing Kemalist discourse is more or less an effort to interpret the Kemalist principle of *inkılapçılık* (revolutionism/reformism) in a strongly, socialist sense. This leftist interpretation thus creates a clear battle ground within the Kemalist tradition, which is also present in scholarly research. One can indeed claim that even though Atatürk wanted to execute revolutionary reforms in Turkey, he did not want a revolution. Taha Parla strongly emphasizes that even though Atatürk wanted to establish a people’s government he did not want to execute *ihtilal* (revolution), but instead *tekamülât* (development). According to Parla, there is not a single paragraph in Atatürk’s *Nutuk* mentioning revolution. Parla further argues that Atatürk’s actions represent *inkılap* (transformation), not revolution. In Parla’s view, Atatürk’s movement did not seek to agitate the masses into action, or abolish the existing social structures. It was a movement seeking a well-organized transformation of political and cultural institutions.<sup>483</sup> It is fruitful to compare Parla’s remarks to those made by another Turkish scholar, Sadi Irmak. According to the latter, the most crucial significance of Atatürk’s *Nutuk* has been its role in explaining to a wider audience the events of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle period. The Great Speech for example explained why Mustafa Kemal and his original comrades ended up as enemies. According to Irmak, this was most of all because Atatürk was *devrimci* (revolutionist), while other leaders of the Resistance Struggle were moderate reformists, interested in *evrim* (evolution).<sup>484</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> Parla 1994, p. 35.

<sup>484</sup> Sadi Irmak, “Nutuk’un Türkiye’deki Etkileri,” in *Atatürk’ün Büyük Söylevi’nin 50 Yılı Semineri Bildiriler ve Tartışmalar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1980), p.188.

Irmak 1980, p. 188.

It is worth noting in this context that Atatürk at least on certain occasions used the word *inkılap* while speaking about revolution. While explaining the workings of the Grand National Assembly in 1923 to Istanbul journalists, Atatürk noted that some lawyers were anxious that the Assembly did not resemble any existing institutions of government. According to Atatürk, a reference was made for example to the parliament of the French revolutionary period (*Mukayesede vâhid-i kıyasî olmak üzere Fransız inkılâb-ı kebrindeki meclisi ele almışlardır*).<sup>485</sup> Here, then, Kemal uses the term *inkılap* while referring to the French Revolution. It is not possible to think that Atatürk could have conceived the events in France in 1789 as “an organized transformation,” as would have to be the case if Taha Parla’s argument is correct. It is much more likely, as Sadı Irmak proposes, that Atatürk was *devrimci* (a revolutionarist). This he was, however, in the sense that he wanted to achieve revolutionary – that is, radical – changes in a short period of time in systematic and organized way. It means that Atatürk wanted to proceed in the spirit of positivist ideals, by “social engineering.” As Atatürk wanted to establish a Turkish industrialist class able to compete in the contemporary capitalist world, he was not a socialist but a promoter of state capitalism. In Bülent Ecevit’s presentation, however, it is not the concrete measures taken by Atatürk that function as a justification for a socialist orientation, but – as Bülent Ecevit himself called it in the above citation – the “abstract” part of Atatürk’s revolution. It seems to be the case, then, that in the narrative offered by Bülent Ecevit in his book *Atatürk ve Devrimcilik*, the *event* commonly labeled as the “Atatürk Revolution” referred not only to those concrete reforms taken during Atatürk’s lifetime, but also to a future revolution, defined as a “social revolution” within the left-wing Kemalist discourse.

Bülent Ecevit was, however, more a reformist social-democrat than a “traditional” socialist. Starting his political career at the national level as a deputy for Ankara in the CHP’s ranks in 1957, he later became the number one ideologue of *ortanın solu* (left-of-center) movement and was elected as the party leader instead of İsmet İnönü in 1972. Unlike İnönü, Ecevit spoke out against the 1971 military intervention and began to emphasize the role of the Republican People’s Party as a genuine mass-party that could not compromise democratic governance. In the polarising atmosphere of the 1970s, Ecevit formed a short-lived coalition government in 1973 with the Islamist National Salvation Party (*Millî Selamet Partisi*) only to resign in September 1974, confronting the “Nationalist Front” (*Milliyetçi Cephe*) of rightist and center-rightist parties during the latter part of the 1970s.<sup>486</sup> Ecevit, however, wanted to frame socialist ideas within Kemalist ideology represented by the CHP. According to Suat Kınıklıoğlu, Bülent Ecevit’s idea of socialism was quite revisionist as he emphasized the willingness to work within the capitalist economy, whilst aiming to reform it. The “left-of-center” movement, which was later labeled as the “democratic left,” called for, among other things, collective production bodies such as village cooperatives in village-cities (*köykent*), or industrial production units

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<sup>485</sup> Atatürk 1982, p. 56.

<sup>486</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Bülent Ecevit,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce; Cilt II: Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 458.

such as industrial cooperatives (*sanayi kooperatifleri*). As Kınıklioğlu notes, the primary aim was to strengthen the economic welfare of the lower strata of society.<sup>487</sup>

Thus, instead of calling for the eradication of capitalism, the CHP under Bülent Ecevit wanted to redistribute wealth within the capitalist system by providing social security for the whole population in the form of unemployment benefits, health care benefits, and social policies specifically for housewives. Most importantly, Kınıklioğlu stresses, this new leftist interpretation of Kemalism acknowledged the existence of social classes but did not seek, at first, to encourage any form of class struggle. However, as the student movement became increasingly powerful at the end of the 1960s, Ecevit re-evaluated his opinion and stated that class struggle was the inevitable outcome of democracy.<sup>488</sup>

Ecevit kept stressing that the revolutions made during Atatürk's lifetime presuppose that the revolution be understood as a process *continually kept alive*. As an example Ecevit asserts that, even though the law prohibiting polygamy was passed already during Atatürk's era, this habit had not vanished, at least from some parts of Anatolia. According to Ecevit, this was not going to happen in the future either, as long as the economic and social structures were not changed. This demanded a revolution. According to Ecevit, the reason for the continuation of traditional and backward habits was not the general conservatism of the East Anatolian population; on the contrary, the mentality of these people was the most progress-oriented in the whole country. The reason was, according to Ecevit, the existing system of land ownership, uneven income distribution, and debts, which together saw to it that the majority of the population in East Anatolia was still dependent on particular powerful individuals. The remedy for this situation was structural revolutions. According to Ecevit, these structural revolutions were not alien to Atatürk revolutions, but on the contrary, they were a necessity in order to truly realize Atatürk's vision.<sup>489</sup>

Thus, like Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal, Bülent Ecevit was eager to re-interpret Kemalist revolutionary rhetoric in more social overtones. He made it his political mission to spread the idea of Kemalism as a truly revolutionary movement only if it could change those economic and social structures that prevented the realization of reforms executed during Atatürk's lifetime. Unlike Avcıoğlu and Soysal, however, he tried to deny the common conception among leftist-oriented intellectuals according to which the masses were incapable of or too weak to comprehend and execute the true meaning of Kemalist reforms. Ecevit claimed, somewhat unsuccessfully, as we will soon discover, that the population was completely capable of finally becoming the master of its own destiny.

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<sup>487</sup> Suat Kınıklioğlu, "Bülent Ecevit: The Transformation of a Politician," *Turkish Studies* 1 no. 2 (2000): pp. 2–3.

<sup>488</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>489</sup> Ecevit [1970] 1973, pp. 20–23.

The novelties brought by the left-wing Kemalist narrative do not stop with the re-interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement, as left-wing Kemalists also challenged the orthodoxy concerning the Kemalist one-party regime during 1923–1945. For example, Doğan Avcıoğlu notes that the national liberation war of Turkey was grounded on a coalition composed of large landowners, intellectuals, and nationalist officers:

Thus, our national struggle was dissimilar to those various contemporary liberation struggles in which the poor peasantry fought against colonial masters and a local pre-capitalist elite. In Turkey, for historical reasons, this group of wealthy landowners constituted a major part of the coalition fighting for liberation. The war was won with the help of large landowners, and the peasantry dependent on them. This character of the liberation war was to stamp its heavy mark on the republican era. The elimination of the existing relations of land ownership, so vital for the birth of modern society, was not done in the case of Turkey. This was because the group of large landowners that had played so prominent a role in the liberation struggle was indeed not aiming to crush the existing order in the countryside, but was anxious to utilize more vehemently new opportunities achieved as a result of the war.<sup>490</sup>

The pronoun “our” in this quotation is obviously the signal of an *implied reader*.<sup>491</sup> It invokes a reader who is accustomed to the heroic character of Turkey’s National Struggle and is now called to grasp its social components. This evaluation of the social nature of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle is the most challenging to the orthodox first-generation Kemalist presentation of history produced during the one-party era. Avcıoğlu’s narrator does not adhere to the conception of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a purely “national” effort devoid of class-implications. In the diegesis of the narrative there surely exists an *entity* called the “Turkish nation” but it is of a different kind to the one presented in the *Nutuk*. Avcıoğlu demystifies the first-generation Kemalists’ discourse of a harmonious nationality fighting for its existence by showing that the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and the regime founded on its legacy was based on the monopoly of power wielded by the capitalist class of Turkey.

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<sup>490</sup> Bu özelliğiyle, Millî Kurtuluş Savaşımız, günümüzün birçok kurtuluş savaşından ayrılmaktadır. Oralarda, kurtuluş savaşı, sömürgeciyle birlikte, onunla işbirliği yapan prekapitalist düzenin egemen sınıfları tasfiye edilmiştir. Türkiye’de ise, tarihsel şartları sonucu, bu unsurlar, kurtuluş savaşının temel dayanaklarından birini teşkil etmiştir. Savaş, eşrafa ve eşrafın bezgin köylü kitlesi üzerindeki nüfuzuna dayanarak yürütülmüş ve kazanılmıştır. Kurtuluş Savaşımızın bu özelliği, Cumhuriyetten sonraki kalkınma çabalarımızın yönünü çizmekte ağır basacaktır. Çağdaş uygarlığa geçişin vazgeçilmez ön şartı olan eski toprak düzenin tasfiyesine girişilmeyişinin nedeni, sanırız ki, Kurtuluş Savaşımızın bu özelliğinde aramak gerekir. Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda önemli bir rol oynayan eşraf, tasfiye edilmesi değil, zaferin meyvalarından yararlanmayı bekliyor ve sabırsızlanıyordu. Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, p. 314.

<sup>491</sup> Here the pronoun “our” is an *indirect reference*: indirect references feature the pronouns *we*, *our*, and *us* in invoking an implied reader. On the other hand, the implied reader can also be invoked by *direct references*: direct references attribute specific qualities to an implied reader or refer to the implied reader as “you.” Helen Rothschild Ewald, “The Implied Reader in Persuasive Discourse,” *Jac: A journal of rhetorical and writing studies* 8 no. 1 (1988). Available at: [http://www.jacweb.org/Archived\\_volumes/Text\\_articles/V8\\_Ewald.htm](http://www.jacweb.org/Archived_volumes/Text_articles/V8_Ewald.htm)

In order to understand the leftist interpretations of Kemalism in the 1960s, we must be aware of at least three different features of the period. The first is the leftist-oriented tradition of interpreting Kemal Atatürk and his reforms, propagated by the writers of *Kadro*-magazine during the one-party era; the second is the general leftist trend worldwide during the 1960s which was the obvious context for the more widespread tendency to conceive Kemalism through leftist lenses; the third is the already mentioned rapid urbanization, and the more open political debate produced by the liberal 1961 Constitution. In this situation, Elçin Maçar argues that the popularized and Kemalist-oriented definition of socialism as a “method of rapid development in a context of social justice” offered by Doğan Avcıoğlu was able to win relatively wide support among the urban middle-class.<sup>492</sup> The most important institutional change stimulated by individual leftist-oriented writers must have been the new left-of-center ideology espoused by the Kemalist Republican People’s Party in 1965. In the public announcement of the Congress of the CHP it was pronounced that the Republican People’s Party was a *social democratic party*. According to Hikmet Bilâ, the reason for this new orientation of the CHP was a new political calculation, according to which it was necessary for the CHP to have a program of its own that clearly differentiated it from the rightist Justice Party and from a radical-leftist Workers’ Party of Turkey. According to Bilâ, the new left-of-center orientation of the Kemalist CHP was also a consequence of the increasing social and economic demands on behalf of the poor; the perceived need among CHP members to answer these demands; and the fact that the Workers’ Party of Turkey had received a response among the poor with its concrete suggestions.<sup>493</sup>

As we will see later, Bülent Ecevit was to become the future strongman of the new social democratic CHP. It was, however, İsmet İnönü, the national leader (*milli şef*) of the Kemalist one-party era, Atatürk’s closest ally, and CHP party leader after Atatürk, who made the first public declaration concerning the left-of-center politics of the Republican People’s Party. İnönü declared in 1965 that in reality the CHP had been left-of-center for the last 40 years and that being *halkçı* (a populist) and a secularist was synonymous with being left-of-center.<sup>494</sup> The 1960 military intervention was seen by many inside and outside the CHP as the realization of demands made during the 1950s by the CHP. One good example of how prominent figures inside the CHP perceived their own party’s role in the making of the 1961 Constitution is provided by Hıfzı Oğuz Bekata in his book *Türkiye’nin Bugünkü Görünüşü* (*The View of Today’s Turkey*) – published in 1969 in order to demonstrate the harmfulness of the Justice Party’s government for Turkey. Bekata asserts that the “left-of center ideology of the Republican People’s Party had been very well accepted by the Turkish peasants. In this situation, Bekata gave a very interesting definition of this “left-of-center” ideology:

After the difficulties experienced and witnessed, we must not repeat our mistakes. In order to prevent these mistakes, we shall contemplate realistically today’s situation. Turkey is an

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<sup>492</sup> Elçin Maçar, “Doğan Avcıoğlu,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): pp. 162–163.

<sup>493</sup> Bilâ 2008, pp. 182–183.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 183–184.



underdeveloped country where various freedoms are still lacking. This is because freedom and independence presuppose each other. Consequently: until the independence of the Fatherland, the Nation, and the State is completed with social and economic rights, our society will not acquire peace. At the present moment, the Fatherland has been saved, the independence of the state and nation has been secured, and a democratic regime has been established. But can we really say that we have established a fair and just society where people's social and economic rights have been realized? Achieving these goals and changing the social structures is the aim of the left-of-center principle. Political responsibility was taken during Atatürk's period by the Republican People's Party, and it established the secular Republic. Then it safeguarded the freedom of conscience and belief. During its rule, the reforms benefit society, and finally democracy was also established. At a later stage, during the preparation and implementation of the 1961 Constitution, the Republican People's Party played the most significant role, wanting to secure the social and economic rights of the citizens. It was perceived that these reforms saved society from internal disorder and extremists, and society was guided towards a happy and peaceful path. **The truth is, thus, that our current Constitution as such is the result of a need for change in the social structures.** Thus, all these beneficial principles included in the current Constitution are the products of the left-of-center ideology of the Republican People's Party.<sup>495</sup>

The ideological changes within the CHP started in 1957 with the "Declaration of Primary Goals" (*İlk Hedefler Beyannamesi*). This declaration has been seen as a basic document that laid the foundations for the contents of the 1961 Constitution. A further search for new ideas was continued by intellectual circles close to the party, for example in journals, such as *Yön*, *Forum*, and others. The new CHP wished to propose a full welfare state, in line with many social democratic or socialist parties in Western Europe. This ideological change was made possible by emergence of new groups in Turkish society that came into being as a result of the growth and transformation experienced in the late 1950s and 1960s.<sup>496</sup> This is confirmed by the fact that the 1961 constitution really established in practice all those reforms demanded earlier by the CHP: proportional representation, a bi-cameral parliament,

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<sup>495</sup> Çekilen bunca çileler ve alınan bunca derslerden sonra, yeni hatalara tekrar sürüklenilmemesi için, Millî gerçekleri olduğu gibi görelim. Türkiye, hürriyetleri tamamlanmamış ve geri kalmış bir ülkedir. Çünkü, hürriyet ve istiklâl bir bütündür. Bu nedenle, Vatanın, Milletin, Devletin bağımsızlığı; Siyasî, Sosyal ve Ekonomik özgürlükle tamamlanmadıkça, toplum huzura kavuşamaz. Bugün vatan kurtulmuş, Devlet ve millet bağımsızlığına kavuşmuş, demokratik rejim kurulmuştur. Fakat gerekli bütün reformlar yapılarak, adaletli ve güvenilir bir düzen içinde, toplumun sosyal ve ekonomik özgürlüğe kavuştuğu ve sosyal güvenliğin sağlandığı iddia olunabilir mi? İşte Ortanın Solu ve düzen değişikliği hareketinin başlanğıç noktası budur. Siyasî görevlerine Atatürk ile başlayan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi; Lâik Devleti kurdu. Vicdan ve din özgürlüğünü getirdi. Yaptığı devrimlerle toplumu geliştirdi. Ve nihayet demokrasiyi gerçekleştirdi. Sonra, hazırlanmasında ve çıkarılmasında hissesi olan 1961 Anayasasıyla ise, ekonomik ve sosyal dâvaların öne alınması suretiyle, hürriyetler bütünlüğüne kavuşturulmak istenildi. Böylece toplumun iç rahatsızlıklarından süratle kurtarılması, millî bünyenin aşırı akıların tahribinden korunması ve milletin sâlim bir yolda mutlu olması düşünüldü. **Gerçek şudur ki, yeni Anayasamız esasen bir düzen değişikliği ihtiyacından doğmuştur.** İşte bugün, Anayasamıza mal olan bütün bu ilkeler, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisinin Ortanın Solu hareketiyle savunduğu ilkelerdir. Hıfzı Oğuz Bekata, *Türkiye'nin Bugünkü Görünüşü* (Ankara: Çığır Yayınları, 1969), pp. 98–100.

<sup>496</sup> Ayşe Güneş-Ayata, "The Republican People's Party," *Turkish Studies* 3 no. 1 (Spring 2002): pp. 103–104.

autonomous universities, a liberal law concerning the press and the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation, the right to strike and collective bargaining, and a constitutional court to judge the constitutionality of the laws passed by parliament. The most important novelty with respect to the future of Turkish politics was, however, the creation of the National Security Council, which gave the military a constitutional role alongside (and often above) the elected government.<sup>497</sup>

The Republican People's Party was in a position to form a government during the first half of the 1960s. In the general elections of 1965, however, the newly founded Justice Party, which claimed to continue the tradition of the abolished Democrat Party, received a clear victory. The CHP had gone into the 1965 elections with its new left-of-center message, and the election defeat produced much criticism regarding this choice. But, İsmet İnönü was convinced that Turkey's social reality demanded a leftist orientation, and thus social democracy slowly but surely became the lasting character of the party which had been founded by Kemal Atatürk as a populist mass-party in 1923.<sup>498</sup> Thus, when Doğan Avcıoğlu published his book *Türkiye'nin Düzeni (The Turkish Order)* in 1968, a left-of-center orientation was becoming the new ideology of the CHP, but at the same time the party had clearly lost the elections of 1965. This situation obviously was significant in Avcıoğlu's call for a state-led program of social revolution. Avcıoğlu writes:

The Kemalist state was to be authoritarian. This was unavoidable. As the liberation war was won with the support of the conservative landowners, and as there was no other group to whom the nationalistic cadre willing to execute the social revolution could turn, an authoritarian state became a necessity. The political liberalism of Kâzım Karabekir and Fethi Okyar, wishing to prevent statism, could not lead to any other outcome than the road back to the old order. Thus, in this situation the revolutions accomplished were to be ones of the super-structures only. They could not break the iron hand surviving from the Middle-Ages, and they did not reach the world of the peasant masses.<sup>499</sup>

Thus, even though Avcıoğlu is critical of the achievements of the Kemalist one-party regime, he is nevertheless unconditionally supportive of the conception of the Anatolian Resistance Movement as the start of an enlightenment project executed by an authoritarian state. According to Avcıoğlu, European-type liberalism would not have produced a modern industrial society in Turkey, but would have instead restored the old order. For Avcıoğlu, liberalism was a path back to the semi-colonial status of Turkey under European domination, and the halting of social reforms. It is quite illuminating that even the Kemalist doctrine of *devletçilik* (statism) was seen by Avcıoğlu as a kind of "disguised liberalism" that in the final analysis favoured the capitalist class:

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<sup>497</sup> Bilâ 2008, pp. 160–161.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid., pp. 185–186.

<sup>499</sup> Kemalist Devlet, otoriter olmuştur. Bu, kaçınılmaz bir durumdu. Tutucu eşraf desteği ile bir kurtuluş savaşını gerçekleştirdikten sonra toplum katlarında başka bir desteği olmayan bir milliyetçi kadronun toplumsal devrim isteği, otoriter bir devleti zorunlu kıları. Karabekir Paşa ve Fethi Okyar'ın siyasî liberalizmi, devrimciliğe paydos deyip eski düzene dönmekten başka bir sonuç veremezdi. Ne var ki, bu şartlarda yürütülen devrimler, üst-yapı devrimleri olarak kalmış, Ortaçağ'dan kalma eşraf "demirperdesi" kırılarak, köylü kitlesine ulaşılammıştır. Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, p. 507.

The principle of statism was never thought of as an alternative to capitalism as an economic system. And in its practice, statism was not an obstacle to capitalism but a policy for its implementation...the policy of statism was such as to increase the development of capitalism, and, because of this, class conflict.<sup>500</sup>

According to Avciođlu, the revolutionary drive, dependent as it was on the large landowners, produced negative results as the landlords were able to use the powers of the authoritarian state to strengthen their position. This opened the way for the increasing exploitation of the peasants.<sup>501</sup>

Why is the narrative offered by left-wing Kemalists so different from the interpretation of first-generation Kemalists? The reason for this is that, according to Avciođlu, Soysal, and Ecevit, there was really nothing in the nature of Ottoman-Islamic civilization as such that should have prevented the Ottoman state developing into a modern industrialized state; this development was blocked by the imperialistic West. This is a very revisionist claim, since, as we saw earlier, first-generation Kemalists represented Islamic civilization as responsible for the degeneration of the Turkish nation. So, the left-wing Kemalist narrative is, similar to that of first generation Kemalists, establishing a “story-world” (*diegesis*) composed of “the West,” and, consequently, of “the East.” However, the *obstacle* hindering the fulfilment of the *goal* is not Ottoman-Islamic civilization but Western imperialism. This suggests that even the diegesis is here slightly transformed, as “the West” is seen more clearly as an enemy. It is not the conception of the West as an enemy in itself which marks the difference between the narrative offered by Avciođlu and the first-generation Kemalists, since the latter also saw the military intervention of the Western powers inside the category of the enemy. However, changing the diegesis by claiming that it was Western imperialism which was the main adversary of the national community and the whole enlightenment project obviously transforms all the structural components of the narrative. Next we need to observe how the left-wing Kemalist narrative transforms the “enemy within.”

## 5.2 Left-wing Kemalist Redefinition of the “Enemy Within”

Challenging the first-generation Kemalist orthodoxy of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and the Kemalist one-party regime seems to suggest that the crucial Kemalist discourse of a unitary, homogenous nation without classes is debunked once and for all. However, left-wing Kemalist narratives of legitimation do not try to construct a vision of history that would ultimately go beyond the nationalistic discourse of first-generation Kemalists. We will see that the concept of history inherent in Avciođlu’s *Türkiye’nin Düzeni*, and in left-wing Kemalist interpretations generally, is highly nationalist and emphasizes the need to protect the Turkish nation

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<sup>500</sup> Fakat devletçilik, kapitalizme alternative teşkil eden bir sistem olarak hiçbir zaman düşünülmemiştir. Ve uygulamada, devletçilik, kapitalizmi engelleyen değil, geliştiren bir politika olmuştur... devletçilik politikası, kapitalizmi ve dolayısıyla sınıf tezatlarını arttırıcı yönde olmuştur. Ibid., pp. 448–451.

<sup>501</sup> Ibid., p. 507.

from the imperialist West. As we saw in section three, Atatürk also stressed the character of the Anatolian Resistance Movement as a struggle against expanding Western hegemony. In doing this, however, he never attacked the existing political and economic structures of the capitalist world order. He wanted to emphasize that the Turks needed to secure their own society by developing those powerful institutions – for example a capitalist economy utilizing advanced technology – that were initially born in the West.<sup>502</sup> Moreover, as we also noted in the third section, Atatürk’s call to resist the West, was, in the final analysis, subjugated to the idea of enlightenment as a universal historical process. Thus, Atatürk’s anti-imperialism never went beyond the general call to resist the external invader. It certainly did not include a fight against capitalism.<sup>503</sup>

Avcıoğlu notes that one of the key political concepts of modern Turkish history is *halk* (the people). According to Avcıoğlu, it has been used in at least two ways: to some it has been a synonym for *millet* (the nation), while others have used it in reference to the common people or mob, excluding the intelligentsia. *Halkçılık* (populism), on the other hand, has been understood as the opposite to divine authority and the sultanate, that is, as a principle of popular sovereignty. According to Avcıoğlu, it has been common to speak about this *halkçılık* even when political power has been solely in the hands of large landowners. This term has also had, however, since the days of Ziya Gökalp, a social connotation: it has been seen as an idea refuting the existence of opposed classes, and in a more positive meaning as the possibility of securing social equality and justice.<sup>504</sup> Also on this basis Avcıoğlu assesses the character of the Kemalist one-party regime:

In any case the populist one-party regime founded as a tool for implementing popular sovereignty was, in spite of its claim to represent all classes, born and developed as a party of landowners and officials, manifesting the sovereignty of these groups alone.<sup>505</sup>

Do we have here a radical critic of Kemalism, or an effort to undermine Kemalism as the state ideology? The answer is “no.” It would be wise, in the context of post-1945 Turkey, to make a clear distinction between those who claimed to be “Atatürkist” in order to avoid total political marginalization, such as the supporters of an Islamic state, and those who criticized the achievements of the one-party regime whilst at the same time strongly supporting the basic goals of Kemalism. It

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<sup>502</sup> Karal 1981, p. 27

<sup>503</sup> Feroz Ahmad defines the Kemalist stance with respect to capitalism in my view quite correctly as he writes that “during the war of independence the Kemalists were anti-imperialists, not only because they wanted to prevent the partition of Anatolia, but also because they refused to allow the new Turkey to remain an economic colony of the West. This aspect of the struggle is sometimes lost sight of because some critics have cast doubt on Kemalism’s anti-imperialism, claiming that the Kemalists were making concessions to foreign capital while indulging in rhetoric against it at the same time. Such critics miss an important point about the political economy of Kemalism, namely that it was capitalist yet at the same time anti-imperialist.” Feroz Ahmad, “The Political Economy of Kemalism,” in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, ed. Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981): p. 150.

<sup>504</sup> Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, pp. 356–357.

<sup>505</sup> Nitekim halkçılığın uygulama aracı olan tek parti de, bütün sınıfları temsil etme iddiasına rağmen, eşraf egemenliğini yansıttak, eşraf-memur karması bir parti olarak doğacak ve gelişecektir. *Ibid.*, p. 360.

must be noticed that Avciođlu, in spite of his general criticism, is fully committed to the Kemalist conception of history as an enlightenment project. For Avciođlu this project represents the coming of a new society of social equality and a new liberated man, promised by the Enlightenment. This promise can be fulfilled only if Turkey frees itself from the economic exploitation of the imperialist West, and manages to build a new industrialized society through the efforts of the state. In this process Kemal Atatürk and his reforms were crucial steps. Avciođlu writes:

If the National Liberation War had not been won, the Turkish nation would have vanished into history. The same that had already happened in the Balkans was waiting Anatolia. Gladstone's vision of wiping the Turks from the face of the earth would have been realized. The imperialist conspiracy working through the Greeks and Armenians would have destroyed the Anatolian Turks. The fact that we Turks today exist as a nation is largely due to Atatürk's ability to form a resistance force in a completely chaotic situation. Atatürk is, more than anything else, the progenitor of the Turkish nation.<sup>506</sup>

This "progenitor of the Turkish nation" is, of course, nothing but a repetition of the image of Kemal Atatürk as the "Father" and "Saviour" of the Turkish nation, an image originally offered by Mustafa Kemal himself in his Great Speech. The above passage also demonstrates very clearly that whatever the faults of the Kemalist one-party regime, they were certainly not Atatürk's failures. As a matter of fact, in his effort to legitimise the continuing position of the enlightened Kemalist cadre above the popularly elected government, Avciođlu clearly evokes the picture of the enlightened "Father" and the need to safeguard his legacy by the intelligentsia. The argumentation is constructed on the idea that, just as the "Father" was needed to lead the Turkish nation to salvation during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, it was now necessary that the groups representing the enlightened state were leading Turkey in its struggle against conservative and capitalist forces both inside and outside Turkey.

As hinted at above, the 1970s in Turkey witnessed "radical politics," part of which was the movement of political Islam. It must be noted that for the *Milli Görüş* (National View) movement – which is the name given to the ideology of political Islam in Turkey – the "West" has been the mother of all evils and has thus represented the absolute "other" to the "national self" that is to be re-created in Turkey through differentiation from the West in general, and from the Kemalist westernization process in particular.<sup>507</sup> However, as İhsan Dađı underlines, the leaders of the *Milli Görüş* movement made a distinction between Western *culture* and *technology*, advocating the technological renovation of Turkey. Thus, during the 1970s the leaders of the *Milli Görüş* promoted the image of the Islamic party's

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<sup>506</sup> Kurtuluş Savaşı kazanılmazaydı, Türk millet tarihten silinme tehlikesi karşındaydı. Anadolu'yu da Balkanlardaki gibi bir âkıbet beklemekteydi. Gladstone'un "Türkleri dünya yüzünden kaldırmak" amacı, gerçekleşmek üzereydi. Rum ve Ermeniler aracılığı ile yürütülen emperyalist komplo, Anadolu'nun Türklüğünden habersiz bırakılan 8-10 milyonluk nüfusunu yozlaştırma, eritme ve yok etme yolundaydı. Bugün bir Türk millet olarak varsak, bunu, herkesin tam bir şaşkınlık içinde bulunduğu bir ortamda, millî kuvvetleri sabırla toplayıp seferber eden Atatürk'ün liderlik gücüne geniş ölçüde borçluyuz. Atatürk, her şeyden önce, Türk milletinin yaratıcıdır. Ibid., pp. 337–338.

<sup>507</sup> İhsan Dađı, "Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization," *Turkish Studies* 6 no.1 (March 2005): p. 24.

relevance not only to the spiritual but also to the material development of the Turkish people by emphasizing its commitment to and success in laying down the basis for heavy industry in Turkey, conceived as a precondition for Turkey's independence from the Western domination. The emphasis on modernization and development as a "liberating" precondition from western hegemony remained, according to Dağlı, an important feature of the *Milli Görüş* movement.<sup>508</sup>

So it seems that the movement of political Islam in Turkey has not proceed one step from the basic distinction between *culture* and *civilization* already offered by Ziya Gökalp during the early decades of the twentieth-century. Indeed, the separation between western *culture* and *technology* is, in its fundamental assumptions, exactly the same as laid down by Gökalp, before the foundation of the Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. It is based on a very controversial claim that Western technology could be separated from its overall culture. As we have seen, Atatürk claimed that such a distinction was a mistake, proclaiming that contemporary civilization was one and indivisible, representing the level that humanity as a whole had reached. This did not mean that Atatürk wanted to deny the existence of Turkish national culture: what he asserted was that this culture could not just take over Western technology and science and still remain as it was, but that it was necessary to establish a new Turkish national culture with those the traits presupposed by the development of technology and science, that is, *rationality* and *secularism*.

Thus, what crucially distinguishes left-wing Kemalist criticism of Kemalism from the one presented by political Islam is its sincere attachment to the Kemalist enlightenment narrative. Even though these political ideologies seem to converge in their criticism of Western imperialism, they are nevertheless grounded on a totally different world-view. Left-wing Kemalism is a heart-and-soul defender of the Enlightenment project, whereas the ideology of political Islam in Turkey (*Milli Görüş*) is ultimately its intellectual antithesis. What differentiates left-wing Kemalist narratives of legitimation from the conservative-republican Kemalist narratives is its redefinition of the *adversaries* and *obstacles* from a socialist perspective.

Mümtaz Soysal's narrator blames the CHP leader İsmet İnönü for Turkey's stagnation, that is, the stopping of social reforms. He notes that this was regrettable as even İnönü himself had proclaimed that Turkey's new situation demanded that Atatürk's principles be developed further.<sup>509</sup> According to Soysal, it was typical of the Turkey of the 1960s that all kinds of groups, even those demanding the "restoration" of the religious *sharia*-state, were in the habit of taking individual sentences from Atatürk's speeches and then using these in their own propaganda. In this respect, Soysal says, the socialist stance was clear enough:

Nobody in the socialist movement tries to picture Atatürk's words as a call to socialism. What the socialist movement is aiming for is a scientific analysis of the nature of the movement which started in Turkey after the First World War; to analyze why this movement

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<sup>508</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>509</sup> Soysal 1975, p. 16.

emerged in the first place; in what sense it achieved all it was aiming for; and with what methods it achieved all that it did.<sup>510</sup>

This would suggest, contrary to what was said above, that Soysal does not want to legitimize his left-wing Kemalist program by utilizing the legacy of Atatürk. However, Soysal continues with the following remark:

Socialism does not understand the Kemalist reforms as done and finished, but wants to take them one step further, seeing Atatürkism as a never-ending symphony. This means that socialists do not want, as İnönü has claimed, to use Atatürk for their own purposes, or to re-invent Atatürkism in a fake costume. Socialists want to give Atatürkism new things and take it further from the current position, in a way very suitable to its principle of revolution.<sup>511</sup>

Thus, the idea of a “never-ending revolution” indeed figures in Mümtaz Soysal’s writings. For him, what is crucial is that furthering the revolutionary reforms is not a distortion of Atatürk but his fulfillment in a new context. Like Avcioğlu, Soysal is fully aware of the fact that the reforms launched by Atatürk during the 1920s and 1930s, or the ideological character of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle after 19 May 1919, were not inspired by socialism. This fact, however, was something which now needed to be changed. Even though this might lead us to think that, when compared to Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, the *goal* presented in Soysal’s book *Güzel Huzursuzluk (Beautiful Unrest)* is thus transformed, this, however, is not the case. Above we saw how the narrative offered by Doğan Avcioğlu in his book *Türkiye’nin Düzeni* changed the *adversaries* and *obstacles* of the first-generation Kemalist narrative by arguing that the counter-revolutionary threat obstructing the enlightenment was the capitalist class of Turkey. For Soysal also, the *goal* of the story told is still the same, “enlightenment,” and the *adversaries* and *obstacles* are those already familiar from Avcioğlu’s book.

