

STATE ELITES, POLITICAL CHANGE, AND PATTERNS
OF NATIONHOOD FROM THE LATE OTTOMAN
EMPIRE TO CONTEMPORARY TURKEY

by

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ABSTRACT

Under what conditions and why do the state elites change their policies toward nationhood? In this research, I intend to develop a nuanced analytical framework with an aspiration toward a theoretical proposition on the institutional change of state policies toward nationhood. The dissertation takes the cases of imperial citizenship reform in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-nineteenth century, the shift from Ottoman identity to Turkish identity in the first quarter of the twentieth century, and the state promotion of minority languages in Turkey after the 2000s. Methodologically, I carry out a comparative historical research through the analysis of official documents such as constitutions, parliamentary proceedings, and speeches by political leaders. I explore the patterns of change within my proposition of the four ideal-type nationhood structures that states can adopt: hierarchical, asymmetrical, hyphenated, and monolithic. While the dissertation emphasizes the notion of ontological security in terms of the logic of the state elites in revisiting state policies toward nationhood, it explains the conditions under which the policy changes occur by looking at the contingencies of the international context, domestic elite competition, and domestic nonstate actors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE STATE OF NATIONHOOD

POLICIES AND THE QUESTION

OF INCLUSION/EXCLUSION

Statement of the Problem

Under what conditions and why do the state elites change their policies toward nationhood? Canada has shifted to two official languages after the concerns over the French-speaking Québécois and uses an ethnic classification in its population census to reflect the cultural diversity of the nation. The United States has no official language, but started to exercise affirmative action in the 1960s in order to overcome the historical discrimination toward those groups who were excluded from American national identity. The United States also embraces an ethnically/racially classified population census system. France has only one official language and there is no classification of ethnicity in the census and there is no affirmative action based on ethnicity or race. France also bans religious symbols such as veils in public schools. Turkey has only one official language and there is no ethnic question in the census but Turkey has recently begun promoting minority languages through its official state television channel. Sri Lanka has shifted to two official languages after conflict with the Tamils. The Australian state officially began to define the nation as multicultural in the 1970s. After centuries of a hierarchical and confessional-based autonomy system, the Ottoman Empire first introduced the

overarching Ottoman nationhood beyond ethnic and religious affiliations in the nineteenth century. After decades of ethnic-based imagined ‘German-ness’, the German state has begun to grant citizenship to the children of Turkish worker migrants, the largest non-German community in Germany. These policies represent a diversity of nation-building and nationhood policies that states adopt, internalize, and reconsider over time in which the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are set. While some of these policies were embraced in the beginning of the social engineering projects of state- and nation-building, many others were adopted gradually in the historical evolutions of nations. In other words, despite being persistent, nation-building and nationhood policies are rarely conclusive but rather they are subject to change. Thus, while some states largely remained loyal to their historical nation-building projects and the boundaries of nationhood, many others moved away from them and changed their path-dependent policies, especially with regard to the historical position of minority groups. Why do some states change their nationhood policies that reconsider and reorganize their ethnic and religious social world, while some states show resistance to such changes? In general, the question is about the policy change in the institutional design of the state and its nation-building *raison d’être* over time.

The challenge for this research is to come up with a theoretical argument in order to explain the policy changes from a comparative-historical perspective. *Under what conditions and why do states change their policies toward nationhood and minorities?* These questions not only aim to explain why the policy change occurs, but they also consider the issue of the approximate timing of the change.

The state attempts to make societies ‘legible’ and simplified through social

engineering tools such as an official language in order to consolidate its routine functions such as taxation and the prevention of rebellion.¹ The idea of a modern nation congruent with its state has been part of the simplification processes in which a homogenous cultural community has been the ultimate goal. Yet, the idea of a homogenous nation with a monolithic national identity has remained an ideal type in most cases within which assimilation has been the social engineering tool of the state. While some states have been successful in building relatively homogenous nations with a motivation for an unrivaled ethnicity and nationhood, others have encountered alternative identity claims both from within where the peripheral ethnic groups have become politicized and from outside as new immigrants have challenged the institutionalized national identities. Moreover, some other states have practiced the options of accommodation or exclusion rather than assimilation. In cases where assimilation policies have failed, the nation-state as an ideal project has found itself in an identity crisis. At that point, the option of cultural pluralism in the public sphere for political contestation has come to the front. The politics of cultural pluralism,² multiculturalism,³ and the politics of difference⁴ have become the new policy options for the states, especially in liberal democratic ones. These debates question the state as a culturally-neutral entity in general and the assimilative state policies toward minorities in particular. If states take these arguments into consideration and political reform occurs, the puzzle, then, is to explain under what

¹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

² Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979).

³ Charles Taylor and Amy Gutmann, eds., *Multiculturalism and The Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

⁴ Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

conditions the path-dependent policies of the founding nation-building motivations and the boundaries of nationhood encounter critical junctures. Thus, the research concern here is not just about why the change occurs, but it is also about when the change occurs since path dependency and critical junctures are important in comparative-historical research.

I choose three cases of paradigmatic shifts in state policies toward nationhood from the late Ottoman imperial context until contemporary Turkey. These cases can shed light on the contemporary identity issues that many post-Ottoman states encounter in the Middle East in general and Turkey in particular. The rise of the Ottomanism project based on constitutional patriotism and its reflections on the Ottoman Nationality Law of 1869 that redesigned power relations of its historically underrepresented ethno-religious communities *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman state, the policy shift from the Ottomanist project of nationhood toward a monolithic Turkish nationhood through the 1920s, and the policy shift toward ethnically plural notions of Turkishness in the 2000s, especially with the so-called ‘Kurdish openings’ raise theoretical as well as empirical questions of why and under what conditions the state policies toward nationhood change.

Focus of the Study

In this research, my purpose is to explain the state policy changes in historically institutionalized policies toward the boundaries of nationhood in relation to ethnicity and minorities. Simply put, the state might shift its policies from discrimination to nondiscrimination or from ethnic blindness to ethnic pluralism. What is at stake here is that the state-framed national identities are challenged by rival alternative identities and changing international norms on the state of minorities and the states seek various ways

of containing, accommodating, and integrating these claim-makings. There is a growing literature on identity-related policy changes within and across states such as on bilingual education, ethnicity-based censuses, constitutional recognition of multiculturalism, affirmative action clauses, state recognition of minority languages, to name but a few. Yet, the trends in minority policy change do not always lean toward accommodative configurations. For instance, Russia lifted its nationality section in its internal passports in 1997 which seems to be a step back from the multiethnic mindset of the state.⁵ If state policies toward nationhood change, we need to understand and explain the variations in the degree of change across cases and the conditions that lead the state toward such changes.

My research mainly involves the state of minorities and their relationship with the state within which the state might reconsider the boundaries of nationhood. Thus, this is not a study on changing citizenship policies that regulate the legal boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, but it is more a study on nationhood that regulates not just the legal but also the cultural boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.

Rogers Brubaker in his seminal study looks at the traditions of nationhood in France and Germany. He argues that “if the French understanding of nationhood has been state-centered and assimilationist, the German understanding has been *Volk*-centered and differentialist.”⁶ In other words, German nationhood is based on ethnocultural understanding while French-ness is based on territorial and political understandings. This

⁵ Sener Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁶ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 1.

dichotomous approach—territorial or ethnocultural, civic or ethnic, Western or Eastern—has been widely adopted in the studies on nationalism and citizenship. But this dichotomous approach is seen as problematic in recent studies. For instance, Sener Akturk argues that civic and ethnic nationalism are not mutually exclusive.⁷ He states that “civic is a vague, empty category; moreover ethnic and civic are derived from different roots.”⁸ In this study, as I will discuss in Chapter 3, I develop four ideal-type institutional structures of nationhood (see Figure 1) which go beyond civic versus ethnic or state-framed or counter-state nationhood.⁹ By doing this, I have two goals. The first is to introduce a more sophisticated conceptual variation in the practices of nationhood. The second is to problematize the conceptual confusion between citizenship and nationhood or state identity and national identity which I find to be analytically different concepts. Rogers Brubaker et al. also highlight this problem. They state that “Nationhood and nationality are not, however, necessarily understood as congruent with state and citizenship” and “this point needs to be underscored, since ‘nation’ and ‘state’, ‘nationality’ and ‘citizenship’ are often used interchangeably in the United States and some Western European contexts.”¹⁰ For this reason, I highlight that this study is not about citizenship *per se*, but it is about nationhood which I see as a more overarching category than citizenship (see Chapter 3). An individual may be a citizen of a state, but may still lack a membership in the imagined nationhood. I will discuss the conceptual

⁷ Akturk, *ibid.*, 2012.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹ The four ideal-type institutional structures of nationhood demonstrate: (1) legal exclusion-pluralism (hierarchical nationhood), (2) legal exclusion-assimilation (asymmetrical nationhood?), (3) legal inclusion-pluralism (hyphenated nationhood), and (4) legal inclusion-assimilation (monolithic nationhood). See Chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁰ Rogers Brubaker, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox and Liana Grancea, *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 14.

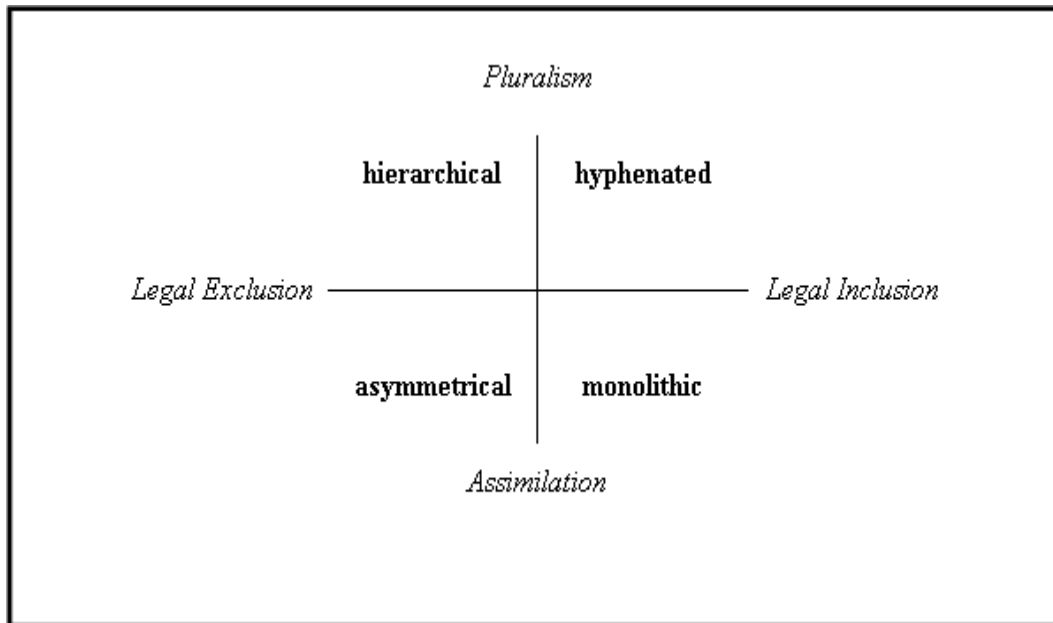


Figure 1. Four Ideal-Type Institutional Settings of Nationhood

framework and typological dimension of this study in Chapter 3.

Research Questions

There are two trends of change here as I will elaborate on more in the analytical framework section: (1) why and when the states move from assimilation to pluralism (or vice versa) and (2) why and when the states move from legal exclusion to legal inclusion with regard to the issue of minorities (or vice versa).

The issue of approximate timing is essential here. Why didn't the Turkish state start broadcasting in minority languages during the 1990s or 1980s rather than in the 2000s? Or why the Ottoman state elites did not adopt Turkishness in the 1850s but in the 1920s before the establishment of the Republic? Or why did the Ottoman state adopt Ottomanism in the 1850s but not in the 1800s? Overall, I plan to explore these questions in a systematic fashion within a specific analytical framework (see Figure 1) that

provides four ideal–type institutional designs of nationhood (in relation to minorities) that I will elaborate on more in Chapter 3. For introductory purposes, the legal exclusion and inclusion axis is about *the degree of citizenship* and the pluralism-assimilation axis looks at *the ethnic recognition* aspect in the institutions of the states.

Key Concepts: Nationhood, Ethnicity, and Minorities

This study seeks to unpack the political change from one institutional setting of nationhood to another as shown in Figure 1. As Rogers Brubaker has shown,¹¹ if France would shift from its historical and institutional view of nationhood that is assimilationist and unitarist toward either an ethnocultural form as in Germany or a pluralist and multi-ethnic form as in the United States, how would we be able to explain this political change? What would be the necessary and sufficient conditions that would lead to such a political change? As this study traces the notion of nationhood from the late Ottoman Empire through contemporary Turkey, the goal is to explain the changes in state policies toward nationhood over time in three specific cases of change. In this comparative historical account, this study also explains the continuity in the policies of nationhood as well as where there is no change. Thus, the research design is based on not only positive cases but also negative cases as well. I provide further explanations on the methodology and research design in Chapter 2 but it would be helpful to introduce the key concepts earlier and explain how these concepts are approached. In Chapter 3, I discuss how I problematize the notions of citizenship and nationhood, and take the concept of nationhood as a combination of the legal and cultural practices. I also provide an in depth

¹¹ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, 1992.

discussion of how I build my four ideal-type nationhood structures in Chapter 3.

In institutional perspectives, the state has been one of the most important engines of such a ‘wide range of forms’ of ethnicity and nationhood.¹² “The state monopolizes, or seeks to monopolize, not only legitimate physical force but also legitimate symbolic force, as Bourdieu puts it” states Brubaker and “this includes the power to name, to identify, to categorize, to state what is what and who is who.”¹³ Incorporating these insights on ethnicity and nationhood, this study also follows an institutional perspective on understanding the dynamics of political change in state policies toward nationhood.

Brubaker et al. also emphasize the statist perspective on nationhood and ethnicity:

Institutionalist and organizational perspectives on ethnicity have focused on the state, analyzing the ways in which states count, categorize, and identify their populations through censuses, identification cards, passports, and the like; the manner in which states are constituted, expressly or implicitly, as nation-states (or, in a few cases, as multinational states); and the forms of state recognition—or nonrecognition—of ethnic heterogeneity.¹⁴

Overall, the way I encounter the dialectical relationship between ethnicity and nationhood, and the way the state organizes the legal-institutional structure of this relationship is not independent from the role of minorities. Further elaboration of the conceptual framework will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Case Selection

Based on comparative-historical research, I aim to explain the patterns of nationhood policy persistence and change through both a within-case longitudinal

¹² Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

¹³ Brubaker, p. 42.

¹⁴ Rogers Brubaker, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox and Liana Grancea, *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 359.

analysis (Turkey) and a cross-case process tracing (Turkey and the Ottoman Empire). I choose three cases for my research. The first case is the rise of Ottomanism and the Ottoman Nationality Law in 1869 that introduced patriotic Ottoman nationhood across ethnic and religious lines to all the subjects of the Ottoman Sultan. The second case is the adoption of the ethnically blind but religiously selective Turkish nationhood in the 1920s. Thirdly, I chose the Turkish state's initiative that began in 2003 to promote minority languages through official television channels and elective courses in public schools which can be considered a paradigmatic shift in a historically ethnically-blind state.

I choose these cases, differing in time and direction of change, for three specific reasons. First, the reason for choosing the Ottoman Empire is that minority policies are not limited to the modern nation-states. Both in an imperial state and in a nation-state, patterns of change in nationhood policies take place and the causes behind them entail in-depth analysis. The confessional-based Ottoman *millet* system that gave autonomy to the Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Jews is considered to be antiassimilative and a unique system of managing diversity in a non-Western context.¹⁵ On the other hand, although Turkey's nation-building project began based on firm assimilation, the state-framed nationhood has been gradually deconstructed. An explanation over the similar *raison d'être* of states' changing policies toward nationhood and minorities regardless of imperial or nation-state setting is likely to take the research agenda beyond nation-states and their discontents.

Secondly, the comparison between the late Ottoman Empire and contemporary

¹⁵ Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Turkey is likely to shed light on the two different social worlds of the governing diversity and nationhood. Thirdly, the differences in the historical periods when policy changes take place might be another gain for the sake of this research design. Although contextual analysis is an emphasis in this research, explaining policy changes similar in nature beyond certain historical contexts and time periods can provide insights for understanding the general conditions that make states change their policies toward nationhood. This can make this research less descriptive and more explanatory.

Conclusion and Organization of the Dissertation

States rarely change the boundaries of their nationhood in relation to the position of minorities. As new institutionalist scholars argue policy feedback and path dependency make the status quo less costly for political elites.¹⁶ Yet, despite the costs, political elites do still reconsider the boundaries of nationhood and change the lines of inclusion and exclusion if certain conditions force them to do so. The aim of this study is to shed light on this question of political change. In a nutshell, I argue that states are more likely to change their policies toward nationhood under three interrelated conditions: favorable international context, the pressure of the domestic nonstate actors, and the elimination of the status-quo elites by the new proreform political elites.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the weaknesses of existing approaches in the literature and provide the methodological approach embraced in this study. In Chapter 3, I elaborate on my typological framework of nationhood within which I seek to analyze the patterns of change. In Chapter 4, a brief historical background of the late Ottoman and early Turkish

¹⁶ Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Republic political context is discussed. In Chapter 5, I introduce the formation and anatomy of modern Turkish nationhood. While Chapter 6 deals with the transition from the Ottoman millet system to Ottomanism, Chapter 7 discusses the pattern of change from Ottomanism to Turkishness. Chapter 8 shows path dependency of Turkishness throughout the twentieth century and how it has shifted to hypnated framework of nationhood after the 2000s. Chapter 9, which is the conclusion chapter, provides the main arguments of the dissertation in relation to the historical patterns of change within the late Ottoman and modern Turkish political trajectory.

CHAPTER 2

POLICY CHANGE AND NATIONHOOD: EXISTING
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES
AND THEIR LIMITATIONS

Introduction

My goal in this study is to understand and explain under what conditions and why state elites change their policies toward nationhood. By nationhood, I mean the legal-institutional and cultural boundaries of belonging to a particular state. Thus, nationhood differs from citizenship since citizenship particularly relates to legal-institutional binding to a specific state. A state can change the boundaries of nationhood by redesigning the relationship between the majorities and minorities through certain policies such as ethnic, linguistic, and religious reforms that alter the boundaries of belonging (see Chapter 3 for my typological design).

In this chapter, I lay out a general survey on the studies of nation-state, nationalism, and the question of nationhood, and then I critically discuss the existing literature on state policy changes toward nationhood and minorities. I categorize two approaches in the studies of policy change toward national identity and minority policies: (1) endogenous approaches that mostly refer to social movements and public policy making, and (2) exogenous approaches that focus on international context and international institutions. While these approaches provide great insights in explaining

when states are more likely to change their identity policies, they tend to overemphasize one dimension (i.e., endogenous or exogenous) over the other. My analysis incorporates both approaches together within which I integrate the literature of institutional change informed by historical institutionalism into the literature of state policy changes toward nationhood and minorities. Thus, in a way, I categorize nationhood as one of the essential institutions of the state.

A General Survey on Nationalism, Nationhood, and the Question of Homogeneity

Since the nineteenth century the modern world polity of nation-states has been enlarged and consolidated, and nationalism has been one of the most important political forces for groups who seek to secure their states and for groups who seek autonomy and self-determination. While the origins of nationalism are not in the primary scope of this study,¹⁷ what nationalism does and how it functions in relation to the dimensions of assimilation and cultural diversity needs attention. For instance, seeing nationalism as a function of industrialization, Ernest Gellner argues that the state fosters a high and standardized culture which becomes “the necessary shared medium, the life-blood or perhaps rather the minimal shared atmosphere, within which alone members of the society can breathe and survive and produce.”¹⁸ Nationalism, then, functions as “a cultural blueprint for various features of social and political organization in the modern

¹⁷ The debates revolve around modernist and primordialist/essentialist approaches to nationalism. Modernist approaches include separate theoretical stances among constructivists and functionalists/instrumentalists. For further information on nationalism in general, see John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds. 1994. *Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press; Umut Ozkirimli. 2010. *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁸ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 37.

world.”¹⁹ In fact, this notion of high culture or cultural blueprint that nationalism produces in modern societies manifests the idea of national identity and nationhood as a “deep horizontal comradeship.”²⁰ Functions such as political centralization, bureaucratization, mass education, conscription, a standardized language, and taxation are the building blocks of bridging the state with a cultural blueprint, high culture, and ‘deep horizontal comradeship.’ As a toolbox, these features refer to the idea of simplification as the basic logic of the modern state that rejects complex heterogeneity among the members of the society. Homogenization of diverse cultures, languages, norms, and ethics is the means to this simplification which incarnates itself in a nation and a national identity.

Yet, nationhood does not constitute a fixed and static notion. Rather, it is a site of “a continuous process of struggle over the legitimacy of the state and the meaning of popular sovereignty.”²¹ In this process, resistance to political integration into a common national state, compliance to the rules and cultural norms of the state, and the assimilation of all or dissident groups into the majority or common culture and language are various stages of nation-building, which does not necessarily evolve in a linear fashion.²² These processes, in fact, are slow-moving and complicated. When the social-cultural and psychological amalgamation and integration of diverse identity groups are unresolved, peaceful and stable nation-building is unlikely. In other words, “the feelings of alienation

¹⁹ Liah Greenfeld and Jonathan Eastwood, “National Identity,” in *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* ed. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 259.

²⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 1983.

²¹ Justin Wolfe, *The Everyday Nation-State: Community and Ethnicity in Nineteenth Century Nicaragua* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 13.

²² Karl Wolfgang Deustch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1966).

and political apathy engendered in political subculture” disrupt the consolidation of the nation-state.²³ To that point, Lloyd A. Fallers argues that the assumption that a nation is socially and culturally homogenous and thus politically unified has diminished. Because “either to wipe out the diversities that are a residue of history or to prevent new ones from developing through migration or internal differentiation” is less likely.²⁴ In addition, social constructivism has gained leverage in the postmodern and poststructuralist approaches as national identities are considered artificial rather than natural or given. This has led to the possibilities of hyphenated identities and multicultural understandings of the nation and the state. Nationalism as a force of cultural unity and cultural homogeneity in general and the nation-state as a monocultural entity in particular has been challenged by pluralist understandings such as ‘multicultural citizenship.’²⁵ As David Miller states, “even nations that originally had an exclusive ethnic character may come, over time, to embrace a multitude of different ethnicities.”²⁶ Overall, the state’s exclusive social engineering projects of nation-building in the past do not mean that the state will stick to those initial policies and not break the path dependence.²⁷

The ‘differentialist’ turn that rejects the view of monolithic and homogenous nationhood reflects the asymmetrical power relations between the majority groups—that tend to control the state and determine the cultural norms and rules—and the minority

²³ Robert C. Scott, “Nation-Building in Latin America,” in *Nation-Building in Comparative Contexts* ed. Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1966), p. 80.

²⁴ Lloyd A. Fallers, *The Social Anthropology of the Nation-State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1974), pp. 2-3.

²⁵ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

²⁶ David Miller, *On Nationality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 21.

²⁷ Paul Pierson. 2000. “Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics,” *American Political Science Review* 94(2): 251-267.

groups—that tend to feel culturally and politically alienated from the social and political institutions of the society. This, of course, makes the question of minority identity relevant across many societies today. Political theorists and philosophers have extensively encountered the diversity question in the age of nation-states. There has been an ongoing debate on how to accommodate the political claims of minority identities that tend to contradict the national identity or the national culture of the state, particularly in liberal democratic nation-states. Political theorists and philosophers have defended various stances from classical liberalism and liberal democracy to communitarian, consociation, recognition and difference-based forms of nation-states. These debates largely revolve around normative concepts such as equality, justice, liberty, and democracy.²⁸ There is a double trend within states both toward a postnational discourse and toward self-determination based minority nationalism mobilizations. The reconciliation of the two is not an easy task.²⁹

The State, Nationhood, Minorities, and the Question of Inclusion/Exclusion

The era of nation-states based on monolithic nationhood built on a single language, a single historical memory, and a single cultural framework is in decline. The story of assimilation and homogenization belongs to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, not to the twenty-first century. The incongruence and the paradox between the state-framed nationhood and counter-state discourses of nationhood have made

²⁸ Stephen May, Tariq Modood, and Judith Squires, eds. *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Minority Rights* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁹ Shlomo Ben-Ami, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation State*, ed. Shlomo Ben-Ami, Yoav Peled, and Alberto Spektorowski (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

discourses of multiculturalism more conventional where once diversity and heterogeneity were challenges to the conventional wisdom of national identity.³⁰ The twenty-first century will witness a shift from a practice of assimilation to an official state policy promoting minority identities and languages.³¹

In the United States, the civil rights and affirmative action policies adopted in the 1960s changed the nature of Americanhood;³² in various Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Mexico multicultural constitutions have been adopted;³³ bilingualism and multiculturalism became an official state policy in Canada ;³⁴ some post-Soviet states in Eastern Europe have been reconsidering their ethnic policies and accommodation projects,³⁵ and other countries such as Turkey and Germany have recently taken steps to become more accommodative toward groups who have

³⁰ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, 2004.

³¹ Brigitte M. French, *Maya Ethnolinguistic Identity: Violence, Cultural Rights, and Modernity in Highland Guatemala* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2010). However, some scholars such as Christian Joppke are cautious in arguing a decline of assimilation but rather they argue that multiculturalism might be in retreat. See Joppke, "The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy," *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (June 2004), pp. 237-257.

³² Joane Nagel, "American Indian Ethnic Revival: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity," *American Sociological Review* 60 (1995): 947-965; Kenneth T. Andrews, "Creating Social Change: Lessons From the Civil Rights Movement." In *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State*, eds. David S. Meyer, Nancy Whittier, and Belinda Robnett (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Christian Joppke, *Selecting by Origin: Ethnic Migration in the Liberal State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Peter J. Spiro, *Beyond Citizenship: American Identity After Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Elke Winter, *Us, Them, and Others: Pluralism and National Identity in Diverse Societies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

³³ Donna Lee Van Cott, "Latin America: Constitutional Reform and Ethnic Rights." In *Democracy and Cultural Diversity*, ed. Michael O'Neill and Dennis Austin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Darren Wallis, "Mexico: Political Management of Diversity." In *Democracy and Cultural Diversity*, ed. Michael O'Neill and Dennis Austin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³⁴ Alain Gagnon, "Canada: Unity and Diversity," in *Democracy and Cultural Diversity*, ed. Michael O'Neill and Dennis Austin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Elke Winter, *Us, Them, and Others*, 2011.

³⁵ Judith G. Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe: The Power of Norms and Incentives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

historically felt like outsiders of the German and Turkish national identities.³⁶

If states can and are likely to change their nationhood structures, the challenge is to explain why and under what conditions these policy changes occur through a theoretically informed and a historically sound analysis. As this study incorporates a comparative-historical analysis, the three cases that I select are neither necessarily contemporary cases nor examples of policy shifts toward pluralist understandings of nationhood. In other words, the goal is to both explain the inclusionary and exclusionary policies toward nationhood and national minorities by the state elites in a comparative-historical perspective in order to see the big picture: the logic of the state elites in policy change. Thus, this study also seeks to understand and explain *why* state elites reconsider changing the status quo nationhood structures in the first place. If *when* and *why* questions are not taken into consideration collectively, one cannot understand and explain the overall mentality in changing the boundaries of nationhood. Although political theorists have been debating extensively on the normative issues of minority identity status in the age of nation-states, a systematic and comparative explanation of policy changes toward national minorities and nationhood has been under-theorized. This is where this study aims to make its scholarly contribution by combining the literature on policy and institutional change with the literature on ethnicity and nationalism.

³⁶ Sener Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*, 2012.

**State Policy Changes Toward Nationhood and Minorities:
Under What Conditions Do Such Changes Occur?**

As stated previously, my intention is not only to explain the inclusionary policy changes toward national minorities but also to explain the exclusionary trends as well. One of my cases where the shift occurs from Ottoman identity toward Turkish nationhood in fact is an example where the political elites decided to be more exclusionary toward any alternative identities. Inclusionary policy shifts might include “rights of sovereignty for the group, exemptions from laws that disproportionately disadvantage the group’s members, aid for the group’s cultural institutions, and support for the group’s cultural survival.”³⁷ Then, the retreat of the state from such policies constitutes an exclusionary path. Further conceptual clarifications will be provided in the next chapter where I will provide my methodological and analytical framework.

In his analysis of ethnic policy changes in Turkey, Germany, and Russia, Sener Akturk classifies seven types of policy changes toward nationhood and ethnicity: “(1) recognition of more than one ethnicity in the constitution, census, and other key official documents, (2) official territorial ethnic autonomy (e.g. autonomous ethnic republics), (3) citizenship of ethnic minorities, (4) linguistic rights of ethnic minorities, (5) single versus multiple official languages, (6) affirmative action for ethnic minorities, and (7) the basis of immigration (ethnic or not).”³⁸ Such policy alternatives refer to the question of whether the state leans toward multiethnic social and political order that “focuses on

³⁷ Amy Gutmann, *Identity in Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 39.

³⁸ Sener Akturk, “Continuity and Change in the Regimes of Ethnicity in Austria, Germany, the USSR/Russia, and Turkey: Varieties of Ethnic Regimes and Hypotheses for Change,” *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (2007), pp. 23-49, p. 24.

special protective and redistribution regimes that benefit individuals through national policy on the basis of group membership.”³⁹ What is actually common across such policy options is that alternative identity paradigms other than the one defined by the state become visible in the public sphere. The real concern for identity categorizations other than the state’s categorization such as religious or ethnic minority identities is not that they are oppressed or discriminated against but the fact that “they are ignored, treated as nonexistent entities whose legitimate complaints do not merit attention.”⁴⁰ Therefore, states’ identity policy shifts refer to either making alternative identities such as those of minorities visible in the public sphere as an official policy or making them invisible and nonexistent in the public space. Overall, either inclusionary or exclusionary policy alternatives for the state tend to create different institutional settings of nationhood. But *when* do the state elites decide on such policy shifts? What kind of conditions lead to the state deciding toward exclusionary or inclusionary policy adoptions? Last but not least, *why* in the first place are state elites willing to change the boundaries of nationhood? What is the logic of the state in that matter?

There are several existing perspectives that seek to explain persistence and change in state policies toward nationhood. Some scholars argue that state collapse or border change can lead to a different institutional structure of nationhood and ethnicity.⁴¹ This approach finds nationhood change within a state that has stable borders unlikely. Yet, nationhood policies do change in the absence of state collapse (e.g., the 1960s Civil

³⁹ Peter J. Spiro, *Beyond Citizenship*, 2008, p. 127.

⁴⁰ Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Surviving Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality: A Challenge For the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), p. xi.

⁴¹ Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals* (Penguin Press, 1994).

Rights era in the U.S.; granting citizenship to nonethnic Germans in 1999; Turkey's inclusive policies toward the Kurds since 2002).

Exogenous approaches emphasize the international context and institutions such as the European Union conditionality as a cause of state policy changes. This argument is in tandem with the convergence approach within which international norms are considered to be pushing states in a similar direction toward more inclusionary trends for minorities. Yet, some states are still reluctant to adopt international norms and even practice policies which would contradict the international norms (e.g., minaret ban in Switzerland, headscarf ban in France). Jeffrey Checkel has shown how Germany has been reluctant to adopt the Council of Europe's norms on minority identities.⁴² Moreover, Anthony Marx demonstrated how the security concerns might lead to exclusion through the U.S. case in which the need for white unity was achieved through the exclusion of the blacks.⁴³ Overall, the perspectives include nationalist ideologies, international norms, ethnic mobilization, and threat perceptions.⁴⁴ For the sake of simple organization, I categorize the existing literature in two sections from a perspective of whether the policy shifts are seen as mostly a result of domestic processes or whether they are interconnected with external factors such as regional or international institutions.

⁴² Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (March 1999), pp. 84-114.

⁴³ Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴⁴ Sener Akturk provides some of the limitations of these theoretical perspectives in his book, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). His theory of ethnic regime change consists of endogenous factors: counter-elites, new discourses, and political hegemony. I critically discuss his approach further in this chapter and in Chapter 8.

Endogenous Perspectives

There is a growing literature on official policy changes toward an alternative nationhood paradigm other than the state's historical definition of it. The roles of minorities, indigenous peoples, and historically marginalized communities that revolve around the issues of national identity, ethnicity, and nationhood have received significant scholarly attention.⁴⁵ For instance, in various Latin American cases, scholars emphasize the role of indigenous activism and the claim-making of subnational cultures as the engine of change in the state perceptions of national identity and adopting various policies recognizing cultural diversity within the nation-state. In her anthropological analysis of the Mayan ethno-linguistic identity in Guatemala and the policy change of National Languages Law by the Guatemalan Congress in 2003, Brigittine M. French (2010) argues that indigenous activism, ethno-national movement, and international support have all promoted multicultural democracy in the Guatemalan nation-state.⁴⁶ Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood put emphasis on the political activism of sub-national cultural groups in their analysis of the reformulation of the national identity in Ecuador.⁴⁷ Similarly, Jeffrey Lesser analyzes the change in the Brazilian national identity and emphasizes the endogenous role of immigrants and their descendants in manipulating Brazil's political and cultural leaders.⁴⁸ In the case of Mexico, Danni Wallis argues that

⁴⁵ See *Political Transformation and National Identity Change*. Eds. Jennifer Todd, Lorenzo Canas Bottos, and Nathalie Rougier. 2008. New York: Routledge; *Democracy and Cultural Diversity*. Eds. Michael O'Neill and Dennis Austin. 2000. New York: Oxford University Press; *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation State*. Eds. Shlomo Ben-Ami, Yoav Peled and Alberto Spektorowski. 2000. New York: St. Martin's Press.

⁴⁶ French, *Maya Ethnolinguistic Identity*, 2010.

⁴⁷ Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood, *Re-Making the Nation: Place, Politics, and Identity in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for*

“an increase in indigenous organizations and later social movements, pressures from below in combination with the declining state capacity and resources in the 1980s, caused a constitutional amendment in 1991 recognizing the Mexican nation as multi-ethnic.”⁴⁹

What seems to be common across these cases is the emphasis on the agency of the non-state actors such as the indigenous communities as the transformative force of policy change.

In a comparative analysis of Germany, Turkey, and Russia which might be considered as largely a European context, Sener Akturk argues that there are three conditions within which states reconsider and change their policies toward ethnicity: counter-elites, new discourse, and hegemonic majority.⁵⁰ He states that “If ‘counter-elites’ representing the constituencies with ethnically specific grievances come to power, equipped with a ‘new discourse’ on ethnicity and nationality, and garner a ‘hegemonic majority,’ they can change state policies on ethnicity.”⁵¹ For Akturk, these three factors are separately necessary and jointly sufficient to cause either an exclusive or inclusive state policy change toward nationhood. Although Germany and Turkey have been within the influence of the European Union along with various European minority rights charters, Akturk does not emphasize external factors in his analysis of policy change. In his perspective, domestic factors are the main drivers for state policy changes toward nationhood and minorities.

Overall, while some scholars emphasize the role of social movements by

Ethnicity in Brazil (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

⁴⁹ Danni Wallis, “Mexico: Political Management of Diversity,” 2000, p. 28.

⁵⁰ Sener Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*, 2012.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

indigenous or minority groups as the engine of change especially when these movements have the organizational capacity and resources to create influential pressure on state elites, other perspectives highlight the role of new elites with their new discourses of nationhood. Are these explanations insufficient since they assume that political change becomes possible and independent from the dynamics within the regional or international political environment? Are internal actors free from structural constraints or opportunities in transnational contexts? Some scholars emphasize the external factors more than the domestic factors.

Exogenous Perspectives

In the post-Soviet context, Judith G. Kelley asks, “why did governments in eastern Europe sometimes accommodate ethnic minorities while at other times restricting their rights or ignoring them?”⁵² She emphasizes the significance of European institutions such as the European Union and the Council of Europe through both membership conditionality and normative pressure. These factors, she argues, have been largely effective in suppressing the domestic opposition to ethnic concessions. In other words, international institutions become the domestic policy actors. The role of ethnic minorities in affecting any policy change has little place in Kelley’s argument. Rather, domestic political elites are constrained in their policy alternatives within the transnational context of the European Union. This argument is also relevant in Turkey’s recent accommodative policy changes toward Kurdish identity such as state television broadcasting in the Kurdish language and public universities offering Kurdish as elective courses. Many

⁵² Judith G. Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 2004, p. 2.

scholars conclude that the Turkish state has adopted these policies due to pressure from the European Union and its conditions for full membership which Turkey has been pursuing since their candidacy status in 1999.⁵³ Would Turkey not change or delay its policies further toward the Kurds if it were not a candidate for European Union membership?

In the North American context and from a perspective of ethnic selectivity on immigration policies, Christian Joppke argues that the United States has shifted from ethnically exclusive immigration policies toward a nondiscriminatory policy between 1924 and 1965.⁵⁴ Although he specifically looks at policy shifts on immigration, Joppke argues that Anglo-European dominance in all domestic policies was lifted after 1965. He largely considers group conflict in domestic society as the main bottom-up pressure on public policy change toward minorities. Yet, he also mentions the foreign policy interests of the United States during the Cold War era as one of the dimensions of ‘race-neutral’ public policy making. Would the U.S. government’s policy change toward various minority groups be unrealized or delayed if the Cold War were not the international context? In a similar fashion, John D. Skrentny emphasizes the geopolitical role of World War II and the Cold War in his analysis of the minority rights revolution in the U.S. between 1965 and 1975.⁵⁵ These international contexts, he argues, pushed the U.S. government to adopt human rights and nondiscrimination policies for national security

⁵³ See a special issue titled “Turkey’s Road to European Union Membership: National Identity and Political Schange,” in *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 9, Issue 3, 2007, eds. Susanne Venney and Kostas Ifantis.

⁵⁴ Christian Joppke, *Selecting by Origin*, 2005.

⁵⁵ John D. Skrentny, *The Minority Rights Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

purpose in the fight against Nazism and global communism. While this context fostered bipartisan support for enacting nondiscrimination and affirmative action policies and made the civil rights era inevitable, “the black civil rights movement helped make the rest of the revolution possible—and rapid.”⁵⁶ Overall, the U.S. federal government passed minority rights reforms during the 1960s under two conditions: (1) the perceived needs of national security, and (2) the various legacies of the black civil rights movement, as John D. Skrentny elaborates. If there hadn't been a civil rights movement but the Cold War context was still present, would the U.S. government still have changed its policies toward nonwhite minorities? Or would it have happened earlier or later than the 1960s? Although Skrentny and Joppke emphasize the internal sources of policy change from assimilation to pluralism, they pay extensive attention to the international context of the 1960s and how such a context was effective in the policy shift in the U.S.

Moreover, there are scholars who combine theoretical insights from international relations with the policy change debates in the field of comparative politics. For instance, in his comparative-historical study, Harris Mylonas looks at the postimperial Balkan states such as Greece and Albania and explains why some political elites chose one policy option of nation-building over the others (accommodation, assimilation, or exclusion).⁵⁷ His main theoretical perspective is primarily informed by the realist paradigm in international relations where the states are seen as the main unitary actors and that they are primarily concerned with their survival and security. From this theoretical framework, geostrategic and security concerns are the primary drivers behind

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁷ Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

the political elites' policy changes toward noncore ethnic groups. Thus, his argument “builds on existing explanations but focuses on the importance of international and geostrategic concerns for nation-building policies” and “it accounts for the variation in nation-building policies as a result of the interaction between host states and external powers rather than non-core groups and host states.”⁵⁸ Rather than those scholars who look at the demands and political activism of minority groups, Mylonas does not give agency to these groups. Interstate rather than intrastate dynamics constitute the conditions behind state policy changes toward nationhood in relation to minorities.

Existing Perspectives on the Selected Cases

The shift of the Ottoman *millet* system toward a policy of Ottomanism is mostly associated with the Tanzimat reforms (1839-1876) in which the Ottoman state put various modernization efforts forward in order to catch up with the European military and bureaucratic efficiency. The discourse of an overarching Ottoman identity took root during the Tanzimat reforms and became the official policy of the state that would bring hierarchically-ordered autonomous-confessional communities (i.e., Greek Orthodox, Jews, Armenians, and Muslims) of the empire under a patriotic Ottoman identity. Many historians see this policy shift as a top-down process mostly imposed by the European Great Powers that were concerned about the conditions of Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁹ However, a prominent Ottoman historian, Ilber Ortayli, argues that policy changes were not only imposed by the external powers but also consciously

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁹ Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

adopted by the Ottoman political elites. On the other hand, others such as Sukru Ilicak point to the secessionist movements, especially the Greek Independence in 1832 that pushed the Ottoman state to reconsider the boundaries of belonging to the Ottoman state.⁶⁰ Despite these historical accounts, there is no systematic analysis that particularly deals with the conditions that led to the rise of Ottomanism in the early and later nineteenth century.

In the formative years of the Republic of Turkey before its establishment in 1923, the founding political elites, especially the founding father Mustafa Kemal, emphasized the Islamic unity of the Anatolian communities against the foreign invaders. He also mentioned the brotherhood of the Turks and the Kurds and how the new state would protect the Kurdish identity and culture with a system of local rule.⁶¹ However, this discourse by the leading political elites was out of the political agenda after the establishment of the Republic in 1923 and the abolishment of the Islamic Caliphate in 1924. The 1924 constitution defined the nationhood of the state as based on monolithic Turkishness (see Chapter 5).⁶² While the political elites were concerned about the British support for a potential independent state for the Kurds, the Islamic solidarity among the Kurds and the Turks was emphasized to build a broader domestic coalition among the Anatolian communities.⁶³ Yet, after the Republic was established, any alternative identity

⁶⁰ Sukru Ilicak, "A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1826," Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2011.

⁶¹ Andrew Mango, "Ataturk and the Kurds," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (October 1999), pp. 1-25.

⁶² 88th Clause of the Constitution: "Regardless of race and religion, everyone is called Turk in terms of citizenship" [Madde 88- Türkiye'de din ve ırk ayırdılmaksizin vatandaşlık bakımından herkese "Türk" denir]. Retrieved from the Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa24.htm> on October 16, 2014.

⁶³ M. Hakan Yavuz, "Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey,"

claims other than Turkishness defined by the state were rejected. Homogenization of the society under Turkishness became the state policy. Again, other than descriptive historical narratives, there is no systematic and theoretical analysis that traces the causal mechanisms behind such a policy shift. This study seeks to incorporate historical analysis of these cases into a theoretical proposition of nationhood policy change.

Last but not least, the so-called ‘Democratic Opening’⁶⁴ in Turkey under the political hegemony of the Justice and Development Party (AKP in Turkish acronym) has deconstructed monolithic Turkishness into a nationhood which recognizes and acknowledges the ethnic diversity in Turkey. As discussed previously, this case has been systematically analyzed by Sener Akturk, and he developed a theory of ethnic regime change driven by domestic factors. Although I tend to agree with the internal dynamics of change in Akturk’s analysis, the downplaying of external factors and no agency given to the Kurdish mobilization seem to be problematic and needs further elaboration. If the state as a conceptual variable was taken in this analysis, the international and regional system within which states are embedded cannot be ignored. The way I approach this

Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Autumn 2001), pp. 1-24; M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

⁶⁴ This project was first named as Kurdish Opening, then Democratic Opening, and lastly as the National Unity and Fraternity project: “*The Project of National Unity and Fraternity is a major democratic initiative implemented by AK Party to expand the sphere of civil liberties while fighting against PKK terrorism. We have implemented revolutionary democratic transformation and human-centered reforms. Indeed, all reforms, implementations, and decisions made throughout this process are concrete signs of our human-centered and freedom-based politics...Religious, ethnic, social, and cultural rights have been freely exercised under successive AK Party governments we have taken all the necessary measure to make it happen...We have made a paradigmatic shift in resolving long-standing problems of our Kurdish citizens and South East of Anatolia. We have developed effective means to fight against state negligence, development problems and discriminatory practices...We have effectively ended all policies of negation, denial and assimilation.*” For a further outline of this project, see AKP’s official website, which describes Turkey’s political vision for 2023, the 100th year of the Republic at http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/2023-political-vision#bolum_

case embraces a state-centric explanation which is discussed further below.

As some scholars show that the international context should be taken into account in order to understand and explain domestic policy changes toward nationhood as opposed to emphases on the internal forces of change, both perspectives still fall short in various capacities. Firstly, the major weakness of the existing theoretical perspectives is black boxing the state. The state is assumed as a taken-for-granted concept which is presupposed to be automatically responding to the external or internal pressures for policy changes. As the state is black boxed in many studies on policy changes on nationhood and national minorities, variables such as social movements, international norms, or external pressure are seen as sufficient explanatory conditions. The state is seen as a fixed and a unitary actor that does nothing but automatically adopt the policy demands of the external and internal actors. Would states automatically change their policies toward nationhood when there are counter-identity mobilizations and discourses? I think one cannot assume as such if one does not look inside the dynamics of the state. Rather than black boxing the state, further analysis is necessary where the state should be taken as a variable rather than a fixed entity. While variables such as counter-status quo domestic social movements, international norms, and other forms of external pressure might be necessary for state policy change, I think they do not constitutively become the sufficient condition for change. In order to understand and explain policy change, the internal dynamics of the state and the logic of the state elites should be significantly considered. The state needs to be studied and should become the object of analysis in understanding and explaining the policy changes toward nationhood. The state tradition, particularly in the Ottoman/Turkish political context, is thus very important in laying out

the patterns of identity politics.

Secondly, the existing studies tend to look at policy changes that are one-directional, and that is the inclusionary policy adoptions by the state. As my study both looks at the exclusionary and inclusionary policy changes in a comparative-historical perspective, I will be able to explain the conditions behind the multidirectional policy changes. Could the conditions behind the policy shifts toward inclusion be similar to the policy shifts toward exclusion?

Thirdly, existing theoretical perspectives and case studies fall short in connecting the agency-driven and structure-driven conditions and explaining transnational and domestic dynamics in leading to the state's nationhood policy change. Fourthly, since the agency-driven and structure-driven conditions are not taken into account constitutively, the existing perspectives are limited in explaining the conditions behind the policy changes. For instance, they are insufficient in explaining why some states are late-comers in accommodative policies under similar transnational contexts that push for accommodation. Finally, existing literature lacks a systematic and comparative analysis of policy changes in imperial and national settings which would show the continuity, variation, and change in state policies toward nationhood and minorities. In other words, my study offers an analysis across different time periods within a similar political and cultural context from the late Ottoman Empire to contemporary Turkey.

Overall, this study seeks to demonstrate a more comprehensive analysis of nationhood policy changes across time in three innovative ways: (1) By bringing the state back in; (2) By taking the transnational context and how it influences state elites into account; (3) By combining the theoretical perspectives of historical institutionalism and

institutional change—which I frame the changes in the cases under study as such— into the literature of nationhood and ethnic politics. Historical institutionalism has been mostly studied within the policy area of welfare policies but rarely applied to ethnic policies. I believe that incorporating the theoretical perspectives of historical institutionalism into the study of nationhood and minority policies would inform and contribute to the existing debates with nuanced understandings such as the issue of policy change timing, path-dependency on the institutional foundations of nationhood, and the multidirectional policy changes across time. Overall, I argue that states are more likely to change their policies toward nationhood under three conditions: 1) a favorable international context for change; 2) the influence of domestic nonstate actors in increasing the leverage for change; and 3) the antistatus quo elites controlling the state by eliminating the prostatus quo veto players.

First, in the next section, I sketch out the approaches on studying the state within the context of the Ottoman/Turkish tradition, and then proceed with the essentials of historical institutionalism and institutional change.

Understanding the Essentials of the Modern State and How to Study the State

During the 1950s and 1960s, society-centered explanations of politics and state actions were widespread in pluralist and structural-functionalist perspectives in political science and sociology.⁶⁵ The state as a conceptual tool and an explanatory variable was

⁶⁵ Theda Skocpol, “Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research,” in *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

seen as old-fashioned due to its lack of autonomy. In other words, the state was not considered to be an autonomous body. While liberal-pluralist perspectives emphasized the interest groups and competition among them as the arena for state action, Marxist perspectives focused on class relations, modes of production, and the world capitalist system within which the state would not be autonomous but be in the hands of the bourgeois.⁶⁶ Yet, through the mid-1980s, scholars such as Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol turned attention to the state as an independent explanatory variable in understanding the dynamics of social and political change.⁶⁷ The historical context of the rise and fall of the Keynesian state, decolonization and non-Western experiences of state-building, and the rise of ethnic conflicts and nationalist struggles paved the way for considering the state as an object of analysis. The significance of the state as an object of analysis is still an ongoing debate among scholars.⁶⁸

Although the state-centric explanation is the common premise for scholars who view the state as an object of analysis, the ways in which the state itself is studied varies. For instance, while historical-institutionalists (e.g., Theda Skocpol) focus on a specific institution such as trade regimes, rational choice institutionalists (e.g., Margaret Levi) put

⁶⁶ Barkey, Karen. *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁶⁷ An edited piece, *Bringing the State Back In* by these scholars in 1985 had an important impact in reconsidering the state as an explanatory variable in analyzing political and social change.

⁶⁸ Tuong Vu has an insightful historical review on the study of the state and how perspectives on studying the state have evolved over time: "Studying the State through State Formation," *World Politics*, Volume 62, Number 1, January 2010. Also see "The State of the Study of the State" by Margaret Levi in *The State In an Era of Globalization*; "The State of the State in World Politics" by Miles Kahler in *Political Science: State of the Discipline* (2002); "Bringing State Back In: Retrospect and Prospect" by Theda Skocpol (2007).

rational individual actors as the engine of the state actors.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the state-in-society approach led by Joel Migdal emphasizes the role of societal forces in shaping the policies of the state rather than seeing the state as powerful enough to be completely autonomous from the society.⁷⁰ The state and the society both have the capacity to transform each other.⁷¹ Tuong Vu puts another approach forward that he calls ‘the state formation approach’ that has common characteristics with the former approaches such as an emphasis on historical focus. Yet, the state formation approach does not narrow the analysis to the mesolevel or microlevel institutional structures but rather employs a macrosociological perspective where the elites and the masses are considered jointly.

Despite different methodological perspectives on how to study the state, the approaches listed are not necessarily mutually exclusive in articulating the state as a conceptual tool. In fact, all have important shared interests in history, institutions, and society. In other words, as Wael B. Halleq argues, the state is “an ontologically meaningful and analytically viable entity.”⁷² In this study, I intend to reveal the official mindset of the state in the Ottoman/Turkish political context in a comparative-historical perspective. As Crawford Young has stated, “there is an ‘official mind’ in the upper reaches of state bureaucracies that shares a number of assumptions and historical

⁶⁹ Tuong Vu, Studying the State through State Formation,” *World Politics*, Volume 62, Number 1, (January 2010), pp. 148-175.

⁷⁰ A collection of articles in *State Power and Social Forces*, ed. Joel S. Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue provides a theoretical framework of the state-in-society approach and is complemented with case studies from different historical and geographic contexts (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁷¹ Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁷² Wael B. Halleq, *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics, and Modernity’s Moral Predicament* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 19.

understandings setting parameters to policy debate.”⁷³ Thus, understanding the essentials of the state in the Ottoman/Turkish context is especially significant due to its very state-centric socio-political context. According to Metin Heper, the state tradition in the Ottoman/Turkish context is based on a strong state and a weak civil society:

The Turkish Republic seems to have inherited from the Ottoman Empire a strong state and a weak civil society. As in the Ottoman period, so during the Republic, the bureaucratic elite continued to perceive the state as vital for holding together the community.⁷⁴

The historical origin of the strong state tradition in Turkey is a legacy of the imperial foundation of the Ottoman Empire, as the leading Ottoman historian Halil Inalcik puts:

Within the Islamic community of peoples Turks have had a special tradition from the time they entered and controlled the Islamic world in the eleventh century. Originated in the steppe empires, this tradition can be defined as recognition of the state’s absolute right to legislate on public matters.⁷⁵

However, the strong state tradition and the high confidence of the ruling elites in the material and immaterial power of their state began to shatter when the forces of modernity empowered the European states to the extent that they would infiltrate the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the nineteenth century. The political and military rise of European imperial states not only led to the insecurity of the Ottoman Empire in the international system, but also others as well such as Russia and Japan.⁷⁶ “In the nineteenth century, the elites in these empires came to see themselves

⁷³ Crawford Young, 2012. *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960–2010* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press), p. 43.

⁷⁴ Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey* (Eothen Press, 1985), p 14.

⁷⁵ Halil Inalcik, “Turkey between Europe and Middle East,” *Foreign Affairs* 7, 1980.

⁷⁶ Ayse Zarakol, *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

and their countries through European eyes, even if they did not necessarily agree on any specific course of action *vis-à-vis* Europe.”⁷⁷ As the rapidly modernizing European states were establishing the hegemonic state system in global politics, the almighty Ottoman Empire and its ruling elites began to question the limit and the capacity of the state in the early nineteenth century. This is why the imperial state “went through numerous reforms, restorations, revolutions, reactionary backlashes, and wars, all of which were primarily motivated by the goal of catching up, competing, and standing equal with the core powers of the modern state system.”⁷⁸ Internal challenges to the state from various peripheral communities on the one hand and external challenges from other states in the region led to a serious crisis of ontological security within the Ottoman state.

By ontological security of the state, I refer to a condition and a question of existence and survival which is widely used in the theories of international relations. For instance, Kenneth Waltz argues that “survival is a prerequisite to achieving any goals that states may have.”⁷⁹ Although the meaning of security is primarily associated with the concept of survival, some scholars particularly embrace the concept of ontological security as ‘security as being’ in the sense of routinizing everyday practices that institutionalize order and continuity.⁸⁰ When such order and continuity of ‘security as being’ is challenged internally and externally, fear and anxiety emerge as a response to a specific threat. For instance, as Brent J. Steele puts it:

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

⁷⁹ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p. 129.

⁸⁰ See the theoretical contributions of Brent J. Steele on the concept of ontological security, “Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity: British Neutrality and the American Civil War;” *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (July 2005), pp. 519-540; also see his *Ontological Security in International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

An agent is ontologically secure when they choose a course of action comfortable with their sense of self-identity. When critical situations become frequent, agents feel insecure because their routine is incapable of accommodating such circumstances. An agent must therefore reform behaviour to accompany them. This explains why agents [states] change behavior.⁸¹

Thus, ontological security of the state should be framed not just in the sense of its physical security but in the sense of its psychological security as well. The state is ontologically secure as long as its physical and psychological condition of being is not under a constant internal and/or external threat that would challenge its existence and survival. If not, such state should be considered a weak state. Thus, I analyze the identity politics of the state in the Ottoman/Turkish political context within a security perspective since the quest of the political elites for ‘proper’ nationhood structure and state identity cannot be well grasped without the dimension of ontological security. In a way, I consider “identity” a security asset for the state elites. As Kemal Karpat states, “in the Ottoman Empire, modernization was essentially a drive to strengthen the state, as well expressed by its slogans: *Bu devlet nasıl yasar?* (How can this state survive?) or *Bu devlet nasıl kurtulur?* (How can this state be saved?), and initially it involved mainly the ruling institutions and their bureaucrats—a status group.”⁸² This psyche of state survival continues to exist in modern Turkish polity, especially surrounding the state policies of identity.

⁸¹ Steele, “Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity,” p. 526.

⁸² Kemal Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 303.

Nationhood as an Institution: Historical Institutionalism and Institutional Change

The state policy changes toward minorities in fact manifests an institutional change in the state's configuration *vis-à-vis* the minorities. As will be discussed in the next section covering my analytical, theoretical, and conceptual framework, I propose a four-ideal-type institutional configuration of the state toward minorities within which I aim to explore the policy changes. Thus, bringing the literature of institutional change in, I will contribute to the ongoing discussion of minority reforms by the state through explaining the necessary and sufficient conditions which would shed light on the issue of timing.

Rooted in the critique against the 'grand theorizing' of the behavioralism in the 1950s and 1960s, the new institutionalists have been concerned with midlevel theories in which institutional factors are considered to be shaping the goals of political actors and their distribution of power among them.⁸³ As opposed to the rational choice institutionalists, historical-interpretive institutionalists analytically emphasize the historical context in which institutions, ideas, and interests are shaped from within.

Among the scholars of historical institutionalism, institutions are seen as the legacies of concrete historical processes in which timing and temporality are at the center of the analysis.⁸⁴ What makes historical institutionalism scholarly attractive is that it provides the theoretical framework for understanding policy continuities within countries

⁸³ Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, Eds. *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁸⁴ Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2 (1999), pp. 369-404.

and the policy variation across countries. Thus, compared to rational choice and sociological institutionalists, macrosociological and power-oriented approaches are more likely to be embraced by scholars of historical institutionalism.⁸⁵ It is assumed that there is an uneven distribution of power in which an individual's preferences are not efficiently represented at the highest level of political milieu such as in constitutions and state apparatus. The reason is that institutions tend to favor various social groups more as compared to other social groups. The analysis of such institutional construction entails deconstructive historical analysis in which path dependency is one of the central conceptual and theoretical approaches to understand the historical evolution of certain institutions. According to Kathleen Thelen, path dependency in historical institutionalism has two arguments:

The first involves arguments about crucial founding moments of institutional formation that send countries along broadly different developmental paths; the second suggests that institutions continue to evolve in response to changing environmental conditions and ongoing political maneuvering but in ways that are constrained by past trajectories.⁸⁶

Thus, path dependency can reflect how certain institutional forms are constructed in the first place and how they can evolve over time under different contextual settings. The specific institutional form that I am interested in for this research is the interplay between the state formation, the nation-building and the conditions for minorities. I argue that a state might take the institutional form of pluralism-legal inclusion (hyphenated nationhood), pluralism-legal exclusion (hierarchical nationhood), assimilation-legal inclusion (asymmetrical nationhood), and assimilation-legal exclusion (monolithic

⁸⁵ Ellen Immergut, "The Theoretical Core of the New Institutionalism," *Politics & Society*, Vol. 26 (1998), pp. 5-34.

⁸⁶ Kathleen Thelen, 1999, p. 387.

nationhood) as far as the state, its imaginary boundaries of the nation and the minorities are put forward. In this regard, how such institutional forms took place in the past and how they are subject to change under certain conditions are the challenges in this research. Yet, if institutionalism is more about endurance or ‘stickiness,’ then how can we explain change?

Ellen Immergut discusses the interpretive notions in historical institutionalism that open a space for explaining change in ways that sociological or rational choice institutionalism might not be able to do.⁸⁷ She argues that historical institutionalists never see equilibrium between power and institutions in which behavior is not determined by institutions *per se*, but rather institutions provide certain contexts for action. Under such conditions, self-reflective actors are able to create their competing definitions of interests and identities that might contradict the existing institutional setting. This gap provides analytical leeway for explaining institutional change.

Yet, Mahoney and Thelen argue that historical institutionalism is still more concerned with continuity rather than change and they critically approach the explanations of institutional change through exogenous shocks.⁸⁸ They argue that endogenous sources of institutional change are under-theorized. Seeing certain institutional forms and their rules of compliance as open to interpretation, Mahoney and Thelen argue that “institutional change often occurs precisely when problems of rule interpretation and enforcement open up space for actors to implement existing rules in

⁸⁷ Ellen Immergut, 1998.

⁸⁸ James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, “A Theory of Gradual Institutional Change,” in *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, eds. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

new ways.”⁸⁹ Thus, both the political context and the characteristics of an institution may lead to an institutional change.

Peter A. Hall summarizes that “explanations for institutional change must take into account the availability and character of the instrumental beliefs pertinent to the changes under consideration, as well as a range of conditions that might affect the character of those beliefs.”⁹⁰ As I sketch out my own analytical framework to the institutional forms of the state with respect to the relationship between nation-building and minorities, my research question in regard to nationhood policy change also refers to the degree of institutional change.

Methodology and Research Design

In this section, I elaborate more on the cases and lay out the within-case analysis (Turkey) and across cases (Turkey and the Ottoman Empire). In order to understand the real-world events regarding my research questions, I conduct a comparative historical study across and within cases which is theoretically informed by historical institutionalism. This study follows a case study approach informed by comparative-historical research in social sciences. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett define the case study approach as “the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalizable to other events.”⁹¹ They also argue four strengths of case study methods that would be useful for theory

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁹⁰ Peter A. Hall, “Historical Institutionalism in Rationalist and Sociological Perspective,” in *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, eds. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 208.

⁹¹ Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), p. 5.

development: “their potential for achieving high conceptual validity; their strong procedures for fostering new hypotheses; their value as a useful means to closely examine the hypothesized role of causal mechanisms in the context of individual cases; their capacity for addressing causal complexity.”⁹² In light of the case-study approach, this research follows a comparative-historical analysis.

The comparative method is *one* of the basic scientific methods⁹³ and comparative historical analysis is *one* of the methodological approaches within the comparative method. Comparative historical analysis is defined “by a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualized comparison.”⁹⁴ In other words, history matters in order to understand particular cases. In contrast, large-N quantitative studies tradeoff between contextual analysis and law-like generalizations in order to offer grand scheme theories. Afterwards, the law-like propositions, through quantitative-formal model analysis, come up with predictions about the future. Yet, comparative historical research puts more emphasis on the contextual analysis where ‘thick descriptions’ are more likely.

In other words, “comparative historical researchers do not typically seek universal knowledge about all instances of ahistorically constituted populations of cases.”⁹⁵ In my research, I employ the comparative historical analysis where contextual analysis has more priority than law-like generalizations. As Peter Evans argues, “as long as we care about

⁹² Ibid., p. 19.

⁹³ Arend Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (September 1971), pp. 682-693.

⁹⁴ James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, “Comparative-Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, eds. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 6.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

particular cases, we are compelled to do history, to try to understand specific sequences of events and to acquire the ideographic knowledge that understanding specific sequences of events entails.”⁹⁶ In conclusion, “every significant phenomenon lives in history, and requires historically grounded analysis for its explanation.”⁹⁷ Bringing these features together, my study will be a comparative and historical analysis.

Although my aim is to explain particular cases, I want to come up with an analysis that would speak to other cases as well. Peter Evans indicates that “the general ideas I derive from a particular case may or may not fit other cases, but they should at least seem worth applying.”⁹⁸ Following Evans, my goal is to conduct research that would resonate with other cases, if not having a potential to explain some other cases as well. In Figure 2 and 3, I demonstrate the institutional design of nationhood within the cases and their patterns of change.

There has been an enormous amount of scholarly work on nation-building, nationalism, minority rights, and human rights conducted with normative and empirical intentions. Yet, research that considers the time and sequence of state policies toward nationhood with a robust analytical framework and with an intention of proposing a theoretical premise has been relatively weaker.

This is where I seek to understand the logic of state elites in nationhood change and I ask: Under what conditions do states change their policies toward nationhood? I

⁹⁶ Atul Kohli, Peter Evans, Peter Katzenstein, Adam Przeworski, Susanne Hoebler Rudolph, James C. Scott and Theda Skocpol, “The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics,” *World Politics*, Vol. 48 (1995), pp. 1-49, p. 3.

⁹⁷ Charles Tilly, “Why and How History Matters,” in *Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, eds. Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 433.

⁹⁸ Kohli et al. 1995, p. 6.

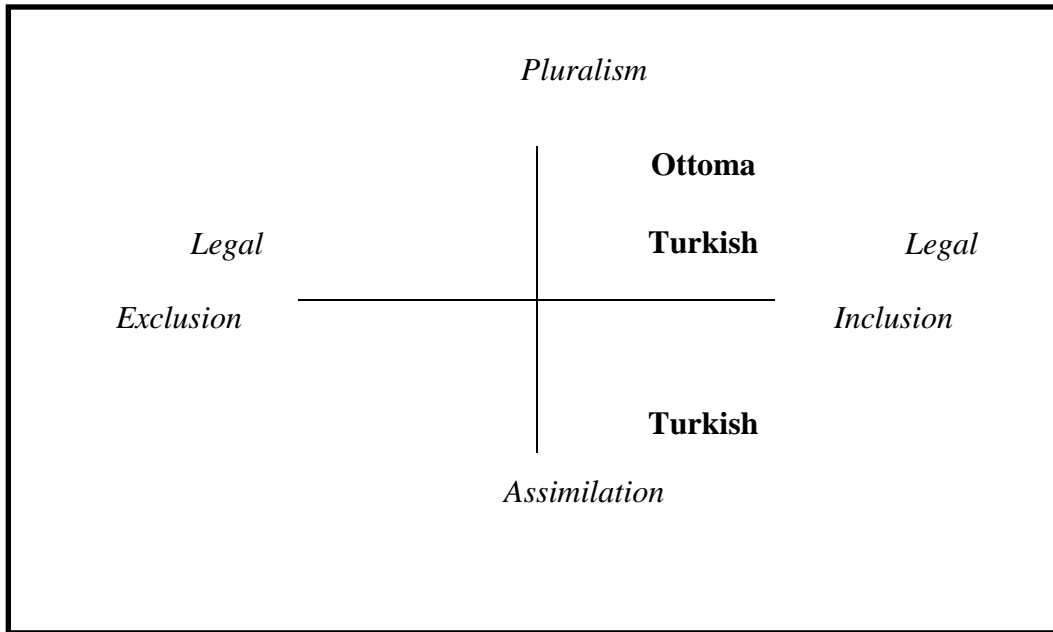


Figure 2. Four Structures of Ottoman and Turkish Nationhoods

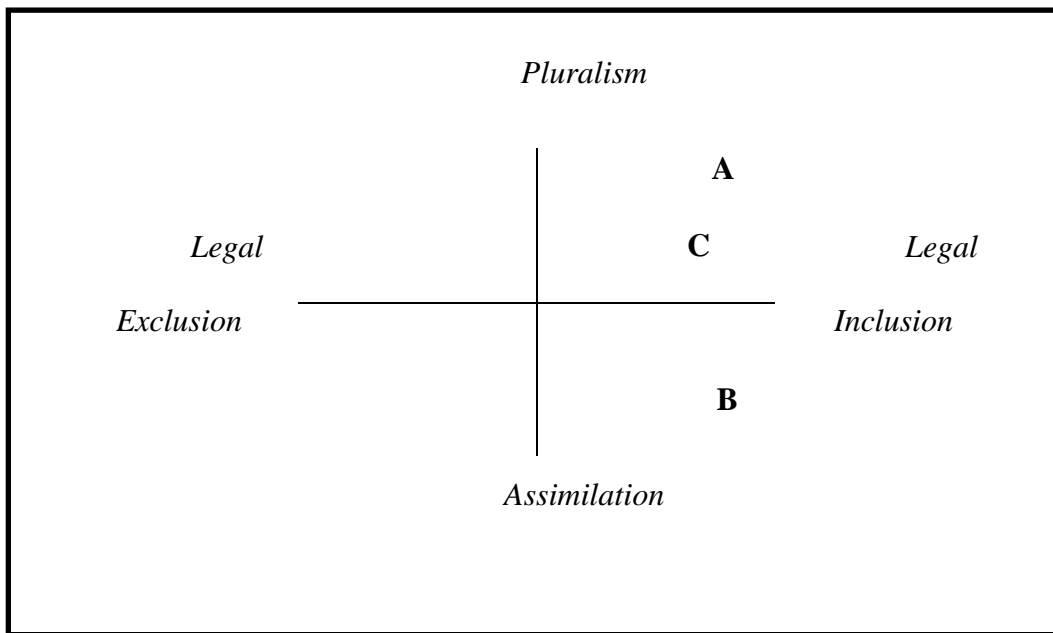


Figure 3. Three Cases of Change from the Late Ottoman Empire to Modern Turkey

aim to understand and explain my inquiry within the analytical framework that I outlined in the introduction. In my typological framework (see Chapter 3), my goal is to explain when a state shifts from one type of institutional form into another one. This constitutes the institutional analysis of my research that takes endurance and change into consideration. Moreover, the question of how these institutional forms were built, with what intentions, and whether they evolved over time brings the historical analysis into my research. Finally, investigating different cases as the states being the unit of analysis makes the comparative dimension of this research. I rely on two different sources: (1) primary documents: legal and political documents such as higher court decisions, legislative discussions and debates, parliamentary proceedings, speeches given by key political actors such as prime ministers and presidents. The Library of Grand National Assembly of Turkey, of which most of the sources are available online, is the main site for archival research on official documents. (2) secondary sources: I also extensively reviewed the contemporary and historical secondary sources related to my research question both in relation to my cases and beyond my cases.

Conclusion

In this chapter where the existing theoretical perspectives on policy changes toward nationhood are introduced, I see the major limitation in black boxing the state and its taken for granted adoption in various studies. Secondly, the state policies toward national minorities are rarely studied through the insights of institutional analysis, most particularly historical institutionalism. By adopting an institutional analysis, this study also seeks to demonstrate the continuity, change, and variation in ethnic policy adoptions of the state over time. Since there is a lack of comparative case study across time and

across specific state configurations such as imperial and national settings, this study would provide more insights on the nature of the state and its policy shifts toward minorities beyond a specific historical context. Such a research design would also put the state at the center of the analysis. Rather than a sole bottom-up approach on policy change through analyzing the nature of social movements, bringing the state to the core of the analysis would offer a theoretical comprehension on how states across the cases view minorities and when the state sees a policy shift as appropriate. There is already a good amount of scholarly analysis on when, how, and what minorities demand from states. Yet, there is little research on when and how states change their perceptions toward nationhood, especially in relation to minorities and change certain policies. In the next chapter, I introduce the four ideal-type institutional settings of nationhood within which I analyze the cases and the patterns of change.

CHAPTER 3

PATTERNS OF LEGAL AND ETHNIC INCLUSION/EXCLUSION: A TYPOLOGICAL STUDY OF NATIONHOOD

Introduction

In the contemporary politics of citizenship, minority issues, and immigration questions, there is hardly any nation-state that would *keenly* claim to be ethnically-biased toward its citizens or ethnically-selective towards the citizens-to-be in its legal-institutional structure, especially in Western Europe and North America.⁹⁹ Rather, in the political discourses of governing elites, there is mostly an attribution to the ‘civic’ nature of the nation and the state along with the values of liberal universalism where every individual member of the state and the nation are equal before the law. Such attributions to ‘civicness’, of course, are articulated on the basis of the nation-state being ethnically-neutral or ethnically-blind. This ‘race to the civicness,’ in the public and political discourses, has been a product of the protracted conventional typology of civic versus ethnic in identifying the nation-states. Can a state be ethnically-neutral? If yes, can the civic and ethnic dichotomy be analytically sufficient? If a state cannot be ethnically-

⁹⁹ The way I approach the concept of ethnicity is Weberian in nature, emphasizing subjective belief in common descent. Due to this notion of subjective belief, the definition of ethnicity in this study includes notions of religion and race as subtypes of ethnicity. Andreas Wimmer unpacks this approach in his theoretical analysis of ethnic boundaries. See Andreas Wimmer, “The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory,” *American Journal of Sociology* 113(4): 970-1022, (2008), p. 973.

neutral, what would be the use value of the civic-ethnic typology? Would the civic-ethnic dichotomy hold its explanatory strength in imperial and transnational forms of belonging? By addressing these questions, I seek to achieve two goals in this chapter. The first goal is to show the analytical insufficiencies of the civic-ethnic dichotomy along with their adjective value in qualifying the concept of nationhood. The second goal is to propose a new typology which would go beyond the nation-state paradigm of the civic-ethnic dichotomy.

Despite criticisms, the civic and ethnic dichotomy in identifying the structures of citizenship and nationalism regimes of nation-states remains the most conventional typology in the studies of immigration,¹⁰⁰ citizenship and nation-building¹⁰¹ and nationalism.¹⁰² Although this dichotomy is widely accepted as ‘ideal-types’ and thus less likely to be mutually exclusive in the legal-institutional practices of the nation-state, analytical and conceptual progress which would dissect this dichotomous typology into a more sophisticated classification has been steady. Moreover, while the conceptual focus has been on the adjectives such as ethnic and civic that complete the concepts such as the state, citizenship, nationhood, and nationalism, the problematization of these nouns has been understudied. For instance, despite the fact that they refer to analytically two different categories, citizenship and nationhood are widely used interchangeably in many contexts.¹⁰³ Finally, the civic-ethnic dichotomy is built upon and adopted within the

¹⁰⁰ For instance, see Christian Joppke, *Selecting by Origin: Ethnic Migration in the Liberal State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

¹⁰¹ See Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

¹⁰² Stephen Shulman, “Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Studies of Nationalism,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35(5): 554-585 (2002).

¹⁰³ See Rogers Brubaker et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian*

nation-state paradigm which completely neglects the practices of citizenship and state policies toward nationhood in the transnational and imperial context.¹⁰⁴ In light of these issues, this chapter first articulates the analytical and conceptual issues between citizenship and nationhood and demonstrates how nationhood is a more overarching concept than citizenship along with overlapping areas. Secondly, by demonstrating the conceptual insufficiencies of the civic-ethnic dichotomy, I propose a new typology of nationhood that incorporates both the nation-state and imperial contexts. Based on the axes of legal and cultural boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, I develop four ideal-type nationhood structures: 1) hierarchical, 2) asymmetric, 3) monolithic, and 4) hyphenated.

In the first section of this chapter, I briefly discuss the civic-ethnic dichotomy in the studies of nationalism and argue why this typology is both analytically and conceptually insufficient. In the second section, I discuss the problematic synonym approach to citizenship and nationhood and demonstrate how they are analytically different concepts. In the final part, I introduce a new typology of nationhood structures on the basis of the weaknesses in the ethnic-civic dichotomy.

Town (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

¹⁰⁴ By transnational, I refer to the current trends of multiple memberships and belongings that blur the idea of state-based membership. The most specific example for this notion of transnational or post-national belonging is the Europe Union. For an excellent review essay on the challenges to the nation-state, see Irene Bloemraad, Anna Korteweg, and Gokce Yurdakul, "Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Challenges to the Nation-State," *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 153-179 (2008). In terms of imperial context, challenging the implicit idea that citizenship and nationhood are concepts of/within the nation-state system, I ask whether the civic-ethnic dichotomy would be applicable to the pre-nation-state era where empires such as the Ottoman and Russian empires also encountered problems of establishing proper citizenship and nationhood boundaries. In other words, politics of difference was a very contested issue in empires as well. On this subject, see Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

The Civic-Ethnic Debate: An Insufficient Conceptual Dichotomy

Although the idea of forming and becoming a nation across space and time has gradually become the undisputed political paradigm of the twentieth century, there has been a great variation in the form and content of nations, which all, one way or another, seek unity and homogeneity. Hans Kohn, in his seminal study, *the Idea of Nationalism*, was the premier work that showed the variation in the formation of nations.¹⁰⁵ For Kohn, Western nations such as England and France came into being with the pre-existing state structures that equated national membership with equal political status (i.e., citizenship). Thus, common heritage was not the primary engine behind nation-building but rather the will to become a part of the nation based on citizenship was the main boundary of the insiders and outsiders. However, in the experiences of Eastern nation formation, nations preceded the state formation and thus state-seeking nationalism was mostly based on common heritage such as blood, culture, and language such as in the cases of state-seeking nationalist mobilizations in the contexts of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires.¹⁰⁶ Overall, Hans Kohn's seminal analysis well established the variation among nations: political nations on the one hand and cultural nations on the other.

This framework of categorization has become conventional among scholars of nationalism with slight modifications. The main dichotomous typology that scholars often embrace and refer to is 'civic' or 'political' that constitutes the Western nationalism

¹⁰⁵ Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944).

¹⁰⁶ Shulman, "Challenging the Civic/Ethnic"

and ‘ethnic’ or ‘cultural’ that form the Eastern nationalism.¹⁰⁷ While the civic ideal type of nationhood is mostly regarded with characteristics such as territorial, political, liberal, individualistic, universalistic, voluntarist, and constitutional, the ethnic ideal type is considered to be illiberal, collectivist, particularistic, organic, exclusionary, and such.¹⁰⁸ Rogers Brubaker has shown these two categories on the cases of France and Germany in his comparative-historical study.¹⁰⁹ While the French nationhood is based on territory, universality, and assimilation, the German case is mostly bounded on the particularistic traits of German blood, thus being ‘differentialist’ or ‘segregationist’.

Under this assumption, civic nationhood is often assumed to be nonethnic but various scholars such as Sener Akturk argue that the civic and ethnic dichotomy is insufficient because they are not mutually exclusive. Akturk states that “civic is a vague, empty category; moreover ethnic and civic are derived from different roots.”¹¹⁰ Even Rogers Brubaker later preferred to use state-framed nationhood versus counter-state nationhood because he finds the ethnic-civic dichotomy ambiguous and analytically insufficient.¹¹¹ He states that:

In the former, ‘nation’ is conceived as congruent with the state, and as institutionally and territorially framed by it. In the latter, ‘nation’ is imagined as distinct from, and often in opposition to, the territorial and institutional frame of

¹⁰⁷ Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983); Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*; Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Andre Lecours, “Ethnic and Civic Dimension: Towards a New Dimension,” *Space and Polity* 4(2): 153-166 (2000); Schulman, “Challenging the Civic/Ethnic”; Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Sage, 2002).

¹⁰⁸ Spencer and Wollman, *Nationalism*.

¹⁰⁹ Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*.

¹¹⁰ Sener Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 7.

¹¹¹ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

an existing state or states.¹¹²

Moreover, Christian Joppke, in his analysis of shifting immigration policies in liberal states such as the United States and Germany, adopts the civic-ethnic dichotomy as ideal-types but he cautions the reader that all nations one way or another have a composition of both.¹¹³ Then, the civic-ethnic typology fails to become black/white categories but rather inevitably falls into the area of the gray zone. Let me articulate this further through the debates on whether a state can be ethnically neutral—that is the underlying principle of ‘civicness.’

Ethnically-Neutral State and Civic-Ethnic Dichotomy

The implicit assumption in civic nationhood is that the state is a neutral institution which is impartial to any ethnic identification which is often called an ethnically-blind state or ‘the benign neglect’. The French case is often shown as an example of this category. Yet, this begs the question of whether a state can be agnostic in terms of ethnicity. For Will Kymlicka, it is not likely:

It is possible for a state not to have an established church. But the state cannot help but give at least partial establishment to a culture when it decides which language is to be used in government; what language and history children must learn in school; what language and history immigrants must learn to become citizens; whether sub-unit will be drawn to create districts controlled by national minorities, and so on...so the idea that ‘civic nations’ are neutral between ethnocultural identities is mythical.¹¹⁴

Amy Gutmann also raises the question of neutrality in the modern democratic

¹¹² Ibid., p. 143.

¹¹³ Joppke, *Selecting By Origin*, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ Will Kymlicka, “Modernity and National Identity,” in Shlomo Ben-Ami, Yoav Peled, and Alberto Spektorowski, eds., *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation State* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), pp. 11-41, p. 16.

states that claim to have principles of civic equality, liberty, and opportunity. Her approach is also critical of the belief that states can be culturally-neutral:

The democratic state protects the dominant culture, whether intentionally or not, through the language it uses, the education it accredits, the history it honors, and the holidays and other customs it keeps. The state and the dominant public culture it supports, both indirectly and directly, cannot be culturally neutral in this sense.¹¹⁵

This is why Kymlicka argues that the myth of civic nation does not prevent the political aspirations of minority groups:

The myth that the state can simply be based on democratic principles, without supporting a particular national identity or culture, has made it impossible to see why national minorities are so keen on forming or maintaining political units in which they are a majority.¹¹⁶

Well, Kymlicka's claim of 'the neutrality myth' has not been uncontested. For instance, Clare Chambers' challenge to Kymlicka's idea is that the official language in any state would violate the principle of cultural neutrality:

Any state that promotes an official language (whether *de jure* or *de facto*) violates liberal neutrality only if that decision is based on the view that ways of life conducted in other languages, or the languages themselves, are inferior to the official language and/or its attendant culture... From a normative point of view, therefore, there is no reason to think that liberal neutrality is rendered mythical by the promotion of an official language.¹¹⁷

Yet, for Elke Winter, "bureaucratic structures and rules can never be entirely neutral; otherwise they would not provide citizens with a sense of loyalty and cohesion."¹¹⁸ As this debate goes on, what is crucial here for the sake of this paper is that the idea that

¹¹⁵ Amy Gutmann, *Identity in Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 43.