For Bülent Ecevit and other left-wing Kemalists, one concrete “revolution” still to be carried out in Turkey is, as we have already seen, the land reform. This was emphasized because it was thought – erroneously, as Andrew Mango has pointed out by referring to studies on the subject and the later statements of leftist intellectuals themselves – that there was not enough land for poor peasants to feed their families.<sup>512</sup> Ecevit went on to emphasize that without proper land reform the revolutions made during Atatürk’s lifetime would also remain ineffective and the

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<sup>510</sup> Bu bakımdan sosyalistlerin tutumu açık. Kimse, Atatürk’ü şu veya bu cümlesiyle alıp sosyalizme kalkan yapmağa çalışmıyor. Sosyalist cephede, Birinci Dünya Savaşından sonra Türkiye’de başlayan hareketi bilimsel gözle incelemek, bunun neden doğduğunu araştırmak, ne derece başarılı olduğunu ortaya koymak ve nihayet amaçlara nasıl varılabileceği üzerinde düşünmek gayreti hâkim. Ibid., pp. 15–16.

<sup>511</sup> Sosyalizmi, devrimleri dondurup bırakmayan, bir adım daha ileriye götüren ve Atatürkçülüğün bitmemiş senfosini tamamlayan bir sistem sayıyoruz. Demek ki, sosyalistlerin amacı, Sayın İnönü’nün imalı deyiimiyle “Atatürk’te kendi maksatlarına uygun deliller bulmak ve Atatürkçülüğün sahtesini icat etmek” değil, ona yeni bir şeyler katmak, onu, devrimciliğine çok uygun bir şekilde, kaldığı noktanın ötesine götürmektir. Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>512</sup> Mango 2004, p. 40

modernization that Atatürk aimed for could not be achieved.<sup>513</sup> Ecevit also asserts that in the Atatürk era, revolutions aiming to remodel the economic and social structures were left undone because they did not represent the interests of the governing coalition composed of landlords and bureaucrats. According to Ecevit, the masses, however, wished to change the economic and social substructures. The people were of the opinion that these changes were blocked by the bureaucratic elite in power. According to Ecevit, the people were right in this:

We must say that the people were quite justified in coming to this conclusion. Because those who wanted to stop the revolution at certain definite boundaries were generally opposed to a democratic revolution, they thus opposed the idea of giving the people new political and social rights. These forces opposed the land reform that was clearly favored by Atatürk in his speeches in the Grand National Assembly in 1936 and 1937. They were keen to block the people's demand to be able express their wishes freely.<sup>514</sup>

Thus, according to Ecevit, the forces opposing the widening of the revolution were not the masses, but the powerful conservative groups trying to secure their own vested interests. These "powerful and conservative people" wanted to halt the revolution at a certain point, and even wanted to undo some of the reforms already executed. According to Ecevit, these people also included individuals who sought to secure their privileged position and material wealth and power by utilizing the religious mentality of the masses.<sup>515</sup> It seems, then, that there was one card in particular that could be used in the attempt to re-interpret Kemalism from a leftist perspective: Atatürk's clearly expressed hatred for the traditional religiously trained notables and sheiks who used religion to manipulate the uneducated masses in order to secure their own material wealth and social status. This "group of narrow-minded exploiters of religion," detested by Atatürk, was a very functional *adversary*, and left-wing Kemalists, including Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit, did not forget to use these symbols of ugly conservatism in their effort to legitimize the Kemalist regime. Thus, the original adversary of the *Nutukian* narrative, the conservative-religious manipulator, was the most concrete symbol that linked the left-wing Kemalist narratives of the 1960s and 1970s to the original *Nutukian* narrative. What was changed was the emphasis on the nature of this adversary, as in the left-wing Kemalist narrative he was not only a conservative, but also a capitalist exploiter. The fact that the left-wing Kemalist narrative was able to argue that the social inequalities represented by the capitalist order were also obstructing the fulfilment of *all* Atatürk's reforms, made it extremely powerful.

Doğan Avcıoğlu argues that Atatürk saw that a fundamental land reform would require strong popular action and pressure from below. But there was no such at the

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<sup>513</sup> Ecevit [1970] 1973, p. 24.

<sup>514</sup> Halk, bu görüşünde de haksız sayılmazdı. Çünkü, devrimleri belirli bir noktada dondurmak isteyenler, genellikle, demokrasi devrimine karşı çıkıyorlardı; halka tanınmak istenen yeni siyasal ve sosyal haklara karşı çıkıyorlardı; Atatürk'ün 1936 ve 1937'de Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisini açık konuşmalarında ısrarla ve açıkça istediği toprak reformuna karşı çıkıyorlardı. Halkın, özlemlerinin serbestçe dile getirebilmesini engelliyorlardı. Ibid., pp. 43–44.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid., p. 45.



time. Instead there was pressure from the large landowners to expand their surplus. With no alternatives in sight, Mustafa Kemal had to rely on this group of wealthy Anatolian landowners during the National Liberation War. After the Liberation War, in a situation of immobilized peasantry, it was impossible to push through reforms that would harm the large landowners. The abolishment of the caliphate, the principle of secularism, the unification of educational system, the closing of the shrines, and the establishment of the new civil code were all actions which demanded great courage, but, as they did not fundamentally change the basic economic structures, they could not break the existing traditional order in the countryside.<sup>516</sup>

The core of Avcioğlu's message was that in the latter part of the 1960s the structural reasons that had made a social revolution impossible before were no longer there, and the time for change was at hand. The narrator of *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* underlines that Turkey was no longer a static country with a passive peasantry under the tutelage of feudal lords in a context of a closed economy. Besides, the working class was also becoming strong, demonstrating that capitalism was really giving birth to its own enemies. It was clear, Avcioğlu notes, that the nationalist-revolutionary cadre of the National Liberation War era did not have this kind of social base to lean on, and was thus compelled to cooperate with the large landowners. Now this structural context was transformed, making change possible.<sup>517</sup> Avcioğlu provides the following assessment of the historical development of the revolutionary cadre and its purpose:

It is quite natural that the first group to notice that the American-model of capitalism was unsuitable for Turkey – youth, teachers, officers, officials, writers and representatives of free professions – was a group generally originated from the middle-class and which could be described as enlightened people attached to Kemalism...The gap between the growing extravagance of a conservative minority and the increasing poverty of the productive majority led to the conclusion that all was not right with the existing order...The conception of reaching the level of contemporary civilization via a progressive constitution, a dominant idea from Namık Kemal to 27 May, was at last abandoned. One had come to understand the social structures behind the constitutions...These were new conceptions of the nationalist-revolutionary cadre, had to occur as a consequence of various developments. We can summarize these views as “reaching the level of contemporary civilization in an independent state through the path of social revolutions.” As we have learned, this is what Kemalism is all about. The revolutions executed after the National War of Liberation, in the structural-historical conditions of that period, crashed into a reactionary obstacle and were in many cases limited to the super-structure, without taking root at the base. Thus, in the dynamic conditions of present-day Turkey, the duty of contemporary Kemalists is to continue Atatürk's revolutions, in order to expand them into the social substructure.<sup>518</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Avcioğlu [1968] 2003, p. 353.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid., p. 955.

<sup>518</sup> Tabîdir ki, Amerikan modeli kapitalizmin Türkiye'deki çıkmazının ve düzen değişikliği zorunluluğun ilk farkına varanlar, - gençliği, öğretmeni, subayı, memuru, yazarı ve serbest meslek sahipleriyle – genellikle orta tabakadan gelen – Kemalizme bağlı milliyetçi aydınlar olmuştur...

How should we evaluate these words by Doğan Avcıoğlu? What we seem to have in front of us is an authoritarian leftist Kemalist program, based on a revisionist interpretation of the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. In Avcıoğlu's leftist theory, the contemporary significance of Kemalism is grounded on its historical mission to fight the imperialistic West and its domestic supporters the feudal-capitalist class of Turkey. It can be claimed that a significant part of the Kemalist bureaucratic elite came to comprehend Turkey's position in the 1960s in line with the argument developed by Doğan Avcıoğlu. In this new leftist-oriented Kemalist discourse, the Atatürkian message was read against the urban and industrial Turkey that was, as they saw it, prematurely provided with universal suffrage. According to this view, the enlightenment project of Kemalism was now needed more than ever, but at the same time this entire "holy" mission was threatened by the conservative groups in society, who were able to exploit the traditional values of the masses.

For his part, Mümtaz Soysal concentrated on criticizing İnönü for the failure to execute those structural reforms which Turkey needed so badly. History, Soysal declares, shall condemn İnönü for giving up so easily the task of Land Reform, the abolishment of the Village Institutes (*Köy Enstitüleri*), and especially for maintaining the *status quo* in in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Soysal, what really showed İnönü's true face was his understanding of the principle of statism, as he added the word *mutedil* (moderate) in front of it.<sup>519</sup> For Soysal, İnönü also stands as an obstacle to a more radical economic policy

Mr. İnönü has noted that "in the economic area, Atatürk did not want to start any kind policy of force." As the economy was such a significant aspect of the National Liberation Struggle, these words by İnönü must be taken under serious consideration. It is completely impossible, that Atatürk, who wanted to execute a revolution in all spheres of life, could have ignored the economy. Thus, it was obvious that the economy was also transformed with policy of force.<sup>520</sup>

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Tutucu bir azınlığın israfı ile üretici çoğunluğunun artan sefaleti arasındaki uçurum, tutulan yolun doğruluğu hususunda şüphe uyandırmıştır... Namık Kemal'den 27 Mayıs'a kadar süren, mükemmel bir Anayasa ile çağdaş uygarlığa ulaşma hayali artık geride kalmıştır. Anayasaların gerisinde yatan toplumsal güçlerin farkına varılmıştır... Bütün bunlar, olayların gelişmesi ve zorlamasıyla, milliyetçi-devrimci çevrelere egemen olan yeni görüşlerdir. Bu görüşler, "bağımsızlık içinde toplumsal devrim yoluyla çağdaş uygarlığa ulaşma" formula ile özetlenebilir. Kemalizmin amacı da, bilebildiğimiz kadarıyla, bundan başka bir şey değildir. Ne var ki, Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan sonra girilen devrimler, o günlerin tarihten gelen statik şartları içinde tutucular koalisyonu çarparak temele inememiş ve birçok halde üst-yapı devrimleri olarak kalmıştır. Türkiye'nin dinamik şartlarında bugünün Kemalistlerine düşen görev, Atatürk devrimlerini devam ettirmek, derinleştirmek ve temele indirmekten ibarettir. Ibid., pp. 955–957.

<sup>519</sup> Soysal 1975, p. 18.

<sup>520</sup> Sayın İnönü, "Atatürk'ün iktisadî sahada devrim yolu ile hiç bir zorlamada bulunmamış olduğunu açıkça ilân etmek isterim" demektir. İktisadî siyaset, Türk kurtuluş hareketinin en çok aksayan tarafı olduğu için, bu sözler üzerinde dikkatle durmak gerekir. Devrimciliği hayatın bütün cephelerine uygulayan Atatürk'ün iktisadî alanda hareketsiz kalmasına imkân yoktu. Nitekim, iktisadî alanda da zorlamalar oldu. Ibid., p. 18.

As the question of land reform is at the center of left-wing Kemalist discourse, it is necessary to recall the situation in which the Land Reform Law was established and then ultimately abandoned. According to Sina Akşin, the first steps towards multi-party system were taken by President İnönü in May 1945, when he hinted that in the near future a “government by the people” would be established in Turkey. Some members of the CHP had already started to express their dissatisfaction with the one-party regime, for example, Celâl Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuat Köprülü, and Refik Koraltan, all deputies of the Grand National Assembly. At that time the assembly heatedly debated the draft for a new Land Reform Law (*Çiftiyi Topraklandırma Kanunu*). According to Article 17 of this law, in order to provide land for peasants who had little or none at all, the government was authorized to expropriate the lands of the great land-owners. On the other hand, Article 12 of the law declared that the level of compensation for expropriated lands was to be determined in accordance with existing land-tax evaluations rather than market values. This particular article, Akşin notes, caused much agitation among land-owning Deputies, especially Adnan Menderes. Although the Land Reform Law was passed by the Grand National Assembly on 11 June 1945, not only was its main architect Şevket Raşit Hatiboğlu unable to obtain a seat in any of the succeeding cabinets, but the next government saw to it that article 17 was never implemented and that the distribution of land to the peasants was limited to a portion of Treasury lands.<sup>521</sup> The Democrat Party was officially founded on 7 January 1946, and Celâl Bayar became its first Chairman. After the Democrat Party had won the first free elections in 1950 Bayar was elected the President of the Republic, and the leadership of the DP was vested in Adnan Menderes. Thus, a man who had most vociferously protested against the new Land Reform Law was now the Prime Minister, and his most important co-leader President of the Republic.

Even though Soysal strongly criticized İsmet İnönü for abandoning the fight for a land reform, it must be noted that both İnönü and the more ideological left-wing Kemalists were only having a polemic within the same Kemalist search for legitimacy. Both tried to legitimize the 1960 military intervention and the continuing existence of the crucial role of the Kemalist secular state elite in Turkish society by demonstrating that Kemalism was the only guarantor of a progressive Turkey. It is in this context that we must understand Soysal’s rhetorical question of what exactly was Atatürk’s goal? Was it just a simple liberation movement aiming at some form of national renewal, or, was it a movement which aimed to transform, from top to bottom, the whole destiny of the Anatolian populace. According to Soysal, even İnönü had proclaimed that Atatürk’s goal was to lead the Turkish nation in a humane and Western way of life (*Batılı ve insanca bir yaşayışa ulaştıracak basamaklardır*). But, Soysal asserts, the ability of the masses to have this “humane life” was deeply conditional on the transformation of their economic circumstances. These economic circumstances needed to be changed with rational methods. Thus, Soysal concludes, the Atatürk Movement must see to it that it executes a well-organized, planned, and rational program of economic development among the masses.<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Akşin 2007, pp. 244–246.

<sup>522</sup> Soysal 1975, p. 19.

Left-wing Kemalist narratives were able to create a *story* according to which the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was not only a war against an external enemy, but also against the capitalist and imperialist order which it represented. In this situation, the left-wing Kemalist argumentation asserts, the way to liberation was the struggle against foreigners/imperialists/non-Muslims/local bourgeoisie, and the economic system they all represented, that is, capitalism.<sup>523</sup> Thus, in left-wing Kemalism the “National Struggle” is also “a struggle against capitalism,” whereas first-generation Kemalists and later conservative-republican Kemalists argued that the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was a war against an external enemy and internal reactionary religious forces represented by the sultanate.

In consequence to their attachment to the Kemalist message, Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit did not hesitate to support the military intervention of 1960, which brought down the elected DP government and claimed to restore the principles of Atatürk. As Nurşen Mazıcı points out, Avcıoğlu was a typical example of those Kemalist intellectuals who saw the 27 May 1960 military intervention as a “liberation process” that ended the anti-democratic regime of the DP. Long after the actual event, Avcıoğlu presented the 1960 intervention as a progressive reaction necessary in a country where there was no politically conscious populace. As Mazıcı asserts, for Avcıoğlu the only fault of the military intervention was the fact that it had not taken place earlier, in 1945, when the Democrat Party was established and a transition to a multi-party system was launched.<sup>524</sup>

As noted, the initial left-wing interpretation of Turkey’s situation had already developed during the Kemalist one-party era. Writers for influential Kemalist *Kadro*-magazine proclaimed that the crucial internal contradiction in Turkey was based on the contradicting class-interests of the peasants and the feudal lords. The modern dichotomy between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was non-existent in Turkey, which was still a pre-industrial country. According to the writers of *Kadro*, it was the duty of the state to abolish all feudal structures and prevent the development of modern class conflict in Turkey. According to this group, then, the propagation of the revolution was the duty of the “leader” and an enlightened cadre representing the state.<sup>525</sup> As Alpkaya stresses, the left-wing Kemalism of the 1960s in general, unlike the earlier version, did not want to deny the existence of the class struggle in Turkish society. The leftists of the 1960s also had their own magazine called *Yön*, a kind of equivalent to *Kadro* in the new era multi-party politics. According to Alpkaya, whereas *Kadro* was meant to convince the one and only leader of the Republic in the 1930s (Atatürk), *Yön* in the 1960s sought to spread its views to as wide an audience as possible.<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>523</sup> Faruk Alpkaya, “Bir 20. Yüzyıl Akımı: ‘Sol Kemalizm,’” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): pp. 490–491.

<sup>524</sup> Nurşen Mazıcı, “27 Mayıs, Kemalizmin Restorasyonu mu?,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 563.

<sup>525</sup> Alpkaya 2002, pp. 477–478.

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 478.

When we read further Doğan Avcıoğlu's *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, we notice that his arguments are based on the conviction that in the Turkey of the 1960s class conflict was still basically the same as it was for the writers of *Kadro*-magazine during the one-party era. Avcıoğlu writes the following:

There are two basic pillars in Atatürk's mission: nationalism and contemporary civilization. Nationalism stands for political, economic, and all-area-encompassing full independence. Contemporary civilization can be reached by independence. So what is the road heading to contemporary civilization? Ever since the era of the Tanzimat, the first one to give the right answer to this question was Kemal Atatürk. Contemporary civilization is not reached by quarrels on "what to absorb from the West and what not." It is reached by the social revolutions to be executed in the near future. The independence representing nationalism is in the same time a precondition for the execution of the social revolution... The total revolutionary movement in landownership of the years 1937–1945 was left undone because of the actions taken by the conservative bloc of bureaucracy and large landowners. But the initial thesis of Atatürk, that is, "**to reach contemporary civilization by social revolutions in an independent state,**" is today as relevant as ever.<sup>527</sup>

And Avcıoğlu continues in the following way

The first and most important step on the path to contemporary civilization is the elimination of the pre-capitalist relations in landownership. In the West, land reform was at the heart of the industrial revolution.<sup>528</sup>

Avcıoğlu claims that the perception of conflict between government officials and the people that developed in Turkey was in essence based on the officials' role as representatives of large landowners and feudal lords. He also makes an interesting observation that since the 1950s the ideologues of the Democrat Party – in an effort to break the opposition formed by the revolutionary-nationalists – were keen to present the conflict in the countryside as one between, firstly, Kemalist officials representing the repressive state and, secondly, the common people, thereby hiding from sight the fact that the conflict was a genuine class conflict between capitalist landlords and poor peasants.<sup>529</sup> According to Avcıoğlu:

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<sup>527</sup> Atatürk hareketinde, iki ana fikir vardır: Milliyetçilik ve çağdaş uygarlık. Milliyetçilik, politik, ekonomik her alanda tam bağımsızlık biçiminde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bağımsızlık içinde, çağdaş uygarlığa ulaşılacaktır. Fakat çağdaş uygarlığa ulaşmanın yolu nedir? Tanzimat'tan beri tartışılan bu soruya ilk doğru cevabı getiren, Atatürk'tür. Çağdaş uygarlığa, "Batı'dan ne alalım, ne almayalım" biçimindeki anlamsız tartışmalarla değil, ilerde gerçekleştirilecek toplumsal devrimlerle ulaşılacaktır. Milliyetçiliğin ifadesi olan bağımsızlık, aynı zamanda toplumsal devrimlere girişebilme olanağı kazanabilmenin ön şartıdır... Tarımda 1937-1945 döneminde uygulamak istenen köklü bir devrim hareketi, eşrafın ve bürokrasinin tutucu kanadının direnmesiyle, başarısızlıkla sonuçlanacaktır. Fakat bütün bunlar, "**Bağımsızlık içinde toplumsal devrim yoluyla çağdaş uygarlığa ulaşma**" diye özetlediğimiz Atatürkçü tezin doğruluğunu ve bugün için de geçerliliğini değiştirmez. Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, pp. 338–339.

<sup>528</sup> Çağdaş uygarlık yolunda gerekli ilk ve en önemli adım, toprak düzeninde prekapitalist ilişkilerin tasfiyesidir. Batı'da, Sanayi İhtilâli'nin temelinde toprak reformu yatmaktadır. Ibid., p. 351.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., pp. 507–508.

It is necessary to admit that, even though the early history of the Republic secured great steps on the path to contemporary civilization, it did not give the people very much at all... New obligations and increasing exploitation by the landlords, at the same time as the bureaucratic implementation was becoming stricter, created in the people a genuine dissatisfaction with the government. This dissatisfaction was then widely exploited by the Democrat Party as it was developing into a party of big business and the landlords.<sup>530</sup>

Herein lies the new, left-wing Kemalist legitimation strategy that was to become very common during the 1960s and 1970s: the authoritarian state as such is a positive thing for the masses; it is only when peopled by conservative reactionary forces that it becomes a vehicle of tyranny. In the left-wing Kemalist movement represented by Doğan Avcıoğlu, multi-party politics and the discourse of democracy are exploited by reactionary forces to maintain a “false consciousness” among the masses that in reality are willing, *but unable*, to execute the Kemalist enlightenment ideal. For this reason, the Kemalist state-elite must secure, with the help of the army, the continuity of Kemalist principles.

That there was a Kemalist intelligentsia, Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit being typical examples, which strongly supported the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elite and provided it with historical-sociological theorizing in its attempt to maintain its social status was to have significant consequences for the politics of Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s. This argument is further highlighted if we look at the way in which the political system worked in Turkey after the 1960 military intervention. According to Kemal H. Karpat, many scholars have argued that the period from 1961 until 1980 has been an era of coalitions. According to Karpat, this evaluation is right only for the period after 1973 when the electorate became highly fragmented and political parties proliferated. During the period 1961–1973, the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*, AP) always won a majority in every elections, either by itself or with the help of the New Turkey Party (*Yeni Türkiye Partisi*, YTP). However, Karpat emphasizes, the Justice Party was prevented from forming a government until 1965. Furthermore, even though the Justice Party won the majority of votes by itself and formed governments on its own in 1965 and 1969, it was effectively prevented from exercising full authority by a series of well-planned strategies of the radical wing of the CHP. In Karpat’s words, “there were delaying tactics in the parliament, ranging from the introduction of endless amendments to bills and never-ending debates. Secondly, there were constant challenges to the constitutionality of laws, and often the Constitutional Court was striking down the Justice Party legislation, since a good part of its personnel sympathized with the CHP. Thirdly, the bureaucracy, though officially neutral, could in subtle ways block the administrative decisions of the AP government.”<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Kabul etmek gerekir ki, genç Cumhuriyet, çağdaş uygarlık yolunda büyük hamleler yapmakla birlikte, kitleye pek bir şey verememiştir... Artan eşraf istismarına ek olarak gelen bu yükümlülükler, bürokratik uygulamadaki sertlik de eklenince, tek parti yönetimine ve bürokrasiye karşı halkta büyük bir hoşnutsuzluk yaratmıştır. Ağa ve tüccar egemenliğinde bir parti olarak gelişen DP, bu hoşnutsuzluktan geniş ölçüde yararlanacaktır. *Ibid.*, pp. 509–510.

<sup>531</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, “Military Interventions: Army-Civilian Relations in Turkey Before and After 1980,” in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahment Evin (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988): pp. 143–144.

According to Karpaz, domestic politics in the 1960s were being decided through the struggle of the same groups as before: the statist-elitist intelligentsia and bureaucracy, on the one hand, and an entrepreneurial, free-economy oriented group on the other.<sup>532</sup> This suggests that the legitimation for the military's intervention into politics was always available, because the statist-bureaucratic cadre was in a position to produce a discourse that seemed to justify its superior position.

We have noticed that left-wing Kemalist narratives create a "story-world" in which the basic components of the Kemalist narrative, that is, "the Turkish nation," "the West," and "the East" seem to be firmly reproduced. We also noted that for left-wing Kemalists "the West" is not only a transient military threat, but also a force economically exploiting Turkey. However, the left-wing Kemalist ideology offered by Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit did not challenge the basic presuppositions of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history, but reproduced them with transformed definitions of the *obstacles* and *adversaries*. Thus, we must conclude that the left-wing Kemalist narrative only slightly changes the diegesis of the narrative, offering the position of an implied reader that comprehends the *unfulfilled* aspirations of the Kemalist enlightenment project, namely, the need for a transformation of Turkey's economic substructures. The reform of these, the implied reader suggests, will finally realize the "reaching the level of contemporary civilization," which is the ultimate *goal* of this narrative.

According to Paul Ricoeur, reading a narrative in itself equals living inside the fictive story-world created by the narrative.<sup>533</sup> This is just another way of describing the implied reader, a position created by a text as a transit mechanism which brings the actual reader into the story-world of the narrative. Through it, the actual reader accepts the "us" of the narrative, thereby identifying with the *nationness* constructed in the text. The reason why the left-wing Kemalist message by Avcıoğlu is credible stems from its ability to reproduce the common Kemalist narrative of a Turkish nation as a living community. As the socialist re-interpretation is written inside this familiar narrative world of Turkish nationalism, it becomes accepted by those who have already internalized the Kemalist narrative of a nation as a naturalized community.

### **5.3 Authoritarian and Democratic Left-wing Kemalist Narratives of Legitimation**

This far we have seen that Bülent Ecevit's left-wing Kemalism shared a great number of issues with the current of thinking expressed by Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal. On one issue, however, the leftist interpretations and the legitimation operations based on them offered by Ecevit and these two other men differed crucially. This was the evaluation of the relationship between the enlightened Kemalist elite and the masses. Ecevit asserts that there was still even

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<sup>532</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>533</sup> Paul Ricoeur, "Life in Quest of Narrative," in *On Paul Ricoeur. Narrative and Interpretation*, ed. David Wood (London and New York: Routledge, 1991): p. 27.

among revolutionary cadres individuals who were convinced that implementing changes benefitting the masses, that is, economic and social revolutions, was possible only under a one-party regime, similar to the one that was in power during Atatürk's lifetime. According to Ecevit, this was obviously not the case. The revolutions made under the one-party regime had lost their vigour, and the system of one-party government was definitively over in the Turkish case. Ecevit admits, however, that when multi-party democracy was established in 1945, it witnessed a tendency to undo certain revolutions already accomplished. This led to a situation where part of the revolutionary cadre became highly suspicious about democracy. These individuals came to the conclusion that the masses did not want revolution. Ecevit states that democracy presupposes accepting that there may also develop reactionary forces, not just progressive ones. But, according to him, Turkey was fortunately inhabited by a young generation committed to Atatürk's revolutions, and this would secure the "revolution" even without the constant backing of the state, under the rights brought about by genuine democracy. It was even the case that widening the revolution to include the economic and social substructures was possible only under a democratic system, especially in the context of the liberal constitution established in 1961. Moreover, according to Ecevit, all Atatürk's actions were an attempt to liberate the Turks, that is, they aimed to increase the freedom of thought and tolerance. They thus prepared the Turks for democracy.<sup>534</sup>

We will soon discover that Ecevit's criticism was directed against other left-wing Kemalists, like Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal. Whereas Ecevit seemed to be full of hope that the Turkey of his day included significant numbers of young people committed to Kemalist principles and to widening the revolution, and that this was enough to prevent reactionary movements getting more power through the democratic system, Avcıoğlu and Soysal painted a much gloomier picture.

Doğan Avcıoğlu argues that whatever the reason for the establishment of the multi-party regime, it ultimately only managed to create a situation where the large landowners, feudal lords, usurers, and compradors, that is, the capitalist class which had already been strengthened during the regime of the revolutionary-nationalists, came to power in a more direct way. In Avcıoğlu's evaluation the beginning of the multi-party period thus testified to the privileged position of landlords, feudal lords, capitalist producers, and compradors of the great cities, a group which was now courted by politicians from every party. In this context freedom and human rights were only slogans used by a conservative ideology espoused in order to safeguard the interests of these privileged groups.<sup>535</sup> Avcıoğlu claims that universal suffrage was thus highly problematic in the Turkish context:

In a social structure where pre-capitalist relations still survived, universal suffrage did not eliminate the ruling coalition of landlords, sheiks, usurers, and businessmen but instead

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<sup>534</sup> Ecevit [1970] 1973, pp. 47–54.

<sup>535</sup> Avcıoğlu [1968] 2003, pp. 520–521.



strengthened their position even further. These groups were to dominate party politics... In this way, universal suffrage became the tool of conservatism, not of advancement.<sup>536</sup>

Avciođlu concludes that this process created one particular aspect of Turkish multi-party politics, namely, the political exploitation of religion.<sup>537</sup> Thus, according to Dođan Avciođlu, parliamentary democracy was not suitable for Turkey. This shows that the left-wing Kemalism of the 1960s represented by Avciođlu was very similar to the authoritarian first-generation Kemalism in opposing a democratic form of government. This should not surprise us, though. The only difference between Dođan Avciođlu and, for example Recep Peker, is their understanding of one of the six principles of Kemalism, namely that of *inkılâpçılık* (revolutionism/reformism). For Peker, this meant the total reform of politics, culture, and the economy, that is, their rationalization, secularization, and nationalisation. With Avciođlu we find these same reforms, but in his opinion they can only be achieved through a genuine social revolution, that is, by empowering the masses.

Before we analyze Mümtaz Soysal's narrative with respect to multi-party democracy, it is useful to take a glance at the historical experience of leftist politics in Turkey by the time of Soysal published his book *Beautiful Unrest* in 1975. By this time, even the "second-generation" of left-wing Kemalist interpretation (the first-generation being the writers of the above mentioned *Kadro* magazine) had some ten years of tradition behind it. As we have seen, the initial left-wing Kemalist interpretation had been produced during the 1930s by the *Kadro* group. Then, from the 1960s onwards, groups inside the Republican People's Party started to emphasize the new 1961 Constitution in establishing a welfare state, including the social-democratic idea of social and economic equality. It must also be noted that at first even the more radical Turkish left saw that it was necessary to present their political vision within the "neutralizing" context of Kemalist statism. From its foundation in 1962 until its first Congress on 9 February 1964, the Workers' Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*, TİP), a "real" socialist party as compared to the center-left social democratic CHP, concentrated on a nationwide organization campaign. The first Congress managed to introduce the population to two major tenets. Firstly, socio-economic progress was possible only on the basis of a non-capitalist path to development, and secondly, in order to achieve the non-capitalist path of development, a change in the nature of power was an essential second step. However, the term "socialism" does not appear at all in the TİP programme of 1964. The reason for this kind of secrecy, İhsan Bal and Sedat Laçiner suggest, was "the need to articulate party's objectives inside the common Kemalist vocabulary. The leaders of the TİP decided not to use word 'socialism' at this initial moment of party's emergence, but suggested that their proposed path was that of the Kemalist

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<sup>536</sup> Ama prekapitalist düzenin kalıtlarını taşıyan bir toplumsal yapıda genel oy, bey, ağa, şeyh, tefeci, tüccar vb. gibi hakim sınıfları tasfiye edecek yerde, onları güçlendirmiştir. Parti örgütlerine bu sınıflar ve temsilcileri hakim olmuştur... Genel oy, böylece ilericiliğin değil, muhafazakârlığın aracı hâline gelmiştir. Ibid., pp. 531–532.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid., pp. 564.

statism, an interventionist economic policy traditionally favored by the ruling parties since the foundation of the statist policies inside the CHP since the 1930s.”<sup>538</sup>

As Jacob M. Landau observes, even though the numbers joining left-wing parties have not been large in Turkey, the left nevertheless has had a significant impact upon public opinion in more general terms. Furthermore, intellectuals, students and other sections of educated youth have been particularly attracted by the socio-economic message of various leftist spokesmen. However, as the 1960s did not bring any real change in the Turkish political system, a more violent and extremist stance was adopted by a number of leftist organizations. This resulted, as observed above, in a climate of public insecurity and fear, inducing the military intervention again in March 1971. This event led to a severe curbing of leftist activities, which however had resumed by the time of publication of Soysal’s *Güzel Huzursuzluk* in the mid-1970s.<sup>539</sup>

The anti-climax of the more extremist Turkish left came on May Day 1977 at the Taksim Square mass demonstration in Istanbul. The demonstration was initially called by *Devrimçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, *DİSK* (Confederation of Revolutionary Labour Unions), which was the more radical of the two such associations in Turkey. Ahmet Samim describes how “the Taksim square was populated by some 200,000 people, composed by members of various kinds of leftist political and workers’ organizations, including those who had their origins in the guerrilla struggles of the 1960s. As a Maoist group attempted to force its way into the meeting in order to propagate its ‘social-fascist’ ideology, some of its cadres fired into the air. This was followed by shootings by the police. This resulted in panic which left thirty-nine people dead, most of them crushed in the stampede.” As Samin further observes, after this event the left was soon caught up in a violent struggle with the extreme right.<sup>540</sup> Political violence then escalated year by year until the military intervened again in 1980. Thus, what happened to the Turkish left was a process of disillusionment. The 27 May 1960 military intervention awakened hope in the leftist intelligentsia that a new progressive Turkey was about to be born. After successive election losses, however, some leftists began to abandon hope in democratic procedures. Parliamentarism was ridiculed, in Sina Akşin’s words, as “sweetie-pie democracy and the talk of a ‘non-parliamentary opposition’ began with hopes also for a future pro-socialist military coup.”<sup>541</sup>

On his part, Soysal asks whether democracy should be understood simply as an opportunity for the masses to cast their vote in general elections, or was it also about bettering their economic status so that they could really make use of society’s opportunities. According to Soysal, the first alternative means that the movement led by Atatürk is understood in a very narrow-minded way. If the second alternative is

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<sup>538</sup> Ihsan Bal and Sedat Laçiner, “The Challenge of Revolutionary Terrorism to Turkish Democracy, 1960–80,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13 no.4 (2001): pp. 98–99.

<sup>539</sup> Landau 2004, p. 378.

<sup>540</sup> Ahmet Samim, “The Tragedy of the Turkish Left,” *New Left Review* 126 (March-April, 1981): pp. 60–85.

<sup>541</sup> Akşin 2007, p. 271.

accepted, Soysal concludes, the Turks should seriously analyze what was needed to establish “a genuine democracy.”<sup>542</sup> So, in the story of Soysal’s *Beautiful Unrest*, the left-wing Kemalist program is offered as the method for establishing the grounds of a genuine social transformation, deemed a necessity in order to fulfill the Atatürkian vision of leading the Turks to a humane and Western way of life. Thus, the *tool* to be used in order to reach the *goal* is the transformation of the economical circumstances of the masses, that is, a social revolution organized by the state.