¹¹⁶ Kymlicka, "Modernity and National Identity," p. 35.

¹¹⁷ Clare Chambers, "Nation-Building, Neutrality, and Ethnocultural Justice: Kymlicka's Liberal Pluralism" *Ethnicities* 3(3): 295-319 (2003), p. 299.

¹¹⁸ Elke Winter, *Us, Them, and Others: Pluralism and National Identity in Diverse Societies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), p. 3. Also see Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

neutrality is an ideal or an expected phenomenon rather than being a strict reality as many practices of the states demonstrate a combination of civic and ethnic characteristics. In other words, states being ethnically neutral might not necessarily be a myth as Kymlicka argues, but it is definitely not an absolute reality. This is why the category of ‘civic’ with claims of neutrality is not necessarily mutually exclusive from its ethnic counterpart.

Alternative Typology?

Sener Akturk also develops a competing ideal-type structure that is more sophisticated and insightful than the civic-ethnic dichotomy. Akturk proposes three ideal-type states which he calls ‘ethnic regimes’: (1) antiethnic (e.g., Turkey before 2004, France), (2) monoethnic (e.g., Germany before 2000, Japan), and (3) multiethnic (e.g., the United States after the 1960s).¹¹⁹ His categorization is based on membership to the state (citizenship) and the expression of ethnic identities within the state:

(1) If a state seeks to restrict membership in the nation to one ethnic category through discriminatory immigration and naturalization policies, then it has a monoethnic regime, and the expression dimension becomes irrelevant because ethnic diversity is minimized through the construction of a monoethnic citizenry.¹²⁰

(2) If a state accepts people from ethnically diverse backgrounds as citizens (membership), but discourages or even prohibits the legal, institutional, and public expression of ethnic diversity (expression), then it has an antiethnic regime.¹²¹

(3) If a state accepts people from ethnically diverse backgrounds as its citizens (membership), and allows, encourages, or even participates in the legal and institutional expression of ethnic diversity (expression), then it has a multiethnic

¹¹⁹ Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

regime.¹²²

Although I consider Akturk's tripartite ideal types superior to the ethnic-civic dichotomy, the main shortcoming is the slippery slope between antiethnic and monoethnic regimes. The antiethnic regime, as he frames the French case, is based on the implicit assumption that the state can be neutral or ethnically blind. As I discussed previously, the idea of the state being ethnically blind or ethnically neutral neglects the fact that such states *can and do* embrace, either intentionally or not, certain ethnic characteristics such as prioritizing the majority language over others. Although Akturk thinks that the civic-ethnic dichotomy is not and cannot be mutually exclusive, he assumes that the antiethnic regime can be mutually exclusive with the monoethnic regime in the sense that the antiethnic regime is not built on ethnic traits such as any selected language, memory, or a teaching of history. Thus, he assumes that the antiethnic regime is independent of any ethnic traits. However, Anthony D. Smith has shown how modern nations are not detached from any ethnic origins.¹²³ Smith's ethnosymbolic analysis demonstrates how modern nations are not a creation *ex nihilo*. Rather, modern nations are constructed upon pre-existing myths, memories, and symbols that Smith calls '*ethnies*'. Yet, Akturk's antiethnic regime assumes that states can create nations *ex nihilo* within which the state is impartial or neutral to any ethnic identities. This is a false assumption and again does not incorporate the possibility of antiethnic and monoethnic regimes as mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive.

¹²² Ibid., p. 7.

¹²³ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

Further Shortcomings in Existing Typologies

The incapacity of being mutually exclusive in the civic-ethnic typology is not a new idea, so the conceptual insufficiency in this dichotomous typology needs further analysis. Thus, I want to highlight three additional shortcomings in this typology. First and perhaps the most significant one is that the civic-ethnic dichotomy is developed, adopted, and practiced in the nation-state paradigm. However, the idea of nationhood precedes the formation of nation-states. Ethnically diverse imperial states also encounter the question of inclusion/exclusion in the aim of forming an imperial nationhood. The civic-ethnic dichotomy does not capture the complexities of imperial systems of nationhood and belonging to the state. It is often neglected that empires, especially after the French Revolution of 1789, pursued and established various structures of belonging by defining the boundaries of nationhood and setting the criteria for citizenship.¹²⁴ Moreover, immigration was also an important phenomenon in the age of modern empires as well such as the forced migration of Crimean Tatars in the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire or the Muslim immigration from the Balkans to the Ottoman Analia during the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913.¹²⁵ What would these examples tell us about the imperial nationhood structures in the Ottoman and Russian empires? Would the civic-ethnic dichotomy be sufficient to explain these examples? Since I argue that the civic-ethnic dichotomy is a product of the nation-state paradigm, this dual typology is less

¹²⁴ Recently more studies on imperial nationhood and citizenship are given greater consideration. For instance, see Julia Philips Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

¹²⁵ M. H. Yavuz and I. Blumi, Eds., *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013).

likely to explain the different trends of belonging in empires.

Moreover, there is a growing literature on transnational and postnational forms of memberships beyond the sovereignty of nation-states. Irene Bloemraad, Anna Korteweg, and Gokce Yurdakul highlight the significance of this trend:

Although states matter, they are increasingly constrained by international law and human rights, making a narrow; state-defined citizenship increasingly illegitimate... The European Union is one site in which a certain postnational citizenship might be coming to fruition.¹²⁶

If the supranational institutions such as the EU are likely to alter the forms of membership and belonging to nation-states, would the civic-ethnic dichotomy preserve its explanatory value? I argue that since this dichotomy is a product of the nation-state paradigm, it is less likely to be explanatory in the nonnation-state paradigms such as in empires and postnational political organizations. For instance, as Karen Barkey states, imperial systems “are complex political formations that do not form one ‘national’ community, but rather multiple networks of interaction, different communities with varying institutions and state-domain compacts.”¹²⁷ Overall, due to the reductionism of the civic-ethnic dichotomy into the nation-state paradigm, categorization of different membership and belonging structures beyond the nation-state is necessary for comparative understandings. As I will propose my four quadrant typology in the final section of this chapter, I aim to show that new categories of nationhood structures can provide deeper analytical tools which can go beyond the nation-state paradigm.

The second shortcoming in the civic-ethnic dichotomy is that it does not capture

¹²⁶ Irene Bloemraad, Anna Korteweg, and Gokce Yurdakul, “Citizenship and Immigration,” p. 165.

¹²⁷ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 11.

the dimension of ethnic pluralism as a state policy. This is especially the weakness of the ‘civic’ category which implies ethnic neutrality through assimilation as a state policy. However, not all states pursue a strict assimilation model such as the French case. Rather, “since the 1970s, a number of liberal democracies have recognized their multi-ethnic populations as political categories in the assumption that public policies based upon ethnicity are the effective way to address social disadvantage and to achieve fairer wealth distribution goals.”¹²⁸ For instance, if a state creates ethnic categories in its census system, it means that that state leans toward pluralism rather than assimilation.¹²⁹ This is why counting ethnic groups is against the French republican tradition in the sense that “any official categorization is discriminatory and runs the risk of politicizing identities and weakening the cohesion of the French political nation.”¹³⁰ This was the case for Canada as well before official multiculturalism took effect with the idea that “any allegiance to a particularistic, collective status founded on historical, cultural, and territorial legitimacy was rejected.”¹³¹

Then, if the French case is a civic case—thus assimilationist—as the state is considered to be neutral, what can we say about the official multiculturalism in Canada? The state is not neutral but recognizes and provides legal-institutional spaces for the

¹²⁸ Elizabeth Rata and Roger Openshaw, “Introduction,” in Elizabeth Rata and Roger Openshaw, eds. *Public Policy and Ethnicity: The Politics of Ethnic Boundary Making* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 2.

¹²⁹ I borrow Elke Winter’s definition of pluralism: “an approach that encourages the recognition of ethnic diversity and its expression within the public space,” see Elke Winter *Us, Them, and Others*, p. 4.

¹³⁰ David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel, “Censuses, Identity Formation and the Struggle for Political Power,” in David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel, eds. *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 24; also see Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

¹³¹ Alain G. Gagnon, “Canada: Unity and Diversity,” in Michael O’Neill and Dennis Austin, eds. *Democracy and Cultural Diversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 17.

protection and advancement of different ethnic identities, particularly with the autonomy of Quebec. The Canadian case can be categorized as civic but it is insufficient to incorporate the state policies of ethnic pluralism. Sener Akturk rightly categorizes such states as ‘multiethnic’ rejecting the category of civiness,¹³² but his typology fails in ‘antiethnic’ versus ‘monoethnic’ differentiation as I discussed previously. Besides, there is significant uncertainty on what is referred to with these typologies. Is it the state, nation, or citizenship? What is civic or ethnic or multiethnic? While scholars have focused on the feasibility (or lack thereof) of these adjectives, the problems of interchangeable use among the nouns of state, citizenship, or nationhood are not addressed to a large extent. Do we talk about the same categories when we say civic state, civic nationhood, or civic citizenship? Are citizenship and nationhood synonyms? I address these issues in the next section which comes to my third critique.

Adjectives without Nouns: Civic and Ethnic What?

The interchangeable use of citizenship and nationhood (or nationality) is particularly relevant here for the sake of clarifying the analytical categories that I try to build my typology on. As I approach the interchangeable use of nationhood and citizenship as a false synonym, Rogers Brubaker and his colleagues also emphasize this problematic practice of interchangeable understanding between citizenship and nationhood. They state that “Nationhood and nationality are not, however, necessarily understood as congruent with state and citizenship” and “this point needs to be underscored, since ‘nation’ and ‘state’, ‘nationality’ and ‘citizenship’ are often used

¹³² Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*.

interchangeably in the United States and some Western European contexts.”¹³³ This is why I underline that civic/ethnic adjectives are loosely used on vague nouns such as state, citizenship, and nationhood. If we cannot clearly draw the conceptual boundaries among analytically distinct nouns/conceptions, then we are less likely to build explanatory adjective typologies. When civic or ethnic adjectives are used loosely and vaguely on the concepts of citizenship and nationhood, first they lose their explanatory strength and second they blur the categories of analysis. This is the reason why the concepts of citizenship and nationhood should be analytically distinguished from each other.

Citizenship “is usually defined as a form of membership in a political and geographic community” and it has dimensions of legal status and rights.¹³⁴ Citizenship gives individuals “the right to vote, to run for office, and to participate in public activities, while also requiring the obligation of paying taxes and possibly serving in the military.”¹³⁵ In a way, citizenship refers to a legal status which demonstrates membership to the state. Yet, as Peter J. Spiro argues, “membership in the state is no longer the only game in town.”¹³⁶ For instance, despite holding citizenship, “people grant American identity to Whites more easily than to Blacks, Asians, and Latinos even if they were born and raised in the United States.”¹³⁷ Thus, ethnically driven understandings of who counts

¹³³ Rogers Brubaker et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 14.

¹³⁴ Irene Bloemraad, Anna Korteweg, and Gokce Yurdakul, “Citizenship and Immigration,” p. 154.

¹³⁵ Marc Morje Howard, *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 3; also see Ronald Beiner, ed. *Theorizing Citizenship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

¹³⁶ Peter J. Spiro, *Beyond Citizenship: American Identity After Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 111.

¹³⁷ Nilanjana Dasgupta and Kumar Yogeeswaran, “Obama-Nation? Implicit Beliefs about American Nationality and the Possibility of Redefining Who Counts as ‘Truly’ American,” in Gregory S.

as a member of the nation might differ among the citizens of the same nation state.¹³⁸ To rephrase George Orwell's allegorical statement, all French, American, or British citizens are equal, but some are more French, American, or British than others.¹³⁹ Overall, what I try to emphasize here is that understanding citizenship and nationhood as synonymous concepts is likely to lead scholars to false categorizations and misleading explanatory typologies. I consider nationhood as a more overarching concept than citizenship and seek to build my typology on nationhood.

As I discussed the conceptual insufficiencies of the civic-ethnic dichotomy previously, I build my typologies as adjectives completing the concept of nationhood which I see as a more overarching category than citizenship. An individual may be a citizen of a state, but may still lack a membership in the imagined nationhood. For instance, the Kurds have been citizens of Turkey but their inclusion under the nationhood category of Turkishness has always been problematic.¹⁴⁰ Nationhood and citizenship are not mutually exclusive but they are two different categories with overlapping areas. The minority Russian population in Estonia can be imagined as part of the Russian nation but they do not have to be citizens of Russia. On the other hand, the Estonian citizenship of the Russian minority in Estonia does not necessarily make them Estonian. Moreover, the Turkish minority in Greece and Bulgaria who do not hold Turkish citizenship are more likely to be considered as part of the Turkish nationhood than the Kurdish minority in

Parks and Mathew W. Hughey, eds. *The Obamas and A (Post) Racial America?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 72.

¹³⁸ Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *Who Counts as an American? The Boundaries of National Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹³⁹ In his classic *Animal Farm*, Orwell allegorically writes that "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

¹⁴⁰ Mesut Yegen, "Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40(6): 51-66 (2004).

Turkey who hold Turkish citizenship. For instance, Turkishness in Azerbaijan and Turkey are depicted as ‘one nation, two states.’¹⁴¹ Then, in a way, citizenship is legally binding to the identity of the state but not necessarily to the nation. Nationhood, on the other hand, is a more overarching concept than citizenship.

I take the notion of nationhood as a combination of legal and cultural practices that forms an institutional structure within states. Legal membership *per se* does not make one a part of nationhood. For instance, would the notion of Muslim American citizens be an oxymoron for the United States as the historical foundation of American nationhood is based on an Anglo-Christian framework? If Benedict Anderson’s notion of nationhood as imagined community is right,¹⁴² Elizabeth Theiss-Morse states, “we might agree that everyone with U.S. citizenship is American, but some U.S. citizens might not be imagined in the national group.”¹⁴³ Or since the French government bans headscarves in public schools, a category of Muslim French citizens would not be acceptable for the state as it promotes secular and unitarist Frenchness. These nationhood structures are, of course, the results of state policies that over time define the insiders and outsiders who are not solely based on citizenship. When the Turkish state followed the French model of the assimilationist and unitarist notion of nationhood after the 1920s, the Kurds as ‘Kurds’ became the outsiders of Turkish nationhood despite their citizenship. As Brubaker states, outsiders “are excluded not because of what they are but because what

¹⁴¹ Murat Ergin, “Is Turk a White Man? Towards a Theoretical Framework for Race in the Making of Turkishness,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 44(6): 827-850 (2008).

¹⁴² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

¹⁴³ Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *Who Counts as an American? The Boundaries of National Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 11.

they are not—because they are not recognized and acknowledged as insiders.”¹⁴⁴ This is why I approach nationhood as analytically a different category from citizenship since the state not just legally but also culturally constructs social closures by adopting certain policies. If the state does not legally and institutionally recognize, acknowledge, or even promote different ethnic categories, the nationhood structure will be different from the one in which the state consciously acknowledges ethnic pluralism. Thus, ethnicity and nationhood should not be understood as independent from each other.

Following the Weberian tradition of ethnicity which Max Weber defines as a “subjective belief in common descent,”¹⁴⁵ Andreas Wimmer defines ethnicity as “a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in shared culture and common ancestry” and “this belief refers to cultural practices perceived as ‘typical’ for the community, to myths of a common historical origin, or to phenotypical similarities.”¹⁴⁶ This approach sees various cultural markers such as religion, race, language, and even nationhood as a subtype of ethnicity. I do not necessarily disagree with this approach and see ethnicity as an overarching concept that is inclusive of other categories. But the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood entails an understanding of political project that states tend to adopt and construct identification. Seeing nationhood and ethnicity as constructed in a common place, Brubaker and his colleagues argue:

Ethnicity is not a thing, an attribute, or a distinct sphere of life; it is a way of understanding and interpreting experience, a way of talking and acting, a way of formulating interests and identities. Nationhood, similarly, is not an ethnocultural fact; it is a frame of vision, a cultural idiom, and a political claim. Understood in

¹⁴⁴ Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, p. 29.

¹⁴⁵ Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1922[1985]).

¹⁴⁶ Wimmer, “The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries,” p. 973.

this, ethnicity and nationhood exist in a wide range of forms.¹⁴⁷

The way I encounter the dynamic relationship between ethnicity and nationhood includes the concept of citizenship as I demonstrate in the legal dimension of exclusion and inclusion in my typology below. Since both immigrant and autochthonic minorities might affect the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood, the state policies in determining the legal and cultural structure of nationhood can be altered by either. Overall, I believe a more sophisticated and explanatory typology of nationhood is necessary to incorporate both the legal and cultural axes of inclusion and exclusion. By doing this, such typology would not suffer from the nation-state paradigm that the civic-ethnic dichotomy is embedded in but instead would be able to apply to nonnation-state contexts such as the imperial and postnational forms of belonging. In the next section, I introduce my proposition of a typology of nationhood.

Beyond the Nation-State Paradigm: Four Ideal-Type

Nationhood Typologies

As I laid out the analytical distinctions between the concept of citizenship and nationhood previously and discussed the weaknesses of the ethnic-civic dichotomy, in this section I propose and discuss four ideal-type nationhood structures. I demonstrate four ideal-type institutional structures of nationhood: (1) pluralism–legal exclusion (hierarchical nationhood), (2) assimilation–legal exclusion (asymmetric nationhood), (3) pluralism–legal inclusion (hyphenated nationhood), and (4) assimilation–legal inclusion (monolithic nationhood) (See Figure 1).

¹⁴⁷ Brubaker et al. *Nationalist Politics*, p. 358.

In the vertical axis between pluralism and assimilation, the question of cultural recognition is crucial. This axis speaks to the cultural dimension of identifying the nationhood structure in the sense of whether state-defined nationhood is singular (assimilation) or plural which is likely to promote diversity and cultural pluralism. In other words, by pluralism, I mean “an approach that encourages the recognition of ethnic diversity and its expression within the public space.”¹⁴⁸ Under pluralism, the state pursues official policies such as bilingual education, ethnic questions in the census, affirmative action, constitutional recognition of ethnic pluralism, and in some cases even the state promotes ethnic pluralism. In other words, a pluralist state does not insist on a monolithic nationhood where all members are deemed to belong to a specific ethnic, linguistic, or religious group. On the other hand, I use assimilation as the opposite of pluralism. By assimilation, I mean the state policies and programs that seek to make its population similar against their will.¹⁴⁹ This refers to state policies where a singular culture and language are promoted as the core of nationhood in which other groups that do not share the state-imposed identity are subject to assimilation into the dominant culture. Assimilation and homogenization policies represent the backbone of many nation- and state-building projects of the twentieth century.

The horizontal axis relates to the question of legal recognition of minority groups (either immigrants or national minorities) by the state. Legal exclusion does not necessarily mean an exclusion from citizenship. A citizen of a state might be legally excluded from using a nondominant language and culture or a person might be a citizen,

¹⁴⁸ Elke Winter *Us, Them, and Others*, p. 4.

¹⁴⁹ Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, p. 119.

but may not have a right to vote. Thus, legal exclusion refers to the condition where citizen or noncitizen minority groups are subject to legal restrictions in the public space while state-favored majorities are not. On the other hand, legal inclusion points to the fact that the public space is legally open to diverse cultures, languages, and religions and are not subject to any judicial penalty. In other words, the scale of legal inclusion and exclusion might range from exclusion from full or no citizenship at all to a restricted citizenship based on discriminatory judicial penalties. Overall, according to these dimensions of cultural and legal recognition, I build four ideal-type nationhood structures that states can adopt.

Hierarchical nationhood is under the quadrant of pluralism–legal exclusion. In hierarchical nationhood, the state is not ethnically blind and the state does not see its every citizen as constituting ‘a horizontal comradeship’ as Benedict Anderson referred to for nations.¹⁵⁰ Rather, the state pursues legal-institutional policies to favor one ethnic identity over another such as through segregation or official discrimination. For instance, in the Ottoman *millet* system, the ruling Muslim community was at the top of the social strata within which other communities such as the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews were considered not members of the ‘horizontal comradeship’ but as the subjects of ‘vertical partnership.’¹⁵¹ In my typology, the hierarchical and asymmetric nationhood structures can be illuminating in understanding many imperial systems of belonging since many empires ruled over the diverse ethnic and religious demography with different systems of governing. The Ottoman *millet* system, for instance, has been acknowledged as anti-

¹⁵⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

¹⁵¹ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993).

assimilationist and respectful to religious diversity.¹⁵² However, as I stated previously, this does not mean that the Ottoman case can be categorized as civic due to the complicated structure of belonging to the state and the nation. Rather, I identify it as a system of hierarchical nationhood based on my four ideal-type typology since recognition of religious diversity and autonomy did not mean that the non-Muslim communities were given equal status of representation and participation to the ruling Muslim elites. In fact, non-Muslim communities were subject to a different legal structure than the Muslim communities. This is why civic-ness or ethnic-ness loses its explanatory power in imperial systems of belonging which show a greater variation than the nation-state systems. In hierarchical nationhood, the state does not discourage or prohibit the expression of ethnic diversity, but it hierarchically categorizes different ethnic communities in the sense of ‘the ruling ethnic group’ versus ‘the ruled ethnic groups’. The Apartheid regime in South Africa is also an example of a hierarchical nationhood in which the white minority ruled over the black majority.

Asymmetric nationhood is under the legal exclusion-assimilation axis. Asymmetric nationhood is different from hierarchical nationhood because the state claims to be ethnically blind and pursues assimilation. Under asymmetric nationhood, the state does not necessarily pursue an official policy of segregation or discrimination, but seeks to integrate certain ethnic communities that are considered anomalies to the state-framed nationhood without granting them full citizenship rights. Thus, the state deprives certain rights from minority groups that they would enjoy with full citizenship such as

¹⁵²Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

through restrictions on voting rights and political representation. Yet, the state also attempts either directly or indirectly to assimilate them into the public schools of the state-framed nationhood. For instance, Native Americans in the United States can be considered as being under asymmetric nationhood. The Federal Indian policy aimed to assimilate native Indians into the mainstream American culture. According to Joanne Nagel, “beginning in the nineteenth century, federal Indian policy was designed to assimilate American Indians into the Euro-American cultural mainstream (e.g., through forced English language acquisition, Anglo-centric education in Indian boarding and day schools, and reservation land reduction programs).”¹⁵³ Yet, Native Americans were not granted citizenship until 1924 and could not enjoy civil rights until the 1960s. Another example of asymmetric nationhood is the new immigrants in Europe who are not citizens of the state but still are incorporated into the various aspects of the social and political system of the host states. These groups, Yasemin Soysal argues, “participate in the educational system, welfare schemes, and labor markets” and “they join trade unions, take part in politics through collective bargaining and associational activity, and sometimes vote in local elections.”¹⁵⁴ Seeing this as a form of postnational citizenship, these groups are “empirical anomalies with regard to predominant narratives of citizenship.”¹⁵⁵ Accordingly, the state legally excludes but at the same time directly or indirectly imposes the assimilation process since these noncitizen groups get involved in every aspect of social and political life in these states despite their noncitizen status. I

¹⁵³ Joanne Nagel, “American Indian Ethnic Revival: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity,” *American Sociological Review* 60: 947-965 (1995), p. 954.

¹⁵⁴ Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

believe this is also an example of asymmetric nationhood since legal exclusion prevents the establishment of ‘horizontal comradeship’. Turks in Germany before the 1999 law that began to grant them citizenship would be under this category.¹⁵⁶ Although they were not granted citizenship, second-generation Turkish immigrants have been subject to full assimilation as if they are Germans.

Monolithic nationhood is the ideal-type for legal inclusion-assimilation. This nationhood structure would be the one within which the state offers universal citizenship regardless of ethnicity or religion. Yet, at the same time, particular group rights are seen as detrimental to the national unity. The state strictly holds on to the monolithic but inclusive nationhood. The French model would be under this axis. The idea of ethnic pluralism is strictly rejected by the state which is seen as divisive for the sake of ‘the one and indivisible French nation’. The immigrant-citizens from the Maghreb would be considered French by the state but without any recognition of group rights. Turkey has been an important example of monolithic nationhood as well. The state still identifies every citizen of Turkey as Turks, which includes minority groups such as the Kurds and the Arabs. Thus, Turkishness is inclusive but singular. In other words, it welcomes non-Turks to become Turks but without any recognition of group differences. Perhaps this has been the case in Turkey until the state promotion of minority languages, most particularly Kurdish, after 2003.¹⁵⁷ Despite legal recognition of every citizen as a Turk, the cultural recognition of pluralism may be shifting Turkey toward hyphenated nationhood.

Hyphenated nationhood refers to the pluralism-legal inclusion dimension in which

¹⁵⁶ Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*.

¹⁵⁷ Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, “Turk or Turkiyeli? The Reform of Turkey’s Minority Legislation and the Rediscovery of Ottomanism.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 43(3): 423-438 (2007).

the state recognizes ethnic diversity of the nation where minority groups can be subject to special protective rights such as affirmative action. This creates a structure where people can identify themselves with dual belonging such as in the United States after the 1960s. Policies such as ethnic questions in the census and affirmative action create the possibilities of being African-American, Mexican-American, or Indian-American. Thus, American belonging does not contradict African descent. Or being Mexican is not mutually exclusive with being American. Two types of belonging in hyphenated nationhood become mutually constitutive rather than exclusive. In hyphenated nationhood, the state does not impose a monolithic belonging to its citizens but creates the legal-institutional structure where dual belonging becomes possible. Hyphenated nationhood then disintegrates the organic nature of the nation-state and can differentiate belonging to the nation on the one hand and the state on the other. A citizen of the United States is attached to the state through being American, and attached to an ethnicity such as by being an Indian, Mexican, Japanese, African, etc. Jeffrey Lesser argues that the immigrants of Brazil have also led to the rise of “hyphenated Brazilians” who “incorporated many elements of majority culture even as they endured as distinct.”¹⁵⁸ The case of the European Union and an overarching European identity as a context of the postnation-state paradigm can be under the category of hyphenated nationhood as well. If the EU is likely to head towards being the United States of Europe, dual belongings such as German-European, French-European, and Austrian-European would be possible forms of belonging. Hyphenated nationhood has the voluntary dimension that is free of the

¹⁵⁸ Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), p. 5.

state's imposition on choosing the individual's belonging category. For instance, in the United States, an individual can either say he/she is Mexican-American or just American.

Conclusion

The civic-ethnic dichotomy in identifying nations, nationalisms, citizenship regimes, and nation-states remains a strong conventional typology that many scholars tend to adopt as ideal-types despite the recognition that they are less likely to be mutually exclusive. In other words, it is acknowledged that one way or another, many cases that we study have ethnic and civic characteristics at the same time. However, the parsimonious nature of this dichotomy continues to appeal to many scholars in the fields of immigration, nationalism, and citizenship. As I previously acknowledged the problem of this dichotomous typology not being mutually exclusive, my underlying initiation to develop and propose a more comprehensive typology specifically for nationhood structures that stem from the neglect of imperial systems of belonging on the one hand and the postnational structures of belonging on the other in the civic-ethnic dichotomy which is mostly built within the nation-state paradigm.

Moreover, the civic-ethnic debate has a paradoxical nature in the sense that the state elites' theoretical construction of nationhood and the way it is perceived by the different communities within that state would likely show variations and inconsistencies. This is why we even witness minority questions and ethnic problems in a state that structures its nationhood on the claims of civic-ness. For instance, American nationhood, despite being one of the most inclusive nationhood structures, at least in terms of its

capacity,¹⁵⁹ does not prevent certain communities from monopolizing Americanness within the boundaries of specific cultural criteria such as speaking the English language and having Protestant values.¹⁶⁰ This is why new immigrants who do not fit into such cultural criteria of becoming American are seen as a threat to the American nationhood.¹⁶¹ Another example would be the debates over Turkish nationhood within the framework of the civic-ethnic typology. While many Kurdish citizens of Turkey tend to perceive Turkishness as an ethnic identity, thus excluding the Kurds, the state elites have historically claimed that Turkishness has been inclusive due to the ‘civic’ definitions of Turkishness in the constitution.¹⁶² In other words, the civic-ethnic classification of nationhood structures are inconclusive and unproductive due to the variation and inconsistencies of how the state structures it and how it is perceived by the inhabitants of that state. However, on the other hand, my four ideal-type approach to nationhood is more likely to grasp the complicated dimensions of legal and cultural memberships to the nations. While it grasps how nationhood can be structured as hierarchical or asymmetric rather than simply ‘horizontal comradeship’, it also pays attention to the singularity/plurality dimension of forming nationhood within the categories of the monolithic and hyphenated nationhoods.

In conclusion, my proposition of nationhood typology provides a more sophisticated framework than the civic-ethnic dichotomy and I believe it has greater

¹⁵⁹ Peter J. Spiro, *Beyond Citizenship: American Identity After Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁶⁰ Samuel Huntington, *Who Are We: The Challenges to the American National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004).

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Yegen, “Citizenship and Ethnicity.”

explanatory power in identifying the different nationhood structures which go beyond the nation-state context. In the upcoming chapters, I will discuss the patterns of identity change within the late Ottoman and modern Turkish contexts within the nationhood typology that I discussed in this chapter. The next chapter will discuss the brief historical background of transition from Ottoman identity to Turkish identity.

CHAPTER 4

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN INTO A REPUBLICAN TURK:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRANSITION

*“I want to distinguish the religious differences of my subjects only when they enter their mosques, synagogues and churches”
Sultan Mahmud II (1789-1839)¹⁶³*

Introduction

Imperial and national states are analytically distinct categories in terms of ruling over their territories and governing the masses. “Empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people.”¹⁶⁴ Nation-states, on the other hand, seek congruence between a particular national culture and a political unit.¹⁶⁵ Nation-states are more centralized than empires; Michael Hechter frames this distinction as a matter of direct rule versus indirect rule.¹⁶⁶ In this transition from indirect to direct rule, argues Hechter, the idea of nationalism and nation-state came into being. The monopoly of violence and power is more territorially concentrated in nation-state governance within which the state seeks regulating all aspects of daily life in order to

¹⁶³ As cited by Yusuf Akcura, 1904, p. 5.

¹⁶⁴ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 8.

¹⁶⁵ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1983.

¹⁶⁶ Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

make societies “legible.”¹⁶⁷ Yet, Karen Barkey states that:

The imperial state does not have complete monopoly of power in the territory under control. It shares control with a variety of intermediate organizations and with local elites, religious and local governing bodies, and numerous other privileged institutions. To rule over vast expanses of territory, as well as to ensure military and administrative cooperation, imperial states negotiate and willingly relinquish some degree of autonomy.¹⁶⁸

As the empires stayed away from top-down social engineering projects of forming one national community and uniformity of rule, the possibility of managing diverse populations through conquest and expansion became the engine of imperial survival for centuries until the idea of nationalism and popular sovereignty was born on the European continent. Overall:

Unlike nation-states, empires were or learned to be less committed to constructing an encompassing collective or to making political relations uniform. Moreover, empires did not have constitutions to regularize rights until they moved into a mixed political mode between empire and nation-state. It was the diversity of peoples, communities, and territories, as well as the diversity of rule, that made empires.¹⁶⁹

Accordingly, the story of the Ottoman imperial system was not unique despite its distinct socio-cultural and religious amalgamation that formed the Ottoman way of ruling over and managing diversity. In this chapter, I first introduce a general depiction of the political and socio-cultural foundations of the Ottoman imperial system. Then, I explain the historical context of the state of the late Ottoman imperial structure that was subject to a comprehensive reform project in the nineteenth century. Finally, I briefly narrate the domestic and international processes within which the transition to the foundation of the

¹⁶⁷ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 1998.

¹⁶⁸ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 10.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Turkish Republic took place in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The goal of this chapter is to briefly present the historical context of the broader political and socio-cultural trends within which the cases under study were incarnated. By doing this, the study of specific cases in the further chapters can be historically situated in the broader sense.

The Philosophical Foundation of the Ottoman Empire

Founded in 1299 near western Anatolia by a tribal family under the leadership of Osman Bey,¹⁷⁰ the House of Osman as the Ottoman state managed to survive, expand, and rule over transcontinental regions of the Balkans, Middle East, and North Africa for more than six centuries until its demise in 1923. The empire functioned as the vanguard of Islam that “the political legitimacy of the Ottoman state was based on its ability to defend the *ummah* and maintain its welfare within the Abode of Islam.”¹⁷¹ The concept of justice was at the center of the imperial foundation of the Ottoman state that emphasized law and order rather than equality. Status quo—in which each community was expected to remain in their own borders and not trespass on the rights of others—“entailed a basically conservative political outlook, in which any change in the social order had negative connotations.”¹⁷² The leading Ottoman historian, Halil Inalcik, puts the idea behind the Ottoman philosophy of justice well:

¹⁷⁰ Ottoman which means *Osmanli* refers to the House of Osman. For definitions of terminology regarding the Ottoman Empire, see Selcuk Aksin Somel, *Historical Dictionary of the Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003).

¹⁷¹ *Ummah* is different from nation. Rather than a territorial community of a similar culture and language, *ummah* refers to all members of the Islamic community in the world. See Behlul Ozkan, *From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan: The Making of a National Homeland in Turkey* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 15.

¹⁷² Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 1993, p. 15.

The values of social order and justice constituted the basic political philosophy of the Ottoman Empire summarized in the formula of the ‘Circle of Equity’: ‘a ruler can have no power without soldiers, no soldiers without money, no money without the well-being of his subjects, and no popular well-being without justice.’¹⁷³

The Ottoman state under this philosophy of justice was based on three sources of legal authority: the Sultan and his power to issue laws and decrees, the Islamic law, and customs.¹⁷⁴ As the empire expanded its territories through successful conquests of the ‘infidel’, the management of diversity as understood within the confessional paradigm became central in the Ottoman system. The Ottoman state was successful in establishing loyalty structures that the non-Muslim communities—who were hierarchically in the lower strata of the Ottoman society—would adhere to. Kemal Karpat argues that four institutional practices survived the system of allegiance in the empire: (1) the amendments in the Qur’an that reject assimilation and language imposition, (2) the Islamic protection of the People of the Book (*dhimmis*) for free practice of faith in exchange for a special tax (*cizya*), (3) the *millet* system that institutionalized the confessional-based autonomy for the non-Muslim communities, and (4) local governments preserving local languages and ethnic attachments.¹⁷⁵ However, the *millet* system was the backbone of the Sultan’s ability to legitimately rule over diverse communities from which even contemporary political theorists of multiculturalism seek to gain insights.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Cited in Behlul Ozkan, *Abode of Islam*, 2012, p. 19.

¹⁷⁴ Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity: A History, 1789-2007* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 25.

¹⁷⁵ Kemal Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 718-722.

¹⁷⁶ See Bhikhu Parekh. *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). Parekh categorizes three models of political integration in multicultural

The Millet System: The Ottoman Way of Pluralism

Millet, etymologically, refers to a religious community in Arabic.¹⁷⁷ Yet, today *millet* is used as a synonym of nation in the Turkish language which was subject to semantic transformation over time.¹⁷⁸ However, *millet*s in the Ottoman polity referred to religious communities where the ruling Muslim *millet* and the state had the responsibility to protect the non-Muslim *millet*s (i.e., Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Jews). They were protected by the Ottoman state (e.g., right to life, property, religious freedom, and security). In turn, they had to pay a special tax (*cizya*). The goal was not to assimilate, but to ensure and flourish the faith-based and linguistic features of each community. Thus, they had the right to establish foundations, the right to education, and the right to communicate in their own language.¹⁷⁹ Yet, Berdal Aral states that legally and institutionally, the ruling Muslim *millet* and non-Muslim *millet*s were subject to different codes and practices:

the house of a non-Muslim could not be higher than that of a Muslim; non-Muslims were banned from living in certain neighborhoods; they were not allowed to dress like Muslims; they could not carry arms without special permission; they could not serve in the army; a non-Muslim man could not marry a Muslim woman; non-Muslims could not take up employment in the public sector; they could not witness against a Muslim in a court of law; and it was forbidden to toll the church bell loud enough to be heard from outside. All these examples indicate that difference of status between Muslims and non-Muslims was institutionalized under Ottoman rule in favor

societies: (1) proceduralist, (2) civic assimilationist, and (3) millet models.

¹⁷⁷ Millet in the Ottoman context refers to the religious community officially recognized by the Ottoman state. For further explanation of millets and millet system, see Selcuk Aksin Somel (2003) *Historical Dictionary of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 189-190.

¹⁷⁸ See Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity: A History, 1789-2007* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Behlul Ozkan, 2012, also provides an excellent historical account of socio-linguistic transformation of certain vocabularies such as *Vatan* (Homeland or Fatherland) and *Millet* from the late Ottoman Empire through contemporary Turkey.

¹⁷⁹ Berdal Aral, "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2004), pp. 454-482, p. 475.

of Muslims.¹⁸⁰

Despite these distinct legal and institutional practices, the Ottoman rule toward the non-Muslim communities was not so arbitrary that it would seek repression. Rather, the *millet* system provided confessional-based autonomy to each community, within which the leaders of the *millets* were responsible for collecting taxes, resolving private disputes in courts, and setting up schools. Yet, unlike the modern state, the Ottoman polity was interested in collective communities, not individuals. An additional caution here is that *millets* are different from what we think of as minorities in the modern sense. Thinking of the Ottoman *millet* system through a lens of the majority versus minority framework would be both reductionist and anachronistic. Elie Kedourie lays out the foundation of the concept of the minority as originated in the European historical-cultural context which did not have any political meaning in the Ottoman political context.¹⁸¹

Despite possible regional variations in practice, the *millet* system functioned in various capacities: “allowing an important degree of local autonomy (especially in everyday matters), keeping urban centers religiously segregated and eliminating local aristocracies (instead of using them to control local peasants.”¹⁸² This system opted out of the option of assimilation by the state and rather facilitated and flourished the continuity and preservation of many cultural practices and languages. Thus, it would be misleading to label the Ottoman Empire purely as a Muslim-Turkish state. “The cosmopolitan structure of the Ottoman Empire—Islamic tradition, Turkish heritage, the background of

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 476.

¹⁸¹ Elie Kedourie, “Minorities and Majorities in the Middle East,” *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (November 1984), pp. 276-282.

¹⁸² Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation-Building*, 2013, p. 55.

Byzantium and also numerous ethnic and religious cultures—was a synthesis.”¹⁸³ Thus, the Ottoman state did not construct a purely ethnic state identity but Islam was at the center of the philosophy of the state. The concept of *Devlet-i Aliye* (Sublime State) constituted the state identity.¹⁸⁴ The ‘Turk’ label to the Ottoman state was European discourse:

The name of Turkey has been given to Turkish-speaking Anatolia almost since its first conquest by the Turks in the eleventh century—given, that is, by Europeans. But the Turks themselves did not adopt it as the official name of their country until 1923... In the Imperial society of the Ottomans the ethnic term Turk was little used, and then chiefly in a rather derogatory sense, to designate the Turcoman nomads, or rather the ignorant and uncouth Turkish peasants of the Anatolian villages. To apply it to an Ottoman gentleman of Constantinople would have been an insult.¹⁸⁵

Turkishness did not gain any national definition until the early twentieth century. Yet, similarly, Ottomanness was not a widespread social identity in the empire either. Being an Ottoman was associated with the ruling elites (*askeri*), not the ruled masses (*reaya*). Asli Ergul states that “in order to be an ‘Ottoman’, one should work in the military or any other service of the state, should be a good Muslim who obeyed Islamic doctrine, should know the Ottoman way of life which absorbed the high Islamic culture.”¹⁸⁶ However, non-Muslims could become ruling Ottoman government officials by converting to Islam. Despite occurring intermittently, this is why many Armenians and Greeks served as grand viziers and high-rank generals in the Ottoman state. Again, this did not entail an assimilation of cultural practices and traditions of any ethnicity,

¹⁸³ F. Asli Ergul, “The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim, or Rum?” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (2012), pp. 629-645, p. 630.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 1-2

¹⁸⁶ F. Asli Ergul, “The Ottoman Identity,” 2012, p. 630.

but just required full faith in Islam among the ruling elites.¹⁸⁷ There was neither a widespread societal consciousness of Ottomanness nor an ethnic consciousness of Turkishness. The *millet* system kept different confessional communities as separate as possible so that any idea of common belonging to a nation or a state was not widely present. This policy of separation along with an absence of assimilation—within which the Islamic philosophy of justice of the Ottoman state guaranteed the life, property, and cultural traditions of the People of the Book—lasted centuries.