We can say that Mümtaz Soysal, Doğan Avcıoğlu, and Bülent Ecevit were as much Kemalists as socialists. This definition is however a bit trivial, since the anti-imperialist aspect of the Anatolian Resistance Movement led by Atatürk offers a genuine, although highly contested, point of convergence between left-wing politics and the Kemalist enlightenment mission. The problematic relationship between socialism, the Enlightenment, democracy, and nationalism, however, has been an integral part of the socialist tradition from its very beginning. All this stems from the fact that there are many socialist programs instead of only one. As Tony Wright emphasizes, already before the First World War there were socialist thinkers, such as Otto Bauer, who argued that the cultural character of each nation stamps itself on its socialism, and that different national traditions should be allowed to pursue their own kind of socialism in their own way.<sup>543</sup> After the establishment of the Soviet Union, and even more clearly after the Second World War, it became obvious indeed that the “Communist” expression of socialism established in the Soviet Union in the form of proletarian dictatorship could not in practice justify its claim as the only “true” manifestation of socialism. The social democratic parties of Western Europe moved further than ever towards reformism and a permanent accommodation with liberal capitalism in response to what they perceived as social and economic changes taking place in these societies. Furthermore, beyond Europe there had now indeed developed new socialist regimes and new socialist movements. Many of these, Tony Wright underscores, explicitly wanted to emphasize the national and cultural particularity of their traditions. They needed to do this because of the evident distance of their experience from some of the central assumptions of classical western socialism, for example in terms of economic development, class structure, and nationalism.<sup>544</sup>

As Tony Wright further observes, the sample of various socialist definitions ranges from a “strict public control of the means of production” to the most humanistic definition of socialism as the “creative development of every individual.” Marxism has defined socialism solely through the materialist method, so that the change in the mode of production effected by the victory of the proletariat is also the realization of the humanistic prospectus of unalienated creativity. Yet, Wright emphasizes, this remains only one version of socialism.<sup>545</sup> The common ground for the various socialisms, Wright proposes, can be seen in the earlier definitions which indicate that socialists were interested in the promotion of certain social objectives (such as equality and community), and also that they have regarded the control of the means

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<sup>542</sup> Soysal 1975, pp. 19–20.

<sup>543</sup> Tony Wright, *Socialisms: old and new* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 15.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

of production as of central importance as far as such objectives are concerned. The common starting-point for these positions, which has also been the point of departure and divergence, is the *socialist critique* of the social and economic order spawned by capitalism, an order referred to as the market society, bourgeois society, liberalism, or individualism.<sup>546</sup>

Soysal's writings seem to suggest that he was serious in his demand for a more comprehensive understanding of democracy. He refers approvingly to the French writer Maurice Duverger, who saw Turkey as an example of those states who had been unable to solve the "sub-structural" problems of democracy. According to this view, the period after the Second World War had demonstrated that raising political consciousness and education was no longer enough to establish democracy in developing countries. Now everyone agreed that politics and the economy were closely related to each other. In these circumstances the preconditions for a more genuine democracy lay more in economic development than in political education.<sup>547</sup> From the point of view of the "enlightenment idea of history," it is interesting that some socialists have, while attacking capitalism, on a basic level attacked the modernization process itself. Others, however, have been enthusiastic modernizers and have indeed attacked capitalism because of its inefficiency in this respect. Thus, Tony Wright observes, early socialists like Fourier could attack the new capitalist "civilization" for its atomism and corruption of natural passions and seek to restore a more organic community, while others, like Saint-Simon, could be excited by the prospect of the new "industrialism" and seek to realize its potential by releasing it from its individualist constraints. On the one hand, socialism was a creature of the Enlightenment, an expression of the spirit of the age. On the other hand, it stood against the age, and carried forward a Romantic protest against the new society.<sup>548</sup> However, even Wright must confess that in general, *socialism as rationality* has always sustained much socialist argument. In this stronger socialist tradition, capitalism is doomed less for its injustice and exploitation than for its sheer irrationality as a means of organizing economic life. Indeed, Wright concludes, the injustices of capitalism, its production of wealth for the few and misery for the many, have been presented as a consequence of its inability to arrange economic and social life in a rational manner. In this view, socialism was not the victory of an exploited class but the *triumph of reason*. Wright on this basis suggests that, "this has been a fundamental socialist argument that places socialism squarely in the Enlightenment tradition and presents it as the most plausible contemporary carrier of this tradition."<sup>549</sup>

From this perspective, it is really no surprise that the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative also included, at some point in its history, a socialist version. The fact that socialism and liberal-capitalism have their common pedigree in the Enlightenment tradition also helps us to understand why both the left-wing and conservative-republican versions of Kemalism could so easily reproduce the enlightenment meta-narrative in their effort to legitimize the Kemalist regime. As we will see, both

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<sup>546</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>547</sup> Soysal 1975, pp. 20–21.

<sup>548</sup> Wright 1996, pp. 23–24.

<sup>549</sup> Wright 1996, pp. 26–27.

versions also had major difficulties in deciding their attitude to democracy. According to Soysal, the 27 May 1960 military intervention could be seen as one phase in the struggle for classical freedoms which had started in Turkey some 150 years earlier.<sup>550</sup> He also asserts that the spring of 1960 witnessed an uprising against the government in a spirit of idealism which adhered to Atatürk's principles, as the young and vital sections of the nation in particular saw how far Turkey had been driven from the principles of westernism, revolutionism, secularism, and populism.<sup>551</sup> Here we come to a crucial point in our analysis of the overall social and political perspective on Turkish twentieth-century history espoused by the left-wing Kemalist discourse. The interpretation of the Democrats' rule as a *counter-revolution* and the 1960 military intervention as a beneficial event ending "a tyranny of the majority" is what really makes the left-wing Kemalist discourse an expression of an attempt to legitimize the position of the military-bureaucratic state elite in power. As Ahmet Samim has proposed, even though the Democrats – from the leftist perspective at least – were pro-imperialist compradors, and eager to give capitalism popular support backed by the cultural conservatism of the Anatolian villages where the majority of the population lived, what took place under Democrat rule was a "real extension of civic rights. The least significant peasant suddenly found that he had a place in the political structure. He gained a small but important benefit. He saw an end to the unquestioned supremacy of the bureaucratic emissary from the towns."<sup>552</sup>

Joseph S. Szyliowicz notes that during the 1940s the average Anatolian villager still lived much as did the peasant centuries ago. There had occurred no real changes to ameliorate his life, as villages were isolated and underdeveloped. Besides, the peasants were ignorant of the outside world and avoided contacts with outsiders as much as they could. The emerging Kemalist regime was aware of the importance of changing the social and economic realities in the countryside, but could ultimately do very little. A fine example of this is the fate of the so-called Village Law (*Köy Kanunu*) passed on 8 March 1924. The law, Szyliowicz argues, had almost no influence on rural life.<sup>553</sup> The gendarm and the tax collector were hated by the people, especially the former because they showed little or no respect for the individual. Beatings of innocent villagers were frequent, leading to a situation where both the gendarmerie and the administration which supported it were, as Szyliowicz says, "intensely disliked."<sup>554</sup> This was the political reality in the Anatolian countryside at the eve of the multi-party era. With the birth of the multi-party system, Turks everywhere became concerned with politics. In Szyliowicz's words "What had been a topic of conversation mainly for intellectuals suddenly became a matter of importance for everyone."<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>550</sup> Soysal 1975, p. 23.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>552</sup> Samim 1981, pp. 60–80.

<sup>553</sup> Joseph S. Szyliowicz, *Political Change in Rural Turkey: Erdemli* (Hague and Paris: Mouton & Co, 1966), p. 36.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

Thus, fearing that a consolidated rural majority might permanently exclude it from power, the Kemalist elite drew up the new 1961 Constitution, which safeguarded its position through reforms aimed to create new urban allies. As Samim further observes, Kemalist intellectuals – leftists among them – contrasted the reactionary consequences of 1950 (the conservative Democrat Party’s rule) with the gains of the 1960 military intervention. A socialist view, again according to Ahmet Samim, *should* have, on the contrary, recognized the positive aspect of the politicization which was confirmed in 1950 as well as grasping how the dynamic of military intervention which secured the passage of the new Constitution in 1961 simultaneously threatened to annul its effective application. Thus, Samim concludes, “without dissenting from the Kemalist evaluation of the policy results of the two changes (reactionary politics after 1950, progressive reforms after 1960), a socialist assessment of the underlying political form of these two critical developments should have completely reversed the positive and negative signs attached to them.”<sup>556</sup> Now, it is this inability, or more correctly, unwillingness, to articulate the fatal consequences of military intervention for the future democratic development of Turkey by left-wing Kemalists which clearly reveal their true intentions. For Avcioglu and Soysal, the leftist or socialist interpretation of the common “enlightenment idea of history” is just a new way of reproducing the legitimation effort of the Kemalist state-elites in order to maintain their privileged position in Turkish society. Thus, here too, as for the first-generation Kemalists like Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, the meta-narrative of the enlightenment works as a justification for the existing relations of power.

Bülent Ecevit refused to accept the legitimacy of the military intervention in 1971. However, as we will see, in his writings of the 1960s, Ecevit did not oppose the military intervention of 1960 that ended the ten-year Democrat Party government. Ecevit’s interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement emphasizes that this effort was successful because sovereignty was vested in the people. He also points out that the War of Liberation was won by the same people who only a few years before were crushed by the enemy’s weapons. Thus, victory was achieved, according to Ecevit, because Atatürk was a democrat who always based his actions on a mandate given by the Grand National Assembly, which represented the people.<sup>557</sup> Ecevit’s interpretation of Atatürk as a “democrat” really brings to the surface some of the internal difficulties of his “democratic-left” mission. We have seen in the previous section that first-generation Kemalist ideologues did not consider Atatürk as a democrat in any conventional sense. For them, parliamentary democracy and European liberal tradition was a road to anarchy that obstructed the historical mission of universal enlightenment. For them, of course, this universal enlightenment was, more than anything else, a struggle against the political and social power of religion and the traditional mentality attached to it. First-generation Kemalists “knew” that reactionary, that is, religious forces would re-occupy Turkish society if the people were allowed to vote in free elections. Bülent Ecevit, on the other hand, felt obliged to stand up for democracy whilst at the same time his writings implicitly express the idea that the people can vote “wrongly” and bring reactionary, that is, religiously-oriented forces to power. Ecevit’s narrative does not

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<sup>556</sup> Samim 1981, pp. 60–80.

<sup>557</sup> Ecevit [1970] 1973, p. 57.

consider this kind of election victory by the conservative parties as a “true” expression of the popular will however: it cannot be, since the conservative forces are, in his opinion, executing policies that are contrary to the true will of the masses. In this sense, Ecevit’s idea of democracy presupposes, very much in the same way as that of first-generation Kemalists, that before the people would vote in the “right” way, they needed to be indoctrinated to the ideals of progressive Kemalism. Thus, in the final analysis, in a very similar way as the first-generation Kemalist ideologues before him, Bülent Ecevit “knows” what is best for the masses better than the masses themselves. Here again, then, we seem to come face to face with the familiar Marxist idea of a “false consciousness.”

According to Ecevit, all the revolutions that had been started by Atatürk were still in the 1960s as relevant as ever, but they were not enough. Ecevit writes:

The six principles introduced by Atatürk are today as relevant as they were at the moment of their birth. In fact, the value of these principles to Turkish society is understood today even more clearly... But, these revolutions were not enough to lift the Turkish nation from oppression and destitution.<sup>558</sup>

Ecevit further emphasized that various conservative groups – while safeguarding their own economic interests – were able to manipulate religion in their attempt to represent the changes made in the substructure as working against the people’s own best interests. According to Ecevit, a situation where the people were opposing some proposed beneficial reform should not be interpreted as a genuine expression of their true opinion: in fact the people had been persuaded erroneously to conceive that these reforms were prohibited by religion. Thus, Ecevit again comes to the conclusion that various reforms carried out during the republic’s history were not opposed by the people at all, but by certain capitalists eager to secure their own position in society.<sup>559</sup> Ecevit writes about the misjudgement made by the intelligentsia:

Until very recently our enlightened class has completely misconceived who are the true reactionaries and conservatives. Many still make this mistake. As a consequence of this mistake, they have perpetuated a grave injustice as they have accused the Turkish people, the Turkish peasantry, of being anti-revolutionist and against the reforms. Because of this, again unjustly, they have thought that a revolution benefit the people is not possible with the mandate given in elections by the peasants.<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> Atatürk’ün benimsediği 6 temel ilke, ilk ortaya konduğu gündeki kadar önemli ve geçerlidir. Hattâ bu ilkelerin Türk toplumu için değeri, zaman geçtikçe daha iyi anlaşılmaktadır... Ama Türk halkı, bu gibi devrimlerin yapılmasıyla birlikte sömürden, yoksulluktan kurtulabilmiş değildir. *Ibid.*, pp. 63–69.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70–74.

<sup>560</sup> Yakın zamana kadar aydınlarımız, gerçek gericiyi, gerçek tutucuyu teşis etmekte yanılmışlardır. Büyük bölümü hâlâ da yanılmaktadır. Bu yanılığın sonucu olarak da, ağır bir haksızlık yaparak, Türk halkını, Türk köylüsünü, devrimci olmamakla, devrimlere karşı olmakla suçlanmışlardır. Onun için de, gene haksız olarak, halkın oylarıyla, köylünün oylarıyla, halk yararına devrimler yapılmayacağını sanmışlardır. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Ecevit also accused the intellectuals of living lives that were totally separated from the common people, when they should have acted as an example for them. Moreover, according to Ecevit, the peasants were led to believe that the ending of the one-party regime and the coming to power of a new government composed by the party previously in opposition would bring about the structural changes demanded by the people. On the contrary, the opposition party in question (the Democrat Party) was composed of persons who opposed land reform. This was a party that had been founded precisely to block social reforms beneficial to the peasants. This was something the people could not comprehend, however. The consequence of this was all the more brutal oppression of the peasants.<sup>561</sup>

These remarks by Bülent Ecevit show us certain general characteristics of the elitist tradition of Kemalism, but they also further highlight some crucial dichotomies in Ecevit's own supposedly democratic version of left-wing Kemalism. First of all, Ecevit's claim that Turkey's intellectuals lived their lives separated from the masses and were, because of this, unable to act as an example for the peasants, is a direct continuation of the call made by Ziya Gökalp and his *Halka Doğru* (Towards the People) ideology at the beginning of the 1920s. This program urged intellectuals to spend time among the Anatolian peasants in order to re-discover their own lost national culture, and conversely, to spread international progressive civilization among the peasant population.<sup>562</sup> Secondly, Ecevit's assertion that the masses had been deceived into believing that the Democrat Party elected in the first free elections in 1950 would work for their own good, when its policies actually were totally exploitative, once again illustrates the difficult task Ecevit faced in reconciling his democratic commitments and his eagerness to lead the "unconscious masses" to a better world.

It is interesting that Ecevit himself is aware of this elitist tradition amongst Kemalist intellectuals. He goes on to accuse Turkish intellectuals and leftists of their inability to understand the people. This had produced a situation where the intellectuals were trying to do things for the people despite the people. It is also interesting that Ecevit refers to Atatürk's actions as an *exemplary remedy* to this false attitude. Furthermore, Ecevit's account presents a rather naive picture of the army's role in executing Atatürk's revolutions by noting that as Atatürk began his great reforms, his first step was to remove the army from politics. It is also quite illuminating of Ecevit's inherently contradictory argumentation that he first accuses "elitist revolutionaries" for their attempt to use the army as a tool to achieve their goals, and that he then goes on, in the very next line, to justify the 1960 coup by claiming that this military intervention was executed at a time when democracy had been crushed. So, Ecevit argues, as the purpose of the 1960 intervention was to re-establish democracy, it was obviously justified.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>561</sup> Ibid., pp. 79–90.

<sup>562</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, "The Mass Media: Turkey," in *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, ed. Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964): pp. 269–270.

<sup>563</sup> Ecevit [1970] 1973, pp. 94–97.



In any case, what Bülent Ecevit was trying to achieve is, firstly, to create a new understanding of Turkish historical development among his fellow leftist-oriented intellectuals, and, secondly, to forge a popular acceptance of the conception that Kemalist principles are suitable guidelines for Turkey in the 1960s. All this is to demonstrate that the source of superior power in Turkey emanates from the heritage of Kemal Atatürk and his proclamation that sovereignty is vested unconditionally in the people. However, in Ecevit's presentation a legitimate regime must, ultimately, carry out a genuine social revolution, since this is the true will of the nation. Very much in the same spirit as the nation, according to Atatürk's *Nutuk*, could not comprehend its own best interest during the Anatolian Resistance Movement, so the Turkish nation of the multi-party era could not perceive the true state of affairs. Ecevit – and those left-wing Kemalists who were sufficiently “progressive” – is in a position to interpret the “true” will of the nation, and in this way offers himself as a candidate for the leadership in democratic Turkey. In this new interpretation of Kemalism, the enlightenment idea of history again works as a legitimation tool. This time it is supposed to demonstrate that the Atatürk Revolution as an enlightenment project was the progenitor of democracy and social revolution in Turkey, thereby leading the Turks to a higher level of civilization.

Thus, according to Ecevit, a genuine revolution is one that re-organizes the relations of production. This had not yet happened in Turkey. But, to claim that the revolutions carried out in Atatürk's time only concerned the so-called superstructures was not to criticize Atatürk; during his lifetime there was no possibility of expanding the revolution any further. Atatürk's revolutions were, besides, necessary for later revolutions. According to Ecevit, secularism, and the freedom of thought it produced, for example, made possible all kinds of public discussion prohibited earlier by religion.<sup>564</sup> Ecevit's conclusion regarding Turkey's situation in the early 1970s is, then, that social reforms must be conducted under the democratic system, following a mandate given by the people. As Ecevit argues:

Today the great majority of the Turkish people want the social reforms that will rescue them. They put forward only one condition: that these are carried out with respect for the people, with respect for their opinions shown in the elections...in other words, in democracy... The door opening the way to the transformation of the substructures is nothing other than the democratic method.<sup>565</sup>

But, the general elections in 1969 were clearly won by the Justice Party, which was the ideological successor of the Democrat Party, now abolished. According to Mümtaz Soysal, the Justice Party effectively used the general religious sentiment in order to stop all urgently needed social reforms. As the masses took to the streets and demanded that their economic status be improved, the Justice Party used repression

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<sup>564</sup> Ibid., pp. 61–65.

<sup>565</sup> Bugün Türk Halkı büyük çoğunluğuyla, kendisini kurtaracak olan altyapı devrimlerini istemektedir. Öne sürdüğü bir tek koşul vardır: Halka saygı, halkın oyuna saygı... Bir başka deyişle, demokrasiye bağlılık... Altyapı devrimciliği önündeki kapıyı açabilmenin de yolu, demokrasiye bağlılıktan, demokrasinin kurallarına uymaktan başka bir yol değildir. Ibid., p. 106.

and scare-tactics in order to cover up the real structural problems causing social disturbances. This was, according to Soysal, a very simple and effective method: in these circumstances those wanting structural changes were now presented as “democracy’s enemies.”<sup>566</sup> Then Soysal explicitly lays out the one argument which seems to be the common denominator for the left-wing Kemalist discourse represented by him and, as we saw above, Doğan Acıoğlu

Universal suffrage, freedoms, elections; all these are naturally inseparable components of classical republicanism, and the more a regime is able to secure these principles, the more republican it is. But, in a country like Turkey, where necessary structural changes have not been realized, these above listed principles start to work against republicanism.<sup>567</sup>

To put these words once again in the more general context of the relationship between democracy and socialism, one must understand that the problem of the status and orientation of socialism has always been particularly apparent in its relations with liberalism. Tony Wright analyses this by noting that, “on one view socialism stood apart from the entire edifice of bourgeois society, in its own separate and self-contained proletarian culture, equipped with its own proletarian science, a preparation for time when the bourgeois order would be overthrown and the new society established. On another view, however, the task of socialism was to extend and fulfill the prospectus of liberalism, by converting its claims from class into universal terms.” If the former view provided the basis for revolutionary communism, Wright argues, the latter became central to the modern social democratic tradition. This tradition acknowledged that it was part of the same cultural universe as liberalism, and in challenging liberalism claimed to be extending it in ways that fulfilled its emancipatory mission. Thus it was claimed that liberty had to be nourished by equality if it was to be universalized, and that this involved extending its scope from the civil and political sphere into the social and economic one.<sup>568</sup> Here, then, ultimately looms the main argument put forward by the left-wing Kemalist narrative propagated by both Mümtaz Soysal and Doğan Acıoğlu. The story-world created in their narratives is constructed on the idea that it was the Kemalist regime which could now realize the “genuine” democracy, which combined the classical liberal political freedoms with social and economic equality.

The year preceding the 1969 elections was of course characterized by the enormous student movements, first in France and then in other countries throughout Europe and in the United States. This generational rebellion against the status quo also deeply affected Turkish universities.<sup>569</sup> This leftist-oriented movement was not however transformed into an electoral success by the leftist parties in Turkey. In fact, in the 1969 elections the share of votes for the more radical TİP fell from 3.0 to 2.7

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<sup>566</sup> Soysal 1975, p. 40.

<sup>567</sup> Genel oy, özgürlük, seçim; bunların hepsi klasik cumhuriyet tanımlamalarının ayrılmaz unsurları ve bir rejim elbette bu unsurlara kavuştuğu ölçüde cumhuriyet niteliğine yaklaşmış olur. Ama ne var ki, Türkiye gibi bir ülkede, cumhuriyetin ayrılmaz parçaları sayılan şeyler, gerekli bünye değişiklikleri zamanında ve istenen ölçüde yapılmadığı için, cumhuriyet aleyhine işlemişlerdir. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>568</sup> Wright 1996, pp. 24–25.

<sup>569</sup> Akşin 2007, p. 273.

percent, and that of the new left-of-center CHP from 28.7 to 27.4 percent, against the 46.6 percent for the Justice Party.<sup>570</sup> On the other hand, the left-of-center ideology espoused by the CHP was able to win sizeable election victories during the 1970s. Two years before the publication of Soysal's *Güzel Huzursuzluk*, that is, in 1973, the new social democratic Republican People's Party became the biggest party in Turkey, winning 33.3 percent of votes against Justice Party's 29.8. percent<sup>571</sup> An even bigger election victory for the CHP came in the 1977 general elections where it received 41.1 percent of votes against the 36.9 percent for the Justice Party. The crucial thing, however, was that the CHP could not achieve an absolute majority, and was thus forced to form coalition governments with other, more conservative parties, or to leave government responsibilities to the "Nationalist Front" (*Milliyetçi Cephe*) coalition composed by a number of center-right and rightist parties.<sup>572</sup>

All this is reflected in Soysal's book, giving it its character as an expression of disillusionment, and an implicit call for extra-parliamentary politics. However, the "call for extra-parliamentary politics" is just as much written within the whole left-wing Kemalist stance represented by Soysal's book *Beautiful Unrest*. What we have in front of us is a narrative story-world which is composed of an *a priori* conviction about the nature of history as an emancipatory project. The events, characters, spaces, and time created in the diegesis of the *Beautiful Unrest* cannot be challenged from the "outside" since there is no alternative to the *a priori* enlightenment mission. In other words, "extra-parliamentary politics" are offered as legitimate in order to achieve the enlightenment.

How should we evaluate the diegesis ("story-world") and the implied reader of Ecevit's book *Atatürk ve Devrimcilik*, on the one hand, and those of Doğan Avcıoğlu's and Mümtaz Soysal's, on the other? In other words, how convincing is the "story-world" offered, and how powerful is Ecevit's narrative as a legitimation tool? One must conclude that the position taken by Ecevit's narrator is the most difficult one of the left-wing Kemalists. Ecevit's narrative constructs a "story-world" which at first seems to be identical with the one offered by Avcıoğlu and Soysal. However, with the seemingly strong commitment to democratic government on the one hand, and the implicit rejection of the popular vote as an expression of the people's "true" wishes on the other, Ecevit's narrative constructs a "story-world" which is highly problematic and self-contradictory. Even though the left-wing Kemalist narratives offered by Avcıoğlu and Soysal also challenged the original *Nutukian* narrative and the legitimation grounded on it, they nevertheless constructed a "story-world" which was inherently credible: contemporary Turkish society was not ready for democracy, since the economic and social substructures had not yet been transformed, a reform which needed to be carried out through by a strong state governed by a leftist and statist-minded Kemalist leadership. This "enlightenment mission" legitimized the military intervention of 1960 and the continuing above-politics-role of the Kemalist bureaucracy and the military. Whether you like it or not, this narrative constructed an inherently solid world, offering a credible implied

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<sup>570</sup> Bilâ 2008, p. 202.

<sup>571</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid., pp. 267–270.

reader through which an individual reader could identify with it. The “story-world” and the implied reader of Ecevit’s narrative, on the contrary, fail to produce the same kind of “narrative necessity.”

#### 5.4 The Limits of Left-wing Kemalist Legitimation Effort

The Republican People’s Party (CHP), even after the inauguration of left-of-center ideology, must be seen as a pro-establishment party, eager to secure the status of the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elite. As such, the narrative offered by left-wing Kemalist ideologues like Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit, is *not* anti-systemic or revolutionary in reality. The rhetoric of “revolutionarism” so common to left-wing Kemalist texts is basically a continuation of the original Kemalist discourse in a new political and social context, aiming to legitimize the Kemalist regime as an executor of the enlightenment in Turkish nation-state. The only real difference between the left-wing Kemalist and the conservative-republican Kemalist currents of thought is the discovery by the former that a social and economic transformation was a necessary pre-condition for the enlightenment.

I argued in chapter 3.1. that the *Nutukian* narrative produced a self-justifying circle that became extremely hard to avoid in the political realities of Turkey during the twentieth-century. However, I also claimed that a certain feature of this story of national regeneration offers a pathway to a critical reading of the overall *Nutukian* narrative: the interpretation of the Atatürk-Revolution as a “never-ending” mission. The *Nutuk* manifests its dual nature as a narration of the “achieved-already” and the “yet-to-be-accomplished.” The first of these, the “achieved-already” refers to the *Nutuk*’s assertion that the enlightenment project was realized in Turkey with the foundation of the Republic, and that the “sacred duty” of the coming generations was to secure it. The second conception, the “yet-to-be-accomplished,” on the other hand, refers to the *Nutukian* call to “reach the level of contemporary civilization” which is described in the Speech as an *eternal mission*. I claimed that this dual nature could be seen as the only doorway for *Nutukian* narrative that allows one to reach beyond its enclosed discourse of a unitary and predestined history.

It can be argued that the left-wing Kemalist narrative of the 1960s and 1970s took the conception of an enlightenment as an “eternal mission” and as something “yet-to-be-accomplished” seriously, trying to go beyond the “achieved-already.” The ten-year period from the middle of the 1960s to the middle of the 1970s which witnessed the heyday of left-wing Kemalism was simultaneously an era in Turkish political history which saw its most liberal Constitution and the first signs of the emergence of genuine civil society. For many Kemalists, whether leftists or conservative-republicans, this period started with the “legitimate military intervention” of 1960 which brought down the Democrat Party regime, elected in 1950. In this context the 1960 military intervention had to be presented to general audience as an effort to “re-establish democracy” after it had been distorted by the DP government. We have seen that even Bülent Ecevit, who condemned the military’s next intervention in

1971, represented the 1960 intervention as a “necessary step to re-establish democracy.”

I have suggested that in this social and political context, left-wing Kemalist texts were a manifestation of the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elite’s desire to produce a narrative legitimizing its continuing hold on power above over civil society. As such, the revolutionary rhetoric was part of a narrative “story-world” (diegesis) which was constructed in order to disseminate the idea of an underdeveloped Turkish society where the traditional economic and social structures blocked the development of a genuine democracy, thus demanding the leadership of the educated socialist and statist-oriented bureaucracy. Even though this narrative had its followers, the limits of this left-wing Kemalist version of the common Kemalist enlightenment idea of history as a legitimation tool are also quite easy to point out. In the critical years of 1973 and 1977, when the social-democrat Republican People’s Party under Bülent Ecevit finally gained power through democratic elections, the polarized political situation between the more radical leftists and rightists, and the deteriorating economy, convinced conservative-republican Kemalist cadres and the military leadership of the threat that a class-based indoctrination and the widening of political rights posed to the existence of a unitary state. Thus, ultimately the “yet-to-be-accomplished” interpretation offered by the left-wing Kemalist discourse was unable to produce lasting grounds for the existence of the Kemalist regime and the state elite attached to it. As we will see in the next chapter, it was the conservative-republican version of the Kemalist idea of history which, even in the 1960s and 1970s, worked better for the military-bureaucratic elite in its effort to underpin its political legitimacy.

## 6 Conservative-Republican Kemalist Interpretations from the 1960s to 1980s: Kemalism as Conservative Enlightenment Project

### 6.1 The Conservative-Republican Kemalist Consolidation of the Nutukian Narrator and the Implied Reader

In the previous section we analysed how the 1960s and 1970s witnessed a very peculiar kind of re-interpretation of the common Kemalist idea of history as a universal enlightenment process. The major ideologues of left-wing Kemalism, such as Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit, presented the Turkish Revolution as being incomplete. The enlightenment was to come only if Turkish society underwent a genuine social revolution, leading to the empowerment of the masses. It was also pointed out that the Republican People's Party, founded as a nationalist and "above class" centralizing mass-party by Atatürk in 1923 was transformed into a social-democratic centralizing party during the 1960s. All these developments can be seen as final outcomes of the cross-roads reached by the Kemalist movement in the latter part of the 1940s, a period when Kemalism itself was split into left and right.

We also saw how Bülent Ecevit, Doğan Avcıoğlu, and Mümtaz Soysal interpreted the foundation of the Democrat Party and the following relaxation of strict Kemalist secularism as a process of *counter-revolution*. This evaluation by left-wing Kemalists, however, needs to be compared with the writings of conservative-republican Kemalists. What we come to see in this section is a conservative interpretation of Kemalism which, despite its more relaxed attitude towards the traditional religious-oriented culture in certain texts, is fully committed to the common Kemalist enlightenment idea of history.

Previous studies have quite convincingly demonstrated that the political history of republican Turkey can be read as a continuous struggle between the statist civilian and military elites, keen to control the social developments from their privileged position, and the more traditionally-oriented rural middle-class groups that wished to expand their political power and economic liberalisation.<sup>573</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, for example, argues that the military rule established after the 1980 intervention ended with the creation of a new ruling coalition in which a conglomeration of social groups from the middle classes, ranging from small entrepreneurs to moderate traditionalists, activist nationalists and Islamists finally gained the upper hand. Karpat stresses that this was actually a final phase of a long process begun already in

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<sup>573</sup> A good example of this commonly accepted interpretation can be found in Reşat Kasaba's introduction to the *Cambridge History of Turkey Vol. 4: Turkey in the Modern World* where it is stated that "Turkey has been pursuing a bifurcated programme of modernization consisting of an institutional and popular component which, far from being in agreement, have been conflicting and undermining each other." Reşat Kasaba, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey Vol. 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): p. 1.

1950 but interrupted and forced to take various, in Karpat's words, "ideologically chosen directions" by the CHP in alliance with the military in 1960, and, partly in 1971. The regime established in 1980 finally acknowledged the political victory – popularly expressed in most elections – of the middle classes. However, in the new Constitution of 1982 there appeared a kind of "division of labour" in which the upper level, especially the president of the Republic, was entrusted with the duty of safeguarding the interests of the state and Kemalist principles, that is, secularism and modernism. The other part of the political process was left to the parties competing in general elections.<sup>574</sup>

It must also be understood that during the period from the 1930s to the 1980s Kemalist state-elite was able to secure its dominant position as the sovereign social group defining the fundamental political and social presuppositions. It is important that, as we will see in this section, this ability was expressed by all the mainstream Kemalist political traditions during the 1960s and 1970s, not only in the statist social-democrat cadre of the CHP. In fact, there was a clear, common Kemalist current of political articulation and, as we will see, effort at legitimation, that surpassed the left/right divide. According to Bora & Taşkın, the tendency of the leadership of the Democrat Party in the 1950s to perceive Kemalism as *bitmemiş bir medeniyet projesi* (an unfinished civilization project) and to re-interpret it with a progressive content is not a sign of a break but that of a continuity. In the period after the military intervention of 12 March 1971 the widening of *milliyetçi muhafazakar* (nationalist-conservative) bloc's influence within the state apparatuses and the filling of key roles by this group after 12 September 1980, made the distance between this group and right-wing Kemalism as unimportant. The "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" developed during the 1980s can be seen as a conservative trend articulated within the right-wing Kemalist political philosophy. Thus, according to Bora and Taşkın, on the questions of political Islam and the Kurdish problem, and in their emphasis on the preservation of the unitary state, republican-conservatism and nationalist-conservatism came together as a right-wing Kemalist attitude.<sup>575</sup> At first, is it tempting to perceive the development of conservative-republican narratives of Kemalism from the 1960s to the 1980s as showing the gradual transformation, and final abolition, of the long-lasting "enlightenment idea of history" as an internally coherent tool of political legitimation. It would be tempting also to interpret the "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" of the 1980s as a final negation of the common Kemalist narrative reproduced since the 1930s. As this study will demonstrate, this is at least partly a convincing interpretation. However, one can argue that the emerging new narrative nevertheless found it hard to abandon some crucial ingredients of the previous one. Moreover, whereas the conservative-republican version of Kemalism became a somewhat a trivial category after its propagators became heavily influenced by the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, the leftist-oriented interpretation of Kemalism has to a large degree maintained its former modes of argumentation.

The same social and political developments that surrounded left-wing Kemalists and their aspirations also form the social-political canvas behind conservative-republican

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<sup>574</sup> Karpat 1988, pp. 155–156.

<sup>575</sup> Bora and Taşkın 2002, pp. 544–545.

interpretations of Kemalism. This, however, is obviously a very misleading way of expressing the issue: what is actually happening is that the narratives produced by Kemalist writers are not simply the outcomes of social and political upheavals, but equally the effective producers of those upheavals. What we need to do next, is to give an account of that narrative which seeks to legitimize the Kemalist regime in the face of various new ideological groupings – the leftist interpretation of Kemalism being one of these – in the writings of mainstream conservative-republican Kemalists from the 1960s to the 1980s. This analysis seeks to provide a description of the process whereby Atatürk’s *Nutuk*-originated idea of history is once again employed as a basis for efforts at political legitimation, even after the 1980 military intervention which opened the door for a more religiously-oriented indoctrination. As has been the case throughout the study, we are concerned here primarily how these texts manage to have certain effects, that is, how they produce *nationality*, understood as a precondition for *legitimacy*. In this chapter it is demonstrated how conservative-republican Kemalist narratives from the 1960s to 1980s reproduced the enlightenment idea of history through their consolidation of the *Nutukian* narrator and the implied reader.

In the beginning of his book *Gerçek Kemalizm (The True Kemalism)*, published in 1964, Major-General Faruk Güventürk asserts that with the beginning of the multi-party regime, Turkey started to abandon Kemalist principles and was again headed towards religious bigotry and ignorance.<sup>576</sup> The writer of this evaluation, Faruk Güventürk (1912–1992), was one of the organizers of the Armed Forces Union, a body which aimed, among other things, to keep overly “radical” officers under control after the 1960 intervention. As Güventürk had been an important member of the original conspiratorial group during the 1950s, he was arrested by the Menderes government at the end of 1957. He was left out of the National Unity Committee in 1960 because the committee wanted supporters who would still occupy crucial positions in the army.<sup>577</sup> After the 1960 coup, Güventürk was appointed as the Commander of the Eastern Army transport corps, positioned in Kayseri. During his lifetime, Güventürk published more than twenty books, mostly on Kemalism and Atatürk’s principles. This array of books notwithstanding, Güventürk is not usually considered an influential Kemalist intellectual. This, however, does not need to bother us here, since the important thing is that his book *The True Kemalism* is a good example of the conservative-republican reproduction of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history during the 1960s. Moreover, it is a remarkable demonstration of how members of the Turkish Armed Forces have participated in reproducing Kemalist legitimation narratives. Perhaps even more importantly, the fact that Faruk Güventürk is not generally considered a major Kemalist ideologue, gives us an opportunity to observe how the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative is full at work “on the margins” of the Kemalist movement.

According to Güventürk, the abandonment of Kemalist principles was like a cancer pushing Turkey back to the Middle-Ages, and away from the civilizational path launched by the great Atatürk. The most dangerous threat was that Turkey’s youth

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<sup>576</sup> Faruk Güventürk, *Gerçek Kemalizm* (Istanbul: Okat Yayınevi, 1964), pp. 16–17.

<sup>577</sup> Willian Hale, “The Turkish Army in Politics, 1960–1973,” in *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, ed. Andrew Finkel and Nükhet Sirman (London and New York: Routledge, 1990): pp. 61–62.



would again be guided to a reactionary mentality. It was everyone's patriotic duty to stop this treacherous activity. Güventürk stresses that Atatürk had secured Turkey's national independence with *misâk-ı millî* (National Pact). Now it was necessary to reinvigorate this by establishing *misâk-ı ilmî* (Scientific Pact), and then march forward on the Kemalist path of positive science.<sup>578</sup> Thus, to start with, it seems that the *narrator* of Güventürk's text speaks within a tradition that is available to all Kemalist writers living in a political entity defined initially in Atatürk's *Nutuk*. One can ask, of course, whether the technical separation between the author and the narrator is as useful in this case as it was with Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk*. As we saw, this distinction made it possible to describe how the "Father" was created through the usage of the narrator in the Six-Day speech by a real author, that is, Mustafa Kemal. In the case of Faruk Güventürk and his *Gerçek Kemalizm* this kind of distinction does not, at first, seem to be as useful. However, the same distinction is relevant in the sense that in his book, Faruk Güventürk can re-invent the *Nutukian* narrator who now has the ability to see beyond the meagre horizons of the present and make a claim for a more general view. Thus, just as much as we should understand the implied reader proposed by Kemalist narratives as a collective orientation, we can think of the narrator as a device which was utilized by Kemalist writers recurrently in similar fashion. This is to say that whatever the position was of, for example Faruk Güventürk as a real person, he can utilize the device of the narrator in a way which is suitable for producing "acceptance" in the reader.

It is worthwhile to consider why Faruk Güventürk felt it necessary to publish his opinions in the first place, why he did this in 1964, and what was the social context inducing a military man like Güventürk to participate in ideological indoctrination. To answer these questions it is wise to start with the concept of "self-image." According to Kemal H. Karpat, in the Turkish case particularly, the self-image of the officer corps, and the role of the military in society in general, is of crucial importance. The identification of Turkish officers with reform and modernity has had a profound effect upon their political attitudes and actions.<sup>579</sup> Historically, the army occupied the highest place in traditional Ottoman society, and the idea that the military represented the highest virtues of the state changed little from the Ottoman to the revolutionary Republican period. The reforms of the Republican period were pushed through by Mustafa Kemal who was not only a revolutionary modernizer, but also a venerated military commander. Given Atatürk's position as a national hero and victorious commander, the whole of the Turkish army was regarded in popular imagination with high esteem. Also, since the foundation of the reformist Republican regime, the army as an institution has constantly been associated with political change and reform.<sup>580</sup> The initial inducement for Faruk Güventürk to offer his political opinions to the Turkish public stems from this traditional self-image of the officer corps as guarantors of the reformist movement.

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<sup>578</sup> Güventürk 1964, pp. 16–17.

<sup>579</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, "The Military and Politics in Turkey, 1960–64: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of a Revolution," *American Historical Review* 75 no. 6 (October 1970): p. 1655.

<sup>580</sup> Karpat 1970, pp. 1658–1659; Ümit Cizre, "Ideology, context and interest: the Turkish military," in *The Cambridge History of Modern Turkey Vol. 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): p. 306.

The second question concerned the date of publication of Güventürk's book *Gerçek Kemalizm*. It will soon become obvious that the reason for publishing his book in 1964 derives from the experience of Democrat Party rule in 1950–1960 and the subsequent military intervention which ended it. As we will see, for Güventürk the military intervention of 1960 was an effort to restore the original Atatürkian enlightenment project in Turkey which was, so the argument goes, abandoned by the Democrats during their period in power. The need to justify the 1960 military intervention thus explains the date of publication of Güventürk's book.

Thirdly, we can initially say that the social and political context for Güventürk's text was the changing social position of the military-bureaucratic elite, which had ruled Turkey from the 1920s to the beginning of DP rule. According to Karpas, the multi-party experiment beginning in 1945–1946 brought about a new relationship between the masses and the elites. In effect, this experiment was, at least initially, a mobilization of the masses against the ruling groups. The government controlled by the Republican People's Party was criticized as having erred in its basic duty to achieve a "good life" for the people, and was thought instead to have imposed a "tyranny" over the people, since its rational, secular authority was not rooted in the traditional system of beliefs.<sup>581</sup> For the military as an institution, the Democrats' rule meant a loss of social and economic privileges, while at the same time newly rich politicians, landlords, and entrepreneurs placed an emphasis on wealth, luxury, and material pursuits, all of which contrasted sharply with the ascetic idealism preached in the armed forces. In this context, the first secret military organization took shape already in 1954, with the aim of intervening and bringing an end to the Democrats' rule.<sup>582</sup> As we noted, Faruk Güventürk was one of the initial planners of the military intervention which eventually took place in 1960.

Karpas's evaluation suggests that the narratives of legitimation produced by the ideologues of the CHP were challenged by the proponents of the Democrat Party during the 1940s and 1950s as they claimed that the authority represented by the Republican People's Party was not rooted in the "traditional system of beliefs." It is exactly this "traditional system of beliefs" that the Kemalist legitimation project aimed to abolish in order to create a new source of legitimacy through the construction of the "enlightenment idea of history."

As David Beetham underlines, the most common source of legitimacy in contemporary societies is the "people." This has offered a very generalized basis of legitimacy for the political domain, even though the actual form of political arrangements has varied widely according to the precise definition of the "people."<sup>583</sup> On the other hand, there can be a form of *paternalism* in the political domain which is not based upon any differentiation of inherent status between categories of people. This is where the fundamental belief system that specifies the ultimate source of authority for a political domain implies that decisions about the public interest and the "common good" must be matters of special knowledge and

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<sup>581</sup> Ibid., pp. 1659–1660.

<sup>582</sup> Ibid., pp. 1663–1665.

<sup>583</sup> Beetham 1992, p. 75.

that those who have attained this knowledge are thereby entitled to determine policy on behalf of those who haven't. As Beetham says, "If it lies in science, then it will be those who have access to scientifically determined principles or expertise about the proper organisation of society, or the necessary course of history."<sup>584</sup>

Now, David Beetham's remark clearly brings us to the basic arguments of the present work. We observed the *necessary course of history* is the fundamental characteristic of Atatürk's famous Six-Day speech. It is obvious that the conservative-republican Kemalist discourse legitimizing the 1960 military intervention – represented here by Faruk Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm* – was a combination of the two legitimating principles mentioned above. On the one hand, Güventürk cannot, in the context of the multi-party democracy established by the Kemalist regime itself at the beginning of the 1950s, deny the "sovereignty of the people" as a legitimating principle. On the other hand, his narrative suggests that the Democrat Party regime was a distortion of Atatürk's principles which were established in order for the sovereignty of the people to reign in Turkey. However, Güventürk's narrative constructs a "people" divided into two separate groups. There are those who are able to understand the "historical mission" of the Turkish nation originally established by Atatürk, which is the "enlightenment path," and those who do not comprehend this and try to push Turkey back into the "Middle Ages," characterized by "religious bigotry" and "ignorance." The people's sovereignty was originally established by Atatürk, and his path was that of the enlightenment. Those who do not comprehend this are not genuine representatives of the "people" at all.

Thus, in Güventürk's narrative of an enlightened nation, the *necessary course of history* is, as it was in Atatürk's Six-Day speech, executed ultimately not by any real conglomeration of people, but by the Kemalist regime representing the "true will" of the Turkish nation. David Beetham's evaluation of paternalism as a type of political legitimation is very much the case here. This concept of paternalism is, of course, especially suitable for describing the Turkish case where the "Father" ultimately represents the "true will" of the nation. However, as I have argued throughout this study, this kind of paternalism, wherever it exists, is something we need to explain. I have proposed that the internalization of this kind of belief system must have something to do with the way people in a modern nation-state learn, through the effects of various narrative devices, to read a nationalist discourse with a recurrent mode of interpretation. I have also proposed that this phenomenon works through the position of the implied reader and a diegesis. Here, we can recall that the concept of the implied reader is needed to explain why "ideology" can exist as an internalized belief. Thus, the implied reader aims to describe a process where "ideology" no longer "floats" or mysteriously "freely circulate" over society, but is materialized in a single act of reading/hearing. In other words, ideology "happens" during the act of reading through the position of the implied reader. As we read conservative-republican Kemalist texts, for example, Faruk Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm*, we notice that this text creates paternalism and the idea of a specific group of people uniquely able to understand the necessary course of history through the paternalist narrator originally found in Atatürk's Great Speech.

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<sup>584</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

All this has something to do with the way in which social reality is constructed. As Jerome Bruner has emphasized, most of our knowledge about how human beings acquire knowledge and construct reality is derived from studies analyzing how people come to know the natural or physical world. Unlike the constructions generated by logical and scientific procedures that can be “weeded out” by falsification, narrative constructions can only achieve “verisimilitude.” Narratives, then, as Bruner says, “are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and ‘narrative necessity’ rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness, although ironically we have no compunction about calling stories true or false.”<sup>585</sup> Besides, as we noted in the Introduction, Jerome Bruner says something which even more clearly helps to understand the narrative bases of ideology: “once shared culturally, narrative accruals achieve, like Emile Durkheim’s collective representation, ‘exteriority’, and the power of constraint.”<sup>586</sup> Thus, there is nothing “mysterious” in the internalization of ideology through the Kemalist narrative as this internalization is grounded on a process which characterizes the construction of human society in general. As we read Faruk Güventürk’s text we once again notice how the Kemalist narrative indeed constructs a “story-world” that is composed of an entity called the “Turkish nation,” and which is presented as a homogenous entity marching onwards, as a “child-nation,” on a path of enlightenment shown by the “Father.” What the “Father” represented – a rational mind – is vested with absolute value, since in the “story-world” thus created the existence of the nation is conditional on the governing of the rational mind.

Besides Faruk Güventürk’s text, the *Nutukian* narrator and the implied reader can also be found in many other conservative-republican Kemalist texts published after the 1960 military intervention. During the latter part of the 1960s, as we have seen, Turkish society became over-politicized and characterized by political violence as leftist and rightist gangs pushed politics onto the streets and campuses. In this context, in 1966, Falih Rıfki Atay (1894–1971) published a book called *Atatürkçülük Nedir? (What is Atatürkism?)*.<sup>587</sup> Atay was a long-standing journalist when he came to Ankara at the beginning of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. He won the confidence of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and belonged to Atatürk’s closest circle from 1923 until 1938 when Atatürk passed away.<sup>588</sup> He was an ardent partisan for the Republican People’s Party, being also a member of parliament. As Hande Özkan points out, Atay vehemently attacked the political opposition, whether this was in the form of *Serbestçi Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Free Republican Party) of the 1930s, or the Democrat Party of the 1950s. According to Özkan, the one common trait that characterized all Atay’s writings was his support for the mission of Turkey’s westernization and the continuity of Atatürk’s revolutions.<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Jerome Bruner, “The Narrative Construction of Reality,” *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Autumn 1991): pp. 4–5.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>587</sup> Falih Rıfki Atay, *Atatürkçülük Nedir?* (Istanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2006). (First edition: 1966)

<sup>588</sup> Falih Rıfki Atay, *Çankaya*. (Istanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2008), pp. 9–10. (First edition: 1961)

<sup>589</sup> Hande Özkan, “Falih Rıfki Atay,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 64–66.

Atay's book *What is Atatürkism?* is a declaration of the "core" of Kemalism, written to convince politically engaged Turkish citizens that the Atatürkian message was plain and simple: rational thinking. On many occasions Atay stresses that Atatürk did not want to leave behind any kind of dogma or clear-cut economic doctrine. He represented a battle that aimed to secure free, rational thinking and civilization in Turkey. It was not acceptable that leftists and rightists tried to turn Atatürk into a symbol of their ideologies. Neither was it suitable to quarrel about what kind of policy Atatürk would practice if still alive. But, what was considered a clear betrayal of Atatürk was the ruining of the secular regime that maintained the freedom of thought.<sup>590</sup>

The argument that the core of Atatürk's legacy was rational thinking and a secular regime implicitly suggests that there was in Turkey's society, past and present, forces which represented the opposite of these, that is, irrational thinking and a religious regime. In this respect, for the narrator of *Atatürkçülük Nedir?* the main political struggle is composed of these binary oppositions, which, as in the *Nutukian* narrative, seems to define the overall character of history. However, Falih Rıfkı Atay also emphasises how attached the Turks were to Islamic traditions during the years of the struggle for liberation:

We drowned. Then we started the struggle for Turkey's salvation in Anatolia. The contemporary generation tends to "idealize" the atmosphere of the National Struggle period. The Assembly of those days was strongly reactionary. The law forbidding alcohol was presented as a piece of sharia law. Almost four hundred new religious schools were opened...Anatolia of the National Struggle era was fifty years behind Istanbul of the Tanzimat period.<sup>591</sup>

Here Atay uses the pronoun "we" which is meant to refer to all those that can be considered as "real Turks." "They," on the other hand, are those reactionary forces who did not comprehend the nature of the historical struggle in question. In this way, Atay's presentation also includes an implied reader who is supposed to take the position held by Atay himself, which is that of a supporter of the enlightenment. In this way Atay's text reproduces the Kemalist narrative which denies the value of another possible narrative, that is, the "hidden narrative" which was not allowed to be expressed because of its "false" claim. According to this false claim, the intention of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was to save the traditional Muslim community and preserve the Ottoman state in Anatolia. We will see later on that this claim became a major point of departure for the proponents of Islamist politics in Turkey during the 1990s.

In any case, it is indeed interesting that the same paragraph quoted above simultaneously demonstrates that many of the members of parliament during the

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<sup>590</sup> Atay [1966] 2006, pp. 43–46.

<sup>591</sup> Battık; Anadolu'da yeniden Türk kurtuluş savaşına atıldık. Kuvâ-ı Milliye havasını bugünkü kuşak pek "ülküleştirir." Kuvâ-ı Milliye meclisi koyu gerici idi. İçki yasağı kanunu bir şeriat kanunu olarak çıkmıştır. Dört yüze yakın yeni medrese açılmıştı... Kuvâ-ı Milliye Anadolu, Tanzimât İstanbulundan elli yıl geride idi. Ibid., p. 12.

Anatolian Resistance Struggle were “reactionaries,” that is, propagators of an Islamic state, while the pronoun “we” signals an absolute opposite, the adherents of Atatürk and his revolution. In this respect, Atay’s text seems, at least for a moment, to deny the *Nutukian* declaration according to which the national congresses represented the national will, and that this will was the establishment of a new secular Turkish nation-state. Thus, initially, Atay’s text creates a “story-world” in which the events described do not have the same meaning as in the *Nutukian* narrative, and the narrative discourse opens the door for a more accurate relationship with the historical reality of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle era. Ultimately, however, this opening for an alternative interpretation is closed by the narrator’s authoritarian “we,” which, as noted, refers to those who were wise enough to sense the “true” will of the people, that is, their desire for “enlightenment.” Thus, what is utilized here is the theme of the “national secret” found originally in the *Nutuk*, which proclaims that the “true will” of the nation was not at first others to express, and was only sensed by the “Father.”<sup>592</sup> Thus, the narrator of Atay’s *Atatürkçülük Nedir?* is a textual continuation of the “Father,” while the “we” is the position of the implied reader, suggesting that all those who want to be loyal to the “Father” will identify with this “we.”

As the narratives propagating a Kemalist representation of history became an inter-textual continuity, and as they were offered by state institutions on various levels of social communication, there developed a strong tendency to perceive social realities through these narratives of an enlightened nation. Atay’s book is thus an example of how the politics of history works: publicly accepted narratives of the past are in the habit of reproducing “we” structures that are widely available to different audiences within a nationally defined political community. These publicly accepted narratives invite people to use these “we” structures in their everyday life and reproduce them in the micro levels of communication. We can recall here Siniša Malešević’s definition concerning the character of ideological narratives: “instead of crude macro-structural narratives mediated by particular modes of production, what takes place is a subtle ‘translation’ of semi-coherent dominant normative doctrines into a set of micro stories, with recognizable discourses, events and actors which are available and accessible to the general population. Thus, ideology is not a ‘thing’ but rather a complex, multifaceted and messy process. Further, it is best conceived as a

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<sup>592</sup> The idea that “a true will” of a community was not necessarily sensed or expressed by the community as a whole but only through its exemplary figures is a trait to be found in the myths and epics of the Turks. There are certain long-lasting symbols of leadership, such as the *Bozkurt* (Greywolf), understood as a guide who appears during times of trouble. The most prominent Turkish ideologue of a racist and ultra-nationalist version of Turkish nationalism, Nihal Atsız (1905–1975), expressed this by noting that during times of trouble, moralists from within the nation come forward and set morality in order. Ayşe Neviye Çağlar, “The Greywolves as Metaphor” in *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, ed. Andrew Finkel and Nühket Sirman (London and New York: Routledge, 1990): p. 91. A majority of Turkish scholars have taken Atatürk’s idea of a “national secret” (*bir milli sır*) at face value. An example of this is Halil Ersoylu, who states that only Mustafa Kemal could comprehend the Turkish nation’s true abilities. Halil Ersoylu, *Nutuk üzerinde incelemeler* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1999), pp. 12–13. Almost similar is the evaluation given by İsmet Giritli who argues that, if analyzed in the light of the *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal was a man characterized by rational thinking, and, able, better than anyone else, to grasp the Turks’ situation realistically. İsmet Giritli, “Nutuk’ta İç ve Dış Politika,” in *Atatürk’ün Büyük Söylevi’nin 50 Yılı Semineri Bildiriler ve Tartışmalar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1980): p. 200.

form of thought-behavior that penetrates all social and political practices.”<sup>593</sup> This, then, has the tendency to devalue possible alternative or “hidden” narratives of the past. One must recall in relation to the implied reader asserted by Atay’s book that it is not a solitary phenomenon only to be confronted by someone who happens to read this particular book. There are much more widespread structures at work, since the implied reader is the product of a total hegemonic discourse.

One can claim that the *Nutukian* implied reader was also reproduced by Celâl Bayar during the 1970s, although in a more complicated way. Falih Rıfki Atay’s *What is Atatürkism?* represents a fine example of a conservative-republican interpretation of the common Kemalist enlightenment idea of history produced by a prominent figure of the Kemalist movement. With Bayar we come face to face with perhaps an even more influential Kemalist, who, like Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, Recep Peker, and Falih Rıfki Atay, belongs to the cadre of first-generation Kemalists. Bayar’s life (1884–1986) spans the whole period concerned in this study. This and his central role as one of the leading conservative-republican politicians of the Kemalist movement makes him a truly key figure in our effort to understand the development of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history as a legitimation tool. What is even more significant is the fact that Celâl Bayar was one of the leading figures of the Democrat Party, a political association which, as we observed above while analyzing both prominent left-wing and conservative-republican Kemalists, has been depicted as the main cause for the abandonment of Kemalism. It is indeed the case that the Democrat Party emerged as a counter-force challenging in many ways the radical modernization efforts of the Kemalist CHP. In this sense Celâl Bayar represents the crucial dividing line between conservative-republican Kemalism and its more traditionally oriented nationalist-conservative center-right challengers which have since the Democrats Party’s period in office espoused a more tolerant attitude to Islam and the religious world-view of the majority of Turkey’s population. Thus, Celâl Bayar’s writings demonstrate here the ultimate end in the spectrum of various conservative-republican reproductions of the common Kemalist legitimation narrative, beyond which the legitimation narrative starts to create another kind of story-world in its attempt at legitimation.

Bayar asserts in his book *Atatürk’ün metodolojisi ve günümüz* (*Atatürk’s Methodology and Present Day*),<sup>594</sup> published in 1978, that all empires in world history have collapsed. Nations, however, hardly ever disappear from the historical stage. In Bayar’s text history is a kind of social testing laboratory, which proves the overall priority of national political units in comparison to multi-national empires. It is indeed interesting that Bayar seems to commit strongly to the idea of history presented in Atatürk’s *Nutuk*. According to this conception, the re-birth of the Turkish nation in the form of the Turkish Republic was a historical necessity, that is, there were no alternatives to the republic in 1919–1923. In Bayar’s own words

In the laboratory of history we see empires collapsing, but we never witness the abolishment of NATIONS. Nations forced to surrender to an imperial regime in the end crush

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<sup>593</sup> Malešević 2006, pp. 83–89.

<sup>594</sup> Celâl Bayar, *Atatürk’ün metodolojisi ve günümüz* (Istanbul: Kervan Yayınları, 1978).

these empires and continue their lives inside their own national boundaries... Thus, the Turks, who during the whole of history have never lived without their own state and flag, could neither escape the obvious destiny of building a new state of their own inside national boundaries. Atatürk also pronounced this fact.<sup>595</sup>

However, according to Bayar, the idea of legitimate political power acquired in competitive elections in a republican regime was familiar to the Turkish nation because its basic assumption was included in both the Turks' national traditions and Islam. In Bayar's opinion the idea of republicanism and the acquisition of political power through elections had been both established ideals among the "eastern states" for the last ten thousand years. Because of this, the Republic of Turkey was founded on a strong and healthy basis.<sup>596</sup> According to Bayar, in the Ottoman state the legitimacy of power was acquired through the so called *biat*-system. In this system, the acceptance of a new sultan was surrendered to the collective approval of the civil and military bureaucracies. Because these were recruited from the common people, they truly represented the popular will in the "election" of the new sultan. Even though the sultan in principle ruled as an absolute sovereign, the military and the bureaucracy always kept a watchful eye on him. The problem of the Ottoman Empire's methods of governing became acute in the last centuries of imperial rule. The bureaucracy representing the people became politicized and disintegrated into various competing blocs. This proved fatal in times of external threat.<sup>597</sup> It is interesting that the same kind of interpretation can be found in Faruk Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm*, where the narrator argues that the Ottoman state was, in its initial phase, based on democratic principles, so that the leaders consulted their subjects before giving orders. This democratic practice was, however, abandoned after the occupation of Constantinople, and the Ottoman sultans started to behave like dictators. This, however, was against the spirit of Islam, Güventürk declares, and goes on to give examples of "democratic opinions" from the Prophet and the early Caliphs. Güventürk even argues that democracy was in fact at the core of Islam, and that the duty of the powerful to serve the common people was strongly established in Islam.<sup>598</sup>

In this respect it is interesting to note that some reformist, but still Islamist, politicians argue for a Muslim version of democracy. For them, the earliest phase of the Islamic Caliphate is depicted as an "era of felicity." This is based on an idea that the early Caliphate corresponded to legitimate and democratic rule. This assertion "is backed up by arguments to the effect that either Islamic traditions correspond to democratic practices, or that received Muslim proposals should be revised, in the

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<sup>595</sup> Tarih lâboratuvarında imparatorluklarında parçalandığını, silindiğine pek rastlanıyoruz ama, MİLLET'lerin silindiğine pek rastlanmıyoruz. Nitekim imparatorlukların gücüne boyun eğmiş nice milletler, sonunda imparatorlukları çökertmişler ve kendi ulusal sınırlarında yaşamlarını sürdürmeğe devam etmişlerdir... Öyleyse tarihin hiçbir döneminde devletsiz ve bayraksız kalmamış tek millet olan Türklerin de ulusal sınırlar içinde yeni bir devlet kurmalarından başka çıkar yol yoktur. Atatürk de işte bunu söylüyordu... Ibid., pp. 44–45.

<sup>596</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>597</sup> Ibid., pp. 47–57.

<sup>598</sup> Güventürk 1964, pp. 38–40.



light of reinterpretation of the Islamic message.”<sup>599</sup> Reformist Islamists argue that the tradition of *shura* (consultation), in which a Muslim ruler was supposed to consult leaders of the community before taking decisions, and of *bai’a* (the oath of allegiance which they were required to take to a newly appointed Caliph) implies Islamic legitimacy for the idea of an elected legislature and head of state. So the argument goes that “in the Early Caliphate, it is claimed that the ruler was chosen by the members of the community rather than imposed by force, as had historically been the case in later Muslim states.”<sup>600</sup> Clearly the term *biat* in Bayar’s text is a Turkish version of the Arabic *bai’a* of the Islamist reformists. Does this mean that Bayar’s and Güventürk’s thinking comes close to that of Islamist reformists? I think not. When we read further their accounts we notice that the argument “Islam-as-democracy” is definitely not aimed at propagating political Islam, but to encourage traditional-minded Turkish population to internalize the Kemalist enlightenment.

The narration of the Turkish nation offered by Bayar asserts, then, that the Turkish nation is an organic and continuous entity that during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle was, as a historical necessity, claiming its right to live in its own national state. It is also explicitly stated in *Atatürk’s Methodology and Present Day* that the leader of this struggle, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, represents empirical science and rational thought.<sup>601</sup> When employed in politics, these fundamental principles equal the doctrine of the “common good,” which, according to Bayar, is the same as the popular will expressed in free elections. Bayar also gives us an interpretation of the different methods of governing and class structures between “the West” and “the East.” According to him, until the First World War western nations were closed societies where military and civil bureaucracies were recruited only from those born to the governing elite. In the East, Bayar claims, there was no possibility for such a power bloc to develop because all officials, including the grand vizier, were the sultan’s slaves, and their wealth and social status could not be inherited by their children. The same was true concerning the merchants. Their riches were also taken over by the sultan when the merchant died. In Bayar’s words “In such a society there could be no classes.”<sup>602</sup> Bayar then reveals his true Kemalist nature and proclaims Turkey a harmonious and unitary nation:

I said earlier that the Turkish social structure does not have classes. In classless societies, the whole driving force emanates from the bureaucracy and the state. If the state elites are strong and wise, society will develop. If these cadres have lost their dynamism, society will degenerate. In classless societies the state determines the way, it is truly the leader... But, as we accepted the principle of a republican regime, we simultaneously accepted a Western type of government.<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> William Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The case of the AKP* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. xiv.

<sup>600</sup> Hale and Özbudun 2010, p. xiv.

<sup>601</sup> Bayar 1978, p. 29.

<sup>602</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49.

<sup>603</sup> Türk toplum yapısının sınıfsız olduğunu söylemişim. Sınıfsız toplumlarda bütün itici güç bürokrasiden ve devletten gelir. Devlet kadrosu güçlü ve bilinçli olursa toplum ilerler, devlet kadrosu dinamizmini kaybetmişse, toplum geriler. Sınıfsız toplumlarda devlet yol gösterici, gerçek anlamıyla

Does this mean that Bayar conceives the West as an ideal example of democratic republicanism? This is not the case. According to Bayar, democratic principles have not been fully realized in the West because its class structure obstructs this. That is, the political process is an arena of various class interests that need to be balanced. Turkey, however, is in much more fortunate situation:

Contrary to this Western case – by such a happy coincidence – our social structure makes it necessary to internalize this ideal type of democracy. Because there are no classes, there is no need for balancing various class interests. There is only the nation and a state that is represented by persons originating from the nation.<sup>604</sup>

In the above quotations expressions like “we see empires collapsing, but we never witness the abolishment of the nations,” and “our social structure” are naturally markers of the implied reader. Even though they are now reproduced within a political tradition which was able to secure popular acceptance in most elections from the 1950s to the 1980s, the *Nutukian* idea of nationality is constructed with a similar device to those other conservative-republican Kemalist narratives. As was demonstrated, in Bayar’s narrative Atatürk also represents the Enlightenment project, and in this way the nationality reproduced in Bayar’s text through the implied reader is similar to the original *Nutukian* one. Thus, during the 1960s and 1970s, the reproduction of the *Nutukian* implied reader was utilized by all Kemalist representations, even in Celâl Bayar’s.

The *Nutukian* implied reader can also be found in the legitimation narratives produced after the 1980 military intervention. As Kemal H. Karpat has stated, it is clear that the left-of-center ideology of the CHP, including its partial rejection of the Kemalist idea of a unitary nation, alienated the military from the CHP in general and from Bülent Ecevit in particular. While the military intervention of 1960 had brought a de facto identification of the military with the CHP via the reforms and the Constitution, that of 1971 “not only failed to arrest but actually accelerated the process of alienation primarily because it brought into the open the divergence of opinion between the CHP and the military on social classes, Atatürk, nationalism, secularism, and reformism, which had hitherto been glossed over.” On the eve of the 1980 takeover, Karpat points out, Kemalism as a state philosophy no longer had a formal, organized representation.<sup>605</sup>

Thus, after 1980 in particular the army’s concern was with all ideologies that did not serve the right-wing nationalist Kemalist message guided by the state. This was amply demonstrated when the junta of 1980 decided to incorporate a strong Islamic element into its nationalist message in the guise of *Türk İslam Sentezi* (Turkish-

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yöneticidir...Oysa, demokratik cumhuriyet esaslarını kabul ederek biz, Batı tipi yönetime geçiyorduk. Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>604</sup> Buna karşılık – ne mutlu bir rastlantı ki – bizim toplumumuzun yapısı, bu ideal demokrasiyi benimsemeyi zorunlu kılar. Çünkü sınıf yoktur, sınıf çıkarlarının dengelenmesi yoktur, sadece millet vardır ve milletin içinden çıkardığı insanlarla temsil edilen bir devlet gereklidir. Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>605</sup> Karpat 1988, pp. 148–149.

Islamic Synthesis), an ideology developed earlier in the 1970s by İbrahim Kafesoğlu which held that Islam had found its true destination only when its message had been adopted by the Turks. The military thus consciously started to use a special brand of Islam as an ideological antidote to those currents which they saw as threatening Turkey's Kemalist heritage, namely communism and religious "fundamentalism," that is, Islam outside state control.<sup>606</sup>

Bora and Taşkın argue that in their effort to re-establish the sovereignty of the state and central power, the leaders of the 1980 military intervention felt that official Kemalism – now more or less simply sterile slogans – was incapable of gathering the masses behind the new regime. That is why the military leadership chose as its political ally *milliyetçi muhafazakarlık* (nationalistic-conservative) Turgut Özal and his new-liberal economic policies, not *cumhuriyetçi muhafazakarlık* (republican-conservative) Turhan Feyzioğlu. According to Bora and Taşkın, this means that the 1980 military junta perceived traditional right-wing Kemalism as insufficient to acquire popular legitimacy. It was out of this situation that the most characteristic ideological trend of 1980s in Turkey was generated, that is, the above mentioned "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis," in which Kemalist state-ideology came together with traditional religiously-oriented conservative nationalism, backed by liberal economic policies. The most crucial function of this new ideological trend was to purify all state institutions of leftist sympathizers.<sup>607</sup>

However, one can also argue that the common Kemalist enlightenment idea of history was once more reproduced in yet another new context in the speeches of Kenan Evren, the leader of the 1980 military intervention and subsequent president of the Republic. As early as January 1981 in his speech for the hundredth anniversary of Atatürk's birth, Kenan Evren faithfully repeated the enlightenment idea of history originally constructed in Atatürk's *Nutuk* 54 years earlier. In his speech Evren cited Atatürk's assertion that every military victory was meaningful only for the change it made possible. In the case of the Turkish War of Liberation, this change was the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. In Evren's own words:

Because of this, the victory achieved with the Great Attack is the birth of the Turkish Republic.<sup>608</sup>

Thus Evren fully repeated in 1981 the idea of history offered by Atatürk's *Nutuk* in 1927, according to which the purpose of the Anatolian Resistance Movement was to secure the foundation of the republic. But, Evren goes even further by stating the following:

This state founded in the heart of Anatolia designed and executed, through the new representative assembly and army, the Turkish War of Liberation.<sup>609</sup>

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<sup>606</sup> Zürcher 2001, p. 219.

<sup>607</sup> Bora and Taşkın 2002, pp. 540–541.

<sup>608</sup> Onun içindir ki, Büyük Taarruz'la gerçekleştirilen zafer Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ni doğurmuştur. Kenan Evren, *Seçme Konuşmalar 12 Eylül 1980/6 Kasım 1989* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2000), p. 43.