However, when the ideas of popular suffrage and nationalism—originated in Europe—were disseminated to the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, the Islamic-based philosophy of justice which was incarnated in the *millet* system began to shatter (see Chapter 6 for further elaboration on this).¹⁸⁸ In the midst of nineteenth century power politics among the major powers of Europe such as France and Great Britain, “the Europeans attached particular importance to the abolition of the *millet* system, which most saw as a discriminatory and barbarous system that denied the very basic rights of humanity and wanted replaced by the western European concept of political citizenship.”¹⁸⁹ Thus, the survival and persistence of the institutional structure of the *millet* system became politically less feasible and socially less acceptable in the changing political environment of norms, ideas, and rights.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Again, see Kedourie’s excellent historical account on the origins of majority and minority concepts in Western political philosophy and how these modern concepts affected the Ottoman philosophy of managing diversity in the Middle East, “Minorities and Majorities in the Middle East,” *European Journal of Sociology* 25 (1984): 276-282.

¹⁸⁹ Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 2012, p. 27.

The Nineteenth Century: The Age of Ottoman Reform

The idea of reform in the nineteenth century was not a new phenomenon for the centuries-old Ottoman polity. In fact, the Ottoman state initiated many military and political reforms before the nineteenth century as well.¹⁹⁰ However, what was novel and original about the nineteenth century reforms was that they were holistic and comprehensive in nature not just targeting a single policy area or a single institution of the state, but these reforms sought to transform the overall ontological nature of the Ottoman polity at the social, political, economic, and cultural spheres. In other words, this holistic approach of reforming the overall Ottoman state and society was a paradigmatic shift from one ontological horizon to another.¹⁹¹ The increasing awareness of the ruling elites—that the Ottomans were in relative decline *vis-à-vis* the European rival states since the seventeenth century’s military defeats, resource contraction, and technological deprivation—inflamed the idea of holistic reform (military, administrative, legal, societal, economic, etc.) in the empire.

Bernard Lewis states that “the decline in alertness, in readiness to accept new techniques, is an aspect—perhaps the most dangerous—of what became a general deterioration in professional and moral standards in the armed forces, parallel to that of the bureaucratic and religious classes.”¹⁹² This stagnation in military and economic development of the Ottomans *vis-à-vis* the Europeans and the inability to catch up with

¹⁹⁰ Ilber Ortayli, *Imparatorlugun En Uzun Yuzyili* (Hil Yayin, 1983).

¹⁹¹ See Halil Inalcik’s *Tanzimat Nedir?* (What is Tanzimat?), *Tarih Arastirmalari* (Ankara, 1941), pp. 237-263. He very clearly explains the meaning of Tanzimat as a reaction to the changing internal and external conditions such as the internal rebellions and their intersection with the external discourses of the European powers. For further elaboration of Tanzimat, see Chapter 6.

¹⁹² Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 26.

the rival powers is well summarized by Stanford J. Shaw:

The great nation states and empires of Europe were using their political unity to develop tremendous power; developments in science and technology during and after the Renaissance and Reformation were enabling them to build armies with weapons far more efficient than any known before; and the great gold and silver discoveries in the New World and the development of imperialism and international trade and commerce on a large scale were giving them the economic strength to support their new-found political and military power. In all of this activity the Ottoman Empire took no part. At best it remained stagnant, with a vast government unable to lead, hardly able to rule.¹⁹³

The Ottomans were financially bleeding by 1800. The vibrancy of the Ottoman trade routes from Europe to East Asia diminished after the European overseas expeditions. The Ottoman state was also limping in tax collection since extracting resources from the peripheral provinces. The notables (*ayan*)—powerful provincial families with financial and troop capabilities—were becoming a challenge to the authority of the Sultan as well.¹⁹⁴ Under these circumstances, the Ottoman ruling elites came to think of adopting the European way of modernization in order to prevent the further weakening of the Ottoman state.

Before and After the Tanzimat (Reordering) 1839-1876

The Ottoman military was the engine of Ottoman political and economic growth as the ultimate protector of the state. The decline of the Ottoman military meant the decline of the Ottoman state. Increasing military defeats throughout the eighteenth century, the declining efficiency of the once powerful Ottoman troops, and the dialectical relationship with the external conditions of increasing European military and technology

¹⁹³ Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 4.

¹⁹⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey*, 1993.

might put the Ottoman military and the state at a disadvantageous position. As Carter Findley states, “during the late eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire lived through wars and defeats that opened a new epoch in the empire’s history” and “simultaneous with revolutionary change in Europe and the Americas, these crises expressed, at the regional level, global forces that tightened spatial interlinkages and accelerated change.”¹⁹⁵ Seeing these capacity and efficiency crises of the military and the organization of the state, Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) put forward the first attempts of ‘defensive modernization’ *vis-à-vis* the might of the European military. The discourse of reform and change was first seeded in Sultan Selim III’s reign.

According to Eric J. Zürcher, Sultan Selim III followed Louis XVI of France as his role model.¹⁹⁶ In his reform package, *Nizam-i Cedid* (the New Order), the Sultan aimed to empower the state both internally toward the unruly and powerful notables (*ayan*) in the provinces and externally toward the aggression of the other regional states (especially Russia). The first function of empowering the state was reforming the military, especially the Janissaries—the traditional elite military troops—that had autonomy from the Sultan’s reign. The declining war capacity of the state was attributed to the corruptness and idleness of the Janissaries. After consulting with the French military advisers, 30,000 new men were trained for establishing a new military troop. Besides this dimension, Erik J. Zürcher emphasizes the role of Sultan Selim II in introducing the European ideas of military and government to the Ottoman Empire that

¹⁹⁵ Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity*, 2010, p. 23.

¹⁹⁶ Zürcher 1993; Bernard Lewis also argues that Sultan Selim III showed great interest in the New Order in his communication with Louis XVI via letters. See Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

later in the nineteenth century infiltrated into the minds and hearts of the Ottoman statesmen and intellectuals:

More important, perhaps, than Selim's actual measures, were the increased opportunities he created for the flow of Western ideas into the Ottoman Empire... French instructors were the interlocutors of new ideas in the first phase. Their students learned both the French language and new ideas that were becoming wide-spread in Europe. The second channel of communication was the new Ottoman embassies in Europe. Permanent embassies were opened in London (1793), Vienna (1794), Berlin (1795), and Paris (1796)... Many of the later reformers of the empire had their first experience of Europe while serving as secretaries at these Ottoman missions.¹⁹⁷

Although Sultan Selim III's attempts at reform stirred opposition from the Janissaries who did not want to lose their privileged status and the Islamic clergy (*ulema*) who were bothered with the increasing influence of French ideas and practices, the successor Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) was able to continue the ideals of his predecessor. While Sultan Selim III was assassinated by the Janissaries in 1807, Sultan Mahmud II was able to relatively consolidate his power with the help of a powerful notable, Bayrakdar Mustafa Pasha.¹⁹⁸ As Sultan Mahmud II was able to suppress the Janissary opposition and reach an agreement with provincial notables, he positioned more reform-minded people in the higher seats of the state. These decades of reform efforts by both Sultan Selim III and Sultan Mahmud II ended with the transformative 'reorganization' (*tanzimat*) of the Ottoman polity in every aspect of its functions and practices. Caroline Finkel (2005) states that the *Tanzimat* was a logical outcome and the continuation of Sultan Selim III's *Nizam-i Cedid*.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Zurcher 1993, pp. 25-26.

¹⁹⁸ Pasha is the highest title of Ottoman civil and military officials. See Selcuk Aksin Somel (2003), *Historical Dictionary of Ottoman Empire*, p. 225.

¹⁹⁹ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (New York:

The Gulhane Imperial Edict of 1839 (*Hatt-i Serif*)²⁰⁰ under the Sultanate of Abdulmecid was the first leg of the *Tanzimat*. This imperial edict had three bases: “the security of life (*can*), honor (*irz u namus*), and property (*mal*) of all subjects; fair taxation based on an individual’s property and wealth; and fair practice in the military conscription of Muslims in terms of provincial distribution and length of service.”²⁰¹ Carter Findley sees the Gulhane Edict of 1839 as a resonance of the Euro-American declaration of rights.²⁰² However, he also states that the Gulhane Edict did not declare the equality of all subjects of the Sultan, but rather “what the decree says, however, among Ottoman subjects, ‘Muslims and members of other religious communities’ (*ehl-i Islam ve milel-i saire*) shall benefit ‘from these imperial concessions’ without exception.”²⁰³ The laws are applied equally, but Muslims and non-Muslim *millets* were still not equal. Despite being liberal in tone, the Edict was still not independent from the Islamic philosophy of equity and justice of the Ottoman Empire. Yet, there was a discursive shift from ‘native locality’ to ‘fatherland’ as the common territory (*vatan*).²⁰⁴

The second phase of the *Tanzimat* was the Imperial Edict of 1856²⁰⁵ which introduced a more concrete understanding of the equality between Muslim and non-Muslim *millets* of the empire. This declaration weakened the centrality of Islamic law and brought non-Muslims and Muslims under the same judiciary by removing legal and *de facto* inequalities between different confessional groups within the *millet* system. For

Basic Books, 2005).

²⁰⁰ It can be called the Noble Edict of the Rose Garden.

²⁰¹ Masayuki Ueno, “For the Fatherland and the State: Armenians Negotiate the Tanzimat Reforms,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 45 (2013), pp. 93-109, p. 95.

²⁰² Findley 2010, p. 44.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856.

instance, a special tax gathered from non-Muslims was abolished, conscription became available to non-Muslims, employment in public service became possible, and non-Muslim *millet*s witnessing against Muslims in courts was in practice. Moreover, non-Muslims gained the rights to be represented in local and central state institutions such as the Council of the State.²⁰⁶ At first glance, these reform epochs in the nineteenth century may be read as Westernization, secularization, and liberal modernization and the state elites as liberal reformers. This one-size-fits-all reading of the late Ottoman history might be misleading at best and reductionist at worst. Frederick Anscombe brings a revisionist perspective on the teleological reading of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire.²⁰⁷ The fundamental purpose of the Ottoman reform efforts, for Anscombe, was “strengthening the empire’s capacity to defend itself against the existential threat posed by historically hostile and increasingly powerful Christian Europe.”²⁰⁸ However, this does not mean that the reforms and reformers were unwilling and reluctant to change Ottoman polity and society. In fact, Ilber Ortayli argues that Ottoman reformers believed in change and to some extent, pursued the Western norms and ideals.²⁰⁹

In the mid-nineteenth century, the interstate relations were chaotic, especially the affairs among the European powers, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire. The expansionist and imperialist ambitions within the interstate affairs reinforced the realist behaviors of urgent ally-seeking in the midst of intersecting and contradicting state interests. In this

²⁰⁶ Aral 2004.

²⁰⁷ Frederick Anscombe, “Conclusion: On the Road from Berlin,” in *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the Treaty of Berlin* eds. M. Hakan Yavuz with Peter Sluglett (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 538.

²⁰⁹ Ortayli, *Imparatorlugun En Uzun Yuzyili*, 1983.

survival-of-the-fittest context, the Ottomans were highly vulnerable to external influence due to their agonizing military, economy, and state authority. Under this context, the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire, especially in the Balkans, became the strategic concern of European powers.²¹⁰ On the other hand, the Russian aggression toward the Ottomans with the claim of protecting the Ottoman Orthodox community and the increasing instability in the Balkans convinced the European powers to accept the Ottomans to the Concert of Europe by the Treaty of Paris in 1856. The European influence in the internal affairs of the Ottomans was further reinforced after this alliance-making. Thus, the idea of reform was at the intersection of internal and external historical contexts.

Despite widespread Muslim opposition to the reforms that would grant equal status to Muslim and non-Muslim communities, reformist *pashas* Ali and Fuad were not reluctant to carry out new policies and institutions that would create a new political community:

Their object was to create a new political community that would encompass the whole population of the Empire, and to found a new nationality based upon equal Ottoman citizens who regarded the Ottoman Empire as their fatherland. In this way they hoped to transfer the loyalty of the non-Muslims from the local community and the Ottoman dynasty to the fatherland and the state.²¹¹

This idea of the Ottoman Empire as the common fatherland (or homeland) for both Muslim and non-Muslim communities seeded the origins of Ottomanism—a patriotic stance that all members of the empire should be loyal to the state and the common

²¹⁰ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 2012.

²¹¹ Butrus Abu-Manneh, “The Christians between Ottomanism and Syrian Nationalism: The Ideas of Butrus Al-Bustani,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (May, 1980), pp. 287-304, p. 287.

homeland—by various Ottoman elites, bureaucrats, and intellectuals known as the Young Ottomans. The Imperial Ottoman citizen was at the center of Ottomanism. Yet, Hakan Yavuz underlines a paradox of Ottomanism:

The Ottoman reforms, which aimed at superposing an Ottoman identity above all ethnic and religious loyalties, had little chance for success given that the Ottoman state itself was always the most active promoter of Islamic superiority vis-à-vis other religions.²¹²

In the absence of a participatory political system, the chance of Ottomanism as a project of individual-rights based citizenship was less likely.²¹³ Thus, there was a gap between the ideal of reforms and their implementation on the ground.

Young Ottomans and Young Turks

The ideals of *Tanzimat* to build a new political community based on territory and universalism that would cut across ethnic and religious particularisms in the Ottoman society did not turn into a societal reality. While various conservative Muslim communities were opposed to the equal status with the non-Muslim communities, non-Muslim communities were unwilling to give up their cultural, economic, and political comfort zones provided by the traditional noninterventionist *millet* system. According to Erik J. Zürcher, various Christian communities refused to give up their traditional rights under the *millet* system since equality before the law would damage the Christian economic interests.²¹⁴ The Muslim bureaucratic-military elite (political force) and the Christian merchant elite (economic force) were the two social forces that would challenge

²¹² M. Hakan Yavuz, “Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as the Catalyst of Homogenization,” in *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications*, eds. M. Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 2013), p. 43.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 1993, p. 41

surrendering their privileged status through equality. However, recent historical accounts argue that seeing the *Tanzimat* as solely a top-down project that did not have any impact on nonelite Ottoman masses would be misleading. It is argued that the ideas of *Tanzimat* increased the expectations of various communities such as the Armenians, and in fact, these communities adopted the discourses of *Tanzimat* against the state in order to justify certain claim-makings.²¹⁵ Perhaps the *Tanzimat* was a top-down and outside-in project that lacked popular support but it definitely transmitted its ideals, discourses, and norms to the nonelite Ottoman masses in various ways. On the other hand, the Ottoman state was concerned about ethnic and religious particularisms that would disrupt the social cohesion of confessional groups, especially after the Greek independence²¹⁶ and Serbian autonomy in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the international context, Russia was pursuing a pan-Slavic and pan-Orthodox Christian foreign policy in the Balkan territories of the Ottoman Empire. The Balkans definitely reflected the centuries-long multiconfessional and multiethnic social cohesion of the empire. Yet, the intersection of the Balkans and European rivalry in the nineteenth century transformed this region into a transnational and interstate zone of competing discourses and claim-makings. The Ottoman Balkans as a sphere of interstate competition and competing discourses of nationalism became known as the Eastern Question in the Ottoman Empire. Erik J. Zürcher defines the Eastern Question as follows:

²¹⁵ This traditional top-down approach was mostly articulated by Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963). See some revisionist perspectives in Milen Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004): 730-32; Masayuki Ueno, "'For the Fatherland and The State': Armenians Negotiate the Tanzimat Refoms," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45 (2013): 93-109.

²¹⁶ Sukru Ilicak, "A Radical Rethinking of Empire," 2011.

The question of how to satisfy competing Balkan nationalisms and the imperialist ambitions of the great powers without causing the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, or, if this destruction was inevitable (something of which the majority of European statesmen were convinced), to dismember it without upsetting the balance of power in Europe and causing a general war, was known throughout the nineteenth century as the ‘Eastern Question.’²¹⁷

While Russian foreign policy aimed to establish a Bulgarian state as the center of pan-Slavism that included many parts of Ottoman Macedonia, Great Britain was concerned about the control of the Straits and Asia Minor by Russia which would disrupt the vibrancy of the British trade route reaching to its most important colony, India. This is why the British policy was based on the protection of the Ottoman territorial integrity within its rivalry with Russia.²¹⁸ With its weak political and economic capacity since foreign intervention in the domestic decision-making of the empire was widespread and the dismal state of public debt was present,²¹⁹ internal and external sovereignty of the Ottoman state was at risk, especially during the constitutional monarchy of Abdulhamit II (1876-1909). The first constitution of the Ottoman Empire—declared in 1876 and modeled on the 1831 Belgian Constitution—proclaimed the sovereign right of the Sultan on the one hand and the basic legal rights of the individuals on the other. The idea behind the constitutional monarchy flourished among a group of intellectuals, policy-makers, and bureaucrats²²⁰ known as the Young Ottomans who were critical of the disintegration

²¹⁷ Zurcher, *Turkey*, 1993, p. 40.

²¹⁸ A collection of essays edited by Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett comprehensively analyzes this chaotic era in the late Ottoman Empire with a special focus on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and its social, political, and economic consequences for the Ottoman state and the society. For further analysis, see *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and The Treaty of Berlin* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

²¹⁹ Engin Deniz Akarli, “The Problems of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics Under Abdulhamid II (1876-1909): Origins and Solutions,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1976.

²²⁰ Such as the poet and journalist Namik Kemal, Mustafa Fazil Pasha and journalists Ali Suavi

of Islamic values and ethics from the Ottoman political culture.

The commonality of the Young Ottoman thought was to redefine a patriotic Ottoman identity in defense of the emerging political consciousness of nationhood in the Balkans in particular and Europe in general. This consciousness was seen as a threat to the territorial and social integrity of the empire, and the Young Ottomans were critical of the extensive concessions to the non-Muslim millets under the *Tanzimat* and the neglect of Islam as the engine of Ottoman political culture.²²¹ Although the Young Ottomans did not pursue an Islamic political agenda and instead advocated participatory constitutional-liberal values, they were skeptical of the extensive infiltration of European norms and values into the Ottoman polity and society. For instance, Namik Kemal, a literary intellectual proponent of the Young Ottoman thought, was critical of *Tanzimat*

Ottomanism:

First, to the absolutist, complicitous and spineless policies of the Tanzimat statesmen who allowed European interventions in the internal affairs of the Empire; second, to the firm belief that it was not anchored in a totalizing ethical-political code, that is, the Shari'a. He did not, however, discard the ideology of Ottomanism. Its stated guarantees of 'protection of life, honor, and property' were not in contradiction to the Shari'a. Rather, its injunctions were incomplete and insufficient.²²²

Young Ottomans sought a third way between the traditional conservatives (pro-Sultanate) and the secular modernists (pro-Europeans) by limiting the powers of the Sultan and “also to bring the diverse amalgam of Ottoman communities together on the

and Sinasi Bey.

²²¹ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 2005.

²²² Joseph G. Rahme, “Namik Kemal's Constitutional Ottomanism and non-Muslims,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1999), pp. 23-39, p. 28.

basis of the law and equality.”²²³ As the Abdulhamit II’s constitutional rule was short lived and ended in 1878, his authoritarian policies led to the emergence of a new epistemic and political faction called the Young Turks.

The Ottomans lost the Russian War (1877-1878) with the consequence of massive territorial losses in the Ottoman Balkans (Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania gained independence, Bulgaria was granted autonomy). The Ottoman defeat led to major criticisms toward the reign of Abdulhamit II and he basically dismissed the parliament and the constitution in 1878.²²⁴ His logic of abolishing the constitution and the parliament was that the lack of consolidated power in the hands of the Sultan paved the way for secessionist movements in the Balkans. Although Ottomanist intellectuals supported the efforts of preserving the remaining territories of the empire, Abdulhamit II’s despotism and failure to prevent military and territorial losses undermined his legitimacy to a great extent. In reaction to these incapacities and autocratic tendencies of the Sultan, a new intellectual and political movement was on the rise under the roof of ‘Committee of Union and Progress’ (CUP) which was established in 1894. The members of the CUP were known as the Young Turks.

Many leading cadres of the Young Turks were politically active in the Macedonian question of the Ottoman Empire which the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs had national claims over. In this chaotic environment of violence, religion, and nationalism, the Young Turks experienced the antistate power of peripheral nationalism and nationalist mobilizations. In this socio-political context, “the main objectives of the

²²³ M. Hakan Yavuz, “Warfare and Nationalism,” 2013, p. 43.

²²⁴ Ibid.

groups constituting the CUP were the opposition to the autocracy of Abdulhamid II, the restoration of the constitution, and the protection of the homeland.”²²⁵ These groups were willing to save the empire against the dissolution threat. Their common objective was to save the Ottoman state against the aggression and expansionism of the European powers. They saw centralization essential toward this end.²²⁶ Their increasing public prominence and the declining legitimacy of Abdulhamid II ended with the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and the restoration of the constitution.

The mentality of the founding CUP (i.e., Eurocentric modernity, positivism, centralists, etc.) cadres was eventually transmitted to the founding elites of the Turkish republic after 1923. In addition to their common background of a Europe-based college education and service in the state, Erik J. Zürcher underlines the Young Turks’ profile characteristics as:

consisted of Muslim males, born almost exclusively between 1875 and 1885, with an urban literate background (albeit hailing from different social strata). The majority of them had their roots in the Southern Balkans, the Aegean or the capital, a region vastly different from inland Anatolia and the Arab provinces. Ethnically the composition of the Young Turks was diverse, with a majority of Turks but important components of Albanians and Caucasian immigrants, some Kurds and Arabs.²²⁷

Thus, the Young Turks were not necessarily composed of a narrow group of Turks. As I will argue further in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, the Young Turks can be categorized as Ottomanists in the sense that they advocated for a centralized empire rather than a nation-state. However, after the experiences of ethnic and religious violence in the Balkans,

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

²²⁶ Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

²²⁷ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, p. 110.

especially during the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913,²²⁸ the notion of Ottoman identity gradually came closer to being affiliated with Muslimhood which became evident after World War I. Surrounding this memory of overlapping linkages of religion, ethnicity, and violence, the Young Turks spent most of their energy on two interrelated political debates: (1) how to save the state from further territorial losses and partition; and (2) the question of centralization towards that end. After the Young Turk revolution in 1908, the elite cadres of the CUP pursued centralization policies by various mechanisms such as monitoring the education system, creating a ‘national’ economy,²²⁹ and consolidating the practice of conscription.²³⁰ The CUP put the Turkish language at the center of these centralization policies which different communities such as the Greeks, Albanians, and Macedonians perceived the intentions of the CUP as Turkification and assimilation by the state. The Young Turk project of a centralized imperial system collapsed after the devastating defeat of the empire in World War I.

In the post-World War I context, the elite competition between the government in Istanbul and the opposition movement in Ankara was based on the choice between an imperial system and a national state. As I show in Chapter 5, the power consolidation of the opposition in Ankara was achieved to establish a national state by eliminating

²²⁸ The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, very much shaped the late Ottoman thought on nationhood and loyalty to the state as there were many atrocities to the Muslim populations of the Balkans as they fled to western and eastern Anatolia. As many Young Turk elite cadres directly experienced violence and nationalism in the Balkans, their boundaries of belonging and loyalty to the state were rooted in their war memories in the Balkans. See a comprehensive collection of essays on the sociopolitical implications of the Balkan Wars in the Ottoman Empire edited by Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi. *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013).

²²⁹ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat (1908-1918)* (Ankara; Yurt Yayinlari, 1982).

²³⁰ For an insightful study that crosscuts the centralization-decentralization debate, see Nobuyoshi Fujinami, “Decentralizing Centralists, or the Political Language on Provincial Administration in the Second Ottoman Constitutional Period.” *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 49, No. 6 (2013), pp. 880-900.

Ottoman identity and replacing it with monolithic Turkishness. In order to understand the shifts and continuities between the different forms of belonging that were promoted by the ruling elites, one especially needs to pay close attention to the identity debates surrounding Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism in the early twentieth-century Ottoman empire.

Yusuf Akcura and Three Types of Policy: Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism

Yusuf Akcura (1878-1935), an émigré from Russia and an influential political figure in the last years of the Ottoman Empire, was involved in the national independence movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal and served as a member of the parliament in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in the early years of the Republic. His essay “Three Types of Policy” written in 1904 was perhaps the most striking piece that critically and strategically discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the three policy options for the Ottoman state: Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism:

the first, the creation of an Ottoman nation through the integration and union of the various nationalities subject to the Ottoman government; the second, taking advantage of the fact that the Caliphate reposed in the rulers of the Ottoman State, the political unification of all the Islamic peoples under the control of the said government (what the Europeans term Pan-Islamism); and the third, the creation of a Turkish political nation based on race.²³¹

Akcura sees the idea of the Ottomanist nation as an equivalent with the American identity of the United States:

²³¹ See *Yusuf Akçura's Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset (Three Kinds of Policy)*, *Oriente Moderno*, Anno 61, Nr. 1/12 (Gennaio-Dicembre 1981), pp. 1-20. This piece was translated from the Turkish Historical Society's modern Turkish edition in 1976: *Yusuf Akcura- Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1976), p. 5.

The real aim was to accord the Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants of the Ottoman State the same political rights and to make them subject to the same obligations; to give them absolute freedom of thought and religion, and taking advantage of this equality and freedom, despite their religious and ethnic differences, to intermix and give coherence to the inhabitants in question, thus bringing into existence a new nation, an Ottoman nation, bound together, like the Americans of the United States, by a common fatherland. ”²³²

According to Akcura, this idea of nationhood started with the Tanzimat and was influenced by the French Revolution’s discourse of *nationalite* based on voluntary consent rather than ancestry and race. As this policy showed traction under the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909), Islamism gained momentum within the Ottoman government circles. However, as Akcura very succinctly puts, Turkism in this period is a very infant phenomenon:

The idea of creating a Turkish political nation based on race is quite recent. I doubt whether the idea has existed either in the Ottoman State down to the present... I do not know that this idea has any supporters in the Ottoman territories outside Istanbul. Whatever one might say, the idea of creating a political nation based on race is rather recent and not too widespread .²³³

If one reads Akcura’s essay very diligently, it is clear that the underlying motivation of his discussion between the three options of identity politics is the Ottoman state. This is why he asks:

in which of the three political directions, discussed above, does the interest - that is, the strengthening - of the Ottoman State lie? And which of these is capable of application in the Ottoman territories? ²³⁴

In quest of a solution to this crisis of the Ottoman state, Yusuf Akcura draws a very rational and pragmatic outline within which he argues that either Islamism or Turkism would serve as the most viable option in terms of empowering the state.

²³² Ibid., p. 5.

²³³ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

However, he does not see these two policy options as mutually exclusive either.

For Akcura, the policy of Ottomanism would be ideal for the Ottoman state but there was little internal and external support for this option. While many Muslims objected to the idea of equality with the non-Muslim subjects, various non-Muslim communities did not want it because they already were in the loop of self-determination against the Ottoman state. Other actors such as the Russian and Balkan governments did not support Ottomanism either since it would make the Ottoman state stronger, as Akcura states.

Islamism would cause exclusion of non-Muslim subjects and divide the Muslim and non-Muslim Turks which in turn would weaken the Ottoman state further. Turkism on the other hand would divide the Islamic community and weaken the state again.

According to Akcura, Turkism would function better since it had the potential of fusing the religious and cultural bonds together. Yet, Akcura concludes with more questions than answers:

In short, the question which has for long occupied my mind and for which I have not found a convincing answer remains before me and still awaits an answer: of the policies of Islamism and Turkism, which is the more beneficial to the Ottoman State, and which is capable of application?²³⁵

Akcura's mindset in fact reveals the mindset of the Ottoman state elites in the sense that their utilization of identity politics was pragmatic rather than ideological in the sense that they cared more about the state than any specific identity category, be it Turkish, Muslim, Ottoman, etc. Whichever served the interests of the state best, they did not hesitate to adopt it depending on the internal and external political realities. Thus,

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 20.

these identity categories were not necessarily mutually exclusive or completely independent from each other. They only served as a toolbox for the state elites where they could use one or more tools simultaneously. I will argue this aspect further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to introduce the brief historical account of the late Ottoman Empire and the first steps toward the founding of the Republic of Turkey with a particular focus on the question of belonging to the state. While the institutional structure of political belonging to the state was designed on the hierarchy between the ruling Muslim *millet* and the ruled non-Muslim *millets* under the millet system, Ottoman nationhood—which was initially introduced in the Reform Edict of 1856 and later deepened with the Nationality Law of 1869 and the first Ottoman constitution in 1876—sought to overcome the hierarchical notion of the millet system by establishing an overarching Ottoman identity that would exceed and cut across any particularistic ethnic belonging. However, the notion of Ottomanness did not necessarily turn a blind eye to communal identities within the empire; thus it was more of a hyphenated nationhood within which various communities of the empire would identify themselves first with their ethnic belonging and then with their allegiance to the state such as Armenian Ottoman, Albanian Ottoman, or Syrian Ottoman. Thus, the question of inclusion or exclusion is not much about neither the ‘civicness’ or ‘ethnic’ dimension nor the Turkishness or Ottomanness of the nationhood, but it is more about the singularity or plurality of the nationhood which would provide flexibility and voluntarism (or lack thereof) to the choice of rather than the imposition on the members of the state.

In the transition from Ottomanism to Turkishness, monolithic nationhood under Turkishness became dominant by the state elites. In the next chapter, I will provide an introduction to the emergence, persistence, and change in the conceptions of Turkishness from the 1920s until the contemporary era. The next chapter will also prepare the reader for the more historically grounded and theoretically informed case analyses in the later chapters where I will show the causal mechanisms and conditions under which the state elites envisioned an institutional shift from one form of nationhood to another.

CHAPTER 5

ANATOMY OF A NATIONHOOD: THE ESSENTIALS OF POST-OTTOMAN TURKISHNESS

Introduction

As I narrated a brief history of transition from Ottoman nationhood to Turkish nationhood in the previous chapter, this chapter will provide the essentials of the imagined Turkishness, how the founding elites constructed this nationhood and how it has persisted and evolved throughout the twentieth century in the Republic of Turkey. This chapter's historical account will supplement the following chapters on the analysis of the causal mechanisms behind the nationhood change from one form to another in postimperial Turkey.

When Yasin Aktay, a Turkish sociologist and a member of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP in Turkish initials), has recently stated that Turkishness is a synthesis not a race, this statement once again stirred the debates on Turkishness in academic and political circles.²³⁶ What Turkishness meant in the minds and hearts of the political elites and the public masses is neither a historical nor a contemporary question in Turkey. Rather, this question is the chronic state of ontological inquiry in the history of

²³⁶ See 'Opposition figures decry AK Party member's statement on Turkish race' retrieved at http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=DADCB5A102B56DE9D891B7AAE84041C8?newsId=332858.

the Turkish Republic. If the founding elites debated the essentials and content of the status of Turkishness in the 1920s from various perspectives, this debate is still at the core of political and public debates in contemporary Turkey. For instance, the very recent process of new constitution making is essentially subject to contestation over the citizenship and nationhood definitions. While some policy-makers, intellectuals, scholars, and journalists promote the persistence of Turk or Turkish as applying to all citizens of Turkey—which has been the case throughout the Republican era—others prefer a change by abandoning the notion of Turk or Turkish and rather adopt *Turkiyeli* (people from Turkey) or a citizen of the Republic of Turkey.²³⁷ While the first group perceives the notion of Turk as a civic identity that includes the multiethnic communities of Turkey, the second group considers Turkishness as an ethnic identity that excludes other ethnic communities in Turkey such as the Kurds, Arabs, Lazs, and Armenians.²³⁸ This debate of whether Turkishness has been constructed as a civic or an ethnic or ethnoreligious nationhood subjugates the academic circles as well.²³⁹

²³⁷ Radikal, March 20, 2013. ‘Argument of Turkishness in the Constitution’ [Anayasa’da Turkluk Tartismasi] retrieved at http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/anayasada_turkluk_tartismasi-1127148.

²³⁸ See these debates in recent media and academic circles such as Haluk Sahin. 2004. “Turkiyeli, Turk, alt-kimlik, ust-kimlik.” *Radikal*, October 22; Fikret Bila. 2005. “Bu millet ne millet?” *Milliyet*, November 27; Baskin Oran. 2005. “Turk degil Turkiyeli.” *Sabah*, August 22; Ali Bulac. 2005. “Ust kimlik-alt kimlik.” *Zaman*, December 12; Ioannis N. Grigoriadis. 2007. “Turk or Turkiyeli? The Reform of Turkey’s Minority Legislation and the Rediscovery of Ottomanism.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 43(3): 423-438; Sener Akturk. 2012. “Turk ust kimligi.” *Sabah*, September 22; Sukru M. Hanioglu. 2013. “‘Turk’olabilirdi; ama ‘Turk’ olmadi, simdi ‘Turk’ olur mu?” *Sabah*, February 3.

²³⁹ For instance, while Sukru Hanioglu argues that the Young Turks and their idea of nation prioritized Turkishness as the dominant ethnicity over others (see *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), Ugur Umit Ungor, along similar lines, states that the Young Turk mentality extending to the Republican regime until the 1950s was strictly ethnically exclusive through very intentional population politics targeted against the Kurds (see *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011)). However, scholars such as Erik J. Zürcher, M. Hakan Yavuz, and Sener Akturk argue that the Young Turk mentality before and after the founding of the Republic was more religiously-driven and thus inclusive to other ethnic identities within the Ottoman Muslim community. Sener Akturk conceptualizes the formation of Turkishness as monoreligious but antiethnic referring to the Muslimhood

In this chapter, I will argue that while approaching Turkishness from the civic versus ethnic dichotomy would be inconclusive and unproductive,²⁴⁰ there is an inherent inconsistency on the meaning of Turkishness in legal-institutional texts and its perception of it by different communities on the ground, most particularly the Kurds. In other words, first, there is no academic, political, or public consensus on the civic or ethnic content of Turkishness—and it is not possible to reach a consensus due to the paradoxical nature of the ethnic and civic dichotomy. Secondly, the inconsistencies between the founding elite’s theoretical construction of Turkishness in the 1920s and the way it is comprehended by the different communities on the ground throughout the twentieth century are inescapable. Despite its inherent paradoxes, if one still takes the civic versus ethnic dichotomy approach to explain the ontological status of Turkishness, one would end up observing the ebbs and flows and inconsistencies between theory and practice over the twentieth century. Rather, I will argue in this chapter that the constant ontological crisis of Turkishness is not due to its ethnic and/or civic characteristics (or antiethnic and monoethnic²⁴¹) but rather it is the singularity of it which I define as monolithic nationhood (see Chapter 3). In other words, the founding elites of the Turkish Republic were more concerned with the singularity of Turkishness based on assimilation

as the common marker of inclusion and exclusion in the new nation. See Erik J. Zürcher, ‘Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalist: Identity Politics 1908–1938,’ in *Ottoman Past and Today’s Turkey*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 150-79; M. Hakan Yavuz, ‘Nationalism and Islam: Yusuf Akcura and Uc Tarz-I Siyaset,’ *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1993), pp. 175-207; Sener Akturk, ‘Persistence of the Islamic *Millet* as an Ottoman Legacy: Mono-religious and Anti-Ethnic Definition of Turkish Nationhood,’ *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 6 (2009), pp. 893-909.

²⁴⁰ While civic national identity draws the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion based on territory and common citizenship regardless of blood kinship, ethnicity or any other primordial attachment, ethnic national identity is based on characteristics such as common descent and language (See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Harmondsworth Penguin, 1991), pp. 9-12.

²⁴¹ See Sener Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

and loyalty, thus establishing a monolithic nationhood, rather than its civic or ethnic characteristics. The political crises of the twentieth century surrounding Turkishness, most notably the question of Kurdish identity, have been more of an outcome of the Turkish state's singular approach to Turkishness rather than its ethnic and/or civic practices.

In the first section, I lay out the founding elites' logic of constructing the ideal Turk and Turkishness on the basis of assimilation and loyalty. In the second section, I evaluate the persistence and change in the form and content of Turkishness throughout the twentieth century in the context of its monolithic nature. In the final section, I analyze the implications of recent ethnic policy changes by the Turkish government on the meaning of Turkishness.

The Logic of the State Elites and the Making of Turkishness:

Who Was (not) a Turk(ish)?

The Young Turks and their Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) that took control of the state in the last phase of the Ottoman Empire were believers in science, education, and modernization that they experienced in European colleges and witnessed in the life styles of the Ottoman Christian bourgeoisie.²⁴² While the CUP cadres struggled to devise a social and political formula where Islam and science would not be contradictory, secular education designed around the Turkish language was believed to produce progress and enlightenment. This is why their scientific approach blended with rationalism and positivism insisted on constitutionalism and parliament as opposed to the

²⁴² Erik J. Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), p. 110.

traditionalism of the Ottoman dynasty. One way or another, modernization in the Young Turk mindset meant Westernization equated with the European civilization. Attempts at modernization without Westernization in various postcolonial geographies such as India did not appeal to the Young Turks, except with the question of Islam in this ideal of European modernity. Bred with these ideas, the founders of new Turkey were mostly followers of the Young Turk mindset. Erik J. Zürcher very clearly acknowledges the characteristics of the founding political elites under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (*Ataturk*):

Almost without exception they were former members of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and played a role in the politics of the second constitutional period (1908-18). They were bound together with a common past which included a number of the greatest upheavals in modern Ottoman history. Most had participated in the constitutional revolution of 1908; the suppression of the counterrevolution of April 1909 by the ‘Action Army’ (*Hareket Ordusu*); the organizing of Bedouin resistance in Tripolitania against the Italian invaders in 1911; the Balkan War disaster of 1913; the World War and the resistance movement after the war.²⁴³

Within these war-torn and chaotic experiences of the collapsing empire, the Republican political elites were also vividly subject to the politics of identity at the junction of religion, ethnicity, and violence, especially in the Balkans.²⁴⁴ As their main identity marker of *us* versus *them* was based on Ottoman Muslims (with an emphasis on the Turkish language at the center of this demography) and non-Muslim inhabitants of the empire, this perception of nationhood was replaced with the Turks and non-Turks in

²⁴³ Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy*, p. 143.

²⁴⁴ See Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). For a collection of essays on the impacts of the Balkan Wars on the establishment of post-Ottoman Turkey in particular and post-Ottoman world in general, see M. Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi, Eds., *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013).

the 1920s. Yet, who would be considered a Turk?

The goal of reaching out to a civilization in the mindset of the Republican founding elites corresponded with becoming a member of the European-Western world. Towards this end, state-centric Turkish modernity was the main cognitive map of the state elites. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet Icduygu highlight four characteristics of state-centric Turkish modernity: 1) the strong state tradition, 2) national developmentalism, 3) the organic vision of society, and 4) the republican model of citizenship.²⁴⁵ The idea of the strong state created a greater autonomy from society which gave the state a paternal role. On the other hand, the organic vision of society framed the nation as a monolithic body that should be congruent and docile with state interests. This is why the understandings of/from Turkish nationalism “did not lead to a language of rights, as in the French case, but rather to a language of obligations that was geared toward the preservation of the state.”²⁴⁶ In order to draw the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion for membership in the nation, the founding elites strategically devised the criteria for becoming/being Turkish that would serve the state's interests and the survival of the state in the long run.

Under these conditions, Turkish nationhood has been inclusive based on Muslimhood along with the primacy of the Turkish language. Thus, despite secular tendencies of the state elites, Islam still played a central role in establishing congruence between the nation and the state. "Islamic political consciousness" before and after the

²⁴⁵ Fuat Keyman and Ahmet Icduygu, *Citizenship in a Global World: European Questions and Turkish Experiences* (London: Routledge, 2005).