It is no distortion of Evren's statement to interpret it as asserting that the new Republic of Turkey existed conceptually already at the start of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. What is presented here, really, is that Evren wants to deny once and for all that the resistance movement could even logically have had some goal other than the salvation of a specifically Turkish nation. Thus, the Islamic interpretation of early Republican history is denied here quite vehemently. This is how political legitimacy is constructed through the officially maintained representation of the past. So, there is a republican Turkish state and nation at the heartland of Anatolia already at the start of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. When Kenan Evren in 1981 presented the above quoted speech, the Kemalist interpretation of history had a half century-long tradition of almost unchallenged monopoly at its disposal. In these circumstances the obvious, widespread indoctrination that followed the 1980 military intervention must have quite easily achieved its goals in Turkish society. Then on 19 May 1981, that is, exactly sixty-two years after Atatürk's landing in Samsun, Kenan Evren stated in that same city the following:

On this day exactly 62 years ago, after a dangerous ship journey with the tiny ship called Bandırma, the heroic commander and the sole hope of the nation, Mustafa Kemal Paşa, landed on this pier. This victorious commander started his entering the unknown with confident steps. He was determined and his heart full of faith, sure of his success. This for the reason that he knew the nation's abilities and its love for independence...The torch of freedom lit in Samsun filled the hearts of people first in Amasya, Erzurum and Sivas, and then in the whole of Anatolia. The force enlivened by this spirit, rolling like the avalanche that it was, crushed all the barriers built against it and accomplished the legitimate right for freedom and independence of the nation, building the modern Republic of Turkey.<sup>610</sup>

The narrative structures of Evren's speech are very universal indeed. There are some basic structures at work such as a "hero" (Mustafa Kemal), "barriers" (those opposing Kemal), "the unknown" (a future goal which demands sacrifices) and "accomplishment" (the independent Turkish nation-state). As suggested, together with the implied reader, these kinds of narrative structures produce an idea of "us" and "our destiny," that is, they produce "a nation." For example, in 1986 Kenan Evren made this very interesting statement

In the very near future we shall begin the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You shall be the children of that new millennium. You all know very well that in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Turkey was

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<sup>609</sup> Anadolu'nun ortasında kurulan bu devlet, yeni Meclis'i ve düzenli ordusuyla Türk İstiklal Savaşı'nın hem karar vericisi, hem planlayıcısı ve hem de uygulayıcısı olmuştur. Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>610</sup> Bundan 62 yıl önce bugün, küçücük Bandırma vapuruyla yaptığı tehlikeli bir yolculuktan sonra, ulusun tek ümidi, yıllardır hasretle beklediği muzaffer ve kahraman komutanı Mustafa Kemal Paşa, buradaki rıhtımda karaya çıkmıştı. Bu muzaffer komutan, bilinmeyen geleceğe, heyecanlı fakat vakur ve enim bir adımla başlıyordu. Azimliydi, kararlıydı ve kalbi güven ve inançla doluyordu, muvaffak olacağından emindi; çünkü o, ulusun hasletlerini, kabiliyetlerini ve onun bağımsızlık aşkını çok iyi biliyordu... Samsun'da alevlenen özgürlük meşalesi daha sonra Amasya, Erzurum, Sivas ve adım adım bütün Anadolu'da, kalplerdeki ateşi tutuşturmuş ve bu ruhla bir çığ gibi büyüyen millî irade, önüne çıkan bütün engelleri parçalayıp aşarak, Türk ulusunu hakkı olan bağımsızlık ve özgürlüğüne kavuşturmuş ve modern Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ni kurmuştur. Ibid., p. 107.

under foreign occupation and that soon after we began the Republican era when the liberation war headed by Atatürk crushed the sultanate. You also know very well the reasons why we were so sadly occupied. If we are unable to keep up with progress and even make up the distance between us and the most developed nations, if we fight among ourselves and attach ourselves to some superstitions forbidden even in our religion, I am afraid that the misfortunes experienced in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century shall again haunt us at the outset of the new millennium.<sup>611</sup>

Again, similar to its obvious role model the *Nutuk*, these Evren's speeches construct a national hero, whose determined action is portrait as a manifestation of the national will. The legacy of this hero and his actions are, the passage obviously suggests, carried on by Kenan Evren and the military regime he represents. What is also striking is the fact that the "hero" comes to the nation by making a dangerous ship journey, and then starts to gather the nation around the torch of light he carries, a symbol of himself. Kenan Evren surely wanted – as he toured Turkey explaining the need for the 1980 military intervention and the subsequent restrictions of political freedoms – to paint a picture according to which he was now taking a similar action of saving the fatherland as Mustafa Kemal had done during the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. The pronoun "you" in the last quotation obviously invokes the implied reader through which the actual reader steps inside this narrative world of nationality, accepting the definitions given by the general-president Kenan Evren as a contemporary "Father." We will see further on that the basic *Nutukian* message of an "enlightenment achieved in a unitary Turkish nation-state" constructed by Atatürk was continuously repeated by Evren in his speeches, in an effort to legitimize the military regime established in 1980.

## 6.2 Different Conservative-Republican Kemalist Representations of the Adversaries and Obstacles

Faruk Güventürk declares that he wrote his book *The True Kemalism* most of all for Turkish youth and schoolteachers. Kemalist principles were being abused by all kinds of leftist, rightist, and reactionary forces, who were trying to propagate their perverse ideas in Atatürk's name. This was wrong, since the Kemalist regime established by Atatürk was unique and did not try to copy any other existing regimes. To Turkish schoolteachers Güventürk assigned a special task, namely, to fight against ignorance and to enlighten their pupils with Atatürk's progressive principles. Güventürk wanted to see the teachers filled with *ülkü ateşi* (passionate ideal) as they executed their duty to overcome ignorance and dark religious bigotry

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<sup>611</sup> Yakın bir gelecekte XXI. yüzyıla gireceğiz. Sizler aynı zamanda XXI. yüzyılın da insanları olacaksınız. Türkiye'mizin XX. yüzyıl başlarında istilaya uğradığını ve Atatürk'ün önderliğinde başlatılan Kurtuluş Savaşı'yla, bağımsızlığına kavuştuğunu ve saltanatı yıkarak, Cumhuriyet dönemine geçtiğini hepimiz biliyorsunuz. İstilaya uğrayış sebeplerini de biliyorsunuz. Eğer dünyadaki bu çok hızlı ilerlemeyi takip edemez, ona ayak uyduramaz, gelişmiş ülkelerle aramızdaki mesafeyi kapatamaz ve sen ben kacasıyla vaktimizi heba edip, ilerlemeye çalışanın arabasının tekerleğine çomak sokmata kalkışır, dinimizle hiç alakası olmayan hurafelerden ve telkinlerden kendimizi kurtaramazsak, XX. yüzyılın başlarında başımıza gelen felaketin XXI. yüzyılda da başka bir şekilde tekrar etmesinden korkarım. Ibid., p. 545.

in every town and village.<sup>612</sup> Thus it seems that the goal expressed in Güventürk's book has not changed at all when compared to the goal of the *Nutuk*. The main thing the Turks need to achieve is "enlightenment." It is the adversaries and obstacles which have been slightly transformed, since the narrator of *Gerçek Kemalizm* declares that it is extreme leftists and rightists, not only Islamists reactionaries, that are the adversaries of and obstacles to achieving the "enlightenment." Just as the extreme leftists and rightists and Islamist reactionaries are presented as one-dimensional characters of the story, "ignorance" and "dark religious bigotry" are entities, that is, abstract ideas, representing the internal enemy. These entities, or abstract ideas of the internal enemy, thus, have not changed at all but remain the same as in Atatürk's Six-Day speech. In this given story there is also an entity or a character called the "Turkish nation," which aims to execute its historical purpose, but is time and time again confronted by various enemies trying to nullify this historical mission.

Thus, universal narrative structures are very much in usage here. Güventürk presents a narrative which seems firstly to consolidate the original *Nutukian* message of Atatürk as the hero who was able to overcome the obstacles in front of him, and accomplish the goal which was to produce "enlightenment" in Turkey. Secondly, Güventürk transposes this Kemalist "truth" to his own era, now constructing a narrative which depicts teachers as the contemporary heroes who shall fight the adversary, that is, "religious bigotry" and "ignorance" in order to re-assert the "path of enlightenment." There are numerous "fanatics" in Turkey, whether leftists, rightists, or Islamists, who try to deceive the Turkish youth with their perverse ideologies. Again, what this narrative is aiming to construct is an authoritative representation of the past, built on the claim that there is only one "right" interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle, and only one possible method to carry on Atatürk's legacy. This "right" interpretation justifies the intervention by the military into the political realm. The Democrat Party in power during 1950–1960 is depicted as a distortion of the will of the Turkish nation, even though it achieved power through the popular vote.

It is important to keep in mind that the situation after the 1960, 1971, and 1980 military interventions has many similarities with the situation after the initial establishment of the Kemalist Republic in 1923. All these events need to be seen as violations of existing constitutional order, and as such all are illegal. As we have seen, according to David Beetham, *illegitimate power* is that acquired through a breach of the constitutional rules. The point of using the strong negative term *illegitimate* for this kind of usurpation of power is, according to Beetham, that it constitutes a clear and indisputable negation of the first condition of legitimacy, which is *legality*. Often this produces a particular problem of legitimation which is difficult, sometimes even impossible, to overcome. What is needed is a special justification by reference to extra-legal norms that are widely acknowledged, and an exigency sufficiently compelling to warrant such action. In particular, since those who have breached the law will themselves require that legality be subsequently observed, they have to provide convincing reasons why others should not copy their behaviour. Secondly, in creating a definitive break with an established constitutional

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<sup>612</sup> Güventürk 1964, pp. 17–18.

order, it is necessary to find a *new basis of legitimacy* for the system of rule inaugurated in its place. The term *illegitimacy* thus conveys at once the idea of manifest illegality, the definitiveness of the break with an established constitutional order, and a task, or programme, of *relegitimation* that may or may not be successfully carried out.<sup>613</sup>

The central issue in relegitimation is thus the establishment of a new principle of legitimacy, or source of authority, that has sufficient popular support to sustain the new rules of power. From the standpoint of relegitimation, Beetham observes, a distinction can usefully be drawn between revolutions that are politically restorative, and those that are socially transformative.<sup>614</sup> It can be argued that the Turkish revolution in 1919–1923 was a very peculiar kind of socially transformative revolution executed from above by a leadership who had managed to win state power. Unlike in Marxism-Leninism, where the one-party regime of proletarian dictatorship was represented as the executor of the transformation of the relations of ownership, in the Turkish Revolution the Kemalist one-party regime was to execute a social transformation in which the relations of ownership would be left untouched, but where all political and cultural institutions, values, and beliefs would be reorganised in rational Western way in an attempt to achieve modernity and the enlightenment.<sup>615</sup> Whereas in the Russian revolution the counter-revolutionary force was represented as the capitalist class, in the Turkish case this counter-revolutionary evil was composed of the representatives of Islamic and sultanic institutions, and the people defending traditional values and beliefs attached to these institutions, all of whom were called reactionary. As we have seen, however, the left-wing Kemalists' representation of the counter-revolutionary force, like that of the Bolsheviks, also included the capitalist class. In any case, in Kemalist Turkey the power of the Kemalist state-elite was legitimized by claiming that this elite was required in order to lead Turkey to enlightenment and modernity, and repress the counter-revolutionary forces.

We have seen that during the 1960s and 1970s an interpretation emerged which claimed that the Turkish Revolution was *incomplete* in its initial form and needed to be completed by a social revolution transforming the relations of ownership. This was of course the underlying assumption of left-wing Kemalism, analysed above. On the other hand, in the conservative-republican Kemalist tradition the re-legitimation effort is grounded on a narrative of re-establishing the original, and, so the argument claims, the true character of Atatürk's revolution. These opposing interpretations bring to surface the dialectic of an attempt, on the one hand, to keep the Atatürk Revolution going as a reformist movement, and, on the other hand, an attempt to

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<sup>613</sup> Beetham 1992, p. 206.

<sup>614</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 221–222.

<sup>615</sup> The Turkish revolution was also very different from other modern revolutions. While defining the new grounds for legitimacy, Kemalists totally rejected the long-lasting universal context of Islam and replaced it with a nation. Thus, the Turkish revolution totally abandoned religion as a basis of legitimacy, and tried to construct a secular justification for a national political community. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "The Kemalist Regime and Modernization: Some Comparative and Analytical Remarks," in *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): p. 9.

systematize its core in order to prevent “distorted interpretations.” In a certain sense, this whole mission of securing the Atatürk Revolution from distorted interpretations results from the argument that Atatürk is, more than anything else, a symbol. At the moment this is said, it becomes important to define what this symbol represents. We can argue that the whole process of political legitimation in Kemalist Turkey is, in its essence, about setting the rules about which definitions can be considered acceptable. As I have proposed, the acceptability of these definitions, on the other hand, ultimately rests on the interpretations of the meaning of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle. So, we are once again faced with the “circle of legitimacy.”

Falih Rıfki Atay’s *Atatürkçülük Nedir?* brings these dichotomies to the surface very clearly. We have already observed that Atay vehemently attacked political opposition, whether this was in the form of the Free Republican Part of the 1930s, or the Democrat Party of the 1950s. In this respect, Falih Rıfki Atay’s opinions are very close to those held by Faruk Güventürk. As we will observe later, Güventürk also fiercely attacked any political opposition irrespective of the period in question. For Güventürk and Atay, then, the Republican People’s Party still represented the one and only truly acceptable political organization, even in the context of a multi-party democracy. We can argue without much hyperbole that the harking back to the Kemalist one-party era seems to have been a common “sin” for most Kemalist writers analyzed in this study, Celâl Bayar and, perhaps, Bülent Ecevit excluded. This hatred for any political opposition should naturally be considered in relation to the Kemalist conception of the national past. In many of the Kemalist narratives analyzed so far, it was the political opposition as such which seemed to distort everything that had been accomplished by Atatürk during the one-party era.

Thus, there appeared a paradoxical situation where the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elite made itself a champion of multi-party politics after the 1960 military intervention, while at the same time it became seemingly anxious about the future development of the country – and its own position – under this democratic-oriented regime.<sup>616</sup> It is this contradictory mission which largely explains the contradictory arguments present in Kemalist texts. However, one should also notice that the conflicting tendencies which can be found if we compare for example the texts produced by Güventürk, Avcioğlu, and Atay, are an important aspect in the political culture which saw Kemalist political discourse and its interpretation of history go unchallenged until the 1980s. Not only was the Kemalist political regime able to legitimize itself on both left and right dimensions, it also included enough self-criticism to produce at least a minimum of space for internal regeneration. The obvious dichotomy in the attempt to keep Atatürkism as an ongoing and even revolutionary project on the one hand, and, the attempt to define its core eternally in order to prevent its transformation into something unrecognizable, on the other, clearly produced not only unresolved contradictions but also a certain ideological “breathing space.”

As the facts concerning Falih Rıfki Atay’s life show, he belonged to the same generation as Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt. He lived through, as an

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<sup>616</sup> Hale 1990, p.57.



Ottoman cleric and journalist, the desperate years of the First World War and the subsequent liberation struggle. Thus, when in the 1960s Atay tried to define the Kemalist “core” for younger generations, he could do this with the authority of first-hand experience of Atatürk and the great reforms executed in the 1920s and 1930s. According to Özkan, during the 1930s when Kemalist regime was in its initial phase, Atay emphasized that Kemalism was an original ideology and in this sense similar to fascism and communism. It is interesting that Atay also at some point perceived Kemalism as a continuous revolution. This conception of a never-ending revolution, however, as Özkan emphasises, was a threat, since it opened the way for numerous different interpretations. Because of this, Atay was keen to systematize Kemalism as an ideology.<sup>617</sup> Thus, we may say, firstly, that Atay was very close to those great Kemalist ideologues of the one-party era analyzed in section three, Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, who also felt it was their duty to give Kemalism a clearly defined core. Secondly, Atay’s claim that Kemalism should be understood as a never-ending mission of development brings him close to the left-wing Kemalists of the 1960s and 1970s. How, then, did Atay try to conciliate these two aspects, and what were his arguments for the ongoing relevance of Kemalism in the multi-party era? First of all, Atay offers examples of religious narrow-mindedness by stating the following:

The reason for the degeneration and backwardness of the whole Muslim world is not “unbelief” but “fanaticism”. The main revolution to be carried out in order to save Turkishness is to separate the affairs of religion and the affairs of the real world; to abolish all institutions that maintain the sharia mentality; to secure freedom of conscience and reason. The two founding pillars of the Atatürk revolutions are laicism and educational unification. In its relation to the outside world, the nation is not to be held under the sharia mentality or any other ideology. It must be free to contemplate whatever is useful to it: This is “true Atatürkism.”<sup>618</sup>

Thus, according to Atay, adherence to Islamic law and Islamic tradition is an ideology that is most harmful to the political community, and all other ideologies are also seen in this way. Like Faruk Güventürk’s *Gerçek Kemalizm*, Atay’s book re-defines the adversaries and obstacles of the national story, so that they now include not only Islamist reactionaries but also propagators of other “alien” ideologies, such as socialism and fascism. Kemalist principles, on the other hand, are presented not as an ideology at all, but as something completely different. They are the founding pillars of the Atatürk revolution, which itself is equated with the saving the Turkish nation. In this narration, then, Kemalist principles are ontologically of a different kind than “ideologies”: they are represented as original preconditions for the collective existence of the Turkish nation. This also helps to explain why the Republican People’s Party is, all superficial rhetoric of democracy’s benefits

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<sup>617</sup> Özkan 2002, p. 66.

<sup>618</sup> Bütün Müslümanlık dünyasının gerileme ve çökme sebebi “gâvur” değil, “softa”dır. Türkiye’den sonra Türklüğü kurtarmak için yapılacak ana devrim din ve dünya işlerini ayırmak, şeriatçılık kurumlarını topyekûn kaldırmak, bir yandan vicdanları, bir yandan akılı hürriyete kavuşturmadır. Atatürk devrimlerinin iki temel taşı, laisizm ve eğitim birliğidir. Millet bütün dünya işlerinde ne şeriat ne de herhangi bir ideolojinin baskısı altında olmayarak, yalnız günün şartları içinde kendisi için en yararlıyı düşünerek karar verir: “Öz Atatürkçülük” budur. Atay [1966] 2006, p. 21.

notwithstanding, the only accepted political institution for “true” Kemalists. Again similar to Güventürk, for Atay the national existence of the Turkish nation is synonymous with the continued existence of Kemalist principles. On the other hand, it is suggested that the CHP is the sole political organization which is able and willing to secure these fundamental principles. Thus it seems that for Güventürk and Atay, Kemalism is indeed more than one ideology among others. It is the precondition of the Turkish nation. This argument quite easily follows, at least for Atay and Güventürk, from the Kemalist interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a Turkish Revolution.

However, according to Atay, action against the laicism of the Republic of Turkey – understood as the separation of religion and politics – had already started during the later part of the Republican People’s Party regime when the system of village institutions (*Köy Enstitüleri*) was run down and the practice of teaching revolutionary principles to children was abandoned. The re-opening of religious schools produced similar results. According to Atay, these measures destroyed the two most basic pillars of Kemalism, that is, laicism and unitary secular education.<sup>619</sup> Thus, even though Atay, in the 1930s, wanted to conceive Kemalism as a continuous revolution, during the 1960s he made his position in very clear words: Atatürk and Kemalist principles were an enlightened philosophy and praxis that secured forever the priority of rational thinking. The best way to secure this was secularism and a unified system of education based on it. This is also the answer given by Atay when asked why Kemalism always needed to be the guiding light of Turkey. In Atay’s understanding, Islamic education was tantamount to the total abandonment of everything that Atatürk had accomplished. Thus, in the diegesis (story-world) of *Atatürkçülük Nedir?* Islamic education is truly the *anti-goal* of the story. This presentation is then ultimately constructed on the idea of history as a struggle between the forces of darkness and light.

In Atay’s text we probably come nearest to the original Kemalist idea of history produced by Atatürk in his *Nutuk*. According to this idea, the history of the Turkish nation can be divided into two periods, a time of ignorance preceding the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as a Turkish Revolution, and an enlightened national time that follows this momentous event.<sup>620</sup> Even during the rapid social change of the 1960s, this narrative held its appeal for Atay and his co-secularists. Society seemed to be falling apart in the face of “foreign” ideologies such as socialism,<sup>621</sup> or because of traditional and reactionary forces that were eager to undermine the unity of the

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<sup>619</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>620</sup> It is interesting how the form of this temporal divide between the age of ignorance and that of enlightenment is very similar to the Islamic conception of the era of “ignorance” (*jāhiliyya*) preceding the revelation of the Quran, and the era of “truth” following it. For a detailed analysis of the concept of *jāhiliyya*, look for example William E. Shepard, “Sayyid Qutb’s Doctrine of ‘Jāhiliyya’,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35 no. 4 (November 2003), pp. 521–545.

<sup>621</sup> It is important to notice that the conservative-republican Kemalist legitimization narratives offered by Falih Rıfkı Atay and Faruk Güventürk – who wholeheartedly supported the Republican People’s Party – were published before social democracy became the official doctrine of the CHP. It was, after all, only by the beginning of the 1970s that Bülent Ecevit managed to secure social democracy as the official CHP doctrine. Feroz Ahmad, “Politics and Political Parties in Republican Turkey,” in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: Volume 4 Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): p. 251.

nation achieved through a unified system of secular education that was spreading rational thinking to all segments of society. Thus, as proposed in the Introduction, the strong commitment to and recurrent practice of reproducing the *Nutukian* narrative produced a mechanism where the social and political struggle of the 1960s was represented with similar arguments as that of the 1930s. It was proclaimed, even, that the present called for, as Faruk Güventürk put it, the re-establishment of Atatürk's "national pact" in the form of a "scientific-pact." Although Atay does not express it as straightforwardly, the same kind of "anxiousness" over the fate of secular education obviously works in his text as a justification for the continuing relevance of Kemalism in Turkey.

Atay mentions that he met Atatürk immediately after victory over the Greeks was finally secured by driving them out of Izmir. According to Atay, Atatürk then made the remark that the "mission" was all but completed, and that now it was the time to launch a campaign against the "true enemy." Atay writes the following:

We have won several battles since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but we have not been able to save ourselves with any of them. This is because the true enemy, the dark force, is not religion but the sharia-tradition, the mentality produced by the religious schools, that is, the obstruction of free thinking in the name of religion. It is because of this that we are backward. The victory in the War of Liberation remains empty as long as we do not create a secular state, as long as we do not stop the national dichotomy by abolishing the educational dichotomy. We achieved a victory, but we are not yet secure.<sup>622</sup>

The "national" past, then, becomes the point of departure for all contemporary politics. Atay paints a picture of a War of Liberation that was won at a heavy price, but whose meaning becomes nullified as contemporary society fails to fulfil the promises of the past. This is the mechanism of the politics of history in its purest form. It is based on a representation of a historical event (collectively conceived as being highly significant) that attaches the meaning of this event to some contemporary political struggle. In Atay's presentation, the Turkish War of Liberation was not an effort to achieve continuity with the political community of the Anatolian Muslims but an event that only has a meaning when it is evaluated from standpoint of the 1960s. The present political reality faced by Falih Rıfkı Atay and all those conceiving themselves as justified carriers of the Father's exalted mission induces them eternally to turn to a past in order to secure the present as "theirs."

The value and significance of this practical operation of the politics of history in Turkey becomes clear if we consider how the dissolution of Kemalist certainties during the 1990s finally opened the past to very contradictory claims. Esra Özyürek

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<sup>622</sup> Biz on yedinci yüzyıldan beri bu yana birçok zaferler kazanmıştık. Fakat hiçbiri ile kurtulmamıştık. Çünkü asıl düşman, ki kara kuvvet dediğimiz şeydir, din değil şeriatçılıktır, medreseci kafasıdır, din adına softa baskısının akıl hürriyetçiliğini kısıtlamasıdır, bu yüzden geri kalmamızdır. Bir laik Yeniçağ devleti kurulmadıkça, eğitim ikiliği ve ondan doğan doğan millî parçalanmanın önüne geçilmedikçe, kurtuluş zaferi de boşa giderdi. Bir zafer daha kazanmış olur, fakat kurtulmuş olmazdık. Atay [1966] 2006, p. 19.

asserts that in the latter half of the 1990s the interpretation – and officially accepted displays – of the foundational years, that is, the era of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and the founding of the Republic from 1919 to 1923, became a battleground in the politics of the time. Özyürek accounts how both Islamists and Kemalists depicted the social realities of the 1990s as in contrast to those of Turkey’s foundational years as a time during which a perfect harmony and unity existed between the state and its citizens. The nature of that past unity was, however, as Özyürek points out, now hotly contested. Whereas the activists of the Islamic Virtue Party saw religion as the basis of harmony, for Kemalists the unifying force came in the form of secularism and a Westernized lifestyle. Thus, both camps claimed that their own interpretation of the past should determine the nature of legitimate politics in contemporary Turkey. In Özyürek’s words “as both parties used a nostalgic representation of the past as a blueprint to transform the present, the representation of the past became an arena for struggle over political legitimacy and domination.”<sup>623</sup>

Here, it seems, the Kemalists are forced to compete with a representation of national history that seems to challenge the very foundations of the narration of the Kemalist enlightened nation. The development of an Islamic interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle and its meaning works, naturally, in the same way as the Kemalist one, although now with a totally different content: it endows the War of Liberation with great significance as an event that promised a future of independent Muslim community of the Turks, free to decide the rules and goals of the unified political community of believers. That this kind of counter-narrative was expressed in the public sphere at all is in itself a marker of the dissolution of the hegemonic political discourse of Kemalism during the 1990s.

According to Atay, a reactionary counter-revolutionary movement came to the surface immediately after Atatürk’s death. Atay does not spare his words in condemning those who let the “sharia mentality” and religious bigotry re-emerge in consequence of the degeneration of the united secular system of education. In reference to Şemsettin Günaltay,<sup>624</sup> who became prime minister in 1949, Atay noted that it was not a beneficial sign that, 25 years after the founding of the Republic, the prime minister was a man who had studied in religious school (*medrese*). This, Atay lamented, led to a situation where the Quran schools became accepted alternatives to primary schools, and schools producing mosque orators (*imam-hatip okullar*) as alternatives to college. These schools, Atay argues, produced an explosion of “reactionary mentality and opposition to revolution and civilization<sup>625</sup>” which was not witnessed even during the old regime. According to Atay, sixty percent of country’s 50, 000 mosques were handed over to these “ignorant fanatics.” One could hardly imagine, Atay concluded, a more serious danger confronting the Turkish nation. Who was to blame? As noted, it is interesting that Atay asserts that this kind of trend had already started before the Democrat Party came to power. It had already begun during the one-party regime of the Republican People’s Party, as its leaders

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<sup>623</sup> Özyürek 2006, pp. 153–154.

<sup>624</sup> Günaltay was widely considered as *ılımlı* (that is “moderate” in the sense of “not strongly revolutionarist”), and *dindar* (“pious”). Bilâ 2008, pp. 117–118.

<sup>625</sup> *gerilikte şeriatçı, medenîlik ve devrimcilik düşmanı*. Atay (1966) 2006, p. 49.

approached the issues of secularism and educational unity in a very short-sighted and opportunistic manner. Thus, the “ugliest attack against Atatürk and Kemalism” was committed by the leaders of the CHP. True Atatürkism, Atay emphasized, was the road of reason, freedom of conscience, and Turkey’s participation in the community of Western civilization. Those who departed from these principles were not Kemalists, and not even true children of Turkey.<sup>626</sup> The exclusive definition of the “real Turks,” only implicitly expressed in the passage cited a little earlier is here declared loud and clear: only those who are heart and soul defenders of reason and enlightenment are genuine members of the Turkish nation.

The accusation that the abandonment of Kemalist principles in general and secularism in particular had already started before the Democrat Party regime is not expressed by Atay only, but can be found even in today’s scholarship. An example of this is Metin Aydoğın, who argues that in the period following the death of Atatürk in 1938 the Republican People’s Party headed by İsmet İnönü established a program of national consensus, which in effect resulted in an anti-Kemalist counter-revolution. Parliament and the ministries were peopled by opposition men from the Atatürk era, who had always supported counter-revolutionary politics. The names of these counter-revolutionaries are familiar ones: Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Refet Bele, Fethi Okyar, Hüsein Cahit Yalçın, Rauf Orbay, Kazım Karabekir, and Adnan Adıvar.<sup>627</sup> Thus, Aydoğın’s list mentions figures who had all been prominent former comrades of Mustafa Kemal, who then at a later stage came to form the opposition during the early decades of the Republic. Aydoğın also claims that the most dangerous trend in the period 1939–1950 was the compromising of Kemalist secularism which “had not yet fully rooted.” Thus, what happened during the Democrat Party’s rule – the abuse of religion for political purposes – was only the continuation of a bad habit begun already during the CHP’s rule.<sup>628</sup>

The reproduction of adversaries and obstacles demonstrated above was, however, in some respects rejected by Celâl Bayar, the former Democrat Party leader whose writings express the legitimization effort on a spectrum from a conservative-republican political articulation to that of a nationalist-conservative one. As Bora and Taşkın stress, the elitist, atavistic, and even fascist-authoritarian approach of Kemalism, attached to an ethnic-nationalist content, seems to posit Kemalism as a firmly rightist political ideology. This interpretation, however, does not give the whole picture. The radical modernization program executed with an equally radical secularism and attitudes of anti-imperialism and social progressivism open the door, as we have seen, to leftist interpretations of Kemalism.<sup>629</sup> The Democrat Party regime and the opposition status of the Republican People’s Party lasted ten years, starting in 1950 and ending with the military intervention in 1960, and witnessed a widening of the political elite and an acknowledgement of the religiously-oriented culture of the Anatolian population. This, however, did not mean that the Kemalist discourse ceased to be the starting point for Turkish politics. As Bora and Taşkın

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<sup>626</sup> Ibid., pp. 49–50.

<sup>627</sup> Metin Aydoğın, *Yeni Dünya Düzeni Kemalizm ve Türkiye* (Istanbul: Umay Yayınları, 2004), pp. 813–814.

<sup>628</sup> Ibid., p. 816.

<sup>629</sup> Bora and Taşkın 2002, p. 529.

point out, the leadership of the Democrat Party, and especially Celâl Bayar, always kept Atatürkism as the superior reference point.<sup>630</sup>

Celâl Bayar asserts in his book *Atatürk's Methodology and Present Day*, that Turkish society was in great danger. Public order had collapsed, and the institutions of state were in crisis. But, the social structure itself was not rotten. Turkey experienced fast population growth and expansion in several areas, such as industry, science, and culture. Moreover, the gross domestic product was higher than ever before. The reason for "social anarchy" was the large number of civil-society organizations and trade unions that intervened in politics. Bayar asks, was not politics meant to be confined to political parties? In Turkey, however, there was "not a single" trade union that was not involved in politics and the signature of these unions was to be found in all political slogans that were propagated everywhere, from the mosque to the institutions of the state.<sup>631</sup>

These remarks show us quite clearly what the initial reason was for Bayar to write his *Atatürk's Methodology and Present Day* at the latter part of the 1970s. The panorama opening before this Kemalist veteran politician is one of chaos. Turkish society as such, based on a Kemalist modernization program, has a healthy and productive-oriented structure, but the political field has unfortunately been invaded and distorted by civil society organizations functioning politically. Trade unions, other voluntary organizations, and even the mosque have become a place of political struggle. All this is, of course, a nightmare for the Kemalist idea of a united and harmonious (read controllable) society on a march to progress.

The accusation that civil-society organizations were acting politically was a condemnation of the leftist mobilization that had begun after the 1960 military intervention. As stated earlier, the Kemalist writers of the 1960s and 1970s lived in a society that was structurally very different from that of the first-generation Kemalists of the 1930s and 1940s. By the end of the 1960s, the character of Turkey's economy and society had changed beyond recognition. Before the 1960s, Turkey had been a predominantly agrarian society with a small industrial base created by the state. By the end of the 1960s, a substantial private industrial sector had emerged. This was followed by a rapid urbanisation as peasants moved to towns and cities in search of jobs and a better standard of living. In Feroz Ahmad's view, the economic transformation thus produced the social classes which had been declared as non-existing until then: working-class and a vibrant industrial bourgeoisie. All this took place under a political system that now gave real possibilities to transform social demands into political ideologies and parties. Under the 1961 constitution, people had more civil rights, the universities greater autonomy, and students the freedom to organise their own associations. Even more dramatic change, workers were given the right to strike in a state that was now described as a "social state."<sup>632</sup> The social transformation started to exert considerable pressure on the political level. The legacy of the abolished Democrat Party was taken over mainly by the new Justice

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<sup>630</sup> Ibid., p. 531.

<sup>631</sup> Bayar 1978, pp. 5–7.

<sup>632</sup> Ahmad 1993, pp. 134–136.

Party, which, as we saw earlier, received the popular vote most of the time but was not allowed to govern in any effective way. Suleiman Demirel, who became the leader of the Justice Party in 1964 and managed to form a majority government after the 1965 elections, had to cope, as Feroz Ahmad notes, with “all the new forces released by the 27 May 1960 regime.”<sup>633</sup>

As political violence increased during the 1960s, the military intervened for a second time in the political process on 12 March 1971. This was followed by a very determined attempt to suspend many of those liberties that had been granted by the 1961 Constitution. The repression of the extreme left with the abolishment of *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (Workers’ Party of Turkey) induced the CHP under Bülent Ecevit to strengthen its social-democratic and working-class identity.<sup>634</sup> What happened, then, was a polarisation and over-politicization of society at the same time as the two main parties, the CHP and the Justice Party, were totally unable to produce even a minimum of political consensus or effective government. However, Feroz Ahmad’s interpretation of the emergence of the working class and the vibrant industrial bourgeoisie is too simplistic. These social classes were also a product of a new narrative framing inside the Kemalist discourse.

We can quite justifiably claim, then, that in a situation of severe political polarisation and acts of violence – which led to a break down of society as a whole – Celâl Bayar’s *Atatürk’s Methodology and Present Day* is a narration of the basis of a legitimate political system in the context of Kemalist tradition. According to Bayar, labeling Atatürk as a positivist or pragmatist does not tell the whole story. Atatürk did not commit to any specific universal doctrine. His purpose was to solve the particular problems facing the Turkish nation.<sup>635</sup> What “genuine democracy” meant for the Democrats in general and for Bayar in particular was majority rule, in which the Kemalist method was implemented in parliamentary democracy represented as the superior “will of the nation.”<sup>636</sup> The idea of legitimate action for Bayar thus leads to a conception of absolute majority democracy, that is, whatever is willed by the majority is always legitimate in the context of modern representative government.

As we have seen, it is exactly this kind of understanding of representative government as an executor of the majoritarian will that was severely criticized by other Kemalist writers, whether leftists or conservative-republicans, such as Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, Faruk Güventürk, and Falih Rıfkı Atay. For these writers, the Turkish people were not sufficiently “mature” or “enlightened” for democracy to work in a healthy way. What was thus needed was a narrative emphasizing the role of the Kemalist enlightened cadre in transforming a backward society into a more enlightened one. Bayar, on the other hand, is a representative of a political tradition which had been able, since the beginning of the 1950s, to acquire power by winning

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<sup>633</sup> Ibid., pp. 138–142.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid., pp. 148–158.

<sup>635</sup> Bayar 1978, p. 21.

<sup>636</sup> Tanıl Bora, “Celâl Bayar,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnsel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): p. 646; Feroz Ahmad, *Turkey: The Quest for Identity* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), p. 108.

the popular vote. It would sound logical to claim that because of this totally different situation, the narratives of legitimation employed by Celâl Bayar must have been very different from the ones employed by his “undemocratic” Kemalist adversaries. As we will see, this is not the case. Even though Celal Bayar was one of the prominent leaders of the Democrat Party, a party which must be seen as the first major center-right political organization representing the more conservative social forces, his work *Atatürk’ün metodolojisi ve günümüz* creates a story-world which in its most crucial aspects reproduces the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history. In this work the narrator proclaims that:

Was not the acceptance of a secular state philosophy a question about a healthy and useful reform leading the nation to internalize the rational world-view? Was not the changing of the alphabet a question of easing the ability to read and write, to spread education, to lead the nation from a BELIEVING nation to a THINKING nation? <sup>637</sup>

Thus, also in Bayar’s text the common Kemalist enlightenment idea of history is in full flow, but now the enlightenment is equated to democratic government and the ability of the empirical science and rational thinking to transform Turkish society into a progressive nation. On these grounds we can assert that the goal of the Turkish nation in Bayar’s text is the familiar Kemalist “enlightenment.” However, this goal is now given a slightly different interpretation as it is not a utopian vision but is to be executed in the present by a government that enjoys popular consent. This modification of the proclaimed goal thus leads to yet another transformation of the adversaries of and obstacles to the common purpose. In Bayar’s text, these enemy categories are composed of those who resist the majority rule established through democratic elections.

As Turkish society seemed to be, by the end of the 1970s, on the verge of internal collapse, the narration of common values became an urgent task. As we have noted, theoreticians of legitimacy, like Bruce Gilley, have emphasized the obvious relation between the state and the moral community over which it is supposed legitimately to rule, so that the more a state behaves in ways consistent with the moral consensus in society, assuming there is one, the more legitimate it is. <sup>638</sup> This then supposes that there is a certain moral consensus in society. If there is not even a rudimentary consensus on what norms and values the community is grounded on, legitimacy becomes impossibility. In this respect, Bayar’s claim that democracy is the “familiar mode of government” for the Turks from their national and Islamic heritage, is a call to unite conservative voters in a common front in a moral battle against political extremists willing to destroy Turkey’s democratic regime. In this respect, Bayar’s text is indeed an attempt to produce the basis for a moral consensus. This is done by depicting the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as the Turks collective effort to bring “enlightenment” to Turkey, this time interpreted as democracy and material

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<sup>637</sup> Lâik devlet tefekkürünün kabulü, bir yanı ile, milletin rasyonel düşünce biçimine alışmasını hazırlayan sağlıklı, yararlı bir devrimden başka nedir? Harf devrimi, okur–yazarlığı kolaylaştırmak, eğitimi yaymak, milleti, İNANIR bir millet olmaktan, DÜŞÜNÜR bir millet olmak, seviyesine çıkarmak gayreti değil mi? Bayar 1987, p. 17.

<sup>638</sup> Gilley 2009, p. 7.



prosperity based on science and technology. However, it is also claimed, as in Faruk Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm*, that a people's government is familiar to the Turks from their past, the Islamic past included.

Here we have, then, a fine example of the mechanism that allows "the enlightenment idea of history" to be utilized by very different political currents. We have seen how the *Nutukian* narration produced a conception of an enlightenment mission that demanded a united and homogenous nation for the Turks. In Bayar's text this narration of a harmonious nation is supposed to demonstrate the erroneous way in which propagators of socialist class-struggle had manipulated the common Turkish people. In Bayar's representation, the Atatürk Revolution had brought enlightenment to Turkey in order to liberate the Turks and offer them genuine democracy.

Then Bayar goes on to emphasize how it was necessary to abolish the political influence of the bureaucracy in a modern nation-state and transform it into a neutral servant of the state. Bayar writes that the newly established state was no longer dependent on an imperial class but on the "national class," which required the abolition of the political power of the bureaucracy, leading to a situation where the civil and military intelligentsia had to serve as a silent servant of the state.<sup>639</sup> Bayar claims that one of the greatest Atatürk's reforms was to cut the political role of the civil-military bureaucracy, but his comrades and successors had failed to appreciate this. During the reign of the Democrat Party, one of the closest comrades of Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, brought the bureaucracy back to power. This happened during the general elections of 1957, when the Republican People's Party headed by İnönü strove to change the Constitution with the addition of major novelties, such as the Senate, the Constitutional Court, autonomous universities and the Turkish Radio and Television Company, the state planning office, the idea of proportional representation, and the politicization of the trade unions by the principles of collective bargaining and the right to strike. According to Bayar, it was obvious that the purpose of these constitutional changes was to bring the Republican People's Party – unable to come to power through democratic elections – back to power with promises given to certain interest groups, such as the workers and the bureaucracy. According to Bayar, his own Democrat Party, on the other hand, was "on the side of Atatürk's Constitution," and opposed firmly all actions that would weaken the sovereignty of the nation. The Democrat Party, Bayar emphasizes, was particularly opposed to the re-establishment of the political influence of the bureaucracy, since this was, as Atatürk had realized, very harmful to the nation.<sup>640</sup>

Here, then, we come face to face with a major event in Turkish political history that is given vastly different interpretations. We have seen that, Bayar excluded, all of the Kemalist writers interpreted the military intervention of 1960 as a restoration of Kemalism and the main tool for widening civil liberties and giving substance to the idea of a social state in Turkey. Bayar, on the other hand, interprets this as a political manoeuvre on behalf of the military-bureaucratic elite, keen to re-build its power base by using extra-parliamentary methods in order to bring down a democratically

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<sup>639</sup> Bayar 1978, pp. 50–54.

<sup>640</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60.

elected government. This totally opposite view on the meaning of the 1960 military intervention is very much apparent even in Turkish scholarship. We have seen that for example Kemal Karpat defines the military intervention as a class-based attempt, executed by the traditional military-bureaucratic power-bloc, in order to re-establish their sovereign position<sup>641</sup>. Sina Akşin, on the other hand, sees the 1960 military intervention and the Constitution of 1961 as a truly democratic attempt to create a more modern and wide-spread democracy and civil society in Turkey.<sup>642</sup> These totally different interpretations by Turkish scholars of the 1960 military intervention and the new Constitution following it bring to the surface the idea of a “counter-narrative.” At first, this counter-narrative was firmly established on the common Kemalist enlightenment idea history, as was the case with Bayar, who declared that Atatürk’s mission was becoming a reality through the general and free elections. Thus, the developing counter-narrative was firmly secular in nature, as it only emphasized the elimination of the statist-bureaucratic state-elite as a democratization process. However, especially since the 1980s, this counter-narrative became more and more attached to a new Islamic-oriented interpretation of history. The transformation from the conservative-republican Kemalist political articulation to the nationalist-conservative interpretation, observable in its initial form in Celâl Bayar’s work, becomes more prominent during the 1980s in Turgut Özal’s Turkish-Islamic legitimation narrative.

Bayar’s condemnation of the 1961 Constitution is a direct response to the realities of Turkey’s political practice during the 1960s and 1970s. We noted earlier that the conservative center-rightist Justice Party was effectively obstructed in using its popular mandate because the centralist-statist bureaucracy, which since the beginning of the 1960s was leftist-oriented, was able to hinder legislation passed by the ruling party. Bayar knew very well that the centralist-statist bureaucracy was not willing to surrender its status as privileged elite standing above and not requiring a political mandate. While giving a narration of Kemal Atatürk and his reforms as executing principles working on behalf of the “common good,” Bayar emphasizes that “true Atatürkists” could not tolerate the bureaucracy’s position above the popular will.

Bayar also accuses the leftist wing of the Turkish intelligentsia for its total inability to understand Turkish society, and its tendency to copy social doctrines from the socialist countries of the time.<sup>643</sup> That the obvious goal of Bayar was to destroy the socialist movement in Turkey becomes evident from the next passage:

If Marxism had offered a genuine hope for Turkish society, Atatürk would have proclaimed a socialist republic in 1923 and nothing could have stopped him. If he ignored a despotic socialist regime and established a constitutional republic, the only reason for it was his conviction that socialism was contrary to the needs of the Turkish nation.<sup>644</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> Karpat 2004, p. 115.

<sup>642</sup> Akşin 2007, p. 268.

<sup>643</sup> Bayar 1978, p. 103.

<sup>644</sup> Marksizm’de Türk Milleti için bir ümit olsaydı, Atatürk 1923’de sosyalist bir cumhuriyet kurardı ve bunu kurması için hiç bir engel de yoktu. Eğer sosyalist bir baskı rejimi yerine, anayasal bir

These remarks are, of course, a direct attack on the left-wing interpretation of Kemalism analyzed in section five. They also bring to mind the highly heterogeneous composition of the early resistance movement, a period when Mustafa Kemal was not yet a sovereign leader. According to Andrew Mango, there were certain activists in the Anatolian Resistance Struggle who wanted to forge a much closer cooperation with the Russian Bolsheviks. Mango cites a man called Damar Arıkoğlu, who noted that there was “no lack of communist propaganda among the members of the Grand National Assembly.”<sup>645</sup> According to Mango, communist sympathies were most expressed by those militants of the Committee of Union and Progress who were initially revolutionary nationalists.<sup>646</sup> Atatürk himself spoke about Turkey’s relations with foreign powers in a closed session of the Grand National Assembly on 24.4.1920. He noted that in the attempt to secure the national cause, any help from the Bolsheviks was welcome, as long as the Turks saw to it that they did not compromise their own principles.<sup>647</sup> Kemal further defined the nature of cooperation with the Bolsheviks in another closed session of the Grand National Assembly on 3.7.1920:

The question is not whether to become Bolsheviks or not... We have our own national customs and principles, and we shall respect them. When we speak about Bolsheviks, we speak about a Soviet Republic and about means; that the enemies of our enemies are our friends. We shall cooperate in order to rescue our own principles, not in order to become somebody’s slaves.<sup>648</sup>

These Atatürk’s remarks are obviously the respected authority backing Bayar’s arguments. What they reveal is that Mustafa Kemal was a pragmatist and a tactician. In the context of 1919–1922, any help was indeed welcomed by the Resistance Movement. Bayar’s commitment to Kemalism is mostly based on this spirit of rational calculation and the search for a more prosperous future. Bayar refers approvingly to Atatürk’s belief that Turkey did not consist of different social classes and therefore there was no need for political parties representing these various groups’ interests. However, there was also another threat within the country that needed to be crushed. This was the reactionary movement.<sup>649</sup> Bayar interprets Atatürk’s westernizing reforms with the following words:

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cumhuriyet kurulmuşsa, bunun tek sebebi sosyalist bir rejimin Türkiye gerekçelerine ve Türk insanının çıkarlarına ters düştüğü içindir. Ibid., pp. 14–15.

<sup>645</sup> Quoted in Mango 2004, p. 291.

<sup>646</sup> Mango 2004, p. 291.

<sup>647</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Gizli Oturumlarda Atatürk’ün Konuşmaları*, ed. Sadi Borak (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1977), p. 18.

<sup>648</sup> Bizim için, milletimiz için Bolşevik olalım, olmayalım meselesi mevzubahis değildir... Biz bir milletiz, kendimize mahsus âdatımız vardır, prensibimiz vardır ve biz bunların sadıkıyız. Biz, Bolşevikler’den bahsettiğimiz zaman bir Bolşevik Rusyası, Sovyet Cumhuriyeti var, ve onların vesaiti var, menabii var ve bizim düşmanımızın düşmanıdır. Biz, kendi maksadımızı kurtarmak için bunlarla birleşiriz. Yoksa kendi maksadımızı bırakıp da onlara köle olalım meselesi mevzubahis değildir. Ibid., pp. 106–107.

<sup>649</sup> Bayar 1978, pp. 70–72.

Atatürk's westernizing was not aimed to secure a superficial resemblance with the West, but to produce in Turkey the kind of dynamism that characterizes western societies.<sup>650</sup>

Bayar also approves of Atatürk's definition of the goal of the revolution: "To reach the level of contemporary civilization" (*Muasır medeniyet seviyesine ulaşmak*, or, with modern Turkish; *Çağdaş uygarlık düzeyine ulaşmak*). Bayar further claims that Atatürk's reforms were very different according to whether they concerned the institutions of the state or society. According to him, the reforms that affected the state were "soft" ones, whereas his social reforms were truly radical ones. The major tool for modernizing Turkish society was the Civil Code brought from Europe. This was the most important because it affected people's everyday lives from birth to the moment of death. Bayar stresses that in 1978 the implementation of this new Civil Code was still unfinished, even though it had been established fifty years ago. For Bayar the new Civil Code represented a massive social operation which affected even the tiniest cells of everyday life in Turkish society. It is also emphasized in *Atatürk'ün Metodolojisi ve Günümüz* that the new Civil Code was implemented in order to change the existing relations between men, and their relation towards the state. The new Civil Code, Bayar argues, was a tool which was implemented as a consequence of the desire to bring Turkish society from the "civilization of the East" (*Doğu uygarlığı*) to the "civilization of the West" (*Batı uygarlığı*). Thus, unlike the reform concerning the institutions of the state, the new Civil Code was a "deep revolution" (*derin devrim*).<sup>651</sup> Bayar also notes approvingly that the structuring of society on the principles of rationality and empirical science, sought by Atatürk, presupposes the unification and westernization of education.<sup>652</sup> These remarks again prove that what is constructed in Bayar's account is fully in line with the common Kemalist idea of history. Here, too, the "story-world" of the narrative includes *entities* called the "civilization of the East" and the "civilization of the West," and Turkey is moving, guided by the "Father," from the East to West. In this context, it is obvious that the "West" is the preferred option. Secondly, the thing that made a Kemalist writer like Falih Rıfki Atay most anxious, the abandonment of the unitary secular education, is, it seems, also condemned in Bayar's account.

Bayar insists that with Atatürk's "methodology" Turkey had really become a Western country, and this proves the obvious success of this method: "It is not a lie to say that we have become a Western-model nation. Yes, we are indeed a Western and developed society."<sup>653</sup> However, it must be noted that, according to Bayar, Atatürk's effort to westernize Turkey did not mean that it would become just one Western nation among others. On the contrary, Atatürk's westernizing represented a desire to reach the intellectual dynamism of the western societies. As the West had reach its dynamism through education based on reason (*akıla dayalı eğitim*), this was also the road Turkey was obliged to take. The result, Bayar claimed, would be a Turkey that was based on its national qualities and modern education, going beyond the contemporary West. This, Bayar concludes, was the *goal*, and the "revolutions"

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<sup>650</sup> Atatürk Batıcılığı, Batı ile yüzeysel benzemeler sağlamak değil, Batı dinamizmine erişmek yolu ile, onun gibi olmaktır. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72–78.

<sup>652</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

were a *tool* to achieve this.<sup>654</sup> Bayar thus proclaims that Turkey needed to have a western education, but it would still be based on national qualities (*kendi milletinin hasletler*). This definition then brings the diegesis of Bayar's *Atatürk'ün metodolojisi ve günümüz* to the familiar *Nutukian* story-world of "the East" and "the West," in which the latter is characterized by science and rational thinking, or, Enlightenment.

According to Tanıl Bora, Celâl Bayar was already during the one-party era most of all a pragmatic Kemalist, who understood the Atatürk Revolution as a method to produce a strong national state and economy. Bora emphasizes that Bayar used both liberalism and statism in order to produce a strong "national economy." Like other prominent first-generation Kemalists, Bayar wanted to create a national bourgeoisie and entrepreneurs, but he did not want them to become totally independent from the central state and its control.<sup>655</sup> Bora also stresses that during the 1950s Bayar started to perceive economic politics more in line with the West-European liberal trend, while he simultaneously continued to emphasize Kemalism in terms a middle-class populist solidarity that regarded the class-struggle as a threat to national unity.<sup>656</sup> Bora mentions further that since the 1960s – as the struggle between rightist and leftist interpretations of Kemalism was clearly on the rise – rightists pictured Celâl Bayar as a symbol of "true" and "genuine" Atatürkism against the "distorted" interpretations of the left. The leftists, on the other hand, saw Bayar as a man who was faithful to the person of Mustafa Kemal, but who had not truly internalized his principles.<sup>657</sup>

Now, according to Bayar, the transformation of Turkey from empire to a republic, representing the sovereignty of the people, opened the door to two major threats, that is, Marxism and Islamist politics. Atatürk, however, closed the door on these dangers with the help of two fundamental principles, Nationalism and Secularism.<sup>658</sup> In Bayar's view, as long as a strong state (*güçlü devlet*) was maintained, the principle of secularism was functioning effectively, and all of Atatürk's aspirations were secured. It was only with the 1961 Constitution and its principle of "limited state powers" (*gücü sınırlı devlet*) that all kinds of sectarianism had been unleashed and religion had become a weapon in political struggle. Bayar even argues that the "sudden rise" of parties abusing religion for political purposes mushroomed immediately after the establishment of the 1961 Constitution.<sup>659</sup>

Thus, Bayar here fully commits to the basic Kemalist assumption that religion needed to be under the control of a strong state, and that it was intolerable to use religion politically to further the interests of particular groups or individuals. Bayar's book *Atatürk'ün Metodolojisi ve Günümüz* was published in 1978, two years before the 1980 military intervention, in the middle of a chaotic years of political violence. The longing for a "strong state" (*güçlü devlet*) can be interpreted in many ways in

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<sup>654</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>655</sup> Bora 2002, p. 548.

<sup>656</sup> Ibid., p. 548.

<sup>657</sup> Ibid., p. 549.

<sup>658</sup> Bayar 1978, p. 63.

<sup>659</sup> Ibid., pp. 66–69.

this context. From the man who has been described as a liberal and committed to private initiative and the economic freedom of the middle classes, this longing seems strange. However, knowing the context, having a strong state obviously looked like the only way to end the political radicalism and polarization of the late 1970s. However, it also reveals Bayar's true Kemalist nature, as he was convinced that the Enlightenment project could only be executed by a strong state, depicted as the representative of a classless and harmonious Turkish society. Thus, it was only in the hands of undemocratic statist-socialist left-wing Kemalists that a strong state became an enemy of the Turkish nation.

### 6.3 Diegetic Continuity of the Conservative-Republican Kemalist Legitimation Effort

In his book *The True Kemalism*, Faruk Güventürk emphasizes that Atatürk spent his whole life trying to give the Turkish nation a new character and purpose. Atatürk's greatest goal was to root positive modern civilization into the Turkish people. According to Güventürk:

Atatürk initiated a positive will to bring the Turkish nation – which had slept for centuries under the yoke of religious bigotry, forgetting the meaning of freedom under the rule of sultans, viziers and fanatics – into the modern world, managing to expand this will to the people, in this way securing tremendous achievements in a short period of time.<sup>660</sup>

In Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm*, revolution (*ihtilâl*) in its "full meaning" equals the establishment of a progressive society through reforms in its political organization, social order, and economy. Furthermore, a revolution demands a leader with intelligence, knowledge, tactical ability, far-sightedness, and unshakeable determination. So we read Güventürk's narrator declaring that

Let us take a look at ATATÜRK's revolution and its reasons. There was a nation which had grieved for centuries as a slave of sultans and caliphs, buried in a tomb of ignorance, superstition and religious bigotry, ordered to vanish as a consequence of the partition on behalf of the winners of the First World War, under a yoke of the sultan the traitor, occupied and perplexed. In this situation the only conceivable duty for a great leader and genius like ATATÜRK was to stand up against this tragedy by crushing the sultan and his rotten government, and lead the nation to a people's government of prosperity and national culture, purified from superstitions. It was necessary to establish a new kind of regime, that is, a people's government with new political and social foundations. And this great person executed all this. He gathered the revolutionary ideals into the Six Principles and guided the Turkish

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<sup>660</sup> Atatürk Türk milletinin hayatına yeni birşey katma ve yenileştirme heyecanı ve büyük ihtirası yaşamıştır. O; asırlarca uyumuş; koyu taassubun pençesinde ezilmiş, sultanların, vezirlerin, yobazların ellerinde hürriyetin ne demek olduğunu unutmuş bir cemiyeti medenî bir akışa götürebilmek için müsbet bir ihtirasın ateşi ile yanmış ve bu ateşi de milletine aşılıyarak az zaman içinde çok işler başarmıştır. Güventürk 1964, p. 23.

nation back to the forefront of nations, grounding the new state on the principles of new legality, government and economic enterprise.<sup>661</sup>

Here then, the Turkish nation is again, paradoxically, both declared as the sovereign source of political power, and thus, at least in principle, a character of a story, that is, capable of intentional actions, but also as an abstract entity grieving, first of all, for centuries under the yoke of the sultans, and then passively accepting the foreign yoke until the “Father,” who seems to be the real intentional actor in this story, leads the nation into a new state, purified with science. It is indeed explicitly stated that “this great person executed all this.”

What must be emphasized is the fact that Kemalism has been much more than just an “official ideology.” As Taha Parla argues, Kemalism also became a norm against which to evaluate the “public interest,” crucially defining political culture in the Republic of Turkey.<sup>662</sup> It was demonstrated in chapter 3.3., that the Kemalist narrative received its fundamental and unquestioned presuppositions from Mustafa Kemal’s Six-Day speech. It was also argued that even though Mustafa Kemal was not given the honorary title “Atatürk” (the Father Turk) officially until 24 November 1934, it was indeed in the *Nutuk* where the “Father” was constructed. Thus, the actual writer (author) of the *Nutuk* is Mustafa Kemal (real-life person) but the narrator of the *Nutuk* is “Atatürk,” a *literary construction*. The narrator – Atatürk – is inside the text and will live forever there. He comes to life every time someone reads the *Nutuk*, or when the *story* of the *Nutuk* is presented in whatever “text” or media. Thus, ever since the *Nutuk*, the image of the Father Turk has been at the center of the symbolic universe of Turkish political culture. When we analyse Faruk Güventürk’s text, we notice how much is at stake here. The image of the “Father,” which was originally nothing else but a *literary construction*, even decades later crucially defines publicly held conceptions concerning the rules of political authority, participation, and the source of legitimacy. As a consequence of this, the Kemalist narrative during the 1960s, which has been seen as an era of widening political rights, democratization, and the emergence of a civil society, still reproduced the problematic idea of a passive nation incapable of political maturity, in need of an enlightened cadre representing the “wisdom” emanating from the “Father.”

Güventürk argues that democracy should be seen as the most advanced political ideal mankind had ever created. However, democracy was no easy task and it could

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<sup>661</sup> ATATÜRK ihtilâline ve sebeplerine göz atalım. Asırlarca padişah ve halifelerin kulu, kölesi, cehaletin karanlık çukurunda gömülü hurafe ve yobazın elinde oyuncak ve girdiği birinci Cihan Harbinde mağlup ve perişan çıkmış ve yurdu parçalanmış, her yeri işgal edilmiş, davalarında bigâne hain bir padişah ve hükümet önünde biçare bir millet, bu durumda ATATÜRK gibi büyük ve dâhi bir şef için yapılacak tek şey, bu gidişi tersine çevirmek, ferdi saltanatı ve kötü rejim yıkarak yerine, hurafelerden uzak, tamamen millete ve millî iradeye dayanan halkı kültüre ve refaha götüren, Demokrasiyi ve halk iradesini kurmak ve yeni rejimi ile siyasal, sosyal ve ekonomik temellere istinad ettirip geliştirmek lâzımdı. Ve o büyük insan da bunu yaptı. İnkılaplarını altı umde üzerinde toplayıp tatbik ederek Türk Milletini yeniden dünya muvacehesinde ön plana geçirdi. Ve yeni devletin yepyeni hukuk rejimini adalet sisteminin, idare tarzının, sosyal ve ekonomik gidişini, içtimai nizamını şaşmayan ve yanılmayan prensiplere bağladı. Ibid., pp. 29–30.

<sup>662</sup> Parla 1994, p. 15.

only work in civilized nations whose citizens had been raised to appreciate democratic values. In this process, enlightened intellectuals were vested with the duty of guiding the population along the path of positive science and civilization. Democracy was, naturally, a regime which was ruled in accordance with the people's wishes and traditions, but its precondition was a "democratic education." Güventürk goes on to stress that this problem had already manifested itself in Republican history, first in the 1920s with the establishment of the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) and then in the 1930s with the Free Republican Party (*Serbestçi Cumhuriyet Fırkası*). In both instances, opposition parties were not normal participants in a democratic regime, but eager to restore the autocratic sultanate and religious politics. In Güventürk's argumentation it was *kültürü az milletler* (culturally underdeveloped nations) in particular that were in danger of becoming divided by various interests and worldviews. Thus, it was necessary for the nation's survival to gather it around one common ideal, and the common ideal of the Turkish nation was Kemalism. It was the patriotic duty of all political parties to work inside this common ideal of Kemalism.<sup>663</sup>

This evaluation immediately demonstrates how little had changed in the form of argumentation within the Kemalist establishment since the 1930s. What Güventürk's statement expresses is the absolute demand for one political program, and a call for a "common ideal," essentially in similar fashion to Recep Peker's call in his *Lectures on the Revolution* during the one-party era. Thus it seems that the Atatürk-inspired narrator of Güventürk's book *Gerçek Kemalizm* in the final analysis rejects the *principle* of democracy, although democracy is tolerated as a necessary *practice*. Again, as in the 1930s, it is claimed that in an underdeveloped country like the Republic of Turkey, it was necessary to gather around one common ideal. This common ideal is "Kemalism," which, as we have seen, in reality is a hegemonic discourse grounded on an interpretation of the "meaning" of the Anatolian Resistance Movement. Thus we can argue that there is a very straightforward link between Recep Peker's *İnkılap Dersleri* of the 1930s and Faruk Güventürk's *Gerçek Kemalizm* of the 1960s. The arguments over what constitutes a legitimate source of political power, and the historical interpretations backing these arguments, are in these two cases basically the same. What has changed is the social context, resulting in the appearance of more *adversaries* and *obstacles* in the national story, as these now include not only Islamist reactionaries but all political extremists on left and right who are eager to "distort" the "true Kemalism."

Güventürk's presentation accusing someone of having an "instrumental" concept of democracy can be compared to the accusations levelled in contemporary Turkey against the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) government. We have seen that first-generation Kemalists, like Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, rejected democracy during the 1930s and 1940s. Then, after the establishment of the multi-party regime in 1945, the Turkish people were allowed to vote in free elections, and they lifted the Democrat Party into power. The majority of the Kemalist state-elite, whether leftist or conservative-republicans, then condemned this DP rule as majority tyranny, and started to reproduce "narratives of

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<sup>663</sup> Güventürk 1964, pp. 37–44.



legitimation” in order to justify the 1960 military intervention. We have also noticed that Turkish scholars, for example Kemal H. Karpat, interpret Turkish twentieth-century political history as a process of gradual democratization, which, after several setbacks, finally established the political victory of the Anatolian middle classes, although the 1980 military intervention saw to it that the Kemalist-minded military still defined the “rules of the game.” From this democratizing “counter-narrative” (that is, the opposite narrative to that of the Kemalist emancipatory enlightenment meta-narrative) emerges a picture where the majority governments of the AKP during the first decades of the new millennium are the culmination of this democratization process. In this respect it is interesting to note what Fuat Keyman depicts as the AKP’s “instrumentalized fashion” of approaching democracy, meaning that the AKP equates democracy with parliamentary majoritarianism, seeing democracy not as a value in itself, but as an instrument of legitimation.<sup>664</sup> What is interesting in this evaluation is that the claim of equating democracy with parliamentary majoritarianism is very close to Kemalists’ argument that the Democrat Party rule during the 1950–1960 was, as Güventürk called it, “majority tyranny.”

Indeed, Güventürk underlines that in a nation where democratic culture had not been created through common education, free elections and people’s voting behavior were not based on any true political principles, or ideals, but on the manipulation exercised by individual actors upon the ignorant masses. In these circumstances, free elections did not produce democracy but a majority dictatorship which in its very first act wanted to destroy the whole democratic regime.<sup>665</sup> It is interesting how similar this evaluation is to the one presented by the leading left-wing Kemalist writer of the 1960s, that is, Doğan Avcıoğlu. It seems that for both Güventürk and Avcıoğlu, democracy was not something that Turkey should execute here and now; rather, it was a future ideal that could be realized only when the Turks had learned to vote “right.” Of course, this is a rather unfair way of presenting the stance taken by Güventürk and Avcıoğlu, since it is true that democracy and free elections presuppose a population well acquainted with political procedures, national issues, and a relatively high level of education. However, it highlights the fact that Güventürk’s book shares the same orientation not only with Recep Peker and his Kemalist doctrines of the 1930s but also with his contemporary challengers of the 1960s, that is, the authoritarian social revolutionists, the left-wing Kemalists.

Thus, Güventürk concludes, education is a necessary precondition for democracy. Education, on the other hand, begins with religious education. This, however, should not be confused with *institutions*. The Islamic religion is something which relies on its own philosophy and the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet. To intervene in the interpretation of these teachings immediately opens the gate to religious bigotry and a reactionary mentality. Religion should have absolutely nothing to do with the state or politics. It is a question of individual conscience and should be practiced privately.<sup>666</sup> What Güventürk is really saying is that religion is something positive in

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<sup>664</sup> Fuat Keyman, “Modernization, Globalization and Democratization in Turkey: the AKP Experience and its Limits,” *Constellations* 17 no. 2 (2010): p. 325.

<sup>665</sup> Güventürk 1964, p. 46.

<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

man's path only if it does not prevent his journey on the path of science. When it is not transformed into bigotry, religion can give a human being a moral and basic civility. On the other hand, an Islam which opposes positive science is the true enemy of democracy, leading to a religious dictatorship.

This kind of attitude towards religion has been a wide-spread mentality among certain groups of the Turkish officer corps. Karpat underlines that the officers supported all of Atatürk's secular reforms, and indeed defined the Revolution of 1960 as a continuation and reassertion of secularism. Officers widely condemned the use of religion for political purposes, and detested superstitions. Yet, Karpat notes, during the 1960s the military in general did not think that secularism was under any real threat since there was no large-scale attempt to revive traditional Islam. Some older officers regarded religion, as long as it was separated from politics, an essential element in the life of an individual, a kind of "basic necessity" for the Anatolian peasants. As Karpat observes, immediate practical considerations probably motivated this attitude. Young conscripts from Anatolian villages, brought up with a traditional concept of authority, considered military service as a kind of religious duty. In this context individual devotion was tolerated, as long as it did not produce a desire to join fundamentalist movements.<sup>667</sup>

According to Güventürk, the Turks are republicans not because of ideological commitments or because of scholarly achieved wisdom. For the Turks, the Republic is a question of life and death, more than choosing one's preferred type of government. This is because the force that realized the Turkish Revolution was the Republican People's Party (*Türk inkılâp davasını hakikatleştiren Halk Fırkası*). It is the Republican People's Party which is regarded as the most natural institution to execute the idea of the sovereignty of the nation. Further, it is the Republican People's Party which is most capable of defending the Republic against all kinds of threats, because the history of the Republic of Turkey is identical with the history of the Republican People's Party. Thus, for the Turks, Güventürk declares, the Republic equals Independence.<sup>668</sup> Now, it is hard to imagine more straightforward reproduction of the original *Nutukian* interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle as the pre-history of the Republic and the Kemalist regime. The *diegesis* offered here is the most faithful one of them all: the Turks as a nation are Republicans, since they fought together in order to establish a Turkish nation-state, and further, they fought as partisans for the Republican People's Party. This, if anything, is a closed world created in a narrative, establishing a historical strait-jacket which leaves no room whatsoever for differentiating the Anatolian Resistance Struggle from the Kemalist Republic which succeeded it – true chronologically but hardly, in reality, causally.

According to Güventürk, what Atatürk meant by declaring that the Turkish Revolution not only included the renewal of institutions but also of whole way of seeing the world, was that Turkish society would transform itself from the Eastern civilizational ideal to the Western civilizational ideal. The Eastern civilization was

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<sup>667</sup> Karpat 1970, pp. 1671–1672.

<sup>668</sup> Güventürk 1964, p. 58.

characterized by a habit of seeing material world as an obstacle of religious salvation. In this context, the aim of all education was the salvation of the soul. This distanced men from the outer world and its realities, preparing men to walk on the path shown by God alone. As this conception saw the outer world as ephemeral, its products and valuables were considered superficial. Güventürk notes that Atatürk saw the Turks' history as evidence of their capability of civilizational development. However, past civilizations were not enough to secure the present Turkish community now formed as a modern nation. Survival as a contemporary nation demanded that the Turks participated in contemporary civilization, which was realised among the Western nations. Thus, the Turks needed to join this Western civilization. It is recurrently emphasized in *Gerçek Kemalizm* that from the traditional Islamic perspective European civilization's concentration on utilizing worldly resources was seen as a bad example. Atatürk, on the other hand, was convinced that the Islamic civilizational ideal was an obstacle to the future development and prosperity of the Turkish nation. For Atatürk, Güventürk declares, "civilization" was not composed of separate spheres of material and intellectual culture, but was one universal human composition including both material and immaterial culture, that is, the whole of human progression in its totality. A civilized man for Atatürk was, according to Güventürk, a man who made the most of his intellect, rational capacity, and logic.<sup>669</sup>

In this context the Atatürk Revolution (*Atatürk inkılâbı*) means moving from a degenerated and rotten civilization to a dynamic and enlightened Western one (*batıl bir medeniyet enkazından dinamik ve aydınlık batılı medeniyete geçiştir*). According to Güventürk, at the time Atatürk started his reforms, Turkey was characterized by religious bigotry (*taassup*) and ignorance (*cehalet*), and the Turks assumed that all initiatives emanated from the sultan-caliph, heaven, or the "other world." Everything was ruled by this religious narrow-mindedness, which was only finally broken by the principle of secularism (*lâiklik*) asserted by Atatürk.<sup>670</sup>

We can conclude that the diegesis or the "story-world" created by Güventürk's narrative seems to be filled with familiar events and entities. What the reader is offered is a world strictly separated into two large-scale cultural entities, defined as "Western civilization" and "degenerated and rotten civilization". The first is a dynamic and enlightened one, the latter is its absolute opposite. It is said that in this latter, degenerated civilization, all human actions were stamped by "religious bigotry" and "ignorance." Now, one can hardly say that this kind of evaluation of Western and Islamic civilizations corresponds to any "real past." Rather, this is a world of binary oppositions, existing in the diegesis of Güventürk's narrative, and consolidated by similar kinds of "story-world" in other Kemalist narratives.