²⁴⁶ Ayse Kadioglu, ‘The Twin Motives of Turkish Nationalism,’ in *Symbiotic Antagonisms: Competing Nationalisms in Turkey*, ed. Ayse Kadioglu and Fuat Keyman (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

Republic "became a formative base for nationalism,"²⁴⁷ and being a Muslim was the precondition for membership in this new national identity. "Every Muslim citizen of the Republic, regardless of his ethnic origins, was invited—and obliged—to adopt the republican Turkish national identity."²⁴⁸ In theory, making Turkishness thus included the Kurds, Arabs, Laz, Albanians, and Circassians in the project of national homogenization. Only non-Muslim communities, particularly the Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, were considered official minorities following the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.²⁴⁹ This is why Sener Akturk identifies Turkishness as monoreligious on the basis of Muslimhood but antiethnic in rejecting any communal ethnic attachments.²⁵⁰ While Soner Cagaptay identifies early Republican policies of nation-building as a blend of *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*, he states that:

Nationality-through-religion emerged as the most common way of gaining Turkish citizenship. The government processed citizenship as a category exclusive to the former Muslim millet. This explains why, although Ankara naturalized non-Ottoman Christians who converted and joined this millet, it blocked off Christian ex-Ottomans, most notably the Armenians, from citizenship.²⁵¹

Thus, other than Muslimhood, "the early Republican elite considered any kind of group identity to be an obstacle to the making of a modern '*gesellschaft*.'"²⁵² Despite this approach that considers Muslimhood and the Turkish language as the *sine qua non* of nonminority status within Turkishness, there are other approaches that consider the

²⁴⁷ Yavuz, "Nationalism and Islam," p. 182.

²⁴⁸ Grigoriadis, "Turk or Turkiyeli?" p. 423.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Akturk, "Persistence of the Islamic *Millet* as an Ottoman Legacy."

²⁵¹ Soner Cagaptay, "Citizenship and Nationalism in Interwar Turkey," *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 9, No.4 (October 2003), p. 614.

²⁵² Filiz Kardam and Kurtulus Cengiz, "Republican Citizenship in Turkey: Historical Development, Perceptions, and Practices," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (2011), p. 154.

construction of Turkish nationhood around ethnic aspects on the basis of various Turkification policies in the first decades of the Republic.

Scholars refer to various social engineering policies by the state that were not independent of an ethnic core of Turkishness. These policies include ‘Citizen, Speak Turkish!’ in the late 1920s that sought the elimination of non-Turkish languages from the public sphere,²⁵³ the founding of official institutions such as the Turkish Historical Society (1931) and the Turkish Linguistic Society (1932) that promoted official discourses of an ancient (pre-Islamic) and primordial Turkish identity,²⁵⁴ official interests in the anthropological origins of the Turkish race in the 1930s,²⁵⁵ Settlement Law of 1934 that closed strategic locations to non-Muslim minority settlement,²⁵⁶ and also exchanged various Kurdish-speaking communities with Turkish-speaking communities between eastern and western parts of Turkey.²⁵⁷ Through the implementation of these policies, for instance, Mesut Yegen argues that the constitutional definitions of Turkishness regardless of race and religion (the 1924 constitution) or every citizen being considered as Turkish (the 1961 constitution) showed a gap between promises and practices.²⁵⁸

However, despite some references to the ethnic-oriented practices of the state, one

²⁵³ Soner Cagaptay, “Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2004), pp. 86-101; Senem Aslan, “Citizen, Speak Turkish!: A Nation in the Making,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2007), pp. 245-272.

²⁵⁴ Aysel Morin and Robert Lee, “Constitutive Discourse of Turkish Nationalism: Ataturk’s *Nutuk* and the Rhetorical Construction of Turkish People,” *Communications Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 5 (2010), pp. 485-506; Ungor, *The Making of Modern Turkey*; Sukru Hanioglu, “Historical Roots of Kemalism,” in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, ed. Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), pp. 32-60.

²⁵⁵ Murat Ergin, “Is Turk a White Man? Towards a Theoretical Framework for Race in the Making of Turkishness,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 6 (2008), pp. 827-850.

²⁵⁶ Cagaptay, “Race, Assimilation, and Kemalism.”

²⁵⁷ See Andrew Mango, “Ataturk and the Kurds,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (1999), pp. 1-25; Mesut Yegen, “Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 6 (2004), pp. 51-66; Aslan, “Citizen, Speak Turkish!”; Ungor, *The Making of Modern Turkey*.

²⁵⁸ Yegen, “Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey.”

way or another, there is a consensus that Turkishness was neither solely an ethnic nor a civic identity as many scholars approach it in these categories. Throughout the Republican era, the state never comprehensively institutionalized an ethnic-based legal, social, and political system. Soner Cagaptay, for instance, acknowledges the ethnic practices and thinks that Turkishness was never exclusionary in an ethnic sense: “as the ‘Speak Turkish’ campaign demonstrates, although Kemalism increasingly favoured ethnicity as a marker of Turkishness in the 1930s, it never closed the gates to voluntary Turkification.”²⁵⁹ In their rhetorical analysis of Mustafa Kemal’s *Nutuk* (the Great Speech) before the national assembly in 1927, Aysel Morin and Ronald Lee reveal what he understood from the ‘noble blood’ of Turks.²⁶⁰ They argue that Ataturk’s narrative of the noble blood of Turks is not an ethnically superior story but rather it makes blood sacred when spilled in defense of the country. As long as an individual self-sacrifices for the defense of the country, he/she would become a member of the Turkish nation. The spilled blood creates the fatherland that includes those who showed self-sacrifice. This is why Ataturk considered the Anzac soldiers of Australia and New Zealand during the Gallipoli War (1915) as the sons of the Turkish nation.

In conclusion, debates on Turkishness from the ethnic-civic dichotomy would be inconclusive and unproductive since there is hardly any consensus. While public perceptions of Turkishness can be different from the definition of the state, different sectors of the society are likely to interpret Turkishness from their own historical memories. However, this does not mean that we cannot identify the *sine qua non* of

²⁵⁹ Cagaptay, “Race, Assimilation and Kemalism,” p. 97.

²⁶⁰ Morin and Lee, “Constitutive Discourse of Turkish Nationalism.”

Turkishness: a Sunni-oriented Muslimhood and the requirement to adopt the Turkish language. Still, the studies on Turkishness neglect the notion of monolithic nationhood and the existing literature cannot capture the questions of assimilation and loyalty sufficiently to understand why the political elites insisted on monolithic nationhood rather than their primary concern being ethnic or civic frameworks.

Assimilation, Loyalty, and the Monolithic Nature of Turkishness

On the debates of the construction of Turkishness, there is an overwhelming consensus that the state pursued assimilationist policies. Some scholars call this assimilation process the Turkification of non-Turks which was a top-down approach and forced social engineering rather than a voluntary process.²⁶¹ It is often assumed that both non-Muslim minorities and non-Turk Muslim citizens such as the Kurds, Lazs, and Circassians were the main targets of this assimilation process. This story is correct but it is insufficient and neglects the essential rationale of the founding elites on nation-building. First, this approach tends to shy away from defining what assimilation is and identifying its variations. Second, they approach assimilation as an either/or concept that neglects the degrees of assimilation. As I question these shortcomings in the approaches to Turkishness in this section, I will argue that how my categorization of monolithic nationhood crosscuts the ethnic versus civic debates and how it demonstrates a more comprehensive understanding of the construction of Turkishness.

²⁶¹ For instance, see Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve Turkleştirme Politikaları* (Istanbul: İletisim, 2002); Ungor, *The Making of Modern Turkey*.

Rogers Brubaker identifies two separate but interrelated types of assimilation²⁶²: 1) general and abstract, and 2) specific and organic. While the first one refers to ‘become similar’ (used intransitively), the second one refers to ‘make similar’ (used transitively). The second meaning has become a morally repugnant meaning in the twenty-first century. For Brubaker, the specific and organic meaning of assimilation in transitive use (*making* similar) has been problematic throughout the twentieth century:

the *transitive* use of ‘assimilate’ to mean ‘make similar,’ which suggests state policies and programs of ‘forced assimilation,’ or at least policies and programs that seek to assimilate people against their will.... Abundant historical and comparative evidence, moreover, suggests that they rarely work, and that they are indeed more likely to strengthen than to erode differences, by provoking a reactive mobilization against such assimilatory pressures.”²⁶³

However, on the other hand, the general and abstract meaning of assimilation in the sense of *becoming* similar has remained ‘politically benign’:

Yet when used *intransitively* in the general, abstract sense of becoming similar—becoming similar *in certain respects* that obviously have to be specified—assimilation does *not* seem to be morally objectionable, analytically useless, or empirically wrong as a conceptual instrument for studying populations of immigrant origin.²⁶⁴

The political elites of the early Republic definitely followed the first meaning of assimilation that is *making* similar which was imposed rather than negotiated. However, this process of *making* similar was not a direction towards any kind of Turkishness but towards a very specific kind of it—that is Muslim, secular, educated, Western, and Republican. Thus, if those who would identify themselves as Turks did not fit to the political elites’ vision of the ideal Turk, then they were also subject to assimilation in

²⁶² Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²⁶³ Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, p. 119.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

schools, military, and other official institutions. Thus when states adopt the first meaning of assimilation in *making* similar national members (horizontal comradeship as Benedict Anderson named it²⁶⁵), assimilation becomes a matter of degree, not an either/or matter. The assimilation as a policy becomes *ipso facto* for the state. *Then, I argue that the literature on the construction of Turkishness neglects the fact that Turks who did not fit to the ideal Turk in the mindset of the elites were also subject to ‘Turkification’ policies as well.* Since “ethnicity is not a thing, not a substance; it is an interpretive prism, a way of making sense of the social world,”²⁶⁶ the founding elites of the Republic interpreted their own understanding of Turkishness and sought to establish a monopoly on defining it with their own ‘interpretive prism.’

In *The Politics of Nation-Building*, Harris Mylonas introduces the concept of ‘noncore group’ in nation-building processes.²⁶⁷ Noncore group refers to “any aggregation of individuals that is perceived as an unassimilated ethnic group (on a linguistic, religious, physical, or ideological basis) by the ruling political elite of a country.”²⁶⁸ Towards that end, “governing elites can pursue educational, cultural, occupational, matrimonial, demographic, political, and other policies aimed at getting the non-core group to adopt the core group’s culture and way of life.”²⁶⁹ In the Turkish case of nation-building, the core group was not the Turks *per se*, but the core group was the founding elites under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal who had a specific ‘interpretive

²⁶⁵ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

²⁶⁶ Rogers Brubaker et al., *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 15.

²⁶⁷ Harris Mylonas, *The Politics of Nation Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.xx.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.xx.

prism' of Turkishness. Thus, those unassimilated Turks were also subject to nation-wide assimilationist policies. First and foremost, the idea of the leading Republican elites was to establish a singular Turkishness (not different interpretations of it) or what I call monolithic nationhood. For instance, a recent in-depth survey study on the perceptions of Turkish national identity at the societal level reveals:

The initial expectation that civic notions of Turkish identity would promote more inclusive attitudes toward minorities and ethno-cultural notions would predict more exclusive attitudes was not met. Rather, in both studies, both of the ethnic and civic aspects of national identity led to more exclusionary attitudes.²⁷⁰

This in fact shows the monolithic nature of Turkishness within which civic or ethnic perceptions of it do not change the fact that either draws the boundaries of Turkishness as a singular nationhood. I argue that the monolithic establishment of Turkishness was the ultimate goal of the founding elites. They did not pay too much attention to the ethnic or civic component of Turkishness, but they were primarily concerned with the singularity of Turkishness in the way of what they understood from it that would prevent any future national disintegration and future collapse of the state. When the fear of national disintegration and the collapse of the state was the primary psyche of the founding elites, the state of loyalty became the ultimate essential of becoming Turkish. Muslimhood and speaking modern Turkish functioned as the cover toward establishing loyalty. This explains why secular and positivist founding cadre of the Republic utilized Islam and Muslimhood for securing the founding and furthering the consolidation of the new regime.

This idea of loyalty in the mindset of the founding elites was a direct reflection of

²⁷⁰ Banu Cingoz Ulu, "Structure of Turkish National Identity and Attitudes towards Ethno-cultural Groups in Turkey," (PhD. Thesis, York University, 2008), p. 99.

their experiences in the late Ottoman Empire where the question of the loyalty of the different *millet*s caused a sense of insecurity in the Ottoman dynasty within which the ontological (in)security of the state subjugated the worldviews of the late Ottoman intellectuals, bureaucrats, and military cadres. In order to establish this security of the new state, while loyalty became the primary motivation behind inclusion/exclusion, the monolithic definition of Turkishness in the vocabulary of the political elites became the ideal type that the assimilation sought to achieve. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that many citizens were denaturalized because they did not join the national struggle during the War of Independence.²⁷¹ Or in the idea of becoming a Turk, Jews were more a possibility than the Greeks and Armenians. As Senem Aslan states, “The Jews had a unique position among the non-Muslim communities of Turkey” because “unlike other non-Muslim populations, separatism had never become a popular movement among the Jews of the Ottoman Empire.”²⁷² Loyalty to the state was and still is at the core of nationhood in the Ottoman-Turkish political culture which “always exalted the state as an entity autonomous from and superior to society with a tutelary and paternalistic role.”²⁷³ Overall, this overlapping mechanism of loyalty, assimilation, and the monolithic nationhood are understudied in the existing literature. Since many studies embrace ethnic and civic perspectives on Turkishness with a vicious cycle of ebbs and flows throughout the twentieth century, they are unable to grasp the persistence of the monolithic nationhood in the official discourse until the 2000s.

²⁷¹ Cagaptay, “Citizenship and Nationalism in Interwar Turkey.”

²⁷² Aslan, “Citizen, Speak Turkish!” p. 260.

²⁷³ Ergun Ozbudun, “Turkey: Plural Society and Monolithic State,” in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, ed. Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 82.

Persistence and Change of Turkishness (1920s-2000s)

The essentialist arguments that nations are immemorial have little significance in contemporary nationalism studies. Rather, instrumentalist arguments as in Ernest Gellner's idea of nationalism as a function of industrialization²⁷⁴ or constructivist explanations as in Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities'²⁷⁵ attract more scholars. Besides, an ethnosymbolist approach by Anthony Smith offers a middle way through accepting the modernity of nations along with premodern ethnic backgrounds of what he calls *ethnie*.²⁷⁶ Except essentialism, what is common across these approaches is that identities are malleable/fluid rather than fixed. This is the case for the patterns of nationhood. The processes of nation-building and nationhood-building neither occur overnight nor reach a conclusive end over decades. As Justin Wolfe introduces his idea of 'the everyday nation-state', he argues that "we should conceive the nation as a continuous process of struggle over the legitimacy of the state and the meaning of popular sovereignty.... Nation is not the sum of particular nationalist practices and ideologies; rather, it is the ceaseless, often mundane playing out of their entanglements."²⁷⁷ This shows that transitions from imperial orders to nation-states are not necessarily a sudden break from the past. Rather, such transitions are the beginnings of continuous formations of nation-states. In other words, the institutional dissolution of empires into nation-states does not mean a complete formation of a nation-state or nationhood. In the light of these insights, the project of Turkishness as the nationhood of Turkey has always remained at

²⁷⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

²⁷⁵ Anderson *Imagined Communities*.

²⁷⁶ Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1986).

²⁷⁷ Justin Wolfe, *The Everyday Nation- State: Ethnicity and Community in Nineteenth Century Nicaragua* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 13.

an incomplete stage in the sense that state intentions and societal perceptions have overlapped, contested, and clashed under different domestic and international socio-political contexts. Therefore, I would periodize the assimilation policies between the 1920s and the 1990s as the construction and consolidation process of Turkishness and the post-1990s as the introduction of alternative nationhood schemes in the polity of Turkey. While the monolithic nature of Turkishness persisted in the legal-institutional practices of the state until the 1990s, the gradual process of deconstructing that monolithic nationhood had begun during the 1990s with new discourses (such as neo-Ottomanism and pro-Kurdish challenges) until its fracture in the 2000s with the state project of devising new ethnic policies that would contradict monolithic Turkishness.

The notion of Turk or Turkish was first used as an identifier of citizenship that was used in the 1924 constitution. Article 88 of the 1924 defines Turks as *the people of Turkey regardless of their religion and race would, in terms of citizenship, be called Turkish*. It is suggested that this definition was adopted directly from Article 8 of the 1876 Ottoman constitution, which defines Ottoman as follows: *whatever religion or sect they are from all individuals subject to the Ottoman State, without exception, would be called Ottomans*.²⁷⁸ As these definitions followed a territorial understanding of citizenship on paper, Mesut Yegen argues that the Assembly debates on the wording of the 1924 definition reveal the distinction between the understandings of citizenship and nationhood. When the 1924 definition was first introduced to the General Assembly, the wording was as follows: *The people of Turkey regardless of their religion and race would be called Turkish*. With the proposition of a member of the parliament from Istanbul,

²⁷⁸ Yegen, "Citizenship and Ethnicity."

Hamdullah Suphi, citizenship was added because he perceived Turkish citizenship as different from the Turkish nationhood.²⁷⁹ Citizenship does not directly refer to nationhood. Although there are legal-institutional boundaries of citizenship, the practices and discourses toward non-Muslim and Muslim minorities in Turkey reveal a distinction between being a Turkish citizen and being a Turk. Internal others can be Turkish citizens but not Turks. However, on the other hand, external others without Turkish citizenship can be considered as part of the Turkish nation such as the Central Asian Turkic Republics and the discourses of ‘one nation, two states’ (especially with Azerbaijan).²⁸⁰

Before the establishment of the 1924 constitution, the 1921 interim constitution of Turkey did not refer to any notion of Turk or Turkish citizen. Rather, it is emphasized that sovereignty belongs to the people. Andrew Mango reveals how the leading cadres of the War of Independence under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal adopted discourses of brotherhood between the Turks and Kurds against ‘the infidel invaders’. For instance, he states that Mustafa Kemal:

In order to prevent British infiltration for an independent Kurdistan, he sent a telegram to a Diyarbekir notable, Kasim Cemilpasazade. He said, “Kurds and Turks are true brothers and may not be separated. . . . Our existence requires that Kurds, Turks and all Muslim elements should work together to defend our independence and prevent the partition of the fatherland. . . I am in favour of granting all manner of rights and privileges in order to ensure the attachment [to the state— *merbutiyet*] and prosperity and progress of our Kurdish brothers, on condition that the Ottoman state is not split up.”²⁸¹

At this stage, the idea of a monolithic nationhood was absent in the idea of the political elites within which the Ottoman state was still at stake. The development of

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 59.

²⁸⁰ Ergin, “Is Turk a White Man?” pp. 842-843.

²⁸¹ Mango, “Ataturk and the Kurds,” p. 7.

monolithic Turkishness and its consolidation process through various social engineering programs such as the adoption of Latin scripts for the alphabet and official discourses invented by the Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Linguistic Society continued, I would argue, until the 1990s when the neo-Ottomanist discourses re-emerged in the public and political arenas.

After the military coup of 1980, the notion of monolithic Turkishness in the legal-institutional structure of the state was further consolidated. The 1924 constitution was a little loose on monolithic Turkishness since it said the people of Turkey rather than the Turkish people and added the clause of “regardless of race and religion,” while Article 66 of the 1982 constitution states that *those who are tied to the Turkish state through citizenship are all Turkish* which follows the 1961 constitution.²⁸² A prominent scholar of constitution in Turkey, Ergun Ozbudun, defines the philosophy of the 1982 constitution as statist-solidarist-tutelary in which the goal was to protect the state from the citizen rather than vice versa.²⁸³ This, he argues, contradicts the pluralistic society in Turkey as the Ottoman legacy:

Turkey, despite the systematic assimilation and homogenizing policies of its republican founders, still retains many of the characteristics of a plural society. The most fundamental problem facing the present-day Turkish democracy is to reconcile this social pluralism with an authoritarian state tradition that seeks to impose an artificial homogeneity, even uniformity, on the society.²⁸⁴

For Ozbudun, the founding leaders of the Republic were aware of the pluralistic society and they advocated for the progress of different communities under the new

²⁸² In order to access the 1921, 1924, 1961, and 1982 constitutions in Turkish, electronic copies are available at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey website: <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa.htm>

²⁸³ Ozbudun, “Turkey: Plural Society and Monolithic State.”

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

nation. Thus, the 1921 constitution involved great administrative decentralization and pluralistic notions. Yet, after the consolidation of power under a single-party regime, the idea of a homogenous society prevailed. The idea of Turkish nationalism was not necessarily chauvinistic or irredentist, and nationhood leaned more on cultural origins rather than certain ethnicity, yet monolithic Turkishness could not escape from the perceptions of being ethnically-driven since the practices of the state pointed to such thought. In other words, Ozbudun concludes that the major political and social tensions of modern Turkey were a result of imposing monolithic Turkishness and the monolithic state from above and the pluralistic reactions from below.

In a 2004 minorities report prepared by the Prime Ministry Human Rights Advisory Council, it is stated that various legal structures such as in the Anti-Terror Law, Law on Associations, and Law on Political Parties ban the public discourses of emphasizing and promoting the existence of linguistic or ethnic minorities in Turkey. This, in turn, rejects the living space for different linguistic and ethnic practices as ‘sub-identities’ of Turkey. For instance, the closure of pro-Kurdish political parties in the 1990s by the Constitutional Court based on their promotion of ethnic politics is seen as the reflection of the singularity in the understandings of Turkishness by the state institutions.²⁸⁵ This psyche of the state persona is called by some scholars the ‘diversity-phobic’ nature of the official discourse in Turkey since the 1920s.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ The report which is in Turkish can be accessed on the personal website of Baskin Oran, a Turkish political scientist, who led the project on preparing this report: http://www.baskinoran.com/belge/IHDKAzinliklarRaporu-MakamaTakdim_Ekim2004_.pdf

²⁸⁶ See Murat Somer, “Defensive- vs. liberal-nationalist perspectives on diversity and the Kurdish conflict: Europeanization, the internal debate, and Türkiyelilik,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No. 32 (Spring 2005); Asli Cirakman, “Flags and Traitors: The Advance of Ethno-nationalism in Turkish Self-Image,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 11 (2011), pp. 1894-1912.

As I argued previously in this chapter, the issue with Turkishness is more to do with its monolithic nature than the debates over its civic or ethnic attributes as many scholars inconclusively approach this issue.²⁸⁷ The singular Turkishness which did not provide any legal-institutional spaces for the expression of subidentities has narrowed its own boundaries of inclusion, for all of those who were not willing to melt into the ideal Turk as depicted by the founding elites.

During the 1990s, neo-Ottomanist discourses have gained momentum that has two characteristics: (1) the reinterpretation of Turkish nationalism is more congruent with cultural tolerance for diversity; and (2) increasing economic and political relations with the ex-Ottoman world.²⁸⁸ Seeing the nation-state under pressure from universalization and localization after the end of the Cold War and the periphery becoming the new sources of identity, Yilmaz Colak argues that certain Islamist groups, Alevi communities, and the pro-Kurdish politics have challenged the unified history of the Kemalist nation-state.²⁸⁹ Under the leadership of Turgut Ozal, the combination of neo-Ottomanist collective memory and liberal multiculturalism has gained more public visibility and has appealed to more masses as seen in the electoral victories of the Islamist Welfare Party in the 1990s.²⁹⁰ However, the real fracture of Turkishness as a monolithic nationhood

²⁸⁷ See Taha Parla and Andrew Davison for their comprehensive analysis of the official discourse of modern Turkey under the framework of Kemalism which they see as a corporatist ideology. They also provide insightful analysis on the background of Turkishness and what the elites understood from it (especially on pages between 68 and 80): *Corporatist Ideology in Kemalist Turkey: Progress or Order?* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004).

²⁸⁸ See M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: the Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 7, No. 12 (1998), pp. 19-41; Y. Colak, "Ottomanism versus Kemalism: Collective Memory and Cultural Pluralism in 1990s Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (2006), pp. 587-602.

²⁸⁹ Colak, "Ottomanism versus Kemalism."

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

occurred in 2003 when broadcasting in minority languages such as Kurdish, Zazaki, and Arabic began on a state-sponsored television channel (TRT). In addition, on August 15, 2005, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the prime minister of Turkey from the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), stated that there were around 30 different ethnic identities in Turkey such as Kurd, Turk, Laz, Circassian, and Bosniak which constituted the sub-identities of the citizenship of the Republic of Turkey—that is the one and only supra-identity.²⁹¹ Interestingly, after almost eight decades of official discourses insisting on the constitutional and territorial definition of Turkishness, Recep Tayyip Erdogan has framed Turkishness as an ethnic identity by publicly announcing the ethnic pluralism in Turkey. The citizenship of the Republic of Turkey (*T.C. Vatandasligi*), not either Turkishness or Turkish citizenship, was framed as the only supraidentity that would include all ethnic identities under its roof. I would argue that this shift in the official discourse of the state was definitely a critical juncture in the path dependent monolithic nationhood from the 1920s to the 2000s.

Conclusion

Attributing the monolithic nature to Turkishness is not new in the literature but the argument about how it crosscuts the ethnic versus civic debates and how these dichotomous approaches are inherently problematic and paradoxical brings a nuanced understanding for the emergence of modern Turkey's nationhood. In the light of this postdichotomous argument, I argued that the assimilation processes since the 1920s targeted not just non-Muslim citizens (Greeks, Armenians, and Jews) or non-Turk

²⁹¹ *Milliyet*. 2005. "Kimlik degisimi!." At www.milliyet.com.tr/2005/12/13/siyaset/axsiy02.html, accessed March 8, 2013.

Muslims (Kurds, Arabs, Albanians, Bulgarians, etc.) of Turkey but the Kemalist nation-building project targeted those who claim to be Turks as well (especially those rural Anatolian Turks who did not fit to the elite's imagination of Turkishness). As often expressed in nationalist circles, 'one state, one nation, one language' or 'the indivisibility of the nation' in fact is the most vivid reflection in the historical depiction of Turkishness in its singularity or as I frame it in its monolithic nationhood. Whether it is civic and inclusive or ethnic and exclusive, the first and foremost goal of the Republican elites was to frame and spread monolithic Turkishness over an ethnically-pluralistic society within which any alternative identity claims that would contradict the state-framed nationhood would be subject to suppression, even the alternative identity frames of Turkishness. The assimilation in the aim of achieving the singularity of nationhood was functional for establishing an unrivaled loyalty structure which in turn would consolidate the legitimacy of the new regime. We can understand the origins of the monolithic nationhood in these overlapping mechanisms. In other words, the logic of the state for inclusion or exclusion has been similar: security and loyalty. This psyche of the state created the path dependent institutionalization of Turkishness as a monolithic nationhood.

In this monolithic structure of Turkish nationhood, legal and institutional spaces for hyphenated nationhood did not exist that would draw the boundaries of belonging in a different way. For instance, hyphenated self-identifications of Kurdish-Turkish (or Turkish-Kurdish) and Armenian-Turkish (or Turkish-Armenian) would be an oxymoronic belonging in the context of Turkey. However, this has been becoming more a possibility after the minority and language reforms in the post-2000 era in Turkey. Although the current constitution still frames Turkishness with its monolithic structure

(that everyone is Turkish), the increasing public visibility and public use of alternative identities and languages along with the state attempts at promoting their existence, I believe, have increased a lot of potential for a hyphenated nationhood structure in Turkey. In this framework of change under my four ideal-types of nationhood structures, I explain the conditions of change in the patterns of these nationhood configurations in the following chapters. Overall, I see the post-2000 legal-institutional changes (which I will explain in detail in the case analysis in Chapter 8) as a shift from a monolithic nationhood toward a hyphenated nationhood in modern Turkey. The next chapter will analyze the conditions under which the Ottoman elites decided to shift from hierarchical millet system to an overarching Ottoman identity without turning a blind eye to communal identities such as Armenians, Jews, Arabs etc.

CHAPTER 6

NEW WORLD ORDER, RELATIVE WEAKNESS OF THE OTTOMAN STATE, AND THE EMERGENCE OF OTTOMANISM AND OTTOMAN HOMELAND (VATAN)

*“We had many soldiers, but not a military... We were impotent”²⁹²
Mehmed Emin Âli Paşa, The Ottoman Grand Vizier, 1871*

*“If we put the concept of homeland in force right now, perhaps it will
gradually be internalized by people and become powerful like in Europe,
but it would never become powerful enough like the struggle in the name
of religion”
Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, Ma’ruzat, p. 130*

Introduction

This chapter deals with the paradigmatic shift from the Ottoman *Millet* system to a new legal-institutional setting of belonging under an overarching Ottoman nationhood as a melting pot for all ethnoreligious communities in the Ottoman Empire. This mid-nineteenth century Ottoman state policy change was primarily reactive to the internal and external challenges that put the ontological security of the state at risk and secondly was proactive to secure the survival of the state (*Devletin Bekası*). A systematic analysis of the conditions that led to this paradigmatic shift is the focus of this chapter.

²⁹² Fuat Andic and Suphi Andic, eds. 2000. *SADRAZAM ALI PASA: HAYATI, ZAMANI VE SIYASI VASIYETNAMESESİ*. Eren Yayincilik: Istanbul, 2000, p. 61.

Ottomanism as a State Project of Patriotism and Its

Discontents

The traditional institutional setting of the state-society relationship in the Ottoman Empire was based on the *millets*. Despite its contemporary use of as a nation, *millet* in fact refers to the religious term *cemaat* (religious community) and the *millets* of the Empire included the Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Armenians where the main *millet* (*millet-i hakime*) was the Muslim community.²⁹³ The administration of these *millets* was based on a system of self- and local rule. As Kemal Karpat clearly states:

The Ottoman state developed a policy toward its ethnic-religious communities designed not to change their ethnic composition or to affect their identity but, rather, to integrate them into the administrative system by recognizing and giving them a large degree of cultural and religious autonomy and local self-rule.²⁹⁴

The *millets* experienced freedom from state intervention in their internal affairs where they had the right to property, life, religious freedom, and protection in exchange for special taxes.²⁹⁵ Although this system of ruling was necessary and crucial for pragmatic reasons in administering extensive lands of diverse populations rather than rights-based *raison d'être*,²⁹⁶ it was also a reflection of tolerance and perception of justice under the Islamic law.²⁹⁷

This imperial system of ruling, without a doubt, constitutes an oxymoronic

²⁹³ F. Aslı Ergül, “The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim, or *Rum*?”

²⁹⁴ Kemal Karpat, “The Ethnicity Problem in a Multi-ethnic Anatolian Islamic State: Continuity and Recasting of Ethnic Identity in the Ottoman State,” p. 712.

²⁹⁵ Berdal Aral, “The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire.”

²⁹⁶ See Karen Barkey on her extensive study of the Ottoman state’s discourse and practice of ruling over the heterogeneous populations, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*. Behlül Özkan also extensively analyzes the mentality of the Ottoman rule over diverse populations by tracing the concept of homeland in the Ottoman Empire and how the meaning of homeland evolved over time throughout to the founding of the Turkish Republic, *From the Adobe of Islam to the Turkish Vatan: The Making of a National Homeland in Turkey*.

²⁹⁷ Aral, “The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire.”

reflection with the contemporary idea of a nation-state. While “empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people,”²⁹⁸ the nation-state emphasizes the homogeneity of the people under its borders despite the more complex reality in most cases. Thus, the *raison d’être* of the nation-state tends to create majority and minority distinctions among the populations under its authority. Seeing the Ottoman social system of *millets* from a majority/minority lens would be both anachronistic and reductionist. Originated in Western political philosophy, Elie Kedourie argues that the concept of minority did not have any political meaning in the Ottoman Empire until the European ideas of popular suffrage and nationalism reached the Ottoman body of politics in the nineteenth century.²⁹⁹ The *millets* of the Ottoman Empire gradually began to turn into minority and majority affiliations as the Ottoman state started to follow the European ideas of modernization in the nineteenth century.³⁰⁰ The project of Ottomanism sought to prevent the *millets* from turning into ethnoreligious minorities.

Prior to the reform age of the nineteenth century, Ottoman identity or Ottomanness “was not a widespread social identity; it was, rather, a way of highlighting the very culture of the ruling elites.”³⁰¹ In other words, to be or not to be an Ottoman drew the boundaries of the ruling elite and the ruled subjects beyond ethnic and religious lines. The Ottoman Imperial Edict of 1839, Reform Edict of 1856, Ottoman Nationality

²⁹⁸Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, p. 8.

²⁹⁹ See Elie Kedourie’s excellent discussion on the origins of the national majority and minority and how these Western concepts affected the Islamic philosophy of diversity in the Middle East, “Minorities and Majorities in the Middle East,” 276-282.

³⁰⁰Ibid.

³⁰¹Ergül, “The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim, or *Rum*?” p. 643.

Law of 1869, and the first Ottoman constitution in 1876 one way or another attempted to transform the Ottoman identity into an overarching common identity for all from its vertical classification between the ruler and the ruled and horizontal classification between the Muslim *millet* and the non-Muslim *millets*. This process of transformation was at the center of the idea of Ottomanism.

Ottomanism can be defined as a political approach that accepted diverse ethnic and religious groups in the empire under a single and united Ottoman community and aimed to integrate these different groups into a common imperial ideal.³⁰² Although the conventional late Ottoman historiography extensively relies on the vocabulary of nationalism, the notion of patriotism is underscored. Patriotism differs from the vocabulary of nationalism in the sense that the former seeks loyalty and allegiance to the state. In other words, “patriotism can be defined as love of one's country, identification with it, and special concern for its well-being and that of compatriots.”³⁰³ Ottomanism was not a project of the state promoting a certain cultural or religious group over others, but it was a project of enhancing loyalty to the homeland and to the state from the heterogeneous demographic landscape. Hakan Yavuz also points to the analytical distinction between nationalism and patriotism in which he sees Ottomanism “as a way of cementing solidarity toward the state while maintaining the cosmopolitan nature of the empire.”³⁰⁴ Toward that end, new state schools were opened bringing Muslim, Christian, and Jewish students together and the modern bureaucratic apparatus attracted non-

³⁰²Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlılık Düşüncesi (1839–1913),” pp. 88–116.

³⁰³ Primoratz, “Patriotism.”

³⁰⁴ M. Hakan Yavuz, “Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst for Homogenization,” pp. 31-84.

Muslims based on meritocracy.³⁰⁵ This is why the concept of *vatan* found a new discursive ground in the mental maps of Ottoman bureaucrats and diplomats. As Behlül Özkan states, “promoting *vatan* as a territorial concept to secure the loyalty of subjects served as a modern political foundation of the Ottoman state.”³⁰⁶ Thus, Ottomanism crosscuts the dichotomy of civic and ethnic nationalism and in fact refers to a protoform of what Jürgen Habermas popularized as ‘constitutional patriotism.’³⁰⁷ Constitutional patriotism seeks to overcome “pre-political, i.e. national and cultural, loyalties in public life, and supplanting them with a new, postnational, purely political identity embodied in the laws and institutions.”³⁰⁸ This, in turn, aims to impersonalize the state. Overall, Ottomanism referred to a gradual institutional transition from a segregation-based *millet* system in the sense that each individual and each community should remain in their own border (*hudud*)³⁰⁹ toward an integrationist model where Ottoman identity became the new melting pot.

Although the aforementioned discussion of Ottomanism unpacks the ideal type, the reality was, of course, more complex. Rather than being monolithic in discourse and practice, Ottomanism had many faces in the sense that the intention of the state and the intentions of the communities in various peripheries clashed, overlapped, and contradicted each other. Ottomanism as a discourse was a contested zone where liberal,

³⁰⁵ George W. Gawrych, “Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire: The Albanian Community, 1800-1912,” pp. 519-536.

³⁰⁶ Özkan, *From the Adobe of Islam to the Turkish Vatan*, p. 33.

³⁰⁷ In fact, constitutional patriotism was first coined by a German thinker Dolf Sternberger. See Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, p. 193. Also see a discussion on Habermas' idea of constitutional patriotism by Patchen Markell, “Making Affect Safe For Democracy? On ‘Constitutional Patriotism,’” pp. 38-63.

³⁰⁸ Primoratz, “Patriotism.”

³⁰⁹ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*.

communitarian, religious, and ethnic perceptions of imperial nationhood and citizenship competed.³¹⁰ Although the intention of the state was to build a common and singular political identity—“united in spirit and in purpose”³¹¹—certain political figures in the Ottoman periphery interpreted Ottomanism and Ottoman identity flexible to ethnic identities in the sense of being used as a hyphenated identity. For instance, Şemseddin Sami Bey, an ethnic Albanian, considered his Ottoman identity as an association with the fatherland and his Albanian identity as identification with his homeland and saw patriotic devotion to the Ottoman state and national commitment to the land of Albania mutually constitutive rather than exclusive.³¹² Butrus Al-Bustani, a Syrian educator and thinker, advocated “Arabic cultural revival, on the one hand, as a means of promoting progress and collective consciousness among the Syrians and of countering Western cultural influences; allegiance to the Ottoman state, on the other, as the best available means of countering this influence on the political level.”³¹³ Al-Bustani saw no contradiction between Ottomanism and Syrian nationalism. Although Al-Bustani was aware of the aim of the Tanzimat reformers toward a single but inclusive Ottoman identity, he referred to the American case of nation-building out of many European nations and how these nations were able to establish solidarity and American identity.³¹⁴ In other words, like Şemseddin Sami Bey, Al-Bustani envisaged a hyphenated Ottoman identity where particularistic identities of the periphery and the universalistic ideals of Istanbul could co-

³¹⁰ Michelle Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth Century Palestine*.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³¹² Gawrchy, “Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire.”

³¹³ Butrus Abu-Manneh, “The Christians Between Ottomanism and Syrian Nationalism: The Ideas of Butrus Al-Bustani,” pp. 287-304.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

exist.³¹⁵

Julia Philips Cohen, in her analysis of the Jewish imperial citizenship in the era of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909), reveals the ebbs and flows between what she calls civic Ottomanism (referring to the religiously and ethnically blind state policies toward different Ottoman communities) and Islamic Ottomanism (referring to the emphasis of Islam in state policies toward different Ottoman communities) and how Jewish communities struggled to emphasize civic Ottomanism.³¹⁶ Arguing that although Sultan Abdulhamid II leaned toward the emphasis of Islam, civic and Islamic Ottomanisms were not mutually exclusive in the first place. Rather, exclusive and inclusive patterns of Ottomanism were cyclical rather than linear under varying conditions of tension and violence. For instance, Sephardi Jews were willing to promote inclusive notions of civic Ottomanism for their own end, especially during the incidents of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation's placing bombs around Istanbul in 1896 and during the Greco-Turkish War on Crete in 1897. Thus, Jewish communities tried to distance themselves from other non-Muslims if they acted violently against the state.³¹⁷

In other words, unpacking the origins of Ottomanism and what it meant and sought to solve from the point of view of the state, especially surrounding the notions of empowering and legitimizing the Ottoman state, is crucial for understanding the continuities in the late Ottoman intellectual and political thought. Taking the state as an

³¹⁵ On the perceptions of the hyphenated identities with Ottomanism, also see Kemal Karpat. 2001. *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press), Chapter 14.

³¹⁶ Julia Philips Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism: Jewish Imperial Citizenship in the Hamidian Era," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44(2012): 237-255; *Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era*.

³¹⁷ Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism: Jewish Imperial Citizenship in the Hamidian Era."

object of analysis here, the issue of what made Ottomanism in the mid-nineteenth century a timely political action in response to an ontological security crisis of the state needs further attention and elaboration. In other words, the external and internal conditions that pushed the Ottoman bureaucrats and diplomats to put the idea of Ottomanism forward still need a systematic and theoretical analysis in order to understand when and why the state *acts* in response to the moments of crisis. Understanding the power and legitimacy structures of the modern state is essential for this purpose.

Bringing State Back In: The Late Ottoman State and Its Power Structures

As I focus on a state-centric explanation for my analysis of identity building through Ottomanism, it is first essential to articulate the logic of being a state and practicing its functions. Despite different perspectives on, and the lack of a single general theory of, the state, one of the most accepted definitions of the modern state in contemporary studies comes from Max Weber who emphasized the state as an entity that employs “the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.”³¹⁸ Being a modern state is incarnated in Weber’s use of monopoly and legitimacy. While monopoly refers to centralization in bureaucratic and military fields, legitimacy is associated with the social contract between the state and society. In premodern states, while the use of violence tended to be a private practice rather than an impersonal function such as exercised by mercenaries, the action of ruling over populations did not particularly entail a social contract such as constitutions. The Ottoman state’s

³¹⁸ Max Weber. “Politics as Vocation,” <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/ethos/Weber-vocation.pdf>

transformation beginning with the Tanzimat was an attempt to come to terms with the Weberian modern state: establishing the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence by centralization in the bureaucratic and military spheres on the one hand, and on the other hand, legitimacy through integration of all ethnoreligious communities under the common homeland since the ontological security of the Ottoman state was at stake.