Besides Faruk Güventürk's *The True Kemalism*, during the 1960s the *Nutukian* diegesis was also reproduced for example in Falih Rıfki Atay's *What is Atatürkism?* Atay reproduces the enlightenment idea of history with a narrative of rational

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<sup>669</sup> Ibid., pp. 84–85.

<sup>670</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

thinking as it has developed from antiquity to modern era, also manifesting itself in the National Liberation War of the Turkish nation:

The foundations of contemporary Western civilization – to learn, to know, to search, to discover, to comprehend and to explain and interpret in an atmosphere of absolute freedom of thinking – that we call the science and philosophy of Greek antiquity, was born in our lands on the Aegean coast. After this, the development of free thinking was not witnessed in Christendom but among the Muslims. The language of this so-called Islamic civilization was Arabic, but the Turks also gave their contribution to it, among various other nations. All Greek writings were translated into Arabic. New knowledge was added to this received wisdom... But this era of free thinking was a very short one. The development of positive science moved to the West via Spanish Muslims. Gradually the Renaissance developed and the modern West was formed. At the same time that the Western schools were abandoning scholasticism and turning to universities of positive science, Islamic education turned away from rationality and concentrated on the transmission of religious dogma, closing its doors to positive science. When the West was under scholastic darkness, the Ottomans advanced all the way to the gates of Vienna. After the era of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman,<sup>671</sup> the Islamic world – and the Turks among them – committed itself to fanaticism, seeing sharia knowledge, not rational knowledge, as their salvation. After this, the Turks, who had once advanced to the gates of Vienna, were forced to retreat all the way to the banks of the Sakarya-river, as the West was marching onwards.<sup>672</sup>

Now, this is the Kemalist enlightenment project expressed in a narration which in a synthetic form defines the world-history context of one of the main battles (that of the Sakarya river between the Anatolian Resistance Forces and the Greeks on 23 August–12 September 1921) of the “Turkish War of Liberation.” It repeats the *Nutukian* story of a Turkish nation that under the Ottomans was unable to join the onward march of civilization represented by the rational culture of the West, resulting in a life-and-death struggle that was to be successful only if the Turks could acquire rational modes of thinking. In this narrative the battle of Sakarya becomes the spatial and temporal marker of a national turning-point. Victory in this battle on the Anatolian soil is the materialized evidence of the Turks’ ability (and necessity) to internalize Western modernity. Atay’s narrative also stresses that the Anatolian soil

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<sup>671</sup> Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, 1494–1566.

<sup>672</sup> Bugünkü Batı medeniyetinin temeli ki; insan aklına tam hürriyet içinde öğrenip, bilmek, aramak, bulmak, anlamak ve yorumlayıp açıklamak yolunu açan eski Yunan ilim ve felsefesi denen şey, bizim yurdumuzun Ege Denizi kıyılarında doğmuştur. Bu altın çağın Greko-Romen devri bin yıl sürer. Hür düşünce چراغی daha sonra Hıristiyanlığın değil, Müslümanlığın eline geçer. Dil Arapça’dır. Fakat İslâm medeniyeti denen bu devirde, birçok milletler gibi Türklerin de büyük payları vardır. Bütün Yunan eserleri Arapça’ya çevrilmiştir. Eski buluşlara yenileri eklenmiştir... Fakat aklı hürriyet veren bu Müslüman devri kısa sürmüştür. Müsbet ilimler چراغی İspanya Müslümanlarından Batı’ya geçer. Yavaş yavaş Rönesans dediğimiz devir gelir. Bugünkü Batı doğmuştur. Şeriatçı Batı medresesi müsbet ilimler üniversitesine dönüştüğü sırada, akılcılıktan nakilciliğe dönen İslâm medresesi müsbet ilimleri kapı dışarı eder. Osmanlılar dağınık ve karanlık Batı’nın medrese devrinde, Viyana önlerine kadar gitmişlerdir. Kanunî devrinden sonra, “Bize şer’î ilimler lâzımdır, akli ilimler değil” taassubu Müslümanlık dünyasını ve bu arada Türkiye’yi kaplayınca, Batı, Viyana kapılarına kadar giden Türkiye’yi Sakarya kıyılarına kadar geri kovmuştur. Atay [1966] 2006, pp. 51–52.

should once more – as it had done during the birth of Greek philosophy – inhabit the most enlightened forms of life on earth.

From these Kemalist narratives of the 1960s, we shall proceed to analyze how the *Nutukian* “story-world” was reproduced after the 1980 military intervention. The military regime established in 1980 saw its long-term goal as the production of a conservative political community. It favored those political forces that emphasised a corporatist-collectivist conception of society where duties were considered more important than individual liberties. One of the restoration efforts was the foundation of the *Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu*, or AKDITYK (The Supreme Atatürk Culture, Language and History Society) which was populated by scholars who saw their duty as servants of an organic state. In their view, culture produced independently of the state was a very potential threat to the existence of the unitary nation. All this was leading to a situation where state-led cultural production was not considered just as an attempt at of nation-building, but also became an issue in national defense policy. In a very real sense, the military intervention of 1980 tried to reverse all those efforts executed after the 1960 intervention to produce cultural manifestations outside the state apparatus.<sup>673</sup> At the head of this re-affirmation of state-centered indoctrination was Kenan Evren, the leader of the 1980 military intervention. As we shall soon discover, in Evren’s public speeches, the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative was again faithfully reproduced.

So, while addressing the public in Sivas on 4.9.1981, Kenan Evren systematically repeated the interpretation constructed in Atatürk’s *Nutuk* concerning the beginning of the Turkish war of liberation. According to Evren, the Sivas Congress, opened on 4 September 1919, was a ray of light that spread the new dawn, first witnessed in Samsun on 19 May 1919, in its full glory, covering the whole of Turkey, and bringing the voice of the Turkish nation to the entire world. Evren also repeated the *Nutuk*’s description of the external and, most of all, the internal enemies, that in order to achieve some personal interests were ready to sell out their country and tried to prevent the Sivas Congress from meeting.<sup>674</sup> He went on:

Dear fellow citizens, the Congress was held. This was because the great majority of the Turkish nation preferred death instead of living in captivity.<sup>675</sup>

Evren also really took time to demonstrate publicly the 1980 military regime as an effort to secure the Atatürkian legacy, and, thus, the whole Republic. In one of his numerous speeches, Evren emphasised how difficult the circumstances were in which the Sivas Congress was held. It was vital that the younger generations eagerly studied Atatürk’s *Nutuk* in order not to lose sight of the significance of those achievements. Evren also made the point that it was not right for the Turkish youth

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<sup>673</sup> Yüksel Taşkın, “12 Eylül Atatürkçülüğü ya da Bir Kemalist Restorasyon Teşebbüsü Olarak 12 Eylül,” in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 2; Kemalizm*, ed. Ahmet İnel (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p. 578.

<sup>674</sup> Evren 2000, p. 134.

<sup>675</sup> Sevgili vatandaşlarım, bu kongre yapılabilmiştir. Çünkü Türk ulusunun büyük bir çoğunluğu tutsak yaşamaktansa ölmeyi tercih etmiştir. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

to read Marx, Lenin, or Mao if they had not first made acquaintance with their own classic, that is, the *Nutuk*.<sup>676</sup> Kenan Evren knew exactly what was at stake when he told the youngsters to read Atatürk's Great Speech before reading the revolutionary texts of other nations. Turkey had its own revolutionary leader, Kemal Atatürk, and reading his narrative of the Turkish Revolution was all the young generations needed in their search for political ideals. In this policy of re-building of harmonious nation, the leftist (and also Islamist and extreme rightist) trends of the 1960s and 1970s were a total distortion of the original revolutionary ideal of Kemal Atatürk, whose revolutionarism equalled the foundation of a rationally oriented Turkish nation-state after Ottoman degeneration. The Kemalist state elite in power looked to the "national past", now perhaps more than ever before, in order to picture itself as the carrier of a mission started by Atatürk and the Turkish army during the years of national ordeal.

The period before the military intervention of 1980 was, according to Kenan Evren, characterised by the intention of various fanatics – leftists, extreme nationalists, Islamists – to break down the legitimate social order in an attempt to achieve their own "perverse goals." According to Evren, certain individuals were spreading anarchy and setting the Turkish nation at each other's throats, claiming totally erroneously that it was composed of different groups in mutual hatred for each other, whether on religious, professional, political, or regional grounds.<sup>677</sup> Thus, Evren here emphasises that in essence the Turkish nation ought to be in the 1980s the same homogenous and harmonious community gathered around the "Father" as it had been, so the argument claimed, in the days of Atatürk. It is thus not a grave exaggeration to claim that in his narrative of national re-unification after the disastrous events of previous decades, Kenan Evren sought to picture himself as a national father figure in a fashion reminiscent of Atatürk. What Evren's narrative produces is a mechanism that provides him with the symbolic authority emanating from Atatürk and his principles as a guarantor of national unity.

Under a provisional article, approval of the 1982 Constitution entailed the election to the presidency of General Evren for a six-year term. At the time, Evren was 65 years old, and, according to Andrew Mango, he was a popular and paternal figure who appealed to the sense of patriotism, solidarity, and common sense of his conservative-minded countrymen.<sup>678</sup> Mango's evaluation suggests, then, that the narrative of the "Father" and a harmonious nation gathering around him was quite successfully employed by Kenan Evren. This can be explained as a consequence of a deep-seated Turkish cultural trait which values leadership. We saw in the third section that first-generation Kemalists, like Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, pictured Mustafa Kemal as a long-awaited, messianic hero who was able to offer the Turks a victory. This cultural trait is best seen as a narration which is partly unconsciously

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<sup>676</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>677</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>678</sup> Mango 2004, p. 83.

produced in every-day culture, and partly consciously utilized by the power holders in their attempted legitimation.<sup>679</sup>

We may say, then, that the gathering of the nation under a benevolent father figure after what was almost a civil war is the first marker of the re-legitimation project by the military junta after it had intervened in the democratic process.<sup>680</sup> Another way of approaching the speeches of Kenan Evren is to see them, like Faruk Güventürk's text, inside the tradition of the armed forces, which had played such a pivotal role in the revolution under Atatürk. The significant role of the army in politics had, however, already started during the Young Turk era. As George S. Harris emphasises, the revolution of 1908 and the prominent part played by officers in the period of Young Turk rule in general formed a clear backdrop for the republican era. Officers were the heart of the Committee of Union and Progress. This involvement with political organizations among civilians was vital in nourishing the concept that the officers were responsible for the destiny of the state.<sup>681</sup> As Ümit Özdağ stresses, even during the period 1923–1938 the Turkish Armed Forces were definitely not independent of politics, but clearly identified themselves with the political party in power (CHP), and acted as the force securing the Kemalist revolution and the establishment of a secular nation-state.<sup>682</sup> When the military seized power in 1980, it perceived itself as a collective which was responsible for the maintenance of the Republic of Turkey.<sup>683</sup> This was pronounced by Kenan Evren in a number of his public speeches. On opening the so-called consultative assembly on 23 October 1981, Kenan Evren stated:

As is well known, in the period before 12 September 1980 the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, claimed by our great leader Atatürk as his major work, was in a state of total malfunction. The most precious heritage of the noble Turkish nation, the Republic of Turkey, was under both physical and ideological attack by its external and internal enemies. This

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<sup>679</sup> Şerif Mardin has noted that great deeds accomplished by heroes is a constant theme of Turkish society, and that the epic hero image is prominent in Turkish folk poetry and in peasant lore. Mardin also emphasizes the fact that in primary school the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic are presented within this same context. Şerif Mardin, "Youth and Violence in Turkey," *Archives européennes de sociologie* 14 no.2 (1987): p. 230.

<sup>680</sup> This interpretation is also shared by Sam Kaplan, who notes that many townspeople welcomed the military intervention in 1980, seeing the army as the only force capable of stopping the anarchy in the country. Kaplan notes that in justifying the military intervention, the generals utilized the concept of "father-state" (*devlet-baba*), a concept widely internalized by the Turkish populace. More clearly than ever before, the 1980 military interventionists saw to it that the image of Atatürk as the savior of the Turkish nation (and the military leaders as the collective incarnation of the Father), was reproduced at all levels of education. Sam Kaplan, *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in post-1980 Turkey* (Stanford California: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 175–177.

<sup>681</sup> George S.Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkey in the 1980s: Guardians or Decision-Makers?" in *State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980s*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988): p. 181.

<sup>682</sup> Ümit Özdağ, *Atatürk ve İnönü Dönemlerinde Ordu-Siyaset İlişkisi* (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2006), p. 43.

<sup>683</sup> Hale 1990, p. 56.

jeopardized its government, independence, and its very existence, resulting in the dysfunction of all the institutions of the state.<sup>684</sup>

Thus, the main message Kenan Evren wanted his audience to receive was that the military intervention was the only way to secure national unity and re-establish Atatürk's principles. In this sense, the initial legitimacy of the military regime established in 1980 derives from its ability to stop the anarchy and terror that had paralysed Turkish society in the end of the 1970s.<sup>685</sup> The question of what sort of society was to be encouraged by the military regime for the future is, however, a much more controversial issue. In various speeches by Kenan Evren, the purpose of the military regime is to place Turkey back on the right course by stressing Atatürk's principles as the true guideline for the nation. This is done by presenting the horrors of the 1970s as an outcome of various ideological groups aiming to achieve their selfish and distorted goals. The main fault of these not-state-derived groups spreading disunity and anarchy is that they are not working for the well-being of the Turkish nation and state, represented as one and homogenous, but against it. In the final analysis, all those supporting ideologies outside the official one offered by the state-elites are accused by Evren of being traitors. In this interpretation presented by Kenan Evren, a Turkish worker, for example, cannot espouse working-class consciousness because this undermines the unity of the Turkish nation.

We can think of the social transformation in the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey as a period that produced, firstly, social-revolutionist Kemalist legitimation efforts, and, secondly, a conservative counter-force that took power in the 1980 intervention. In the same way we can claim that the narratives produced by left-wing Kemalists, like Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, and Bülent Ecevit analysed in the previous section, were forces constituting a political manifesto that was perceived as justified by a certain section of the population and which then encouraged them to see their society as structurally repressive, induced them to fight for a more socialist or, as they saw it, egalitarian society. With a similar line of thinking we should see Kenan Evren's public speeches during the 1980s not simply as a superficial account of what was happening – a military backed re-establishment of the conservative political discourse which emphasised the Atatürk Revolution as a unique method of accomplishing the Enlightenment in Turkey – but as a set of narratives which were perceived by the public as credible accounts of the current situation of the Turkish state and nation. Kenan Evren also hinted that the problems facing Turkey were the result of multi-party politics that had begun in 1950:

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<sup>684</sup> Bilindiği üzere, 12 Eylül 1980 öncesinde ulu önder Atatürk'ün en büyük eserim dediği Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi işlemez hale gelmiş, yüce Türk milletine en büyük armağanı Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti, iç ve dış düşmanların tahrikiyle rejimine, varlığına ve bağımsızlığına yönelik fikri ve fiziki saldırılarla sarsılmış, devlet başlıca organlarıyla işlemez duruma getirilmişti. Evren 2000, p. 199.

<sup>685</sup> The official statistics on terrorism for the two-year period before the 1980 coup show over 5,000 dead and 20,000 wounded. Of this total, a substantial number were the result of political killings conducted by extreme leftist and rightist camps fighting with each other on the streets, campuses, and universities. Çağlar 1990, p. 79.



Dear brothers and sisters of Uşak, since the beginning of the multi-party regime, this heavenly country has suffered many instances of division into separate camps. Because of this, we have seen fratricide, a civil war. There has occurred a general division into left and right, both seeing each other as enemies. There are also forces out there who want us to believe that we are divided into Sunnis and Alevis.<sup>686</sup>

According to Ersin Kalaycioğlu, the objective of the 1980 military intervention was indeed to nullify the democratic political system created after 1960. The main objective of General Evren and his associates was to make the Turkish political system stable while retaining a facade of democracy. The military regime perceived Turkey in the 1970s and 1980s as being under serious threat from internal communist plotters encouraged by the Soviet Union. According to the military junta, the way forward in this situation of internal weakness was to strengthen the state by creating a regime where the executive branch reigned supreme under the command of a President who would act in accordance with the "collective interest." The Constitution of 1982 was, Kalaycioğlu writes, "designed for General Evren to rein supreme, devoid of any political and legal responsibility for his actions except for treason."<sup>687</sup>

By the 1982 Constitution, political parties were put under the strict control of the agencies of the state. Originally the new Constitution stipulated that political parties were not allowed to form auxiliary bodies such as youth or women's branches. Political parties were also forbidden to have any association with trade unions, business groups, corporations, foundations, and voluntary organizations. Trade unions were also treated at length in the new Constitution, which stipulated that they should not pursue any political cause, engage in political activity, receive support from political parties or give support to them.<sup>688</sup> One of the most striking novelties brought about by the 1982 Constitution, as already hinted, was the addition of compulsory religious and moral education under the supervision and control of the State, in elementary and secondary schools. Thus, Kalaycioğlu underlines, "for the first time ever in Republic's history religious and moral education in elementary and secondary schools was incorporated into the Constitution and made compulsory for all the students." Further, according to Kalaycioğlu, this action was most probably grounded on the idea that religious extremism and political Islam emerges out of ignorance and ill-advised instruction of religious belief and dogma. If instruction in religion could be provided – by official school institutions – in an "enlightened manner," students would learn the "correct" content of religion and would never be prey to the propaganda of religious extremists and revivalists. As Kalaycioğlu observes, it is an irony indeed that it was under the 1982 Constitution that Islamic revivalist parties and politicians have come to power since 1996, serving as PM and

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<sup>686</sup> Sevgili Uşaklı kardeşlerim, bu cennet memleket çokpartili sisteme geçtiğimizden beri milletin bölünmesinden, kamplara ayrılmasından çok zarar gördü. Bu yüzden bir kardeş kavgasına, ülke bir iç savaşa sürükleniyordu. Sağcı solcu diye bölünüp, solcu sağcıyı düşman olarak gördü. Alevî Sünnî diye bölündü. Evren 2000, p. 304.

<sup>687</sup> Ersin Kalaycioğlu, *Turkish Dynamics: Bridge across Troubled Lands* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 127–128.

<sup>688</sup> *Ibid.*, p 130.

Cabinet Ministers, and popular support for such parties has showed a clear increase at the polls since the 1991 national elections.<sup>689</sup>

In 1983 Turkey again witnessed democratic elections and multiparty politics in a system in which civilian politicians could not have a say in the rules of the game. In this situation no single party emerged to defend, adopt, or identify with the 1982 Constitution. The two parties set up by the military regime soon vanished out of the picture, and the electorate voted for the sole new party established without the tutelage of the military regime, the Motherland Party, which was soon to be dominated by Turgut Özal, the future Prime Minister.<sup>690</sup> The 1980 military junta also pushed through a ban on all pre-1980 political parties and party leaders. This ban was lifted later in the 1980s, but the reshaping of the political arena had its consequences. The old voting blocs were gone and the original desire of the military junta to create two or three big centralized parties was thwarted. What was created by these measures instead was a plethora of parties on both left and right. However, the ideological cleavage of the period 1960–1980 of socialist or social-democrat versus liberal-conservatives was left behind. The military government of 1980–1983 ruthlessly persecuted anyone who had something to do with left-wing politics during the 1960s and 1970s. Large numbers of leftist intellectuals, students, and journalists were imprisoned for long periods, even when no charges could be pressed against them. Worst hit was the now social-democratic CHP which lacked the political culture to cope with a ban imposed on it by the “State,” with which it traditionally had been identified.<sup>691</sup>

In May 1983 Evren stressed the total inability of weak coalition governments to secure the workings of the state and asked his audience to give the matter serious thought before voting in the forthcoming elections.<sup>692</sup> A concept often used in Evren’s speeches is *istikrar* (stability). Even though Evren declares himself a genuine believer in parliamentary democracy – and that parties are an indispensable part of politics – one can sense in his speeches a longing for the era of the Kemalist one-party regime, characterized by the ideology of one national party representing an indivisible Turkish nation. It is precisely the division into various groups fighting with each other, and the usage of social conflict as a weapon in politics which follows, that represents the horror scenario for Kemalist ideology, eager as it is to protect the nation’s “unity.” In this sense Kenan Evren is a heart-and-soul Kemalist. The ideal Turkish society for Evren seems to be very similar to the one presented in Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, that is, one and indivisible. After the new Constitution had been accepted in a referendum, Kenan Evren made a radio and television speech in December 1982, stating the following:

Dear Citizens, with the new Constitution that you have now approved, a new era will start in the history of the Republic of Turkey. On its threshold, we shall not forget our sufferings, but now as those days are left behind, as we have once more expressed our national unity in

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<sup>689</sup> Ibid., pp. 130–131.

<sup>690</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>691</sup> Ibid., pp. 132–136.

<sup>692</sup> Evren 2000, p. 316.

the face of history and of the whole world, let us envisage a bright and happy future for Turkey, and let us start working to achieve it... With a desire for “Peace at home, peace in the world,” two days after the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of our great leader, let us express our national character by following in the footsteps of Atatürk, following his principles and Revolution, let us protect our national identity, and let us make our country prosperous with the help of “positive science.”<sup>693</sup>

It is very illuminating that in this speech Kenan Evren used concepts and phrases that immediately brings to mind Atatürk’s *Nutuk*. Evren declares that the Turks have once more proved their national unity in the face of history and of the whole world (*tarihe ve cihana karşı*). This is almost identical to the phrase used by Atatürk in his Six-Day speech where he writes that “During these historical days the whole nation waits impatiently for a government, expressing the full force of the national will, will to be working with the utmost determination. In the eyes of history and fatherland (*vatana ve tarihe karşı*), while the whole world is watching you carrying the burden of heavy responsibility, let it be known to you, gentlemen, that if you base your decisions on the sacrificial determination of the nation, and work patriotically, the whole nation stands beside and supports you.”<sup>694</sup> This is no coincidence. The narrative tools employed by Kenan Evren and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk are very similar because Evren repeats, more or less consciously, those speech conventions that had become part and parcel of the Kemalist-oriented military. This way of talking emphasises the unique character of Turkey and its Revolution; the revolution equals the continuing existence of the Turkish nation; to safeguard this revolution presupposes national unity, which over and over again – so the argument goes – proves itself the face of history.

In the citation quoted above, Kenan Evren asserts that the Turks should once again, after a disastrous period of disunity that demanded military intervention, show their true national character and follow in the steps of Atatürk. This narrative demonstrates that the present is manageable only if the Turks follow the military in its effort to restore a harmony to the national community. It is also a narration which repeats the *Nutukian* theme of the nation in jeopardy: the Turkish nation can only survive as long as it possesses unity; this unity is however lacking; the leader will act and re-establish this unity; there are internal enemies seeking to prevent this attempt at re-unification; finally the nation comes together under the guidance of the “Father” and is able to secure its continuity as an internally strong community. What we have in front of us, then, is an attempt to restore legitimacy employing the familiar narration of the Turks as a homogenous nation that needs to be guided in times of trouble. One can even sense a certain idea of a “child-nation” that was lost

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<sup>693</sup> Aziz Vatandaşlarım, Kabul ve tasvip ettiğiniz Anayasa ile Türkiye Cumhuriyeti tarihinde açmış bulunduğunuz bu yeni dönemin eşliğinde, geçmiş acılarımızı unutmadan, fakat artık mecbur kalmadıkça o acı günlerin sözünü etmeyerek, tarihe ve cihana karşı bir kere daha ispatladığımız millî birlik ve beraberliğimizle, Türkiye’imizin mutlu ve nurlu geleceğine bakalı ve artık o geleceği hazırlayıp gerçekleştirelim... “Yurtta sulh, cihanda sul” istek ve iradesiyle, millî haslet ve meziyetlerimizi kullanarak, iki gün evvel ölümünün 44. yıldönümünde tekrar içimizde yaşattığımız Cumhuriyet’imizin kurucusu ebedî önderimiz Atatürk’ün ilk eve inkılaplarının içinde, millî benliğimizi koruyarak, yurdumuzu “müspet ilimle” imar edelim... Ibid., pp. 264–265.

<sup>694</sup> Atatürk [1927] 2006, pp. 312–313.

but which was brought home by a benevolent father, a general-turned-president (Kenan Evren), who is a contemporary manifestation of Atatürk, or at least of his mission.

Then in July 1983 while visiting the town of Hakkâri, Kenan Evren outlined to his audience the central Kemalist doctrine of one nation, crystallized in Atatürk's conception of nationalism, which defines the Turkish nation as "one flock, undivided into classes or privileges" (*imtiyazsız, sınıfsız kaynaşmış bir kitle olarak*).<sup>695</sup> In this speech, Kenan Evren confirmed the idea of history constructed in Atatürk's *Nutuk* in a completely unchanged form. According to this idea of history, the struggles in 1919–1922 represent a Turkish Revolution executed by a united Turkish nation that had secured its national borders, and was now living through the enlightenment process in every corner of the land. Evren also stated that, just as in the past, the present and future Turkey would face traitors who were fighting against this enlightenment project, represented as a common wish of a unified nation.<sup>696</sup>

Kemal H. Karpat claims, writing in 1988, that the key ideological change in Turkey occurred in the meaning attached to the concept of "modernism." According to him, "Today, the cultural and political emulation of the West is no longer the axis of modernism. It is, rather, economic development, technological advancement, and material progress in all its forms. The reconciliation with Ottoman past and the reshaping of the national identity in light of the Turks' own national cultural and religious ethos have broadened the scope of modernization in such a way as to relegate the West, without abandoning it, to secondary position, while giving priority to a new historically rooted socio-cultural Turkish identity."<sup>697</sup>

To a very minor degree, Kenan Evren's public speeches from 1980 to 1986 seem to confirm this evaluation. We have seen that Evren's main intention was to re-establish the original *Nutukian* message of national unity. Reading through his speeches suggests that Kemalism was indeed interpreted most of all as an ideology of a united nation. Like first-generation Kemalists, Evren warns his audience of the threat of religious fundamentalism. He does not, however, declare that God is irrelevant to the political community in the way that, for example, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt had done. Evren wanted the Turkish youth to become a "Fatherland-loving and Atatürkian nationalist, not an unbeliever but committed to secularism, respecting traditions and national customs."<sup>698</sup> It can be claimed that producing a political center committed to material progress through a rational and technical mentality in a context of cultural conservatism and moderate religious-oriented nationalism is the ultimate goal of Kenan Evren and his regime. In essence, the enlightenment idea of history reproduced by Kenan Evren by his attachment to *Nutukian* symbolism and rhetoric serves to legitimize the conservative status-quo established by the military regime during the 1980s. Evren's speeches produce a narrative of national cohesion,

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<sup>695</sup> Evren 2000, p. 340.

<sup>696</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

<sup>697</sup> Karpat 1988, p. 156.

<sup>698</sup> Evren 2000, p. 448.

calling for a consensus policy based on the material progress of the middle-classes that were in the process of forming the backbone of a capitalist society.

It can be claimed that the whole *Nutukian* narrative was based on the concept of “one path to modernity” and that this path was conceived as equalling the West in all of its forms. It can even be stated that the *Nutukian* narrative presupposes the “West” as the only possible category within which the Republic of Turkey can secure its existence. What we have in front of us in Kenan Evren’s speeches is an attempt to require legitimacy which in its core issues clearly reproduces the enlightenment idea of history originally constructed in Atatürk’s Six-Day speech. Thus, for Kenan Evren and the military regime established after 1980, the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history seemed once again to function as a tool for political re-legitimation.

#### **6.4 The Synthesis of the Conservative-Republican Kemalist Legitimation Effort and the Center-Right Nationalist-Conservative Narrative during the 1980s: *Türk-Islam Sentezi***

Umut Özkırmılı and Spyros A. Sofos argue that, after the beginning of the multi-party regime, the Democrat Party and its center-rightist successors started to appeal to the Islamic sensibilities of the majority of the Turks. This also induced the CHP to reinvent its attitude towards religion, accepting the idea that Islam was a crucial component of Turkish national identity. So, according to Özkırmılı and Sofos, Islam was already “striking back” during the 1950s and 1960s, not just in the 1980s, with the center-right parties campaigning on an Islamic platform, also inducing the Kemalist elites to re-conceptualize Islam as an important element of Turkish national identity.<sup>699</sup> The rediscovery of Islam as an important aspect of Turkish national identity was given further strength by the so-called Intellectuals’ Hearth (*Aydınlar Ocağı*), a group of academics and professionals from various disciplines. The “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis” was formed in this group during the 1970s. The Intellectuals’ Hearth was politically situated between the center-right Justice Party and the radical right Nationalist Action Party. This group’s influence really manifested itself after the 1980 military intervention. According to Özkırmılı and Sofos, the Intellectuals’ Hearth was able to submit its draft proposal for a new constitution to the junta, which governed Turkey through the so-called National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurumu*), and leading figures of the Hearth later declared that 75–80 percent of the final version of the 1982 Constitution was based on their draft. Özkırmılı and Sofos emphasize that it was views of Muharrem Ergin, who was the mastermind behind the Hearth’s draft constitution, that helped establish a model authoritarian regime, which were thus well suited to the objectives of the military junta. According to Özkırmılı and Sofos, the rediscovery of Islam in Turkish national identity had a potential to provide the legitimacy that the 1980 regime so desperately needed.<sup>700</sup>

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<sup>699</sup> Özkırmılı and Sofos 2008, p. 60.

<sup>700</sup> Ibid., pp. 61–62.

In this section we have analyzed Kemalist conservative-republican narratives from three decades, from the 1960s to the 1980s. This analysis has demonstrated that when it comes to attempts to acquire legitimacy in these Kemalist texts, the “rediscovery of Islam” observed by Özkırmılı and Sofos has almost no presence at all in these narratives of legitimation produced during 1960–1980. In the present analysis, contemporary scholarship on modern Turkey, which divides republican history into three periods, namely, the Kemalist one-party regime, multiparty democracy from 1950 to 1980, and the so-called “third republic” after the 1980 military intervention, has been, in a sense, both reproduced and abandoned. It has been argued that, when it comes to the narratives of legitimation, the regime established after 1980 by Kenan Evren and the military junta represented a clear continuation of former Kemalist legitimation efforts. One can even argue that the common Kemalist interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Struggle of 1919–1922 was, after 1980, utilized more vehemently than ever before. Thus, even though the 1980 military intervention crucially changed the character of the regime and the Constitution when compared to the one established in 1960, the tool employed by the Kemalist state-elite to produce legitimacy – the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history – was for Kenan Evren exactly the same as it was for Faruk Güventürk, Falih Rıfki Atay, and Celâl Bayar.

However, within this common narrative there were clear variations between different Kemalists. The most obvious dividing line is of course the evaluation of the nature of the Democrat Party regime during 1950–1960, and the following military intervention of 1960. For Faruk Güventürk and Falih Rıfki Atay, the DP rule represented a “counter-revolution” and they concentrated on legitimizing the regime established in 1960 by presenting it as a restoration of Atatürkian vision. In doing this, Güventürk and Atay took a position wholly in line with that of left-wing Kemalists. Celâl Bayar, on the other hand, was the leading figure of the DP tradition, and for him the 1960 military intervention was an illegal usurpation of power by the bureaucratic state-elite. However, in his effort to produce political legitimacy, he reproduced the basic components of the Kemalist enlightenment narrative: a united Turkish nation-state, a united scientific-oriented education, national prosperity grounded on the application of rational reason and technology, in the context of strict secularism.

If we take an overview of the diegesis produced in the conservative-republican Kemalist narratives, we observe that there is a major dividing line between the different representations of “democracy.” For the partisans of the Republican People’s Party, like Atay and Güventürk, the DP’s rule was not “genuine” democracy but a mockery of it, as the DP only managed to produce “majority tyranny,” the same interpretation we found in the narratives offered by authoritarian left-wing Kemalists. For Celâl Bayar, “democracy” was being hampered by the bureaucratic elite inside the CHP, whereas the DP and other center-right parties, like the Justice Party, were the true manifestations of the Kemalist enlightenment.

We have observed in this section that the class-based mobilization of the “masses” and the rhetoric of social revolutionism/socialism inherent in the left-wing Kemalist

narrative were rejected by the military and the conservative-republican Kemalist state-elite who saw it as a road to internal division. Especially in the narrative offered by Kenan Evren, the horror of this internal division was indeed the main justification for the military intervention and the new regime. We recall that the original *Nutukian* narrative was most of all a *re-legitimation* effort. This attempted relegitimization also characterizes most of the conservative-republican Kemalist narratives.

I have followed Siniša Malešević's idea that "ideology" is not for the most reproduced within crude macro-structural narratives, mediated by particular modes of production, but rather through a subtle translation of semi-coherent dominant normative doctrines into a set of micro-stories, with recognizable discourses, events, and actors, which are available and accessible to the general population. We have noticed that the diegesis offered by all conservative-republican Kemalist narratives analyzed here is composed of the familiar entities called "the west," "the east," and "the Turkish nation," thereby calling into being an implied reader who perceives that the destiny of the Turkish nation is to follow a historical path from a regressive East to a progressive West. As we read through these narratives, we noticed that they included several indirect or direct references to "you," thus invoking the implied reader: "We achieved a victory, but we are not yet secured." (Atay); "In the laboratory of history we see empires collapsing, but we never witness the abolishment of nations" (Bayar); "Let us take a look at Atatürk's revolution and its reasons." (Güventürk); "You also know very well the reasons why we were so sadly occupied. If we are unable to keep up with progress and even make up the distance between us and the most developed nations, if we fight among ourselves and attach ourselves to some superstitions forbidden even in our religion, I am afraid that the misfortunes experienced in the beginning of the twentieth-century shall again haunt us at the outset of the new millennium." (Evren).