To be ontologically secure, the modern state depends on three assets: (1) territory, (2) sovereignty,³¹⁹ and (3) legitimacy.³²⁰ Any internal or external threat to these three assets jeopardizes the ontological security of the state. For this reason, the state is not a fixed entity but rather it is constructed and reconstructed in temporal sequences. Territory, sovereignty, and legitimacy of the state can suffer moments of crisis either internally between state and nonstate actors or externally with other states. Theda Skocpol thus argues *a la* Otto Hintze that “states necessarily stand at the intersection between domestic sociopolitical orders and the transnational relations within which they must maneuver for survival and advantage in relation to other states.”³²¹ In this dynamic of ontological security, we can better understand the logic of reform *by* the state and *for* the state. For instance, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, a prominent statesmen and official historian of the Tanzimat era, similarly highlights the territory, sovereignty, and legitimacy problems within the Ottoman state. He discusses how the concept of homeland (*vatan*) was replacing religion as the catalyst for war-making capacities in Europe and argues that

³¹⁹ Although Stephen D. Krasner, in his *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* is critical to the ontological meaning of sovereignty, Seyla Benhabib, in her *The Rights of Others*, maintains that the normative force of sovereignty has been an influential aspect of modern interstate relations which she calls the Westphalian system.

³²⁰ Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State: A Sociological Introduction*.

³²¹ Theda Skocpol, “Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research,” p. 8.

the Ottomans would experience difficulties in replacing Islam with *vatan* as the power base for the Ottoman military's war-making capacity.³²² Thus, the conscription of non-Muslims in the Ottoman military would be less likely to empower the Ottoman military he argues, but he also states that this was a necessity more than an option since the Ottoman military was experiencing difficulties in recruiting Muslim soldiers. This was, of course, an outcome of the financial collapse of the Ottoman state in the mid-19th century which according to Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, some considered this as a state collapse. At this time, he says, it was heard that European states would share the partitioning Ottoman Empire.³²³ The power of the Ottoman state, in terms of its autonomy and capacity, was failing.

In terms of the state power, while “autonomy refers to the state’s ability to formulate interests of its own, independent of or against the will of the divergent societal interest,” “capacity is defined here as the state’s ability to implement strategies to achieve its economic, political, or social goals in society.”³²⁴ Yet, the sources of autonomy and capacity are not just material but also entail an immaterial base. This is why Tuong Vu aptly argues that “the state is no longer defined as a purely materialist concept; rather, a greater emphasis is now placed on immaterial (especially ‘cultural’) aspects of the state.”³²⁵ The works of Antonio Gramsci in the early twentieth century and Michael Mann in the late twentieth century have made important contributions to the

³²² Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'ruzat*, p. 130.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Karen Barkey and Sunita Parikh, “Comparative Perspectives on the State,” pp. 525-526.

³²⁵ Tuong Vu, “Studying the State through State Formation,” p. 164.

understanding of the modern state's immaterial sources of power.³²⁶ For Gramsci, the nature of the modern state cannot be unpacked without linking force and consent, on the one hand, coercion and persuasion on the other. These two dimensions are historically and mutually constitutive incarnating the meaning of the state.³²⁷ In other words, "no state can maintain its stability and permanence without establishing mechanisms to generate legitimating institutions by which the consent of the population is mobilized."³²⁸

In addition to Gramsci's emphasis on the consent or persuasion mechanism in the survival of the state, Michael Mann focuses on the distinction between *despotic* and *infrastructural* power structures of the state. While despotic power refers to the extensive authority of the state without any need of consultation with the society or other nonstate, infrastructural power is built through penetration and collaboration with the society.³²⁹

Heavy reliance on the despotic power without grounding it on a sustainable infrastructural power is an important sign of weakness for modern states. In the cycle of state modernization attempts, Ottomanism definitely referred to this immaterial conceptualization in terms of empowering the autonomy and capacity of the Ottoman state by creating a new infrastructural power base when the new European norms began to emphasize homeland more than religion.³³⁰

Based on these approaches to the state power, how can we contextualize the degree of power of the Ottoman state at the turn of the nineteenth century in order to put

³²⁶ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks* ; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 1, History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760 and Volume 2, The Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914*.

³²⁷ See Jonathan Moran, "Two Conceptions of State: Antonio Gramsci and Michael Mann," pp. 159-164; Benedetto Fontana, "Gramsci on Politics and State," pp. 157-178.

³²⁸ Cited in Fontana, "Gramsci on Politics and State." p. 168.

³²⁹ Moran, "Two Conceptions of State."

³³⁰ Özkan, *From Abode of Islam to Turkish Vatan*.

the rise of Ottomanism into a historical context in terms of its intention and timing? Did the Ottoman state have despotic and infrastructural power, both internally and externally in the beginning of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries? Was the state capacity sufficient in order to put various governing policies forward and rule over the peripheries? What was the degree of state autonomy from other power structures in the periphery and at the imperial center? How strong was the Ottoman state when the Young Turks came into power? Through answering these questions, I believe two discussions can be made. First, the late Ottoman political elite mindset can be critically and analytically contextualized in relation and within the concept of the state. Second, one can grasp the larger picture of continuities from the Tanzimat elites to the Young Turks within the cognitive framework of Ottomanism. Thus, the notion of empowering the Ottoman state through the intended policies of Ottomanism can be more vividly unpacked.

**Internal Opportunities and External Necessities: The Making
of Reforms and the Emergence of Ottomanism in the Early
Nineteenth Century**

By the 1800s, the Ottoman political context corresponded to the weaker central state, stronger external rivals, and stronger provincial societal forces. The Ottoman state, which was still patrimonial as an extension of the Sultan's dynasty, lacked both a despotic and infrastructural power. Neither the material sources of war-making and military-building nor the immaterial sources of penetrating the society for extracting resources were sufficient. While the lack of manpower for war-making was a real concern, "war, once an important source of income for the empire, had become a loss-

making industry.”³³¹ The unruly and arbitrary misconducts of provincial warlords and disobedient autonomous power networks of notables (*ayan*) were both threatening internal security and order and also challenging the authority of Istanbul as if the empire consisted of multiple dynasties rather a single and supreme one.³³² The tax income base was mostly based on agriculture in which the traditional tax-farming system strengthened the autonomous power of the *ayans*. Besides, most of the tax income was spent by provincial administrations rather than by the central state. On the other hand, the Janissaries, an elite military faction, “were garrisoned in the major provincial centres as well as in the capital, were a numerically large (and expensive) but militarily largely worthless body, strong enough to terrorize the government and population alike, but too weak to defend the empire.”³³³ While this was a sign of the declining military efficiency of the Ottoman Empire *vis-à-vis* the technologically advancing European armies, it was also a manifestation of limited sovereignty of the Ottoman body politic. In other words, the capacity and autonomy of the Ottoman state in terms of the Sultan’s power house to act *in* and *for* itself was limited.

From a historical-sociological perspective, Tim Jacoby very successfully narrates the change and continuity in the Ottoman state by adopting Michael Mann’s interpretation of imperial rule that laid out the notions of infrastructural and despotic power.³³⁴ He argues that *ulema* and Islam functioned as the primary infrastructural power

³³¹ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 17.

³³² Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity*.

³³³ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 17.

³³⁴ Jacoby’s book gives innovative insights on the background of the modern Turkish state through a macrohistorical analysis of the Ottoman past from a lens of Michael Mann’s social power theory: Tim Jacoby, *Social Power and the Turkish State*. For the article length version of the Ottoman state analysis, see Tim Jacoby, “The Ottoman State: A Distinct Form of Imperial Rule?” pp. 268-291.

of the Ottoman state:

Underpinned by the flexibility of the *örf*, the imperial state maintained a polity of sufficient adaptability to prevent diverse socio-economic strata at the periphery from decentralising power and then forming an intermediary class between its agents and the plebeian *reaya*. In seeking to institutionalise a direct relationship between ruler and ruled through a hierarchically organised network of clerics, soldiers and administrators, the Ottomans transformed Islam's innate transcendentalism into an immanent ideological infrastructure.³³⁵

Once this traditional infrastructural power diminished in parallel to the military decline and the Ottoman elites' perception of a weakening state, the "viable alternative" to the Islamic ideological base of the Ottoman state was the project of Ottomanism. For instance, in *Ma'ruzat*, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa is well aware of how the infrastructural power base of religion was being superseded by the concept and idea of *vatan*. Yet, he states that although the political attachment and identification with the homeland was established gradually in the European context, replacing Islam with the idea of Ottoman *vatan* would need a few generations to establish it. Until then, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa argues that the Ottoman military would remain 'soulless.'³³⁶ The Ottoman ruling elites were becoming increasingly aware of the relatively weakening imperial state both in relation to the other states and in relation to domestic peripheral forces, and Ottomanism was the recipe for overcoming the state crisis of ontological security. This institutional transition came into being with external necessities (i.e., forces of international context in relation to peripheral demand-makings) on the one hand and internal opportunities (elite competition and the elimination of the veto players) on the other.

³³⁵ Jacoby, "The Ottoman State," p. 285.

³³⁶ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'ruzat*, p. 130.

International Context and Structural Changes

In *Ending Empires*, which “attempts to explain why compromise and accommodation resolved some nationalist conflicts and why hard-line policies led to conflict and bloodshed in other instances,” Hendrik Spruyt argues that “while the international environment provided catalysts for change, domestic politics explains the variation in policies.”³³⁷ French and American Revolutions in the late eighteenth century definitely meant a sea of change in the international system and the international political culture.³³⁸ Mlada Bukovansky demonstrates the comparative-historical background of these revolutions and how they gradually affected the international political culture on the one hand and international state system on the other:

From the mid-eighteenth century onward, the political struggles of European and American aristocrats against the perceived despotism of their monarchs yielded a profound shift in how both leaders and subjects came to view the sources and terms of legitimate political authority. Bloodlines and divine sanction began to lose their symbolic power as sources of legitimacy; popular will—however nebulously defined—began its ascent as the ultimate source of legitimate authority. In their power struggles, monarchists and those who challenged them deployed the material and cultural resources at their disposal. A central resource for all sides was the complex and diverse body of discourse known as Enlightenment thought.³³⁹

By Enlightenment thought, Bukovansky underscores the certain values and systems of government under modernity:

We live in an era accustomed to taking Enlightenment conceptions of political legitimacy for granted. Equality, individual rights, the power of reason to resolve political and administrative issues, the necessity of checking the powers of government to allow civil society to flourish, and the notion that political authority—or sovereignty—ultimately resides in the people of a nation: all these

³³⁷ Hendrik Spruyt, *Ending Empire: Contested Sovereignty and Territorial Partition*, p. xi.

³³⁸ Mlada Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics: The American and French Revolutions in International Political Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

³³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 3.

notions, however imperfectly realized in practice, have come to dominate global political discourse. They are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as standards toward which all member states should strive. But historically, these standards of legitimacy emerged within a context dominated by a distinctly different notion of legitimate authority: that of dynastic, monarchical sovereignty legitimated by blood and divine sanction.³⁴⁰

One of the leading Tanzimat reformers, Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha, describes this change in the system of ruling surrounding popular sovereignty and in the international political culture to Sultan Abdulaziz (1861-1876) in 1871:

His Highness, once upon a time, the rulers who had divine rights would hide themselves from ordinary people and thus grant themselves a mystic and a kingly image. The names of such rulers would suffice to create fear and respect among people. However, communities in our contemporary era show respect to their rulers as they represent authority with a worldly existence rather than a divine rule. Today, this worldly relationship between the ruler and the ruled is the strongest guardian of the rulers.³⁴¹

Moreover, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, the official historian of the Ottoman state and a prominent statesman in the mid-nineteenth century, mentions the idea of nationality and how it is likely to change the internal and external relations of the imperial states:

The French Emperor, Napoleon III, brought out an idea of ‘Nationalite’ during his war with Austria over the issue of Italy. This triggered a new situation against the rule of domination which had been in force for years. Namely, although the rulers had the authority and rights to forcefully suppress the peoples’ rebellions and subordinate the rebels, Napoleon III destroyed this right of the rulers by bringing out a new order to the world: ‘a government shall let the people go if those people would not be willing to live under that government.’ Thus, he said that ‘since the Italians under the Austrian rule did not want to live with Austrians, Austria should give up on these Italians’ and Britain was the one that first accepted this ‘Nationalite’ norm. While states such as Russia and Austria rejected this norm,

³⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 4.

³⁴¹ “Efendimiz, bir zamanlar tanrılık tasıyan hukumdarlar kimseye gorunmezler ve kendilerine esrarengiz ve azametli bir hava verirlerdi. Sadece isimleri halkin hurmet ve korkusu icin kafi idi. Bugunse milletler hukumdarlarına otoriteyi temsil eden bir sahisla kurulan bir munasebet cercevesinde hurmet beslemektedirler. Bu munasebet hukumdarların en saglam muhafız alayidir” (p. 73) in Fuat Andic and Suphi Andic, eds. 2000. *SADRAZAM ALI PASA: HAYATI, ZAMANI VE SIYASI VASIYETNAME SI*. Eren Yayincilik: Istanbul, 2000.

other states hesitated to do so.³⁴²

These Enlightenment values gradually shifted the imperial system of dynastic rule into an international system of nation-states as equals under the international bodies such as the United Nations. While many empires one way or another encountered internal and external crises in the process of the adaptation to the gradual transformation of the international system, empires were still the legitimate units of world politics until World War I. Although World War I did not completely legitimize the nation-state system (see Chapter 7), the number of nation-states skyrocketed especially after the dissolution of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires.³⁴³ However, it should be noted that structural change by itself does not constitute a causal effect on domestic changes. Rather, as Andreas Wimmer and Yuval Feinstein aptly argue, contexts and contingencies are important dimensions in understanding how global structures are diffused internally.³⁴⁴ In other words, the French and American Revolutions were the initial triggering forces that gradually led to the diffusion of the ideals and values such as popular and national sovereignty at the turn of the twentieth century.³⁴⁵

³⁴² “Fransiz Imperatoru III. Napolyon, Italya meselesinden dolayi Avusturya ile savastigi sirada bir ‘Nationalite’ fikri ortaya cikardi. Bu ise yillardan beri yururlukte olan hakimiyet hukukuna aykiri bir durum ortaya cikardi. Soyle ki; oteden beri isyana kalkisan kavimler hakkında zor kullanarak isyancilari itaat altina almaga hak ve yetkileri olmasina karsilik, Napolyon bu usulu yikarak, ‘bir hukumetin kendisini istemeyen bir kavmi terk etmesi lazim gelir’ diye dunyaya yeni bir usul getirdi. ‘Ve madem ki Avusturya elinde bulunan Italyanlar onlari istemiyorlar, onlar da Italyanlardan el cekmeliler’ dedi ve bu Nationalite usulunu en once Inglitere kabul etti. Rusya ve Avusturya gibi bazi devletler ise bu usulu kesinlikle red edip, bazi devletler ise tereddutte kaldilar” in Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma’ruzat*, p. 57.

³⁴³ See Andres Wimmer and Yuval Feinstein for their macrohistorical account in explaining the global rise of nation-states; “The Rise of the Nation-State Across the World, 1816 to 2001,” *American Sociological Review* 75(5): 764-790, (2010).

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ See Burak Kadercan’s insightful study on the emergence of nationalism in world politics as a result of political survival calculations of the imperial elites influenced by the French Revolution; “Military Competition and the Emergence of Nationalism: Putting the Logic of Political Survival into Historical Context,” *International Studies Review* 14(3): 401-428 (2012).

For instance, Eric Weitz, in his analysis of the shift in the nineteenth century international order from the Vienna system to the Paris system, argues that the interstate system moved away from dynastic legitimacy and state sovereignty with clearly defined borders towards population politics along with state sovereignty congruent with national homogeneity.³⁴⁶ The protection of minority rights, civilizing missions, and humanitarian interventions had become international issues amid the Great Power politics. For Weitz, liberal principles following the French and American revolutions and European imperialism are the two main factors behind the structural shift in the international order. The Ottoman state was not outside of these global trends in the international system. In the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman elites had observed these changes in different venues such as working in European embassies, receiving higher education in European schools, and getting trained by European military officials. These elites came to the conclusion that interstate competition, especially within the great power rivalry among the European states, necessitated the adaptation to the structural trends in the international system.

Following Weitz's analysis, Michael Reynolds successfully places the collapse of the Ottoman state within this international context where interstate competition deeply affected domestic policy-making with its intended and unintended consequences.³⁴⁷ The issue of 'minority rights' was, in fact, a means of great power competition. The Ottoman state was by no means outside of the structural changes at the international level. Yet,

³⁴⁶ Eric Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions," pp. 1313-43.

³⁴⁷ Michael Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918*.

weakening military capacity, declining economic resources and inefficiency, and declining rule-making and order-enforcing institutions put the Ottoman Empire as the follower of the new discourses and practices of the newly emerging European norms. In other words, the Ottoman state was not in a position to generate new discourses that could (re)shape the international system but rather the Ottomans were the inevitable followers of the external discourses.

Davide Rodogno, in his analysis of the political history of humanitarian intervention, argues that the discourse and practice of intervening in other states in the name of ending human suffering in the target state was incarnated within the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers, especially in the context of the Eastern Question, a concern over the political and social conditions of the Christian populations in the Ottoman Balkans.³⁴⁸ Midhat Pasha, the late Tanzimat reformer and the architect of the first Ottoman Constitution in 1876, emphasizes the significance of the Eastern Question for the Ottoman State:

...many people still believe that Christians in Turkey are looked upon as vile slaves, and treated as such, it is necessary to demonstrate the falsity of these accusations, and to speak of the relations which exist in Turkey between Mussulmans and Christian....³⁴⁹

He points to the centrality of the Eastern Question in the public interest of Europe and argues how the European expectations to the solution of this Question were miscalculated. He argues that talking about the East without knowing about its geography, ethnography, and history would not end up with a well-understood depiction

³⁴⁸ Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*.

³⁴⁹ Midhat Pasha. "The Past, Present, and Future of Turkey." *Nineteenth Century* 3, no. 18 (June 1878): 981 - 993.

of it. Yet, there were two projected solutions to this humanitarian crisis as perceived by the European powers: either the dismemberment of the empire or the modernization of the empire through transformative reforms. However, as Davide Rodogno successfully reveals, the European discourse of humanitarian intervention lacked legitimacy from two shortcomings of the Europeans themselves: 1) the orientalist rhetoric that Europe was in a position of civilizational superiority over the ‘barbarian’ Ottomans; and 2) hypocrisy of the discourse due to the fact of the European treatment of human populations in their colonies such as the French treatment of the Algerians.³⁵⁰ Thus, the idea of humanitarian intervention, especially over the Ottoman territories, was more a realist notion of Great Power imperialism and power-seeking than a liberal notion of promoting political and civil rights *per se*. This is why the establishment of the Concert of Europe in 1815 exercised a nonintervention clause only among the European powers themselves. Although the Ottoman Empire joined the Concert of Europe in 1856, the external pressure for reforms was present throughout the nineteenth century.

Overall, these transformations in the international political culture had ramifications in the domestic balance of power between the imperial center in Istanbul and the peripheries within which peripheral demand-makings further gave the impetus for change in the boundaries of belonging to the Ottoman state. Unless reform was put in effect, the Ottoman elites believed that the ontological security of the state was in jeopardy. Ali Haydar Mithat Bey, the son of the most significant reformist Ottoman vizier Mithad Pasha in the late Tanzimat era, states this security dimension in his 1903 biography of his father:

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

At the time of Mahmud II.'s accession to the throne [1808], after the murder of Selim III, the accumulation of difficulties and dangers that beset the empire were such that it seemed as if nothing short of a miracle could prevent its complete destruction. It required at any rate some very potent principles of internal strength and cohesion to resist the centrifugal forces in full activity at that crisis. . . . Serbia was in open revolt under Michel Obrenowitz, Egypt was in the hands of the able and ambitious Mehemet Ali, Arabia was in the effervescence of a Wahabee rising, the Pasha of Janina had raised the standard of revolt, and the Governor of Widdin, the famous Pasvan Oglou, had proclaimed his independence, and--most serious danger of all--the insurrection of Greece, supported by a consensus of enthusiasm in Europe, threatened the integrity of the empire; all this, too, at the very moment when the military forces of the empire were undergoing the complete reorganisation which Selim had begun, and Mahmoud was resolved to carry out.³⁵¹

Ali Haydar Mithat Bey calls this era of turbulence "the mortal crisis of the Ottoman Empire."³⁵² As stated previously, Greek independence supported by European liberal circles was the most significant and proximate cause in the incarnation of the threat to the security of the empire in the mindset of the elites.

Peripheral Demand-Makings, Relative Weakness, and State

Security

Midhat Pasha vividly summarizes the state of the Ottoman Empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

During this time Europe was becoming organised and was entering by degrees on the path of progress. Towards the end of that century a vigorous and energetic effort was giving a new start to modern civilisation and changing the form and nature of governments, whilst the Ottoman Empire, wanting men capable of appreciating the excellence of realised progress and the necessity of making the country take a step in advance, had remained stationary, and had modified in nowise its ancient institutions, which themselves, it must be admitted, had fallen into such a state of disorganisation that a change of system had become inevitable. The material forces of the Empire were exhausted alike by intestine disorders and

³⁵¹ Ali Haydar Mithat Bey. 1903. *The Life of Mithad Pasha: A Record of His Services, Political Reforms, Banishment, and Judicial Murder* (London: Arno Press), p. 16.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

by the periodical wars which it had to maintain against Russia.³⁵³

The elites were increasingly aware of the relative weaknesses of the Ottoman state *vis-à-vis* the military and political development of the European powers surrounding the ideals of Enlightenment after the French and American revolutions. They were also aware of how the new trends external to the Ottoman Empire had serious internal ramifications in terms of different antistate demand-making structures such as separation movements (e.g., Greece and Serbia). Thus, one cannot understand the conditions that pushed the Ottoman ruling elites to perceive the state as materially and immaterially weak without the claim-makings of various peripheral movements and the incapacity of the state to respond to these claim-makings in a timely manner. The Greek independence and Serbian autonomy in the first half of the nineteenth century were the key challenges that put the Ottoman state into an ontological security crisis. As Carter Findley argues, “Greek independence and Serbian autonomy signaled the start of a reconfiguration that would ultimately shatter the equilibria and relationships that held the multinational Islamic empire together.”³⁵⁴ Moreover, Şükrü Iııcak critically analyzes the Greek insurgency (1821-1826) and provides a thick description of it, a topic that has been largely ignored in the history of the late Ottoman Empire according to Iııcak.³⁵⁵ He considers the effect of the Greek insurgency on the Ottoman ruling elites greater than it is often thought. For him, the Greek insurgency “proved to be a war of survival both for the insurgents and the Ottoman central state: the former struggling literally for their

³⁵³ Midhat Pasha. "The Past, Present, and Future of Turkey." *Nineteenth Century* 3, no. 18 (June 1878), p. 984.

³⁵⁴ Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity*, p. 64.

³⁵⁵ Şükrü Iııcak, “A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence 1821-1826.”

existence, the latter forced to rethink its system of imperial allegiances and human capital, carry out two colossal operations of social engineering and recast its military establishment and society in order to prevent collapse.”³⁵⁶ The Greek insurgency was not the only antistate mobilization against Istanbul but due to its discursive content and form of separatism, it caused deep and long-lasting impacts in the nineteenth century Ottoman state and society. The holistic transformative approach of reforms was the vivid manifestation of the perception of the weakness in the state apparatus of the empire. This is why the Sultan viewed the separatist movement as a reflection of the weak state rather than a conscientious political action by the insurgents.³⁵⁷

The leading reformers of the state (i.e., Mustafa Reshid Pasha, Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha, and Fuad Pasha) during the Tanzimat era one way or another all emphasized the survival of the state (*Devletin Bekası*). For instance, Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha describes the Tanzimat politics as a choice between life and death of the empire in his political statement in 1871:

It was necessary and crucial to resist, to stand on our own feet and to prevent the separation and partition... The future of our State depended on whether this policy [Tanzimat] was accepted or rejected.³⁵⁸

In his political statement to the Sultan Abdulaziz (1861-1876), Fuad Pasha mentions the integration of different *millets* in order to prevent the partition of the state:

In terms of our domestic affairs, we need to put all of our efforts into one goal: to

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 1.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ “Ayakta durmak, direnmek, bolunmeye ve parcalanmaya yer vermemek gerekiyordu...Unlu atalarimizin mirasi olan Osmanli Devleti su anda butunlugunu hemen hemen muhafaza etmektedir. Biz iktidara geldigimizde bu miras yok olmak yolundaydi. Bu durum karsisinda en uygun siyaseti guttugumuze inaniyoruz. Devletimizin istikbali bu siyasetin kabulune veya reddine baglidir” in Fuat Andic and Suphi Andic, eds. 2000. *SADRAZAM ALI PASA: HAYATI, ZAMANI VE SIYASI VASIYETNAMESI*. Eren Yayıncılık: Istanbul, 2000, p. 59.

integrate different communities together in our country. Without this integration, the survival and continuity of the Ottoman State is impossible.³⁵⁹

As these state elites of the Tanzimat era saw the necessity of reform in order to integrate different communities together on the one hand and empower the state by centralizing its power on the other, their reformist agenda would be less likely to be implemented unless they would eliminate the veto powers of the old Ottoman guards (i.e., the military (Janissaries) and the ulema).

Inside the State: Elite Competition and Veto Players

For Selçuk Akşin Somel, the first elite-level ideas of Ottomanism after 1839 were conducive to the authoritarian centralization of the state.³⁶⁰ This is why İlber Ortaylı states that the Westernization of the empire in the nineteenth century was more an outcome of domestic processes than a direct result of external pressures.³⁶¹ In other words, the power consolidation at the center *vis-à-vis* other power networks such as the Janissaries and the provincial *ayans* created more opportunity spaces for the Ottoman Sublime Porte to initiate, design, and implement reforms.

The aim of Ottomanism was to strengthen the state not just externally but internally as well, because traditional power centers such as the Janissaries and the increasing power of provincial notables (*ayans*) *vis-à-vis* the central state were a sign of

³⁵⁹ “*İcislerimize gelince, bütün cabalarımızı tek bir amaca yönelmek zorundayız: ülkemizde yasayan çeşitli halkları kaynaştırmak. Bu kaynaşma gerçekleşmeksizin Osmanlı Devleti’nin sürdürülmesi bana gerçekten olanaksız görünmektedir.*” (p. 6) in Engin Deniz Akarlı, ed., 1978. *BELGELERLE TANZİMAT: OSMANLI SADRIAZAMLARINDAN ALİ VE FUAD PASALARIN SİYASİ VASIYETNAMELERİ*. İstanbul: Bogazici Üniversitesi Yayınları.

³⁶⁰ Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlılık Düşüncesi (1839-1913).”

³⁶¹ İlber Ortaylı. *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*.

what İlber Ortaylı calls “double sovereignty.”³⁶² “During the second half of the eighteenth century, the central government relied heavily on the *ayan* both for troops and for tax collection (many notables held official posts as tax collectors)”³⁶³ and some of these families even conducted independent foreign relations without any control of the central government. The reformist mindset, thus, was also a reaction to the warlord *ayans* for the Sultan to consolidate the power of the center and the foundation of Sublime Porte as a shift from military bureaucracy to civic bureaucracy facilitated the initiation of Ottomanist reforms.³⁶⁴ In that regard, the elimination of the veto players against the new institutionalization efforts was essential in the making of Ottomanism which would preempt further weakening of the state.

In his insightful analysis of reformist mindset in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, Burak Kadercan also reveals the intralite competition within the Ottoman state particularly within the framework of civil-military relations.³⁶⁵ By particularly looking at the Ottoman military reforms in the beginning of the nineteenth century, Kadercan argues that “whenever the Janissaries perceived a threat to their corporate interests and privileges, they blocked military reforms not only within the corps but elsewhere in the Ottoman military establishment.”³⁶⁶ The *ulema* (the highest religious establishment) was also an agent within the elite competition since “to ensure that future Ottoman leaders refrained from similar reform efforts, the Janissaries convinced the state’s religious

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 18.

³⁶⁴ Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity*.

³⁶⁵ Burak Kadercan (2013). “Strong Armies, Slow Adaptation: Civil-Military Relations and the Diffusion of Military Power,” *International Security* 38(3): 117-152.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 118.

authorities to issue an opinion declaring that the suggested military reforms were incompatible with religious law.”³⁶⁷ Although Kadercan’s analysis focuses on military reforms, the inraelite competition in general and the civilian-military relations in particular was an important component of the dynamics of Tanzimat and Ottomanism throughout the nineteenth century.³⁶⁸ It was only after the abolishment of the Janissaries in 1826 and the power consolidation of civilian elites who had a reformist mindset (Mustafa Reshid Pasha, Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha, Fuad Pasha and later Midhat Pasha) that the structural reform of the empire toward a solid integration of different *millet*s and efficient centralization under Ottomanism became possible.

Seeing the state as a unitary actor may be viable in the international system. However, in order to understand the internal and external actions of the state, one needs to look at the elite structure and elite competition inside the state. It is the governing elites who become able to rule by eliminating the veto players, and who create opportunity structures for reform.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the rise and the spread of Ottomanism in the mindset of the early nineteenth century Ottoman ruling elites came into being among mutually constitutive historical contingencies and temporal sequences. The context of these external necessities and internal opportunities to reform occurred in three interconnected relationships: 1) the changing international context toward popular sovereignty rather than dynastic

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 139.

³⁶⁸ For a brief historical background on the agency of Ottoman Ulema, see Amit Bein’s *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic: Agents of Change and Guardians of Tradition* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

sovereignties; 2) the rise of peripheral antistate demand-makings that benefited from the opportunity spaces of the changing international context; and 3) the internal power competition within the Ottoman state and the power consolidation of civilian elites who believed in reform.

While the peripheral challenges to the central state, especially the separatist Greek insurgency, pushed the Ottoman state elites to reconsider the condition of state weakness and strength, the rising European norms of humanitarian intervention and popular sovereignty along with their realist articulation in the context of power-seeking rival states provided more opportunity spaces to insurgent movements against the Ottoman state. On the other hand, the increasing diplomatic relationship between the Ottoman state and European powers exposed the relative weakness of the Ottoman state among the Ottoman foreign diplomats and bureaucrats. Yet, the necessity to reform would be less likely unless the power of the imperial center was consolidated *vis-à-vis* the veto players such as the traditional military establishment and the semisovereign provincial notables.

Thus, I unpacked the conditions that led to the first comprehensive identity reform—the patriotic Ottomanism project—in the Ottoman Empire that sought a major paradigm shift from the institutionalized *millet* system. In terms of the timing of the incarnation of Ottomanism in the Ottoman body politic, I have proposed a multilayered process of historical contingencies and temporal sequences which I phrase as ‘external necessities and internal opportunities.’ While external necessities speak to the structural trends in the international political environment (e.g., the emergence of new international norms, their various use for geopolitical competition and political gains by states), internal opportunities point to the reaction to and adoption of these norms and political

trends by domestic political actors—be it the state and/or the societal actors.

Although the aforementioned multilayered process of change can explain the conditions under which the state elites seriously reconsider and implement reform of the old institutional structures of belonging to the state, the question of what motivates the same elites for identity-based reform is more related to the perceptions of the ontological (in)security of the state (*Devletin Bekası*). As I articulated throughout this chapter, the leading elites of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century became increasingly aware of the state weakness relative to their European counterparts. The reformers believed that the only way to overcome this power gap in interstate competition was to adopt the international political culture (i.e., popular sovereignty, constitution, and the idea of *vatan*) through internal institutional transformation of the state.

As a result, this reform-making surrounding the Ottomanism project in relation and in response to the ontological security of the state which was internally and externally threatened established a state-centered mindset of the latter Ottoman political thinkers and statesmen including the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. The theoretical conclusions will be further elaborated in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 7

POST/WORLD WAR I CONTEXT, NEW ELITES WITH 'NATIONAL' MINDSET AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF OTTOMAN IDENTITY INTO MONOLITHIC TURKISHNESS

*“The integrity of the homeland, the sovereignty of the nation is under threat.”
The first clause of the communique in Sivas Congress, June 1919*

*“In the West and East alike, the internal organization of a state that has
communities from different cultures, genesis, and ideals in a single
territory that are not compatible with each other would be baseless and
rotten.”*

Mustafa Kemal, President of Turkey, 1927

*‘İktidar olduk ama muktedir olmadık’
Adnan Menderes*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I unpacked the policy shift of the Ottoman elites from the *millet* system to the policy of Ottomanism for greater integration of the different communities under an overarching Ottoman identity and better centralization of the government authority. In this chapter, I first reveal the continuity of Ottomanism as a state policy towards the end of World War I and underline the conditions under which the state elites were more committed to an imperial Ottoman identity rather than a national identity. Second, I articulate the changing domestic and external conditions after World War I and discuss how new external necessities and internal opportunities gradually led to the adoption of a monolithic Turkish nationhood under the leadership of Mustafa

Kemal and his movement against the guards of the old Ottoman regime.

Continuity of the Ottoman Identity Until the End of World

War 1

If the Tanzimat reformers, particularly Ali and Fuad Paşa, cultivated the first seeds of Ottomanism in response to the internal and external challenges that the Ottoman state was encountering at the turn of the nineteenth century, an opposition group against these reformers emerged in the 1860s under the secret society called the Patriotic Alliance and was later known as the Young Ottomans. Although the Young Ottomans were not necessarily against the reforms *per se*, “their intense patriotism made them think of reform for Ottomans, by Ottomans, and along Islamic lines.”³⁶⁹ They considered the Tanzimat reforms to be the outcome of European pressures rather than the Ottoman state acting independently *by itself and for itself*. The lack of a separation of powers after the fall of the Janissaries and the declining influence of the Ulema and the Tanzimat regime under the rule of Ali and Fuad Paşa were seen as more and more an absolutist rule that rejected sharing their power through a constitutional and parliamentary government. The reforms were seen as concessions to the European powers rather than a sovereign attempt of the state to defend and strengthen itself. Namık Kemal, a literary figure and a poet of the time and perhaps the most important figure among the Young Ottomans, publicized the concept of vatan (fatherland) through his play called *Fatherland, or Silistire* (1873) within which vatan and *Allah* are seen as inseparable units of the state.³⁷⁰ However, this

³⁶⁹ Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, p. 21.

³⁷⁰ Namık Kemal, *Vatan Yahut Silistre*. For instance, one of the lines in the play goes as “Bilir misin, bence vatan iman ile beraberdir. Vatanımı sevmeyen Allah'ı da sevmez ...,” p. 63. See also Şerif

was not necessarily a challenge or opposition to Tanzimat Ottomanism, but rather it was a critique that Ottomanism “lacked complete legitimacy because it did not conform fully to Europe’s discourse of reform or to the anchors of Islamic collective identity.”³⁷¹ Thus, the legal equality of non-Muslims and Muslims was not a concern and it was not in contradiction with Islamic community values, but again it was more about the condition of the state in the hands of the few and ‘at the service’ of the European powers. The Young Ottomans sought to utilize Ottomanism deeper and further to make the Ottoman state sovereign and independent through the institutions of constitutional and parliamentary rule. This legacy of the *state persona* continued within the Young Turks as well.

If the conditions surrounding the ontological security of the state pushed the Ottoman governing elites to reform the state by initiating the project of Ottomanism in the early nineteenth century, the intended goals of establishing a stronger Ottoman state with new institutions and new *raison d’état* were curtailed with more crises at the turn of the twentieth century. Let alone establishing a secure political and social environment for non-Muslim communities, the Ottoman state became weaker to the point that it could not even provide security for its Muslim populations. The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the resulting Treaty of Berlin in 1878 and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 which ended with the Ottoman state’s death in Europe and the massacre of Balkan Muslims were important indicators of the Ottoman state’s unrelenting weakening and incapacities despite the intentions of the Tanzimat reforms. As opposed to the aims of finding a

Mardin, *Türkiye’de Din ve Siyaset, Makaleler 3*, p. 271.

³⁷¹ Joseph Rahme, “Namik Kemal’s Constitutional Ottomanism and non-Muslims,” p. 31.

ground of legal equality between Muslim and non-Muslim communities through Ottomanism, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the Treaty of Berlin further legitimized the idea of border-making based on national homogeneity in the international state system and led to further national aspirations for the different communities within the empire such as the Armenians, Macedonians, and Albanians. At the end of the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman state lost 83% of its land and 69% of its population in Europe.³⁷² Basically, the Ottoman Empire turned into an Anatolian state with Muslims constituting the majority of the population. This was, of course, a devastating experience for the Ottoman ruling elites since the Balkan territories were the engine of multireligious and multi-linguistic harmony and the economic power house of the Ottoman wealth.

If Greek separatism and independence (1821-1832) was shocking to the ‘almighty’ Ottoman state at that time, the post-1878 and the Balkan Wars laid the groundwork for more devastating national struggles and territory losses in conjunction with European economic and political interventions against the state at multiple fronts. After such military defeats and their outcome of legitimacy deficits,³⁷³ the state became completely ontologically insecure and the Ottoman elites encountered fear and anxiety on how to keep the only territory in their hands: Anatolia. For instance, in his memoirs, Talat Paşa, one of the most leading figures of the CUP during World War I, reveals the fear and anxiety over the survival of the state. He states that the “power overrides right” theory was apparent for ‘Devlet-i Aliyye’ after the defeat in the Balkans referring to the

³⁷² Yavuz, “Warfare and Nationalism,” p. 58.

³⁷³ Selim Deringil also emphasizes the legitimacy search of the Ottoman state throughout the nineteenth century. He states that even the Sultan Abdulhamid II “did not turn his back on the Tanzimat reforms but rather attempted to mold them to his advantage.” See “Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909),” p. 345.

weakness of the state.³⁷⁴ The desperate need for an external ally was inevitable.

The search for an external ally was in order to revitalize the psychologically and physically defeated state and distorted social psyche. Entering World War I on the side of the Germans was a risk but also an opportunity to secure the survival of the remaining Muslim Anatolia. According to Mustafa Aksakal, a diplomatic historian of the Ottoman involvement in World War I, by 1914, the Ottoman elite (the CUP) regarded the only way to cease the further partition of the state to be through military power and World War I functioned as an opportunity space in that regard.³⁷⁵ Under the siege of European capitulations that favored the trading activities of the Ottoman Christians and the European political tutelage, the Ottoman state was only *de facto* sovereign and independent. As Zafer Toprak argues, the CUP entered World War I to gain back its sovereignty and full economic and political independence from the European powers.³⁷⁶ If isolated from international politics, neither material nor immaterial sources of state power were sufficient to prevent the further disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.³⁷⁷

In the context of understanding Ottomanism as patriotism and the Ottomanists as empire-savers rather than empire-destructors, the state-centric mentality of the late Ottoman elites would be better understood. Amid the aforementioned series of turmoil in the post-Tanzimat era, Ottomanism was still the driving force of the state after 1878 until the end of World War I. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, although Sultan

³⁷⁴ Talat Paşa, *Hatıralarım ve Mudafam*, p. 28.

³⁷⁵ Aksakal, Mustafa. *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

³⁷⁶ Zafer Toprak, *İttihat Terakki ve Devletçilik*.

³⁷⁷ For the long-lasting effects of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 on the legitimacy structures and power capacities of the Ottoman state, see a collection of essays devoted to this subject by M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, *War and Diplomacy*.

Abdulhamid II emphasized the role of Islam and the institution of the Caliphate after this war's catastrophic loss for the Muslim world in general and the Ottoman state in particular, the policy of Ottomanism was not abolished, at least in a legal sense.