The enlightenment is the goal of the story told, and that story began on 19 May 1919 in Samsun. This is the familiar story-world composed of a familiar date (19.5.1919), place (Samsun), event (beginning of the Turkish Revolution), and actor (Atatürk), and whenever these are included in any given story, the actual reader can identify with this familiar story-world through the implied reader invoked by the text. I have claimed that it is through this kind of mechanism that Kemalist "nationality" is reproduced. In other words, nationalist ideology as a social fact does not somehow mystically, freely circulate over the community, but is internalized through the implied reader during the reading/hearing of the Kemalist interpretation of history. These familiar components have provided common ground for both Kemalist secular-modernist nationalism as well as for a more traditional oriented conservative Turkish nationalism. However, the important distinction is that in the former this whole narrative story-world was interpreted through the idea of the enlightenment – a Kemalist articulation of strict secularism that has been internalized not by the majority of Turkish citizens but only by the secular middle classes.

The aim of this and previous sections has been to demonstrate the reproduction of the "Kemalist enlightenment idea of history" as a legitimation tool from the 1930s to

the 1980s. During the presentation it has been repeatedly claimed that this Kemalist enlightenment narrative was written within, and together with, the narrative of Turkish nationalism. Thus, the interpretation of the Anatolian Resistance Movement of 1919–1922 as a Turkish Revolution bringing enlightenment to Turkey brought together two all-encompassing conceptions, namely, the “nation” and the “enlightenment.” As a starting-point, I accepted the idea that the legitimation of power is an ongoing process, and that legitimacy is never an “all-or-nothing” situation, but rather that of “degree.” Another point of departure has been the idea that narratives do not simply reflect reality but very much construct that reality as an experienced reality. This position, then, forms the basis for my attempt to demonstrate how Kemalist narratives produced certain tremendously long-lasting narrative structures of nationality through a diegesis (“story-world”) and an implied reader.

In this respect, the 1980s seems to be a kind of transitional period as one can argue that the conservative-republican Kemalist legitimation narrative was taken over by a new ideological redefinition, that is, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. We saw above that the narrative of legitimation offered by Kenan Evren still created a diegesis and an implied reader which reproduced the *Nutukian* enlightenment idea of history. However, even though the speeches of Kenan Evren still reproduced this Kemalist enlightenment narrative in a familiar fashion, the ideas of the leader of the center-right Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*), that is Turgut Özal, clearly reveal an attempt to legitimize its hold on political power by utilizing an Islamic-oriented version of Turkish nationalism. One can argue that by the 1980 military intervention, or at least in the period following it, the official Kemalist state-ideology was opened in order to re-establish a Gökalpian vision of Turkishness. However, the new ideological orientation of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis can be seen as an updated version of the “national sociology” school of the early republican years in order to produce a kind of “secure ideological middle ground” after the “radical politics” of the 1960s and 1970s. As Jenny B. White observes, the role of Islam in the public and political spheres has been a matter of contestation throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, Islam was excluded from the political arena. Then, during the 1950s Islam started to regain a foothold in the political arena, but it was not until the 1980s that the first Islamist political parties really became popular. Then, since the 1980s, the re-emergence of religiously identified parties has reshaped the Turkish political scene, challenging the state’s official secularism.<sup>701</sup>

In a sense, what happened during the 1980s can be interpreted as a re-discovery of nineteenth-century Islamic modernization by a new era, which has crucially challenged the project of modernity. Haldun Gülalp argues that we should treat Islam as an ideology, and explain the contemporary rise of political Islam from this perspective. Gülalp notes that in the Turkish case, Islam was used as a tool of political legitimation during the Young Ottoman period in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and that this also laid the ground for the pan-Islamic ideology of sultan Abdülhamid II. This effort of political legitimation on Islamic premises was then challenged by the Kemalist regime, which established Turkish Republic on

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<sup>701</sup> White 2008, p. 357.



secular nationalism, leading to the suppression of Islam as an ideology and the control of religion by the state. Gülp also depicts how the modernizing-westernizing reforms of the Tanzimat period, starting with the reform edict of 1839, were challenged by the so-called Young Ottomans. The Tanzimat period was characterized by bureaucratic reformists, whose project was declared “ideologically unjustified” by the Young Ottomans, who tried to provide the ongoing modernization efforts with an Islamic justification. Then, during the reign of Abdülhamid II, the modernization’s legitimacy was even more based on Islamic premises.<sup>702</sup>

One text which perhaps more clearly than any other highlights the attempt to redefine official state ideology by means of a narrative synthesis between the traditional Kemalist enlightenment idea of history and the more religiously oriented Turkish-Islamic approach (which in large part is actually a re-cycling of the Islamic reformism of the nineteenth century), is Turgut Özal’s book *Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey*, a work which offers an account of Anatolian history in order to demonstrate Turkey’s European character. Published first in French and a little later in English, this book is most of all intended for the European political elite. However, it also very much participates in the ideological and political debate inside Turkey, aiming to offer a credible intellectual vision of Turkey’s future to the literate middle classes. As such, Özal’s book can be seen as a same kind of attempt to establish political legitimacy as any other text analyzed in the present study. After showing Anatolia’s crucial role as one of the cradles of human civilization, the text asks a rhetorical question regarding the extent to which the Turks have inherited Greek civilization, through which they can associate themselves with the Western world.<sup>703</sup> The answer given is as follows:

The classicist movement in Turkey was delayed for some while, though it was virtually completed before World War II, following the foundation of the secular Republic. The great works of antiquity, as well as those of the West, were translated and incorporated into the Republic’s education system. While for the West classicism meant going back to a different time and place, for us it had only the temporal dimension. The place in question was our own country which still has various aspects of this cultural heritage in its living tissues.<sup>704</sup>

It is said here that both in the West and in Turkey, the Middle Ages lost touch with the wisdom of ancient Greece, but it was re-established in both cases. In Europe this demanded not only a temporal re-orientation but also a spatial one, while in Turkey classical civilization was actually in its birth place. All this is a precondition for the second major thesis, according to which Islam as a religion was, more than Christianity, suited to accept Greek philosophy. The narrator first emphasizes that

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<sup>702</sup> Haldun Gülp, “Using Islam as Political Ideology: Turkey in Historical Perspective,” *Cultural Dynamics* 14 no.1 (2002): pp. 22–26.

<sup>703</sup> Turgut Özal, *Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey* (Nicosia: K. Rustem & Brother, 1991), p. 50. (First edition in French: 1988)

<sup>704</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

the progress of civilization always necessarily presupposes the enlargement of the sphere of reason, and then presents the following evaluation:

Despite the fact that the Christian religion was a Hellenized form of Semitic monotheism, it remained alien to Ionian reason until the Renaissance, even though, like Islam, it was fully acquainted with Greek philosophy and metaphysics. Islam by contrast was very much at home with Ionian scientific approach which gave birth to algebra and astronomy during the Islamic renaissance from the ninth to the twelfth centuries AD, so proving that theoretical scientific mind and monotheism are not mutually exclusive.<sup>705</sup>

Here the Kemalist enlightenment narrative is quite obviously transformed into something more ambiguous. The goal still seems to be the same, that is, “enlargement of the sphere of reason,” but the original obstacle is no longer the same. Unlike for the *Nutukian* narrator, institutionalized Islam is not an obstacle to scientific progress but its refuge. One can therefore argue that there is also a slight change of the implied reader: he/she is still the ideal Turkish republican citizen, but now he/she is at the same time an educated Muslim who values the achievements of Islamic civilization as the embodiment of scientific progress.<sup>706</sup>

Ersin Kalaycıoğlu notes that during the party’s formative years from 1983 to 1987, the image of the Motherland Party was influenced mainly by Turgut Özal’s personal orientation. Özal stood for the opening up of the Turkish economy in a society which was nevertheless based on the moral-religious Sunni values of the past. In Özal’s ideal Turkey “the majority of the population would still be Allah-fearing, mosque-attending souls, taking pride in the competitive strength of their companies in the global market, simultaneously taking care of the downtrodden brothers through charitable contributions established by the state. In short, Özal wanted a modern society held together by conservative values.”<sup>707</sup> Now, it is not difficult to see that this kind of social philosophy well suited Kenan Evren. As long as the scientific civilization of the West was positioned as the basic cornerstone of education, religiously backed conservative nationalism worked more than better for a general de-politicization of society.

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<sup>705</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>706</sup> This interpretation seems to be shared by Sedat Laçiner, who has noted that the main difference between Mustafa Kemal’s and Turgut Özal’s European vocation was that Atatürk universalized European values while Özal did not see any problem with Turkish civilization, since for Özal Turkish backwardness resulted from the lack of liberalism and scientific thinking. Because of this, “Turkey did not have to re-experience the enlightenment process undergone by the West because the fruits of the enlightenment could easily be adopted by today’s Turkey.” Laçiner also approves the idea that Özal represented the Turks’ “anti-Kemalist” feelings. Sedat Laçiner, “Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism,” *The Journal of Turkish Weekly* 9 (March, 2009). Available at: <http://www.turkishweekly.net/article/333/turgut-ozal-period-in-turkish-foreign-policy-ozalism.html>. (First published by *USAK Yearbook of International Politics and Law* 2 (2009): pp. 153–205.)

<sup>707</sup> Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “The Motherland Party: The Challenge of Institutionalization in a Charismatic Leader Party,” *Turkish Studies* 3 no. 1(Spring 2002): p. 46.

However, one can argue that in the eyes of the secular intelligentsia Özal's version of center-right political argumentation had again, as always, gone beyond accepted limits. There is an illuminating passage in Özal's book where the narrator laments that the Turkish intelligentsia *en masse* opposes the Motherland Party.<sup>708</sup> Indeed, secularist circles even today see the Özal period as peopled by unnecessarily populist, neo-liberal opportunists who too easily allied with the military regime – thereby hiding the fact that until then it had been the Kemalist secularists who had had very good relations with the military interventionists. A typical Kemalist evaluation of the Özal period is offered by Sina Akşin who writes that “Özal, a great pragmatist, had no trouble embracing Evren when he went to visit him at the presidential palace. On the whole he and his government did not have too much difficulty getting along with Evren and the army. His too familiar manners and speech, his closeness to Islamism (in 1977 he had been a candidate of the Islamist National Salvation Party and his brother Korkut was one of the leaders of that party), his lack of interest in culture, his laxity towards corruption and his readiness to cut corners (he seldom held cabinet meetings) raised eyebrows in many quarters, but ideologically he was on the same wavelength as Evren.”<sup>709</sup>

During the 1980s the government allowed a wide variety of Islamic ideas and material to be published and broadcast. The newly adopted doctrine of economic liberalism brought wealth to conservative and provincial entrepreneurs, and the Özal government brought these groups into the bureaucracy. There developed a new generation of Islamist intellectuals whose ideas started to attract members of the professional middle class, students, and even intellectuals who were, as Jenny B. White says, “now questioning Kemalism, nationalism, and even the modern, centralized nation-state, which some saw as totalitarian.”<sup>710</sup> As Islamist intellectuals re-discovered Muhammad Abduh and other Arab Islamist thinkers, they also started to “re-evaluate the basic tenets of the Enlightenment tradition, namely rationalism, universalism, modernity and the inevitability of human progress along a normative trajectory set by the West.” This questioning, White concludes, then gave impetus and credence to attempts to develop models for a non-Western political order, the principles of which were based on Islamic philosophy rather than secular nationalism.<sup>711</sup>

What White here calls the “inevitability of human progress along a normative trajectory set by the West” is identical to the phenomenon I have labeled the “Kemalist enlightenment idea of history.” Thus, to the degree that the official ideology and the narratives aiming to produce political legitimacy inside the “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis” during the 1980s were inspired by, or an inducement to, the questioning of this “inevitability of human progress along a normative trajectory set by the West,” they were also a more or less conscious decision to abandon the “Kemalist enlightenment idea of history” as a legitimation tool. One can argue that

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<sup>708</sup> Özal [1988] 1991, p. 309.

<sup>709</sup> Akşin 1996, p. 285. However, Hale and Özbudun note that in his memoirs Kenan Evren described Özal as a “positive danger for Kemalism.” Hale and Özbudun 2010, p. xxi.

<sup>710</sup> White 2008, p. 369.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

since the re-definition of the official state ideology during the 1980s, the right-wing conservative-republican version of Kemalism has become irrelevant, and the ideological dividing line now is drawn between conservative oriented center-right forces representing the majority of voters on the one hand, and a strict “defensive,” more often than not rhetorically leftist-oriented Kemalism representing the secular middle classes, on the other. Thus one can also argue that since the 1980s the distinction between conservative-republican and left-wing versions of Kemalism is no longer meaningful: the supposedly social-democratic Republican People’s Party is *the Kemalist party*, and even a brief look at its contemporary program reveals that the traditional enlightenment legitimation narrative is still at the core of its political argumentation.<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>712</sup> It is noteworthy that besides the re-affirmation of traditional Kemalist laicism, the CHP’s current party program also includes a definition of human rights that implies the emancipation of the individual in a more specific way: “Our understanding of the free individual does not include only the legal reforms but also the liberation of the individual in reality from all sorts of economic and social repression, economic dependence, pressure from religious orders, injustices in land ownership, and feudal pressure. It also includes the liberation of women through education and culture.” (Özgür birey anlayışımız sadece yasalarda yapılacak değişikliklerle sınırlı olmayıp gerçek hayatta bireylerin her türlü ekonomik ve sosyal baskılardan, ekonomik bağımlılıktan, tarikat baskısından, toprak mülkiyetindeki çarpıklıklardan ve feodal baskılardan kurtarılmasını da kapsamaktadır. Eğitim ve kültür yoluyla kadını özgürleştirmek.) *Cağdaş Türkiye İçin Değişim – Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Programı*, p. 20. Available at: <http://www.chp.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/chpprogram.pdf>

## 7 The Enlightenment Meta-Narrative as a Legitimation Tool

Perhaps it is best to start this concluding chapter with a quotation from Robert Nisbet, already presented in chapter 2.1.: “relatively small things which can be achieved in one generation toward the fulfillment of the idea or value are greatly heightened in importance when they are perceived as steps in the inexorable march of mankind.”<sup>713</sup> One can hardly find more suitable expression for the essence of the Kemalist “enlightenment idea of history” as a legitimation tool. In the previous chapters we have analyzed the formation of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history as a tool for political legitimation, from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s Six-Day speech to the speeches delivered by Kenan Evren during the 1980s. As we have seen, in providing legitimacy for the continued existence of the Kemalist regime, the Kemalist state-elite established a long-lasting narrative of a Turkish nation on a historical road to the enlightenment, perceived indeed as *an inexorable march of mankind*.

The Kemalist enlightenment idea of history has been internalized in Turkey most of all by the secular middle classes. I have argued that enlightenment and nationalism were two all-encompassing components in Kemalist ideology, and they thus also formed the basic presuppositions in the narrative “story-world” (diegesis) of the Kemalist representation of history. Whereas Turkish nationalism has been propagated by all Turkish political parties, the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history built inside Turkish nationalism has always been challenged by a more conservative and religiously motivated nationalism represented by the center-right parties, from the Democrat Party of the 1950s to the contemporary Justice and Development Party. In this sense the function of the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history has been to legitimize the Kemalist regime in the face of those forces which challenged its vision of modernity. This Kemalist vision claimed that in order to survive in the contemporary world, the Turkish nation had to get rid of the Islamic culture of the Ottoman Empire.

This also provides the ultimate answer to the question why the enlightenment idea of history has been crucial in legitimating the Kemalist ideology. Christoph Herzog has noted that the way in which the Enlightenment is collectively conceived in Turkey produces a perception that modernity and enlightenment are not “autochthonous” or “homegrown” historical achievements but represent something from the outside, something which has remained “foreign to Turkish history.” Herzog then goes on to argue that there are more or less clear indications that the Ottoman-Islamic civilization was able to produce enlightenment inherently already during the eighteenth-century, even though this took the form of oral elite debate of freethinking only. This domestic tradition, however, was “forgotten” and the Kemalist discourse has from its beginning constructed a historical narrative

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<sup>713</sup> Nisbet 1980, p. 171.

according to which there is a unilateral historical development heading towards emancipation, initially originated in the West and then brought to Turkey by the Atatürk Revolution. This, when attached to the major Kemalist effort to construct a Turkish national identity, leads, according to Herzog, to a paradoxical situation where the Kemalist emphasis on Western Enlightenment must be regarded as self-defeating: “it constructs as essentially Turkish the very identity it seeks to refute.”<sup>714</sup>

However, as we have analyzed the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history as a tool of political legitimation, we have noticed that it was absolutely necessary for the Kemalist regime to construct a collective idea that the enlightenment was initially “foreign”: the Turkish Revolution, in order to be legitimate, needed to accomplish something crucial for the existence of the Turkish nation, something crucial that the Ottoman Empire was inherently and essentially incapable of achieving. This crucial “something” was the the enlightenment. That is to say, in the Kemalist discourse *aydınlanma* (enlightenment) and *muassır medeniyet* (contemporary civilization) are “foreign” only until 19 May 1919. At that moment they are made an internal part of the “new Turkey” by its founding father, Atatürk. This, ultimately, also explains why there was such a pressing need to construct a glorious pre-Islamic Turkish antiquity, represented, as we observed in the introductory chapter, as the “cradle of civilizations.” Thus, in the Kemalist discourse, it is not the “West” that is the fundamental “other” of the Turkish nation, it is politicized Islam represented by the Ottoman Empire. This is why Kemalist writers have so systematically argued that *Türk İnkılabı/Atatürk İhtilali* (Turkish Revolution/Atatürk Revolution) is the execution of the universal Enlightenment project in the Turkish nation-state: the “revolution” was legitimate because it executes the enlightenment in Turkey. If the Kemalist discourse had proclaimed that the Ottoman Islamic Empire had already during the eighteenth-century been capable to produce the enlightenment, the Atatürk Revolution and the Kemalist regime established by it would have completely lost their legitimacy.

One of the main reasons for studying the Kemalist enlightenment idea of history as a totalizing meta-narrative in a synthesizing fashion, sometimes even at the cost of simplifying the picture to the limits of what can be considered acceptable in a historical study, has been the observation that the current postmodern criticism of the Kemalist project offers too simplistic an account of the nature of the Kemalist regime. Firstly, by labeling it totalizing, authoritarian, and elitist without also attempting to analyze the “narrative accruals” of the Kemalist texts, the postmodern criticism has severely narrowed our ability to comprehend the appeal and meaningfulness of the enlightenment meta-narrative to several generations of Turkey’s secular middle classes.<sup>715</sup> There is one trait in the postmodern scholarship which really obscures the historical experience, one that is also highly relevant in

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<sup>714</sup> Herzog 2009, pp. 22–30.

<sup>715</sup> As Cornell and Karaveli point out, “The prevailing Western reading of Turkey suffers from a blind spot, of a refusal to fully acknowledge that the confrontation over secularism is a conflict of identities, not just a power struggle between ‘Muslim democrats’ and ‘authoritarian secularists.’” Svante E. Cornell and Magnus Halil Karaveli, “Prospects for a ‘Torn’ Turkey: A Secular and Unitary Future?,” *Silk Road Paper* October 2008 (Central Asia- Caucasus Institute/Silk Road Studies Program), p. 13. Available at: <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/silkroadpapers/0810Turkey.pdf>.

order to understand the appeal of the Kemalist conception of history to the secular middle classes in Turkey. While labeling Kemalism as totalitarian and undemocratic, the postmodern criticism of Kemalism also manages to ridicule the whole Enlightenment project, in this way inducing us to forget the whole tradition of emancipating modernity, which has been a tremendous force in the struggle to overcome religious narrow-mindedness, conservative authoritarianism, gender inequalities, God-given “truths” obscuring humanity’s natural rationality, and, most of all, in promoting the education of the so-called “masses.” Thus, it is only against the long-lasting tradition of this meaningful emancipatory project, which has definitely not been just a collection of empty slogans for generations of Turkish secular middle classes, that we should evaluate the (past or contemporary) nationalist-Kemalist position taken by the major part of the Turkish secular middle classes, some of whose members would even welcome the intervention of the army in order to stop what they see as the re-Islamization of Turkey.

Secondly, the postmodern/postcolonial perspective which has described Kemalism as a failure because it is based on an unacceptable universalization of European experience, at the expense of particular rights, is very problematic position. One should understand that particularism and universalism are two sides of a same coin: the postmodern/postcolonial theory accusing Kemalism of being undemocratic, elitist and authoritarian, is a way of speaking that also presupposes the universalization of European-originated principles of democracy, liberal rights, minority rights, and the freedom to express ones faith. The particularist claims presuppose a universalist “higher order” which justifies the critique of Kemalism on the grounds that it fails to appreciate these universal rights for various particularisms.

After we have read through various Kemalist texts from the 1930s to 1980s, we can conclude by noting that the utopian aspect of Kemalism, described for example by İlhan Selçuk as an effort “to create a new human” (*yeni insanı yaratmak*),<sup>716</sup> has been both a tremendous factor justifying the Kemalist regime, and simultaneously a repressive tool in exercising power. This must be seen as the fate of all historical revolutions: the desire to implement a utopian vision produces suffering and repression. On the other hand, without the human desire to engage in utopian thinking – and the opportunity to realize the new society to which it aspires – many of those social changes we today consider as highly precious would have remained unfulfilled. The legacy of the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative for contemporary Turkey is thus a longing for a vision of a “revolution” understood as a *telos*, a peculiar tradition of a symbolic “Father,” who is simultaneously admired and completely misunderstood, a nation where conservative religious values are claimed to represent democratization and the empowerment of the people – who need to be liberated, paradoxically, from the Enlightenment utopia of universal emancipation.

Also, the legacy of the Kemalist enlightenment meta-narrative for contemporary, and, I would be inclined to predict, for future Turkish political culture is a question

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<sup>716</sup> İlhan Selçuk, “Türkiye Aydınlanması: ‘Yeni İnsan’ı Yaratmak,” in *Türkiye’de Aydınlanma Hareketi. Dünyü, Bugünü, Sorunları*. 25–26 Nisan 1991 Strasbourg Sempozyumu Server Tanilli’ye Saygı (Istanbul: Akım Yayınevi, 2006): pp. 31–37.

concerning the character and ultimately the limits of the principle of the “sovereignty of the people,” perceived as a perennial problem in the Republic of Turkey by the secular middle classes: if the majority is willing to abandon the fundamental secular tenets of the Kemalist revolution, how could this be accepted? It is important to notice that for the secular middle classes this is not only a question of whether the religiously oriented majority is aiming to re-establish an Islamic state in Turkey. From the Kemalist perspective, even the abandonment of the secular life-forms and the effort to create a new human being who has internalized the secular and scientific world-view is perceived as an effort to undo the sovereignty of the people. In this respect it seems that Mahmut Esat Bozkurt’s ideas linger on inside the Kemalist mindset. As we noticed in chapter 4.2., according to Bozkurt, the principle of the “sovereignty of the people,” which works as a fundamental ideal of the Turkish Revolution, does not give the people the right to make a decision that would in the end limit that sovereignty. Accordingly, in the name of the “sovereignty of the people” the Turkish nation cannot choose either the re-establishment of an Islamic state, or religiously-inspired ways of communal living, since these do not designate life but that of *irtica* (decline), resulting in *esaret* (slavery), a concept which in this context must be seen as meaning “intellectual slavery,” that is, submission to God. Hence, for those members of the Turkish secular middle classes who have truly internalized the Kemalist idea of history, *irtica* will inevitably result if the nation re-establishes theocracy, but also if the effort to create a new human (*yeni insan yaratmak*) is abandoned.

As the enlightenment idea of history has been utilized as a legitimation tool, the critical attitude towards all received wisdoms inherent in the Enlightenment tradition was severely compromised in Kemalism. As Büşra Ersanlı has observed, in Kemalist dominated Turkish intellectual life, to be rational or scientific has not produced a democratic or critical atmosphere, but has only resulted in a project to rescue politics from religious traditions.<sup>717</sup> One can argue that the Enlightenment tradition constructs an idea of critical reason endlessly questioning itself. The idea of the Enlightenment as a never-ending project questioning all received wisdom was clearly emphasized, for example, by Max Weber. Bryan S. Turner notes that, on the one hand, the Judeo-Christian faith was the source, in Max Weber’s view, of western civilization. On the other hand, religion is the great fountain of irrationality. It was the historical transformation of this irrationality into rationality which constituted the essence of the civilizational process. From Nietzsche, Weber learnt that all rational thought is tragic because it must constantly explore its own horizons, that is, its limits.<sup>718</sup>

In this sense, rational thought endlessly questioning its own limits is the foundation of the Enlightenment, and all subsequent criticism of universal rationality and the Enlightenment tradition presupposes this kind of self-questioning. In Kemalism, however, this critical attitude was compromised in order to build a political regime in the name of progress. This project soon developed its own unquestioned truths, dogmas, which were definitely not open to rational argumentation, and in this sense

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<sup>717</sup> Ersanlı 2006, p. 105.

<sup>718</sup> Turner 1992, pp. 7–11.



the Kemalist enlightenment has only managed to create a society where the official education system is on the rhetorical level based on critical reason but which in practice mostly encourages students to observe uncritically established truths. This state of affairs has much to do with the enlightenment meta-narrative reproduced by Kemalist texts: the emancipatory project was narrated together with the idea of nationalism, and these two main components of Kemalist ideology created a story-world in which a critical approach was compromised in order to protect the past from distorted interpretations. The logical outcome of this was the inability – in any particular socio-political context – to move beyond the established narrative – an act that a critical re-assessment would have required. A related issue concerns the diegetic continuity of Kemalism, that is, its enduring story-world which is inhabited by a Turkish nation whether as a “child-nation” needing permanent guidance, or as an entity incapable of intentional actions. During the overall analysis, we noticed several instances of a father-like narrator and a definition of the “people” not as a conglomeration of real individuals but as a category established by the Kemalist narrating voice. Although this kind of definition of the people has probably been part of most nationalistic discourses, it is hardly an exaggeration to claim that in Turkey’s political culture the omnipotent original “Father” and his subsequent narrative incarnations have reached extraordinary proportions.

The meaningfulness of the narratological approach to Kemalism can be summarized with the following example from Uri Margolin’s analysis of *Don Quixote* as a character inhabiting a narrative story-world: “Don Quixote did not exist before Cervantes invented him; he is precisely the way his author presents him, and could easily have been otherwise. He was born when the text bearing his name was written down, and will go on living as long as at least one copy of it remains and at least one person reads it. And where and how does he exist? In the sphere of our individual imagination as an object of thought, and in the sphere of public communication as an object of discourse.”<sup>719</sup> Now, if we replace the name *Don Quixote* with *Turkish nation* in the above quotation, we get a pretty good definition of the narrative existence of a nation. One can argue (with a certain overstatement) that the Turkish nation was born the day Turkish nationalist ideologues invented it. One can also argue that the *Turkish nation* exists in the sphere of our individual imagination as an object of thought, and in the sphere of public communication as an object of discourse. Also, it is helpful to think with regard to the Kemalist nationalist narrative that the *Turkish nation* is exactly the way his authors present him, and could easily have been otherwise.

So, as narrative and reality should be seen in a dialogical relationship – like a circle where the first one affects the other and *vice versa* – the narrative characterization of a nation has an effect for the real-world existence of the nation. Thus, the enduring Kemalist story-world from the 1930s to 1980s (and beyond), with its definition of the Turkish nation as a “child-nation”; its narrative constructions of “adversaries” of and “obstacles” to the national “goal” (the Enlightenment); and most of all its implied reader who recognizes the “you” in the Kemalist narrative and transforms it

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<sup>719</sup> Uri Margolin, “Character,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. David Herman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): p. 67.

into an “I,” this way internalizing Kemalist ideology, provide the narrative bases for the endurance of Kemalist ideology, internalized by the secular middle classes and thus crucially affecting their conception of history, world-view, and values. The force and endurance of Kemalist ideology can be explained by the credibility of the narrative story-world established. As the Kemalist nationalist narrative was written together with the enlightenment meta-narrative, originally constructed in Europe, it was able to narrate Turkish national history as part of a process perceived as having world-historical proportions and meaning. In other words, the story of humanity’s emancipation through rational thinking and science established a fundamental purpose and a utopia. And as with all totalizing cultural narratives conceived as utopian projects, so Kemalism has its darker side. As the story of human emancipation in the particular context of the Turkish nation state became a tool of political legitimation, it also became an obstacle for the development of individual freedoms, minority rights, and pluralist democracy.

Finally, as the Kemalist conception of history implied an idea of “reaching the level of contemporary civilization” – understood as contemporary Europe – it is obvious that the current polemics concerning Turkey’s future membership in the European Union, or Turkey’s “European character” in general, should only be discussed after a detailed analysis of Kemalist legitimation attempts. As a political project, the EU has participated in reproducing the idea of a European identity, seeing the Enlightenment tradition as a central ingredient of this identity. As we saw in chapter 2.1., the idea of Europe has been historically formed as a totalizing cultural narrative. Since the beginning of the nineteenth-century this narrative identity has been more and more secular, constructing the idea of human emancipation through science and progress based on critical reason. This narrative identity has traditionally been based on the idea of an “other,” an essentially religious Islamic civilization. As I argued in chapter 2.1., the point is not whether today’s European political or academic elite still believes that these kinds of dichotomist and essentialist constructions are justified – one could argue that at least in some circles the opposite is currently the case because of the postcolonial/postmodern/relativist paradigm – but that many other Europeans still see the world through these totalizing cultural narratives.

Also it must be understood that the contemporary rejection of the European model of modernization in several Islamic societies tends to reproduce the idea of a crucial difference between European and Islamic civilization. By referring to many currents of political Islam in today’s world, Haldun Gülalp states that political Islam labels the idea of progress as an expression of Western hegemony, and tries to legitimize post-nationalist politics of identity based on religion. In Gülalp’s words, “if secular nationalism implied at least a concealed recognition of the superiority of the West and thus the need to imitate its ways, the assertion of an authentic self that is essentially different from the western character inevitably and paradoxically leads to the reproduction of another western dogma – i.e. the dogma of orientalist essentialism. Only, it does so in reverse.”<sup>720</sup> Thus, the insistence on an authentic “Islamic self” in contrast to “Western modernity” only manages to reproduce the totalizing cultural narratives of the “West” and the “Islamic world,” a discourse, as

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<sup>720</sup> Gülalp 2002, pp. 28–34.

we recall from chapter 2.1., which has been critically observed as the product of Western “orientalists.” In the Turkish context similar kinds of trends – although not by proponents of political Islam but by center-right forces emphasizing religious values in Turkish national identity – is observed by Mustafa Aydin and Asli Toksabay Esen, who note that, “the shift in Turkish discourse from the assertion, since the foundation of the Republic, that Turkey belongs to Europe in civilizational terms towards an emphasis on an ‘alliance of civilizations’ is unfortunate. This approach of the Turkish government reinforces the essentialist attitudes that constitute the basis for an anti-Turkish sentiment on religious and cultural grounds as it underlines differences rather than convergence.”<sup>721</sup>

This has produced a new phase in Turkish political history, a phase where the Europeanizing discourse is expressed by a political party whose electorate simultaneously is in the habit of re-creating an “Islamic self,” a category clearly constructed as a distinction to a “European other.” This is rather evident, since as I noted before by referring to J. M. Bernstein’s and Krzysztof Brzechczyn’s ideas on the inevitability of meta-narratives, the historical past (and therefore also the future) as a collective formulation can only be expressed in retrospect by a synthesizing narrative which places separate events, individuals, and periods into a meaningful whole. From this perspective, in Turkey, postmodern and Islamic-oriented criticism which labels, in many respects with justification, Kemalism totalitarian and elitist, in a new era that declares the end of meta-narratives, only manages to create a new meta-narrative which repeats the story of the end of meta-narratives, in reality simultaneously reproducing another one in the context of religious identity politics and a neoliberal market economy.

In Kemalist Turkey the Enlightenment project was executed as a top-down process by a state authority. In essence, this implied the idea of social engineering in the tradition of nineteenth-century European positivism, seen as a method for rapid social change. Knowing the situation in Ottoman society at the beginning of the 1920s, this choice was perceived as inevitable by the reforming elites. In the current phase, however, this tradition seems to be the greatest obstacle to the development of a more pluralist and democratic society. On the other hand, it is obvious that without the Kemalist regime and its social engineering project, *secularization* – which must be seen as a necessary precondition for a liberal order based on equal and individual rights – would have been much more precarious and slower. As the Kemalist regime was built during the 1920s, the interpretation of European political institutions and ideals – which had begun already in the last quarter of the eighteenth-century – continued with influences taken from the corporatist and even fascist ideologies of the time. Thus, from the perspective of political ideologies, Turkey has been part of the European political tradition for a long time. The problem is that Kemalist Turkey was “Europeanized” initially during a time of corporatism and fascism, a body of political ideals that today’s Europe (in a rather uncritical manner) wants to forget and reject as it presents itself as the defender of democracy, the rule of law, and a free

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<sup>721</sup> Mustafa Aydin and Asli Toksabay Esen, “Conditionality, Impact and Prejudice: A Concluding View From Turkey,” in *Conditionality, Impact and Prejudice in EU-Turkey Relations*, ed. Nathalie Tocci. IAI-TEPAV Report (July 2007): pp. 134–135.

market economy. In this respect the new AKP regime has done a lot with its liberalizing policy to build a European Turkey. On the other hand, Europe is most of all a collective representation, composed of people who want to identify themselves as Europeans. From this perspective, being European does not mean fulfilling certain technical criteria but a willingness to identify with a common ideal. In this respect, the desire to identify with the international Islamic *ummah*, and the building of a presumably “authentic Islamic self” as opposed to the forced western-oriented secular Turkish identity proposed by Kemalist ideology, can be problematic as some might claim that Europeans should, by definition, most of all identify with Europe and its values rather than an international religious community which, after all, is mostly reproduced by constructing the “other” as European.

These observations, it must be underlined, are not to suggest that we *should* keep reproducing totalizing cultural narratives: what is suggested here is that these kinds of narratives have a long history, that they have been functioning as tools for political legitimation in the past, and that similar kinds of totalizing narratives will probably have this kind of function also in the future. These efforts are based on an influential human desire to narrate lived experiences, both on the individual and the collective level.

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