Regarding Sultan Abdulhamid II's Islamic policy, Hasan Kayalı argues that "it did not entail a novel definition of the fatherland; nor did it jeopardize the legal status and rights that the non-Muslims had gained under the secular Ottomanism of the preceding decades, though clearly Hamidian ideology was exclusionary from a social and psychological point of view with respect to non-Muslims."³⁷⁸ Thus, the Hamidian era should not be read as a sharp rupture from the Tanzimat (1839-1876) as is often done in the discussions of the late Ottoman history. Frederick F. Anscombe also points to this continuity especially from a perspective of religion since "the Ottoman state had always been of and for Muslims first."³⁷⁹

The Young Turks or the Committee of Union and Progress emerged and evolved as a coalition of oppositional figures who were against the authoritarian policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II. It was a coalition because the organization was neither monolithic nor unified in its political agenda.³⁸⁰ The main concern that brought the oppositional figures together was the reinstating of the Ottoman constitution thus creating accountability on the arbitrary rule of the Sultan. Since the Young Turks were not all Turks and did not belong to a similar ideology, they considered the constitution the guarantor of liberal politics within which *Ittihad-ı Anasır* (union of all Ottoman elements; Muslims and non-Muslims, Turks and non-Turks alike) would be secured and established. In Talat Paşa's

³⁷⁸ Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 31.

³⁷⁹ Anscombe, "On the Road Back from Berlin," p. 556.

³⁸⁰ Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*.

words, the CUP aimed “the progress and rise of the common *vatan* through the union of all Ottoman elements.”³⁸¹

Sultan Abdulhamid II didn't completely shy away from the idea of Ottomanism, and neither did the CUP. However, prominent scholars such as Şükrü Hanioglu frame the CUP in the framework of Turkish nationalism.³⁸² According to Hanioglu, the true agenda of the CUP included:

a strong government, the dominant role played by an intellectual elite, anti-imperialism, a society in which Islam would play no governing role, and a Turkish nationalism that would bloom later... The last item on the agenda was controversial, since some CUP members were not Turkish. While Turkish members gravitated toward Turkish nationalism, which became the guiding ideology of the CUP, especially after 1906, the non-Turkish members leaned toward their own respective nationalist movements.³⁸³

On the contrary, Hasan Kayalı, one of the leading scholars of the Young Turks, argues that:

The Young Turks envisaged the creation of a civic-territorial, indeed revolutionary- democratic, Ottoman political community by promoting an identification with the state and the country through the sultan and instituting representative government. Though they remained committed to the monarchy within the constitutional framework, they conceived of an Ottoman state and society akin to the French example in which religion and ethnicity would be supplanted by state-based patriotism.³⁸⁴

While Kayalı and Hanioglu's approaches are two contradicting views regarding the identity politics of the CUP, Erik Jan Zürcher introduces a somewhat vague framework of 'Ottoman Muslim nationalism' by rejecting the identity categorizations among Turkish nationalism, Islamism, and Ottomanism:

³⁸¹ Talat Paşa, *Hatıralarım ve Mudafam*, p. 24.

³⁸² Şükrü Hanioglu, *Young Turks in Opposition*

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

³⁸⁴ Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 9.

The Unionists' ideology was nationalist in the sense that they demanded the establishment of a state of their own: before 1918 they took every step to make the existing Ottoman state the Muslims' own and after 1918 they fought to preserve what remained of that Ottoman Muslim state and to prevent it from being carved up. But the nation for which they demanded this political home was that of the Ottoman Muslims-not that of all of the Ottomans, not only that of the Turks and certainly not that of the Muslims of the world.³⁸⁵

While Kayalı and Zürcher's approach eliminates the portrayal of the CUP as Turkish nationalists, Kayalı's thesis is more cautious in conceptualizing the CUP era as a nationalist period even when the CUP utilized Islamic values and discourses after 1913 since Kayalı emphasizes 'state-based patriotism.' What is usually underscored in this controversial debate is the primacy of the state and the concerns over its continuity and survival through policies on the basis and in reaction to the internal and external political and socio-economic realities. For instance, Erol Ülker, in parallel with Kayalı's argument, argues that what is often regarded as Turkification before 1913 was the centralization efforts of the CUP rather than nation-building efforts.³⁸⁶ After 1913, although Turkification was in progress in Anatolia according to Ülker, this policy existed with the other imperial policies. In other words, although Ülker frames the identity policies of the CUP as nation-building especially after 1913, he fails to explain why Turkification was not a unified and single policy of the CUP but rather one of the imperial policies designed for Anatolia as he claims. This is perhaps due to the centrality of *Devlet-i Alliyeye* and imperial *vatan* rather than *millet* in the mindset of the CUP elites. As empire-savers rather than nation-state admirers, the CUP elites sought to hang onto Ottomanism, perhaps with more emphasis on Islamic values and discourses after the

³⁸⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, p. 230.

³⁸⁶ Erol Ülker, "Contextualising 'Turkification': nation building in the late Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918."

Balkan Wars. The project of nation-state became only feasible during the so-called National Independence war (1919-1922) since the international system after WWI was more favorable for such a choice.

The Young Turks, Ottomanism, and the International System

Rather than the Young Turks, Mustafa Kemal's *Kuva-yi Milliye* (National Forces) after World War I insisted on achieving a national state by rejecting the imperial legacy. The Young Turks on the other hand had an imperial mindset and commitment to save and strengthen the Ottoman state through radical centralization and thus weaken the power of peripheral elites in their potential collaboration with rival states such as Russia and Britain. Scholars of this era have so far neglected the role of the international system in terms of norms, state structures, and institutions in the decision-making processes of the ruling elites of empires, especially those of the Young Turks. Perhaps a recent study by Michael Reynolds (2011) pays close attention to the nature of the international system during the Young Turk era:

In their endeavor to preserve the empire and reform it from top to bottom, however, the Unionists faced an interlocking dilemma. The first part lay in the nature of the interstate order in the early twentieth century. That order was anarchic, competitive, and dominated by a small, select group of actors. In an environment where no higher sovereign existed to regulate interstate relations, a state's only guaranty of survival was its own power...Anarchy, competition, and the global reach of the great powers combined to create extraordinary turbulence around the globe in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the Ottoman lands were among those most buffeted .³⁸⁷

In this highly anarchic and competitive system, there was no overarching international institution or organization that would regulate or constrain the imperial

³⁸⁷ Michael Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 23.

rivalry. According to Reynolds, this international system was run through the normative context of population politics based on ethnicity and nationalism which established the pretext of power rivalry among empires. He states that:

The affirmation of the nation-state by the great powers as the normative unit of global politics exerted a tremendous impact upon local politics already in turmoil. It made the language and program of nationalism essential to the central objective of modern politics, obtaining and maintaining control of the state, and thereby facilitated the spread of nationalist ideologies. The structure of the global order and interstate system provided powerful incentives to adopt nationalist ideologies by tying control of the state and its territory to claims made on behalf of the nation.³⁸⁸

Although Reynolds is right that the politics of identity was on the way of becoming the normative framework for many imperial states in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, he overemphasizes ‘the affirmation of the nation-state by the great powers as the normative unity of global politics.’ If this statement should be considered *sui generis*, one would neglect the qualitative difference in the international system between pre-World War I and post-World War I. It is true that population politics based on ethnicity and nationalism was on the rise, but a statement of the nation-state being the unit of the international system before World War I is an overstretch since the end of World War I globally skyrocketed the rise and spread of national states. Before World War I, empires rather than national states were still the main units or actors in the international system. In fact, even after World War I, certain imperial states managed to survive longer than others and Michael Reynolds acknowledges this:

A closer inspection of the historical record at the end of World War I reveals the lesson of imperial collapse to be far from clear-cut. Not all empires met their end

³⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

in World War I. Indeed, several of them expanded, most notably the British, French, and Japanese. The common determining feature of the Ottoman, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian empires was not their imperial structures so much as the fact that they had all been defeated militarily. Had the war's military outcome been different –and it was a very closely run affair–so the list of collapsed empires would have been different. As this study argues, nationalism, understood as the mobilization of groups based on ethnicity for the purpose of asserting a claim to political sovereignty, was at least as much a consequence as a cause of imperial collapse.³⁸⁹

In other words, the nation-state system was not the defining framework of the international system before World War I. This is perhaps why ‘nationalizing the state’ was more strategically and practically appealing to the Kemalists after World War I rather than the Young Turks before the war. The international environment for full-fledged national homogenization based on Turkishness was more favorable after the war. The national self-determination principle of the U.S. President Woodrow Wilson after the war constituted the paradigmatic shift in the global order. Michael Reynolds does not neglect this either:

At the end of 1918, the former spaces of the Ottoman, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian empires were in disarray. Creating a new framework for order in the vast territories of the Middle East, Eurasia, and Eastern Europe was one of the challenges facing the victorious Entente powers. Shortly after the Bolsheviks had announced national self-determination as their formula for the postimperial order, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States embraced it in a bid to undercut Bolshevism, thereby ensuring that it would become a foundational principle of the postwar order. Such, perhaps, was Wilson's idealism that he believed that popular and democratic sovereignty would determine the shape of the postwar settlement...It heralded the emergence of a definitively different interstate system, one clearly ‘focused on populations and an ideal of state sovereignty rooted in national homogeneity.’ Diplomacy and international relations were never the same afterward.³⁹⁰

If the international environment is not favorable for internal reform-making

³⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 9.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 254.

surrounding the politics of identity, state elites are less likely to act against such current. Thus, if Ottomanism is read as a project of patriotism rather than nationalism, then the ideational continuity between the early nineteenth century reformers and the early twentieth century Ottoman political elites would be revealed more clearly. Feroz Ahmad emphasizes this continuity as well:

The CUP was a direct extension of the reform movement of the nineteenth century, especially the Young Ottomans, and like them it was concerned only with the problem of how to save the Empire. Fundamentally, the Young Turks provided the same answer as the Young Ottomans of the 1860s and 1870s; to introduce constitutional government, thereby curbing the power of the Sultan, and at the same time satisfying the aspirations of the minorities by giving them equal rights within the law.³⁹¹

Although Young Ottomans were critical of the Sultan's regime, they were also very loyal to the state to the extent that they were very cautious in their ideas and actions in order to prevent any potential harm to the Ottoman state.³⁹² This common psyche of saving and empowering the state among the late Ottoman political elites from the early nineteenth century to the early twentieth century is at the center of understanding Ottomanism as a project of patriotism. None of these political elites sought to disintegrate the Ottoman Empire and found a new state other than the Ottoman state until the very end of World War I. Thus, despite their different methods, they were all Ottomanists in the sense of establishing an ontologically secure Ottoman state, like its heydays in the old days. However, understanding Ottomanism as a fixed and monolithic concept is also problematic as well. Ottomanism was a contested zone within the Ottoman political and intellectual milieu at the turn of the twentieth century.

³⁹¹ Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 16.

³⁹² Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*.

For instance, Hakan Yavuz underlines at least three modes of Ottomanism: 1) one that emphasized legal equality of all before the law in the sense of a religiously and ethnically blind state and allowed the expression of local identities regardless of religion and ethnicity (Abdullah Cevdet); 2) secondly, Prince Sebahaddin approached Ottomanism as an idea of developing a free market economy and adopting decentralization in the sense of administrative autonomy; and 3) finally, Ahmet Rıza emphasized the role of Islam as the moral center of Ottoman society for achieving cohesion.³⁹³ The main debate over Ottomanism was whether the state should be centralized and thus become a strong state or should be decentralized and share the power with ethnoreligious community leaders. Since the CUP cadres opted for the centralization policy, those who favored decentralization founded the Liberal Union Party in 1908 under the leadership of Prince Sebahaddin. The CUP's centralization policy fused with the policy of establishing a national economy that favored the Muslim merchants over the Christians especially after the Balkan Wars³⁹⁴ and the policy of national education based on the Turkish language was perceived as a Turkification policy by some of the ethnoreligious communities. Yet, "Turkish nationalism gained some influence in the Society, but never replaced Ottomanism."³⁹⁵ But why? Perhaps ironically, Şükrü Hanioglu provides a potential answer to this in his later study. He states that the late Ottoman history should not be read as a struggle between competing ideologies since ideas and ideological struggles are not the primary engines of historical change but rather

³⁹³ Hakan Yavuz, "Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst for Homogenization," p. 78.

³⁹⁴ Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi*.

³⁹⁵ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, p. 329.

structural and domestic realities provided the main context for policy makers in order to choose one policy over another.³⁹⁶

As I mentioned in the first section of this chapter, Ottomanism came into being in temporal sequences and historical contingencies that made the Ottoman political elites in the early nineteenth century perceive the condition of the state as ontologically insecure. It was a turning point in the sense that the *millet* system no longer served the purposes of keeping the state intact³⁹⁷ but rather began to undermine the integrity of territory, sovereignty, and legitimacy of the state. Ottomanism gradually replaced the *millet* system throughout the nineteenth century for the same purpose of keeping the state ontologically secure and in one piece. Rather than being ideological choices of the state elites, these policy changes were direct outcomes of the structural and domestic realities as I mentioned in the first section. Thus, a policy shift away from Ottomanism toward Turkism would entail the same structural and domestic realities rather than ideological motivations in order for the state elites to reconsider the path dependency in their policy choices. Such realities in the CUP era only matured at the very end of the Balkan Wars, 1912-13, convincing the state elites that Ottomanism in terms of holding the empire intact through the integration of Muslim and non-Muslim communities was longer feasible. Yet, the shift was not mechanical in the sense that Ottomanism suddenly collapsed and Turkism was adopted. Rather, the patriotism of Ottomanism evolved into a Muslim patriotism with full devotion to the Ottoman state until the very end of World War I. This

³⁹⁶ Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*.

³⁹⁷ See Karen Barkey's *Empire of Difference* where she argues that tolerance and the non-assimilationist policy of the Ottoman Empire was a necessity to institutionalize the territorial integrity of the state.

nonexpansionist Muslim patriotism was also in the discourses of Mustafa Kemal as well, perhaps for strategic reasons until he consolidated his power in the mid-1920s.³⁹⁸

The conventional late Ottoman periodization flows with the Tanzimat (1839-1876) along with its aims of secular integration of the millets under a common Ottoman homeland; then the Islamist policy of the Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) through the emphasis on the institution of the Caliphate; and finally the Young Turk rule (1908-1918) along with the emphasis on the agenda of Turkish nationalism within the CUP. What makes this periodization somewhat problematic is the overrated emphasis on sharp ruptures within the political agendas of each governing elites, especially from a perspective of identity politics. There is no doubt that there were policy variations within these different periods, yet in the grand scheme of things such variations were the means toward the same end, that is the prevention of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the institutional establishment of the Ottoman state's ontological security.

I believe one of the reasons of this overrated emphasis on ruptures is the conceptual confusion over the forms and contents of identity politics that is attributed to each period. This problematic approach—perhaps being built on Yusuf Akçura's three policies of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism (1904)—considers these three identity politics options in the late Ottoman Empire as mutually exclusive and each being the counterpart of the other. Kemal Karpat articulates the downsides of this approach:

In reality all three concepts coexisted and evolved together in constant interaction. Ottomanism and Islamism nurtured Turkishness, were absorbed by it, and survive in it today. When Ziya Gökalp differentiated “artificial” Ottomanism from the “real” one that was likely to save Turkism and Islamism, he knew that all three of these ideologies were so deeply embedded in one another that they were

³⁹⁸ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building*.

inseparable, as a proper reading of his famous article on the subject makes clear. Gökalp's criticism of Ottomanism grew vehement after the Empire disintegrated in 1918 and the leaders of the Turkish nation, defined as a nation-state that emerged in Anatolia in the years 1919–23, turned their backs on their Ottoman and Islamic heritage and proceeded to advance their own Turkish nationalist interpretation of history and national culture.³⁹⁹

Thus, what is often neglected is that Ottomanism was qualitatively different in its form and content from Islamism and Turkism. In other words, Ottomanism as a project of patriotism was an antidote to nationalism while Islamism and Turkism were both compatible with the nationalist agendas. Ottomanism was inherently immune to constructing 'internal others' since its primary focus was the political attachment to the state, not a specific religious or ethnic community. On the other hand, Islamism had its 'internal others' of non-Muslims and Turkism had its 'internal others' of non-Turks. Since the late Ottoman political elites from the Tanzimat reformers to the Young Turks were very cautious of establishing 'internal others' in order to prevent the excuse of European 'humanitarian' interventions on the one hand and the political claim-makings of various ethno-religious communities on the other, one way or another their emphasis was much more on Ottomanism rather than Islamism or Turkism. Moreover, since all of these late Ottoman elites' first and foremost concern was the survival of the state, Ottomanism was pragmatically more compatible with their concern regarding the state.

The second reason for the mutually exclusive and rupture-oriented approaches to the late Ottoman periodization is perhaps the neglect of the essential relationship between Ottomanism and the ontological security of the state. As I articulated previously, Ottomanism emerged under certain conditions which were threatening to the Ottoman

³⁹⁹ Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam*, p. 327.

state's physical (territorial losses, antistate mobilizations) and psychological (declining confidence in the 'mighty' empire). This fear and anxiety among the Ottoman statesmen was the moment within which they aimed for institutional change in the qualitative nature of the state. Ottomanism as the backbone of this nineteenth-century transformation was the recipe to overcome fear and anxiety within the state. Young Ottomans and Young Turks were both raised in this political, psychological, and intellectual milieu that placed the survival of the Ottoman state on the top of their agendas. This is why one was not qualitatively less Ottomanist than the other in each period of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This trend only began to paradigmatically change after the very end of World War I when the National Pact under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal gradually rejected the Ottoman legacy and pursued a completely new regime with a new identity for the state.⁴⁰⁰

Turkishness and Turkish State in the Making: Power

Struggles and Regime Change

The Ottoman Empire joined World War I on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary against the Allied Powers and faced the catastrophic defeat at the end of the Great War. This war imprisoned the 'almighty' empire into Anatolia with limited sovereignty. The Armistice of Mudros was signed on October 30, 1918 which gave the Allied Powers the right to control the strategic Straits of Dardanelles and Bosphorus and the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of the empire under the circumstances of

⁴⁰⁰ For an English documentation of the National Pact, see J. C. Hurewitz, *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record*. Volume 2. (Yale University Press, 1979), p. 209. This book provides primary documentation of certain treaties and government documents between 1914 and 1945.

internal disorders, especially regarding the conditions of the Armenian population in Eastern Anatolia.⁴⁰¹ Following the armistice, Istanbul—the heart and the capital of the Ottoman Empire—was occupied by the Allied Powers and Izmir—an important port city on the Aegean coast—was occupied by Greek military forces. The imminent threat to the political survival of the empire and the Ottoman state was at stake and this question regarding the ontological security of the state led to two different elite factions.⁴⁰² One of these factions was the Ottoman government in Istanbul that consisted of the sultan, the high-level military, and the civil bureaucrats and politicians who believed that the only way for the survival of the Ottoman state was cooperation with the Allied Powers since they considered the Ottoman state, militarily and politically, was in no position to challenge the victors. However, another faction emerged in 1919 under the leadership of various Ottoman statesmen and commanders such as Mustafa Kemal, Kazim Karabekir, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, and Rauf Orbay. This group, based in Ankara, rejected the surrender and cooperation option with the Allied Powers. Rather, they started the Anatolian resistance movement against the foreign occupation on the one hand and the Istanbul government on the other. Interestingly, as Hakan Ozoglu⁴⁰³ aptly argues, these two competing elite factions had the same purpose with differing methods. Both of these factions' purpose was to save the empire by liberating the sultanate and the caliphate from the occupation and the yoke of the Allies. However, while the Istanbul government

⁴⁰¹ Seha L. Meray and Osman Olcay, *Osmanli Imparatorlugunun Cokus Belgeleri (Mondros Birakismasi, Sevr Andlasmasi, Ilgili Belgeler)* (Ankara: Ankara Universitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakultesi Yayinlari, 1977).

⁴⁰² For background on the ontological insecurity of the late Ottoman state and how this condition shaped the modern Turkey's founding elites, see Ayse Zarakol, *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁴⁰³ Hakan Ozoglu, *From Caliphate to Secular State: Power Struggle in the Early Turkish Republic*, (Praeger, 2011), p. 3.

sought to achieve this purpose by cooperating and negotiating with the Allies, the opposition in Ankara supported the idea of armed resistance by mobilizing and building Anatolian Muslim communities under the umbrella coalition of *Kuva-yi Milliye* (National Forces). As Niyazi Berkes⁴⁰⁴ states, “the ruling group in Istanbul believed that, since Great Britain controlled more Muslims than anyone else, Muslim unity under the British wing was the best alternative to an independent existence” and “the ideal condition would be a British protectorate over the Ottoman Caliphate, a British guarantee for the Ottoman Sultanate, and a bit of land in Anatolia for the Turks (peasants).”⁴⁰⁵ On the other hand, the aims of the *Kuva-yi Milliye* included “unconditional national independence, the rejection of any protectorate or mandate, the rejection of exterritorial rights for foreign nationals and powers, the rejection of all special privileges for the minorities, and the acceptance of aid from any power not pursuing imperialistic objectives.”⁴⁰⁶ This is why, in his *Great Speech*, Mustafa Kemal—the leader of the opposition in Ankara—states that solutions such as the British protectorate or American mandate would mean slavery for the state.⁴⁰⁷ Amid these competing discourses over the question of state survival (*Devletin Bekası*), the establishment of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara in April 23, 1920, further challenged the authority of Istanbul and in fact created two governments in one state.

These two factions developed their own discourses to delegitimize each other. While the Istanbul government accused the opposition in Ankara as the extension of the

⁴⁰⁴ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 1964, p. 432.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 435.

⁴⁰⁷ Mustafa Kemal, *Nutuk, Volume 1*, p. 12.

Committee of Union and Progress and as backed by the Bolsheviks,⁴⁰⁸ they framed the Grand National Assembly in Ankara as an anticaliphate and antisultanate formation.⁴⁰⁹ Through this propaganda, the Istanbul government aimed to mobilize people throughout Anatolia against Mustafa Kemal and *Kuva-yi Milliye*. On the other hand, opposition in Ankara aimed at delegitimizing the Istanbul government through the narrative of national will⁴¹⁰ and was very cautious not to challenge the sacred institutions of the Ottoman society (i.e., the sultanate and the caliphate). A day after the opening of the Grand National Assembly, Mustafa Kemal very clearly states that one of the functions of the Assembly was to “liberate the supreme sultanate and caliphate.”⁴¹¹ The Islamic paradigm of *Kuva-yi Milliye* was apparent as well in the opening ceremony of the Grand National Assembly which was purposefully opened on Friday—the holy day of Islam—with Friday prayers. Thus, *Kuva-yi Milliye* used the Islamic discourse to neutralise the propaganda of the Istanbul government and to obtain maximum unity among the Muslim communities such as the Kurds, Arabs, Circassians, Turks, and Lazes (Ahmad 1993).⁴¹² This race to coalition-building amidst the external and internal political realities defined and redefined the character of elite competition in the years to come until and after the Republic was established by Ankara in 1923. The new regime’s discursive base surrounding the national will and national independence was not independent from the metanarratives of the postwar international order, especially national self-determination and sovereignty which were more or less in tandem with the Wilson principles.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 179.

⁴⁰⁹ Mustafa Kemal, *Nutuk, Volume 2*, pp. 325-338.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 220-221.

⁴¹¹ Mustafa Kemal, *Nutuk, Volume 1*, p. 313.

⁴¹² Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

Postwar International Context/ Order/ Discourses

The nineteenth century was the era of consolidation of the European society of Westphalian states which defined the rules and norms of the international state system on the basis of territorial integrity and noninterference. However, such norms and rules were not objectively applied to all states, especially to those that were outside the European society of states. Imperialism and colonialism were justified by “the West” through the pretext of modernity that was understood as the amalgamation of secularization, rationality, and scientific progress that gave “the West” the moral right of civilizing mission and ‘humanitarian intervention’ for ‘the barbaric,’ ‘the uncivilized,’ ‘backward’ Eastern states . As Ayse Zarakol argues, empires such as the Ottoman, Russian, and Japanese states were stigmatized both internally and externally in their domestic as well as international affairs.⁴¹³ “As empires, they long sustained social universes capable of producing comprehensive worldviews—in other words, before their incorporation into the Westphalian system these states had their own normative standards by which they defined themselves as ‘normal’ and others as different, abnormal, or inferior.”⁴¹⁴ Yet, since they became integrated into the European society of interstate system in the nineteenth century, “they came to an awareness about their inferiority, i.e. in the sense of a lack or deficit of modernity, through their own discussions.”⁴¹⁵ Such awareness of a development gap –militarily, politically, and socially—led to the major ontological insecurity of these states and their political elites which turned into a race to Westernization and modernization. Late Ottoman elites throughout the nineteenth

⁴¹³ Ayse Zarakol, *After Defeat*, 2011.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

century and the Young Turks in the early twentieth century were all seeking ways to overcome this ontological security of the state and its survival by complete emulation of the Western institutions, rules, and norms. This was so that they would not be isolated from the international system defined by the major European states on the one hand and that they would be recognized as equal and sovereign without a threat of foreign intervention on the other hand. While Westernization reforms toward these ends could not prevent the defeat and the death of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I, the founding elites of modern Turkey encountered the same concerns and questions surrounding ontological security, sovereignty, and international recognition as an equal member of the European society of states. This is why although the Ankara government had close ties with the Bolsheviks in Russia, the founding *intelligentsia* after the victory of national independence turned its face toward the West by incorporating and utilizing the national self-determination and national sovereignty discourses rather than communism or pan-Islamism which were the other viable alternatives. After World War I, the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, declared the principle of national sovereignty and nations to be treated equally under a body of an international organization which later became the League of Nations.

The United States entered World War I on the side of the Allies by declaring war first on Germany and then on Austria-Hungary in 1917 on the basis of Germany's submarine attacks on passenger and merchant ships.⁴¹⁶ After entering the war, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson appointed a committee of experts, known as the Inquiry, in order to prepare and enforce a postwar "just and secure peace" plan rather than "a new

⁴¹⁶ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/wwi>

balance of power.”⁴¹⁷ As a result of this collaborative work, President Wilson introduced the famous Fourteen Points to the U.S. Congress on January 8, 1918 which later led to the foundation of the League of Nations in 1920 as the first international organization with the mission of maintaining world peace by guaranteeing “political independence and territorial integrity [of] great and small states alike.”⁴¹⁸ Wilson’s Fourteen Points included agendas such as free trade, arms reduction, and open diplomacy. However, in Wilson’s Fourteen Points, the most transformative and influential principle for the post-war international order and normative context was the idea of self-determination for those nationalities under European colonial rule on the one hand and under the imperial orders that became ‘the prison of nations’ on the other. One way or another, this ‘Wilsonian turn’ in the rules and norms of international politics led the world to believe in a postwar order of nation-states.⁴¹⁹

The government in Istanbul and the opposition in Ankara were very well aware of this new design of states based on nations. As Yucel Guclu states, “at the end of the First World War, the Turks had looked to the principles of Wilson with great hope because they seemed to provide certain guarantees of national existence.”⁴²⁰ The twelfth point in Wilson’s package was directly related to the Ottoman Empire:

The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development; and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as

⁴¹⁷ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/fourteen-points>

⁴¹⁸ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/fourteen-points>

⁴¹⁹ Trygve Throntveit (2011), “The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 3.

⁴²⁰ Yucel Guclu. 2003. “Turkey’s Entrance into the League of Nations,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39:1, p. 188.

a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.⁴²¹

For instance, during the meetings between the Istanbul government and the Allied powers before the Treaty of Sevres was signed in 1920, the debates were carried via the national/nationalities principles. The Ottoman government in Istanbul blamed the Allies for the nationality and national self-determination principles not being applied to the Ottoman government equally as these were applied to Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, and Austria (*Osmanlinin Cokus Belgeleri*, Meray and Olcay 1977). For example, the imposition that Eastern Thrace belonged to Greece in the Treaty of Sevres outline was opposed by the government in Istanbul on the basis that “there were three hundred and sixty thousand Turks in Eastern Thrace including Edirne as opposed to two hundred and twenty four thousand Greeks.”⁴²² Moreover, the clause regarding the autonomy for the Kurds, if not independent statehood through referendum, was questioned by the Ottoman government due to the belief that the Kurds were and would be loyal to the Sultan without any demand for secession.⁴²³ At the end, the Ottoman government signed the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 by considering the option of not signing this treaty as the death of the Ottoman state.⁴²⁴ In other words, the Istanbul government assumed that if they did not sign the Treaty of Sevres, the state death of the long-lived Ottoman Empire would be imminent against the Allies. The opposition in Ankara always framed and perceived this kind of mentality as nonresistant, surrendering and not sufficiently ‘national.’

For Woodrow Wilson, “the definition of ‘nation’ was not confined to populations

⁴²¹ <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=62>

⁴²² Meray and Olcay 1977, p. 20.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 26.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

sharing an ancestral homeland,” rather “it denoted, simply, the population over which a state maintained order.”⁴²⁵ In other words, what Wilson understood from self-determination was not necessarily ethnically-driven independence movements around the world but rather he uttered the need for civic participation of all citizens in the states’ decision-making processes. This is actually what distinguished Wilson from Vladimir Lenin’s call for ‘national self-determination’ for all the non-Russian nationalities and other ‘oppressed nations’ after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Not only did Lenin grant the freedom of secession to all ‘oppressed nations,’ but he also envisioned ethnically-based sovereign states within the metanarrative of socialism.⁴²⁶ On the other hand, “Wilson’s entire philosophy of government was antithetical to the Bolshevik’s pronouncements that every ethnic-nationalist aspiration must be realized as a sovereign state.”⁴²⁷ The ideal nation-state, for Wilson, was both organic and civic within which the nation and state grow and change together in a dialectical relationship.

Although Lenin’s anti-imperialist tone in his idea of national self-determination appealed to Mustafa Kemal and the opposition in Ankara, he later stated that the new regime was not based on the Bolshevik principles but rather modeled on nationalism without any class consciousness.⁴²⁸ However, on the other hand, the question of the American mandate was fiercely debated during the 1919 Congress of Sivas—the Congress that gathered all the factions of Anatolian opposition together and shaped the framework of *Misak-ı Milli* (National Pact) which was accepted in 1920. Some members

⁴²⁵ Throntveit 2011, p. 451.

⁴²⁶ Levent Urer. 2003. “Woodrow Wilson’un Ideal Dünya Tasarımının, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Kuruluş Felsefesine Etkileri,” I.U. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi, No: 28.

⁴²⁷ Throntveit 2011, p. 460.

⁴²⁸ Urer 2003, p. 12.

of the Congress demanded the American mandate on the basis that this would give the Anatolian resistance an upper hand against the British and Greek occupations along with the idea that Americans were willing to accept fewer concessions to the Armenians in eastern Anatolia than Britain.⁴²⁹ The main debate regarding the American mandate was framed within the dichotomy of “independence” from a foreign state or “dependence” on a foreign state. Mustafa Kemal was critical of the idea of the American mandate by underlying two issues/questions: (1) “the abandonment of internal and external sovereignty of the state,” and (2) “whether [the] state and nation needed assistance and support against the harmful foreign pressure.”⁴³⁰ The Congress still decided to invite American delegates to Anatolia for meetings. However, Mustafa Kemal states that he rejected the mandate option on the basis of the one and single goal of the Anatolian resistance: “to establish a Turkish state based on national sovereignty without any restrictions and conditions.”⁴³¹ Accepting the mandate option for Mustafa Kemal meant “deprivation from the quality of humanity” and “confessing impotency and laziness.”⁴³²

Despite this critical stance to the American mandate, Mustafa Kemal’s discourse of national sovereignty as a territorial (Wilsonian) rather than ethnicity-based (Leninist) definition of nation-state overlaps with the Wilsonian idea of self-determination. Since Mustafa Kemal viewed the British as the most dangerous antagonist in the Kuva-yi

⁴²⁹ Nutuk, Vol. 1, 1960, pp. 101, 102, 103.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. 105. “Bunların birincisi; devletin dahili ve harici istiklalinden vazgeçmemesi ve ikincisi de, devlet ve milletin haricin tazyikati muzirrasına karşı muavenet ve muzaheret ihtiyacında bulunup bulunmamasıdır.”

⁴³¹ Nutuk, Vol. 1, 1960, p. 12. “Efendiler, bu vaziyet karşısında bir tek karar vardı. O da hakimiyeti milliyeye mustenit, bilakaydusart (kayıtsız sartsız olarak) mustakil bir Türk devleti tesis etmek!”

⁴³² Ibid. p. 13. “Ecnebi bir devletin himaye ve sahabetini kabul etmek insanlık evsafından mahrumiyeti, aczu meskeneti itiraftan başka birsey degildir.”

Milliye struggle, his “language about Wilson was a shade more charitable.”⁴³³ The Society of Wilsonian Principles established in Istanbul in 1918 included some of Mustafa Kemal’s closest supporters as well.⁴³⁴ As the opposition in Ankara gradually became the center of power in the new regime, the founding *intelligentsia* were very well aware of the dynamics of international discourses on the boundaries of nationhood and nation-building which one way or another were influenced by Wilson’s framework. While the Treaty of Sevres, which was signed (but not ratified) by the Istanbul government in 1920, entailed harsh sanctions such as the self-determination right for the Kurds in southeastern Anatolia (Article 64)⁴³⁵ and territorial rights for the Armenian state in the eastern regions such as Van, Erzurum, and Bitlis (Article 89),⁴³⁶ the counter-elites in Anatolia under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal did not recognize this agreement and aspired to renegotiate with the Allies through the Treaty of Lausanne on July 1923 after they eliminated the Istanbul government and stopped the Sultan from defining the faith and the future of the state. In the Treaty of Lausanne, while concessions to the Kurds and Armenians were canceled, only non-Muslim communities were recognized as minorities with certain

⁴³³ Dankwart A. Rustow. 1968. “Ataturk as a Founder of a State,” *Daedalus*, 97(3): p. 799.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ “If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that these peoples are capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas.” Retrieved at http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Section_I,_Articles_1_-_260

⁴³⁶ “Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to the access for Armenia to the sea, and as to the demilitarisation of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the said frontier” retrieved at http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Section_I,_Articles_1_-_260

rights (Article 39).⁴³⁷ Thus, the founding elites conceptualized Turkishness as the melting pot for Muslims along the lines of Wilsonian self-determination within the *Misak-i Milli* borders of modern Turkey.⁴³⁸

Throughout the Anatolian resistance, as Dankwart Rustow aptly underlined, “Kemal’s action rested on a few basic convictions that he applied to shifting circumstances with great flexibility.”⁴³⁹ That said, Kemal was a man of action rather than an abstract thinker.⁴⁴⁰ The notion of ‘national sovereignty’ as the metanarrative of the postwar international order—especially after President Wilson’s influence in ‘globalizing’ the national self-determination—was one of Mustafa Kemal’s few basic convictions. This is why he confidently and loudly praised that “today the nations of the world recognize only one sovereignty: national sovereignty.”⁴⁴¹ In his *Great Speech* (1927), he explains how the nation should be structured and designed based on a monolithic nationhood, which in turn makes a strong state, according to Mustafa Kemal.

“In the West and East alike, the internal organization of a state that has communities from different cultures, genesis, and ideals in a single territory that are not compatible with each other,” states Mustafa Kemal, “would be baseless and rotten.”⁴⁴² He continues stating that “such as a state would be far from national and its political

⁴³⁷ “Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities will enjoy the same civil and political rights as Moslems” retrieved at http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Treaty_of_Lausanne

⁴³⁸ Urer 2003

⁴³⁹ Dankwart Rustow 1968, p. 799.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., p. 799.

⁴⁴² Nutuk, 1981, Vol. 2, p. 322 “Batıda ve doğuda, yaratılışı, kültürü ve ulkusu başka başka olan ve birbirleriyle bağdasmayan toplulukları tek sınıra içine almış bir devletin iç örgütü, kuskusuz temelsiz ve çürük olur.”

method would not be national either.”⁴⁴³ Thus, he visualizes a strong state only within the framework of ‘a single nation.’ He also rejects the irredentist ideals of bringing all Turkic nations on the one hand (Turanists) and all Muslims around the world (Islamists) on the other under one single state. Mustafa Kemal considers Turanists and Islamists as dreamers and illusionary on the basis of the “general conditions of the contemporary world.”⁴⁴⁴ By “general conditions of the contemporary world,” Mustafa Kemal definitely refers to the postwar context of nationality norms and discourses within the larger framework of Wilsonian self-determination. These external conditions provide a point of reference for the design and form of the new state structure on the one hand and national body on the other. This postwar international context also speaks to the external necessities for the state elites within which they can find legitimacy and recognition. This is why Levent Uzer underlines that after the opposition in Ankara came into power, they sought to design the base of the national body as large as possible compatible with the Wilsonian principle during the meetings of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. This approach ended by constructing Turkishness on the basis of Muslimhood that would be inclusive of the Kurds, Lazes, Albanians, and others. As articulated in Chapter 5, the new identity for the state under the leadership of the new ruling elites became monolithic with the purpose of assimilating all Muslim populations of the new Turkey under the roof of Turkishness. However, the new elites’ full-fledged efforts of constructing the new Turk

⁴⁴³Ibid., p. 323 “Boyle bir devletin, ozellikle ic orgutu ulusal olmaktan uzak oldugu gibi, siyasal yontemi de ulusal olamaz.”

⁴⁴⁴Ibid., p. 323. “Islamcilik ve Turancilik siyasasinin basari kazandigina ve dunyayi uygulamaalani yapabildigine tarihte rastlanamamaktadir...Bizim aydinlik ve uygulanabilir gordugumuz siyasal yontem, ;ulusal siyasadir.’ Dunyanin bugunku genel kosullari ve yuzyillarin kafalarda ve iralarda yerlestirdigi gercekler karsisinda hayalperest olmak kadar buyuk yanilgi olamaz.”

did not start until they consolidated their power, eliminated all opposition, and overcame their insecurities in their shift from *ancien regime* to the new one. Unless the veto players were eliminated, the political elites' attempt at changing the form and content of nationhood would be less likely.

Opposition in the New Regime and the Insecurities of the New

Elites

As Mustafa Kemal was able to lead the anti-Istanbul and anti-imperialist Anatolian resistance with his charismatic leadership, Islamic oratory, and military experience during World War I, the Istanbul government and the Sultan Vahdettin was unable to crush this opposition despite *fatwas* (Islamic rulings) that labeled the people in Mustafa Kemal's movement as infidels, Bolsheviks, and Unionists. One of the reasons for this unsuccessful propaganda against Mustafa Kemal was Istanbul's submissive policies and behaviors toward the Allied powers within which the Ottoman's holy city of Istanbul was occupied in March 1920 and the signing the Treaty of Sevres humiliated the Muslim communities of the '*ghazi state*' (Islamic warrior). On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal utilized the Islamic discourse very well as his war propaganda that created unity among the Anatolian Muslims of different ethnicities such as the Kurds, Turks, Arabs, and Lazes.⁴⁴⁵ The influence of the sultanate and the caliphate in Istanbul in mobilizing Muslim populations across and beyond the Ottoman territories became increasingly impotent. The disunity and internal power struggles within the Allied powers in terms of reaching an agreement on the future and faith of the Ottoman Empire also created

⁴⁴⁵ Ahmad, Feroz. 1993. *The Making of Modern Turkey*.

windows of opportunity for Mustafa Kemal's opposition in Ankara. For instance, while Britain sought to prevent France and Italy from acquiring lands that would make them more powerful than Britain in the Mediterranean, France and Italy were both uneasy regarding Britain's attempts to use Greece as a proxy state.⁴⁴⁶

Under these conditions, Mustafa Kemal's national movement held a strong hold against the Greek occupation in the Western front, Armenian forces in the Eastern front, and French forces in the Southern front along with fighting against the Sultan's army in Anatolia. Overall, while the support base of the national movement gradually expanded and the Sultan's government lost its legitimacy, the supporters of the national movement were able to control the Ottoman parliament in Istanbul in 1920 which isolated the Sultan further. Moreover, the terms of the Treaty of Sevres were first undermined in the London conference of the Allied powers in 1921 within which the French and Italians agreed on rapprochement with the representatives of the national movement. Greek occupation backed by Britain was also eliminated with the Armistice of Mudanya on October 11, 1922. With this armistice, the national movement forces regained control of the Western front and their sovereignty was recognized leading to the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 which recognized the national movements' terms of National Pact (*Misak-I Milli*). When the Sultan Vahdettin was also invited to the peace talks, Mustafa Kemal found the opportunity to abolish the sultanate on November 1, 1922. However, as Hakan Ozoglu argues, "One can convincingly make the case that Ankara originally intended to get rid of the "office" of sultanate, not necessarily the sultan in person" and "the main target for the abolition of the sultanate was the Istanbul government, not Sultan Vahdettin or the

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

Ottoman dynasty.”⁴⁴⁷ Although the sultanate was abolished in 1922, the institution of caliphate remained until 1924 after the Republic was declared in 1923.

Although Mustafa Kemal achieved a great deal of bringing different coalitions under the roof of the national movement, this bloc of coalitions dissolved when the common enemy was defeated and the war was won. Different factions of the national movement coalition disputed the characteristics of the new regime. The most disputed issue was over the presence of the Caliphate as the symbol of Islam and the representative of all Muslims around the world. However, as discussed earlier, Mustafa Kemal was neither Islamist nor Turanist that he solely believed in national sovereignty. He explains this in his *Great Speech*:

Let’s say, Turkey would hold the institution of Caliphate for a while by seeking to bring all Muslims together and govern them with success. Good, but what if these nations under our control would one day ask for the right to national self-determination. What will happen then?⁴⁴⁸

In parallel with the postwar context of Wilsonian thought, Mustafa Kemal was very committed to the nation-state idea with no intentions of expansionism and irredentism. This was in his realist and pragmatic nature. If Turkey was to keep the institution of Caliphate, many external crises in the Muslim world would easily be imported into the domestic affairs of the new Turkey. Moreover, keeping an institution of an old regime would always run the risk of giving leverage to the supporters of the *ancien regime* against the new one. As Feroz Ahmad argues, “the notion of an Islamic state was

⁴⁴⁷ Hakan Ozoglu 2011, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁸ Nutuk, Vol. 2, 1981, p. 520. “Tutalım ki, Türkiye bir zaman için söz konusu görevi kabul etsin. Butun Müslümanları bir noktada birleştirerek yönetmek ulküsüne ulaşmaya çalışsın, başarı da sağlansın! Pek güzel ama, uyduğumuz ve yönetimimiz altına almak istediğimiz uluslar: ‘Bize büyük hizmetler ve yardımlar yaptınız, sağ olunuz ama biz bağımsız kalmak istiyoruz, bağımsızlığımıza ve egemenliğimize kimsenin karışmasını uygun görmeyiz, biz kendi kendimizi yönetebiliriz.’ derlerse ne olacak?”

anathema to Mustafa Kemal and his supporters.”⁴⁴⁹ Within this process, the Muslim Anatolian civil society and the Kemalist state had contested with each other within which “the Kemalist military-bureaucratic establishment has viewed large sections of its own society, rather than foreign countries, as its main threat.”⁴⁵⁰ This is why Hakan Yavuz aptly argues that “the primary aim of modern Islamic movements in Turkey is either to carve new spaces in society or to penetrate the state and reshape it according to their own counteridentities and perceptions of the Seljuk and Ottoman past.”⁴⁵¹ The challenge to Mustafa Kemal not only came from Islamic-conservative circles but also from his close military comrades during the war of national independence as well. For instance, Rauf Orbay, one of the top military commanders during the war of national independence and the prime minister of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara between July 1922 and August 1923, encountered Mustafa Kemal on the grounds that abolishing the Caliphate would be disastrous for the new regime. Mustafa Kemal framed such actions and attempts as a ‘counter-revolutionary threat.’⁴⁵² Amit Bein (2011) argues that “every instance of religiously motivated protest or violent opposition—and there were a handful of these in the 1920s and 1930s—was lambasted as a manifestation of religious fanaticism and dealt with harshly by security forces.”⁴⁵³ The 1925 rebellion of Sheikh Said—a Kurdish sheikh of a Sunni sect from Diyarbakir who fought for the reestablishment of the Caliphate—was an important turning point in the contestation over

⁴⁴⁹ Feroz Ahmad 1993, p. 53.

⁴⁵⁰ Yavuz 2003, p. 46.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid. p. 38.

⁴⁵² Ahmad 1993, p. 58.

⁴⁵³ Amit Bein, *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic: Agents of Change and Guardians of Tradition* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), p. 111.

the new regime which led to the initiation of Takrir-i Sükun (Law on the Maintenance of Order). According to Hakan Ozoglu, “this law virtually eliminated any and all future opposition to Mustafa Kemal and to his inner circle.”⁴⁵⁴

External Necessities, Internal Opportunities, and Monolithic Turkishness

As I discussed in detail in Chapter 5, the Republic under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal came to the conclusion of adopting monolithic Turkishness by assimilating all the Muslim elements of Anatolia. However, this policy choice in nation-building was not necessarily a predetermined plan but rather came into being within temporal sequences and historical contingencies. For instance, while Mustafa Kemal emphasized the brotherhood of the Kurds and Turks and even mentioned autonomy for the Kurds after the common enemy would be defeated,⁴⁵⁵ he abolished this option for the Kurds after his regime was consolidated with no opposition through the end of the 1920s. As Dankwart Rustow aptly stated, Mustafa Kemal was a man of action rather than a man of abstract ideology. He believed in national sovereignty and an independent state within which he was intentionally very cautious not to give a clear definition of what he meant with nation in order to bring different Muslim communities under the umbrella of the national independence movement against the Christian ‘invaders.’ His national independence movement successfully labeled and framed any collaborators with the European occupation forces as ‘traitor’ (*vatan haini*) within the Islamic metanarrative. Thus, he was able to mobilize the different ethnic groups such as the Kurds, Lazes,

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 80.

⁴⁵⁵ Mango 1999; Akturk 2012.

Circassians, Turks, and Albanians within the larger Muslim community in Anatolia. He was very attentive to the context of postwar international politics and leading discourses. He and his movement took every step leading to the establishment of the Republic and the adoption of monolithic Turkishness very strategically in response to both internal and external circumstances. The priority of these elites again was to save the state like the Young Turks until their defeat in World War I. However, Mustafa Kemal saw the survival in completely different institutions within a national state along with national belonging rather than embracing the institutions of the Sultanate and the Caliphate as in the preceding imperial state with forms of imperial belonging.

World War I ended with the globalization of the nationality principle which was sponsored by two leadership currents: one that of Woodrow Wilson and the other that of Vladimir Lenin.⁴⁵⁶ The Leninist Revolution in Russia introduced the idea of ‘brotherhood of all nations’ within the Marxist-Leninist framework which led to the policy of ethnic federalism in the Soviet Union.⁴⁵⁷ Woodrow Wilson’s idea of national self-determination also gained momentum at the same time, which Erez Manela underlines as “the Wilsonian Moment” in world politics:

It launched the transformation of the norms and standards of international relations that established the self-determining nation-state as the only legitimate political form throughout the globe, as colonized and marginalized peoples demanded and eventually attained recognition as sovereign, independent actors in international society.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ Arno J. Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918* (New York: Meridian Books, 1964).

⁴⁵⁷ Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

⁴⁵⁸ Erez Manela, *Wilsonian Moment: Self Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 5.

The Wilsonian moment, therefore, should be examined and understood as an international phenomenon not because every individual on the face of the planet was aware of Wilson's rhetoric, but because the scope of its dissemination and import transcended the usual geographic enclosures of historical narratives.⁴⁵⁹

The national independence movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal was not outside of these external discourses. While the imperial government in Istanbul could not resist to the peace settlements in the Treaty of Sevres which was based on the partition of Anatolia with an emphasis of ethnicity (i.e., Armenia, Greece, and Kurdistan), the national independence movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal rejected this peace settlement in order to gain sovereignty in a larger Anatolia territory which included the Kurds. This is why the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 which gave international recognition to Mustafa Kemal's Turkey, framed minorities only in religious terms (Armenians, Greeks, Jews), not in ethnic terms.

Historically armed with experiences of orientalist discourses toward the Ottoman state under the banner of "Sick Man of Europe" within which the Ottoman state sovereignty had a semicolonial status with the privileges of capitulations given to the non-Muslim Ottoman communities, the founding elites of modern Turkey did not want to be labeled as such but rather sought international status and recognition as a member of the West and an equal partner of the European states. Neither pan-Islamism nor communism as the alternative policy options for the state elites would fulfill the will to become an equal partner with the 'civilized nations.' Thus, a transnational reading of the Turkish nation-building along with the domestic drivers of change is more likely to explain why and under what conditions these elites decided to adopt monolithic

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 7.

Turkishness rather than Islamic multiculturalism as a legacy of the Ottoman Empire on the one hand and ethnically-conscious Soviet communism on the other.

The external necessity of being recognized as a sovereign state and autonomous nation with full independence in the international system—rather than becoming a semi-colonial state with the partitioning of Anatolia along ethnic and religious lines under the terms of the Treaty of Sevres signed by the Istanbul government in 1920—shaped the decision-making mechanisms of the Kemalist elites very well. While this external necessity more or less created a favorable environment of monolithic nation-building as understood as more territorial than ethnic, internal opportunities such as the elimination of the veto players (i.e., the Istanbul government and the Sultanate) and the antistate domestic claim-makings by the Sheikh Said and other reactionary rebellions throughout Anatolia provided the pretext of securitizing any alternative identity claims other than the definition of the state.

Conclusion

Both the late Ottoman and the early Republican elites were first and foremost concerned with *devletin bekası* (survival of the state) within the grand psyche of ontological insecurities caused by the external and internal military and psychological defeats throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While the patriotic policy of Ottomanism (see Chapter 6) sought to soothe this ontological insecurity through the inclusion of all Muslim and non-Muslim communities of the empire under the overarching Ottoman identity, the shift to Turkishness as the identity of the state and nation aimed to overcome the same ontological insecurity that the political elites encountered. These policy shifts happened when such moves were favorable in the

international context on the one hand and when political elites, who were receptive to change as opposed to the status quo, gained a hegemonic position within the state (Tanzimat reformers and Kemalists, respectively). If Turkishness as a national identity is less inclusive than the Ottoman identity, what is interesting here is that the logic of the state in the Ottoman/Turkish context in either excluding or including alternative identities is the same — that is securing the state.

CHAPTER 8

THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD, DECLINE OF THE KEMALISTS, AND BACK TO THE OTTOMAN FUTURE OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY

“Can people be treated as second-class, third-class citizens because of their ethnic belonging, language, religion, and sects? Can such treatment be fair and just?”
Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 2009

“Rationally and conscientiously, accepting status quo which will put Turkey in greater dangers and risks is not possible...Strong states do not insist on unsustainable policies”
Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, 2009

Introduction

In Chapter 7, I discussed the conditions under which the founding elites of the Turkish Republic came to the conclusion of adopting monolithic Turkishness with the motivation of saving and establishing an independent state along with national sovereignty. This chapter first looks at the consolidation and continuity of monolithic Turkishness throughout the twentieth century and articulates the conditions under which changing monolithic Turkishness was not rational and feasible for the state elites. Secondly, the chapter looks at the structural changes in the international context after the end of the Cold War and how the state and societal actors have been influenced by this gradually creating opportunity spaces for the state policy change from monolithic Turkishness to hyphenated Turkishness after the 2000s.

New Regime, Power Consolidation, and Fixating Monolithic

Turkishness

As the new regime under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal eliminated all the veto players and opposition and consolidated its power under the single party (Republican People's Party) rule through the end of the 1920s, a full-fledged nation-building program (see Chapter 5) took place with no tolerance of any alternative identity claims such as Kurdish and pious Muslim identities. The metanarrative of state ideology in the process of nation-building was framed as Kemalism which the Republican People's Party adopted in its 1931 party program under six basic principles: republicanism, secularism, nationalism, populism, statism, and revolutionism. As Erik Zürcher states, "These six principles...were incorporated into the Turkish constitution in 1937...together they formed the state ideology of Kemalism and the basis for indoctrination in schools, the media, and the army."⁴⁶⁰ State institutions founded in the 1930s such as the Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Linguistic Society functioned as intermediaries of constructing a national memory apart from the crucified ancient regime of the Ottoman dynasty.

The theses developed under the Turkish Historical Society promoted the idea that the origins of the Turks were in Central Asia who were then spread to other regions of the world such as the Near East and Europe. By these means of identity-building, the Turkish Historical Society "aimed to give Turks a sense of pride in their past and in their national identity, separate from the immediate past, that is to say the Ottoman era" and "it was one of the means whereby the Kemalist leadership tried to construct a new national identity

⁴⁶⁰ Zürcher, p. 190.

and strong national cohesion.”⁴⁶¹ Thanks to the single-party rule with no separation of powers and no opposition, the founding elite’s agenda in building new institutions for the state on the one hand and constructing nationhood congruent with this new state on the other were mostly undisturbed. In fact, after the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925, intermittent tribal Kurdish uprisings against the state (i.e., Agri in 1930, Dersim in 1937-38) and their suppression by the state paved the way for further consolidation of the regime. The insecurity of this infant regime had to be eliminated with radical reforms in the mindset of Mustafa Kemal’s cadres. Thus, the late 1920s and 1930s were the golden age of the ruling Kemalist cadres to reinvent the socio-political and institutional nature of the new regime which Hale Yilmaz frames as “Becoming Turkish.”⁴⁶² From new dressing codes (such as the Hat Reform of 1925 embracing European hats as official symbols of modernization) to adopting the Latin alphabet by abolishing Arabic scripts in 1928 and from establishing new national holidays such as the 23rd of April celebrations commemorating the opening of the National General Assembly in Ankara in 1920 as the symbol of and first step toward a ‘modern’ and secular nation-state. The making of the Turkish state and nation came into being through the dissemination of such reforms to the overall society by co-optation on the one hand and contestation on the other. This mostly unhindered and abled power consolidation of the founding cadres became officially contested when the multiparty era began in 1946 and an opposition party (Democrat Party) was able to topple the founding elites.

After Mustafa Kemal’s death in 1938, his Weberian charismatic authority and

⁴⁶¹ Zurcher p. 199.

⁴⁶² Hale Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2013).

state persona were succeeded by his loyal comrade, Ismet Inonu. Served as the Chief of the General Staff and as Prime Minister after the national independence war, Inonu became the second president of the Turkish Republic with the title of National Chief (*milli şef*). The Inonu era of the Turkish Republic coincided with World War II. Despite being neutral until the last months of the war (joined the Allies at the very end of the war), the Inonu government became increasingly unpopular due to deteriorating economic conditions such as high inflation, poor living standards in the countryside, and increasing military expenditures.⁴⁶³ The resentment against the Republican People's Party and its highly centralized decision-making structure was on the rise both within and outside the party. As the United States became the major leader of the international economic and political system in the Western world against the communist Soviet Union, Turkey became more integrated into the US-led international system especially by receiving funds from the Marshall Plan and being a partner within the Truman Doctrine against the communist threat. This integration to the Western state system pushed the single party regime under Inonu to shift to a democratic multiparty system in 1946. Fearful of the rapid rise of the opposition Democrat Party (DP), the Inonu government shied away from holding fully fair and free elections in 1946 keeping him in power until the next elections in 1950. The hegemonic victory of the Democrat Party in the 1950 and 1954 elections happened by receiving 53.4% of the total votes, which opened a new era in the history of modern Turkey. Feroz Ahmad (1993) insightfully reveals the trajectory of this transformative shift in relation to the culture of the founding elites:

There were now two cultures: the Westernised, secular culture of a tiny but

⁴⁶³ Zurcher 1993.

influential minority associated with the bureaucracy, and the indigenous culture of the mass of the people associated with Islam. When opposition was permitted once more at the end of the Second World War, it was able to exploit this alienation with great success and win mass support in order to oust the ruling party at the polls. That marked the beginning of an Islamic reassertion whose impact is being felt even today.⁴⁶⁴

However, the cadres and founding leaders of the Democrat Party such as Adnan Menderes and Celal Bayar were still politically raised within the Kemalist trajectory. That being said, the party program of the new elites incorporated many aspects of Kemalism in itself. According to Zurcher, “the most striking difference from the RPP was the virtual absence of representatives with a bureaucratic and/or military background.”⁴⁶⁵ This is why the Democrat Party continuously uttered the motto of ‘national will’ (*milli irade*) as opposed to the will of the few under the party-state rule until the 1950s. By embracing the notion of *milli irade*, the Democrat Party had antistate aspects both socially and economically. For instance, in the government program under the first Menderes administration, the Election Day (May 14th) in 1950 was framed as the opening of a new era⁴⁶⁶ and the old era’s state was depicted as “interventionist capitalist, bureaucratic, and monopolist” that led to high state expenditures and low economic efficiency.⁴⁶⁷ Thus, the Democrat Party promoted liberal economic policies with less state intervention in the market.

⁴⁶⁴ Zurcher, pp. 92-93.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 231.

⁴⁶⁶ “*Şüphesiz ki; on dört Mayıs, bir devre son veren ve yeni bir devir açan müstesna ehemmiyette tarihi bir gün olarak daima anılacaktır.*” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP19.htm> on September 21, 2014.

⁴⁶⁷ “*Böylece, zamanla müdahaleci kapitalist, bürokratik ve inhisarcı bir devlet tipi ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu tip devletin; masrafları mütemediyen artırarak memleketi borçlanma yoluna sokmuş olmasını ve iş ve istihsâl hayatını kısırlaştıracak iktisâdi kaynaklarımızın gelişmesine engel olmuş bulunmasını tabii görmek lazımdır.*” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP19.htm> on September 21, 2014.

Socially, the Democrat Party advocated a more sophisticated understanding of secularism than the party-state regime before 1950. The first government program clearly makes a distinction between struggling against the ‘reactionary movements’ and being committed to the freedom of religion and conscience.⁴⁶⁸ This makes a qualitative difference from the Republican People’s Party regime which understood secularism as a necessity for the idea of progress where science would play the leading role and Islam was a hindrance toward that goal. In the 1931 party program of the Republican People’s Party, under the secularism section, it is stated that all laws, codes, and practices would be based on science compliant with the necessities of the age.⁴⁶⁹ This statement does not mention any aspect of freedom of religion. Yet, the DP program in 1946 recognizes freedom of religion as one of the sacred rights of humanity.⁴⁷⁰

In terms of nationalism and nationhood, the DP and the RPP do not show analytical differences in the sense that the idea of monolithic Turkishness persists. In other words, unity in homogeneity or uniformity rather than unity in diversity shows

⁴⁶⁸ “*İrticai tahrike asla müsâade etmemekle beraber din ve vicdan hürriyetlerinin icaplarına riayet edeceğiz. Hakiki layikliğın manâsını biz böyle anlamaktayız.*” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP19.htm> on September 21, 2014.

⁴⁶⁹ “*Parti, bütün kanunların, tüzüklerin, ve usullerin yapılışında ve taplanışında, en son ilim ve teknik esasları ile, asrın ihtiyaçlarına uyulmasını prensip olarak kabul etmiştir.*

Din, bir vicdan işi olduğundan, parti, dini, dünya ve devlet işleri ile siyasadan ayrı tutmağı, ulusumuzun çağdaş medeniyet yolunda ilerlemesi için başlıca şartlardan sayar.” Republican People’s Party Program, 1931, p. 11. Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/eyayin/GAZETELER/WEB/KUTUPHANEDE%20BULUNAN%20DIJITAL%20KAYNAKLAR/KITAPLAR/SIYASI%20PARTI%20YAYINLARI/197000602%20CHP%20PROGRAMI%201935/197000602%20CHP%20PROGRAMI%201935%200001-0068%20BOLUM%2001.pdf> on September 21, 2014.

⁴⁷⁰ “*Partimiz, lâyikliği, devletin din ile hiç bir ilgisi bulunmaması ve hiç bir din düşüncesinin kanunların tanzim ve tatbikinde müessir olmaması manasında anlar; din hürriyetini diğer hürriyetler gibi, insanlığın mukaddes haklarından tanır.*” Democrat Party Program, 1946, Clause 14, p. 4. Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/eyayin/GAZETELER/WEB/KUTUPHANEDE%20BULUNAN%20DIJITAL%20KAYNAKLAR/KITAPLAR/SIYASI%20PARTI%20YAYINLARI/200805461%20DEMOKRAT%20PARTI%20PROGRAMI%201946/200805461%20DEMOKRAT%20PARTI%20PROGRAMI%201946.pdf> on September 21, 2014.

continuity in the approaches toward nationhood. In the 1931 Republican People's Party program, nation is defined as "the political and social whole that incarnates through citizens who are tied together with common language, culture, and ideal."⁴⁷¹ The principle of nationalism (*ulusculuk*, not *milliyetçilik*), on the other hand, is articulated as the promotion of the nation to the level of modern nations and the protection of free self and the particular character of the nation as defined previously. In similar lines, the Democrat Party approaches the nation as a unity of citizens who share a common culture and ideals as a result of the common history and in addition to that the party specifically accepts an understanding of nationalism that rejects all the exclusionary notions.⁴⁷² The DP also considers all the citizens as Turks regardless of religion and race.⁴⁷³ This continuity in the fixation of monolithic Turkishness within the idea of unity in homogeneity shows that the perception of Turkishness remained the same across these two competing elite groups (the RPP versus the DP). Sener Akturk (2012) specifically studies the case of the Democrat Party as counter-elites who held political hegemony without any attempts at changing the boundaries of nationhood. However, he fails to explain why the Democrat Party did not have a new paradigm or discourse on nationhood.⁴⁷⁴ This failure is also the main insufficiency in his theory of nationhood change under the conditions of 1) counter-elites, 2) new discourse, and 3) political hegemony. In order to understand and explain under what conditions the state elites are

⁴⁷¹ "*Ulus; dil, kültür ve ülkü birliği ile birbirine bağlı yurddaslardan meydana gelen siyasal ve sosyal bütündür.*" Republican People's Party Program, 1931, p. 3.

⁴⁷² "*Yurddarşlar arasında müşterek bir tarihin yarattığı kültür ve ülkü birliğine ve her türlü ayırıcı temayülleri reddeden bir milliyetçilik telakkisine bağlıyız.*" Democrat Party Program, 1946, p. 3.

⁴⁷³ "*Partimiz bütün yurddasları din ve ırk farkı gözetmeksizin Türk sayar*" Democrat Party Program, 1946, p. 3.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

more likely to change the form and content of nationhood, it is important to unpack the external necessities of the state within the international community on the one hand and internal opportunities on the other. Most particularly, while the international context shapes domestic discourses, alternative domestic claim-makings by nonstate actors in relation to the international context determines the state elites' perception of change or lack thereof.

The Cold War Era and Domestic Discourses within the State's Political Agenda

The first Menderes government's program very vividly articulates the priorities in the national security agenda and the threat perception of the political elites (i.e., radical left). This is not surprising within the context of the Cold War where Turkey was an ally of the United States, was part of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plans, and joined NATO against the Soviet-led communist bloc.⁴⁷⁵ In this bipolar international context within the metanarratives of communism versus capitalist democracy, Turkey's choice of alliance naturally determines the threat perceptions of the political elites and their agenda of national security. As stated in the 1950 government program, "we, in the contemporary conditions, will not consider radical left circulations within the subject matter of freedom of expression and conscience."⁴⁷⁶ Radical left circles are depicted as 'spies' who would 'destroy the homeland from within' and thus, the roots of the radical left should be

⁴⁷⁵ Melvyn Leffler (1985). "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952," *The Journal of American History*, 71(4): 807-825.

⁴⁷⁶ "Biz bugünün şartları içinde aşırı sol cereyanları fikir ve vicdan hürriyeti mevzuunda mütalâa etmek gafletinde bulunmayacağız" Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP19.htm> on September 21, 2014.

graved.⁴⁷⁷

The military and political alliance of Turkey with the United States and being a member of the anti-Soviet bloc in the United Nations made ‘democracy’ the main discursive paradigm of Menderes' government. This discourse was also used to make a qualitative distinction between ‘the old regime’ before the Democrat Party rule since the May 14 elections in 1950 was depicted as the “great revolution” that established “the democratic system” against “the dogmas, traditions, and thoughts in the lifetime of the State.”⁴⁷⁸ In this context, the United States was insistently framed as “the great friend” by Menderes' government between 1950 and 1960. These political elites were also very conscious of the shifting necessities of the state under different international conditions. The fifth Menderes government program clearly states this: “in terms of significance and content, the necessities, issues, and causes of today’s Turkey cannot be possibly compared to the necessities and issues of yesterday’s Turkey.”⁴⁷⁹ If one of the necessities of the ‘old Turkey’ and the founding elites of the Republic in the late 1920s and 1930s

⁴⁷⁷ “Bu konuda bilhassa üzerinde duracağımız mesele memleketi içinden yıkıcı aşırı sol cereyanları kökünden temizlemek için icabeden kanuni tedbirleri almaktır. İrticai ve ırkçılık gibi ayırıcı cereyanları vasıta olarak kullanan ve çok defa kendisini bu maskeler altında gizleyen aşırı solcu hareketlere karşı gereken bütün kanuni tedbirleri almakta asla tereddüt etmeyeceğiz. Biz bugünün şartları içinde aşırı sol cereyanları fikir ve vicdan hürriyeti mevzuunda mütalâa etmek gafletinde bulunmayacağız. Bugün aşırı sol cereyanlara mensup olanların, mücerret bir fikir ve kanâat sahibi olmaktan ziyâde yıkıcı cereyanların aletleri olduklarına şüphemiz yoktur. Fikir ve vicdan hürriyeti perdesi altında bütün hürriyetleri kan ve ateşle yok etmekten başka bir maksat gütmeyen bu ajanları adalet pençesine çarptırmak için icabeden kıstasları vuzuh ve katiyetle tespit etmek zaruretine inanıyoruz.” Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ “14 Mayısla tahakkuk yoluna giren büyük inkılâbın ilk safhası aşılmıştır, denilebilir...Yeni bir programla huzurunuzla çıkarken memleketin iç durumundaki bu manzaraya işaret suretiyle demokratik idare sisteminin her türlü yıkıcı tesirlerden masun bulundurulması hususunda uyanık ve tedbirli bulunacağımızı arz etmek istiyoruz...Cümlece malumdur ki, asırlarca devam eden ve Devlet hayatında kökleşmiş bulunan kaideler, ananeler, telâkkiler 14 Mayıs inkılâbıyla ortadan kalkmış veya sarsılmış bulunuyor.” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP20.htm> on September 22, 2014.

⁴⁷⁹ “bugünkü Türkiye’nin ihtiyaçları, meseleleri ve davaları, ehemmiyet ve vüsat bakımından, dünkü Türkiye’nin ihtiyaç ve meseleleri ile asla kabili kıyas değildir.” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP20.htm> on September 22, 2014.

was to construct a very particular nationhood (see Chapter 5) for the state, such necessity was not present for the ‘new Turkey’ under the Democrat Party rule due to the international context of the Cold War—i.e., class-based struggles rather than ethnic struggles defined the security agenda of the state—on the one hand and the absence of the nationhood question on the other, particularly within the context of Kurdish threat and question of the 1920s and 1930s. In fact, the threat and question of Kurdistan in the Eastern provinces in the mindset of the founding elites was gradually transformed into and framed within the socio-economic development paradigm especially during the Cold War era.

According to Sener Akturk, the Democrat Party in the first multiparty elections was the counter-elites against the party-state under the Republican People’s Party.⁴⁸⁰ However, its strong support from the Kurds and Alevis alike came from the common opposition and criticism of Kemalism on the one hand and commitment to socioeconomic development on the other, rather than any discourse related to ethnic demands as Akturk states (p. 136). However, Akturk takes Kurdishness in this case as taken for granted or as if it is primordial in the sense that mass Kurdish ethnic consciousness was present in the 1950s but the Kurds did not mobilize around ethnic demands. Moreover, he considers the Turkish state an isolated body from world politics and international discursive patterns, especially in the context of the bipolar international system of the Cold War. Turkey, of course, was not neutral in this bipolar world being a member of NATO and a close ally of the United States, as stated in the fifth Menderes government (1957-1960).⁴⁸¹ Within this

⁴⁸⁰ Akturk 2012

⁴⁸¹ “*Buna mukabil ideolojik soğuk harp gittikçe şiddetini artırmakta ve her gün biraz daha*

context, the security paradigm of the state was based on the communist threat, not an ethnic threat. This was very vividly articulated by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes in his fifth government program as well, especially within the context of suppressing media under the banner of fight against hidden communism.⁴⁸² If the ruling elites did not have any perception of ethnic claim-making or ethnic threat in a mass organized way in the 1950s, why would they reconsider the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood? Unless it is a necessity for the state elites, they are less likely to change the boundaries of nationhood. Until the 1960s, Hakan Yavuz (2001), in his seminal study on the stages of Kurdish nationalism, aptly states that:

The discourse of the new Republican ideology of Mustafa Kemal either denied the existence of the Kurds or reconstructed a political language to talk about the issue without pronouncing the word 'Kurds.' As a part of the radical nation-building reforms, Kurdish traditional notions of identity and culture were constructed as 'reactionary', 'tribal', and an outcome of regional 'backwardness'.⁴⁸³

If the state elites did not frame the Kurdish question in an ethnic paradigm but rather considered it in a socio-economic scope, there was no need to revise the boundaries of the Turkish national identity. Especially after the 1950s within the context of the Cold War, “Kurdishness” was structured within the leftist-communist paradigm in the eyes of the state elites. An ethnicity-based consciousness of Kurdishness among the

tehlikeli hal almaktadır... Hususiyetle dost ve müttefikimiz Birleşik Amerika ile karşılıklı hürmet ve itimada dayanan çok samimi rabitaların her zamandan ziyâde kuvvetli bulunduğunu ifadeden haz duymaktayım. Bütün NATO müttefiklerimizle ve bu meyanda bilhassa Almanya, Fransa, İngiltere ve İtalya ile olan ve karşılıklı anlayışa ve dostluğa dayanan iki taraflı münâsebetlerin her sahada her gün biraz daha takviye edileceği gibi...” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP23.htm> on September 23, 2014.

⁴⁸² “Esefle kaydetmek icabeder ki; ölçüsüzlüklerden faydalanmak ve meydanı boş zannederek harekete geçmiş olan ve siyâset mücadelelerinde ağırlaştırma ve zehirleme gayreti içinde çalışan ve birçok yerlere barınmak istidadında olan gizli komünistlikle müessir bir mücadeleye girişmek, huzur ve sükunun temininde ve manevi asayişin iadesinde ehemmiyetli bir tedbir olarak telakki edilmek icabeder.” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP23.htm> on September 23, 2014.

⁴⁸³ Yavuz, p. 2.

Kurds existed only at the elite level, not at mass groupings. While Islam and communism functioned as surrogate identities for the Kurdish identity until the 1980s, the ethnicization of Kurdishness became a reality after the insurgency started by the Kurdistan Workers' Party after the 1980s.⁴⁸⁴ This speaks to the fact that an amalgamation of concepts such as 'terrorism', 'separatism', 'ethnicity', and 'cultural pluralism' were only put to the security and political agenda of all the ruling governments after the 1980s. In addition to other factors, states are more likely to change their structure of nationhood when rival identity and identity movements pose greater threats to the ontological security of the state (*Devletin Bekasi*). This was the case when the Ottoman elites introduced Ottomanism in the early nineteenth century and when the Republican founding elites introduced Turkishness as the monolithic identity of the state in the 1920s.

Sener Akturk's theory states that "counterelites need to be armed with a new comprehensive discourse on the relationship between ethnicity and nationality and acquire an overwhelming majority in the political arena in order to change the ethnicity regime."⁴⁸⁵ According to Akturk, although the Democrat Party era (1950-1960) was an era of the counter-elites gaining political hegemony against the Kemalist party-state of the 1930s and 1940s, the absence of new discourse on ethnicity caused a continuity of the way that Turkish nationhood was officially structured. Yet, since Akturk does not explain why the Democrat Party did not have a new discourse regarding the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood especially within the context of the Kurdish question, his theory

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Akturk 2012, p. 119.

loses its explanatory value and remains insufficient for our understanding of under what conditions states are more likely to change their nationhood frameworks. Domestic claim-makings by various nonstate actors on the one hand and the international discursive context within which the state is embedded on the other are key factors that reveal when the political elites adopt new approaches and policies toward framing the nationhood. For the case of Turkey, challenges to the official Turkishness were much more imminent when various domestic actors were able to mobilize the masses surrounding identity politics within the opportunity spaces of the post-Cold War international context.

**Post-Cold War International Context and the Transformation
of the Nation-State: The Decline of Forced Assimilation and
the Extension of Human Rights**

The post-Cold War state of world politics manifests greater attention to the politics of identity—be it ethnic, religious, linguistic, or gender. Amid the optimism of democracy and human rights, the question of nation-building under decolonization and post-Communist states has become one of the key issues in debates over stability and order. The human catastrophes in the backyard of relatively prosperous and stable Western Europe—the Balkans—after the breakup of Yugoslavia have forced the international community to reconsider the extent of human rights on a scale between individual rights and group-rights.⁴⁸⁶ Various international conventions by the United

⁴⁸⁶ Gene M. Lyons and James Mayall, “Stating the Problem of Group Rights,” in *International Human Rights in the 21st Century: Protecting the Rights of Groups*, eds. Gene M. Lyons and James Mayall (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003), pp. 3–19; Jennifer Jackson-Preece, “Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism,” in *International Human Rights in the 21st Century: Protecting the Rights of Groups*, eds. Gene M Lyons and James Mayall (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003), pp.

Nations, the Council of Europe, and the European Union⁴⁸⁷ right after the Cold War manifest the idea that individual rights within the borders of citizenship and national membership are insufficient to restore order and stability in nation-states where multiple identity belongings surrounding ethnicity, religion, and language weaken the understandings of a monolithic nationhood based on individual rights. These conventions in the international normative context have led to the decline of assimilation in contemporary nation-building processes. In other words, the early and mid-twentieth century's assimilation *par excellence* has been more or less framed as crimes against humanity in the international community. Thus, the post-Cold War has increased the debate and adoption of multicultural policies and norms in the public sphere, and has reduced the idea of the nation-state as a project of homogenization and monolithic nationhood.

Michel Seymour indicates that “certain homogenous types of nation-states are outmoded, but others deserve to be maintained, especially those that are able to recognize their own polyethnic and pluricultural character.”⁴⁸⁸ For David Laitin, “the classical nation-state, one where a nation and state are commensurate, in which the national will is

49–71.

⁴⁸⁷ For instance, since 1989, there is a trend that individual-rights based human rights norms have been expanding toward group-rights based international norms: The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), The UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), The UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992), The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), European Convention on Human Rights (1950), the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) Copenhagen Document (1990) and Helsinki Document (1992) and the 1992 creation of the office of High Commissioner for National Minorities, The Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992), The Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995).

⁴⁸⁸ Michel Seymour, “Introduction: Theories and Practices,” in *The Fate of the Nation State*, ed. Michel Seymour (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), p. 3.

embodied in a state of its name, is today largely a nostalgic myth.”⁴⁸⁹ However, on the other hand, Brendan O’Leary argues that “the claim that nation-states are fading fast also seems highly provocative and indeed deeply insensitive when numerous nations without states strive to reverse what they generally and correctly see as a major disadvantage in their collective powers, including their power of self-determination and self-government.”⁴⁹⁰

In addition to the arguments that monolithic nationhood has been in decline in the last two decades, there have been debates on a paradigmatic shift to the postnational era or postnational citizenship, especially under the models of regional political integrations such as the European Union.⁴⁹¹ This idea is based on how national identity is superseded by transnational or supranational identities in particular and global cosmopolitan attachments in general. However, the idea that the nation-state in particular and the state in general is in total decline *vis-à-vis* supranational and transnational forces is premature at best and misleading at worst. In fact, the changing nature of national identity is not its shift to supranational attachment, but its pluralization and atomization from its uniform and homogeneous *raison d’être* into heterogeneity. This pluralization is facilitated by the subnational challenges from minority communities and the mobility of migrants from the outside. Thus, “many of those who stress plural group identities, with the exception of strong cosmopolitans, stop short of rejecting national identity, the nation-state, or even

⁴⁸⁹ David D. Laitin, *Nations, States and Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 100.

⁴⁹⁰ Brendan O’Leary, “What States Can Do with Nations,” in eds. T.V. Paul, G. John Ikenberry, and John A. Hall, *The Nation-State in Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 53.

⁴⁹¹ Keith Breen and Shane O’Neill, “Introduction: A Postnationalist Era?” in eds. Keith Breen and Shane O’Neill, *After the Nation: Critical Reflections on Nationalism and Postnationalism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

nationalism, properly conceived”; rather “they typically call for the internal transformation of nation-states and a reconceptualization of nationalism along lines that are more inclusive and hospitable to cultural difference.”⁴⁹² In other words, as John A. Hall states, “political authority and decision making are not simply pushed upward to the supranational level; rather they are evolving in multiple vertical and horizontal directions.”⁴⁹³

This pinpoints the fact that as different segments of political authorities other than the nation-state find opportunity spaces for decision-making in complex interdependent relations, this does not necessarily mean that the state remains static but it is, in fact, continuously evolving according to the changing dynamics of domestic and transnational political and socio-economic realities. Then, “the evolution in state types—from the princely state to the dynastic state to the territorial state to the nation-state—is a grand transformation in the character of state power and the sources of state authority.”⁴⁹⁴ In terms of power and authority, managing multiethnic societies along with a social cohesion seems to be one of the major challenges for the nation-state in the twenty-first century, not just for weak or nondemocracies, but for strong liberal democracies as well (e.g., Quebec in Canada, Scotland and Northern Ireland in Great Britain, Basque and Catalan regions in Spain, the immigration question in the US and the European Union). Such management both entails a redefinition of nation and reorganization of the state. Overall, more or less a consensus is that nation and state are neither divorcing from each

⁴⁹² Breen and O’Neill, p. 5.

⁴⁹³ John A. Hall, “Nation-States In History.” in eds. T.V. Paul, G. John Ikenberry, and John A. Hall, *The Nation-State in Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 23.

⁴⁹⁴ John G. Ikenberry, 2003. “What States Can Do Now.” in eds. T.V. Paul, G. John Ikenberry, and John A. Hall, *The Nation-State in Question* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 354.

other nor disappearing in a globalizing world. Yet, the idea of homogenizing and forcefully assimilating nation-state of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, where nation-building culturally and linguistically destroys minorities, is both morally and legally unacceptable in our contemporary world. Overall, the contemporary international normative context one way or another enforces diversity and pluralization of identity belongings away from monolithic understandings of nationhood.

Post-1980s Counter-Hegemonic Mobilizations and the Domestic Political Claims-Making in Turkey

As the contemporary international normative context has become more favorable to group rights and multicultural policies, domestic social movements or political mobilizations that aim to change state policies toward the meaning and practices of established nationhoods have utilized this opportunity space for their own purposes. Due to the proximity and Turkey's bid for the EU, the European normative context has provided the discursive repertoires to various identity groups in Turkey against the tutelage of the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elites. However, the European human rights regime that is favorable to minorities has already been embedded in the international normative context of declining forced assimilation and the extension of human rights. Thus, the role of the EU as the engine of domestic change toward minorities in Turkey is overemphasized. Besides, the external norms do not provide one-size-fits-all policies but rather these norms are vernacularized by those domestic groups who attempt to seek change in the institution of nationhood. As I previously articulated the international normative context that identifies monolithic nationhood frameworks as morally and legally less acceptable, in this section, I would like to lay out domestic

political activism by the various groups that interact within this structural context in order to change the institution of nationhood.

The Republic of Turkey is a top-down project of social engineering in the pursuit of transforming the society toward a modern civilization.⁴⁹⁵ This entails a strong state tradition in charge of every social and economic aspect: the relationship between the state and Islam, the state and economy, the state and society and the idea of national identity.⁴⁹⁶ In turn, this strong tradition of transforming society was facilitated through an ideal of homogenous and monolithic Turkish identity. The military in this process became the guardian of the secular state and indivisibility of national unity. A series of military interventions in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997 manifest the idea of the Turkish state analogous with the Turkish military. In other words, the content and extent of Turkishness as an institution of nationhood had always been a top-down project rather than an outcome of grassroots mobilizations, civil society effects, or societal consensus. Since the 1980s in general and the post-Cold War era in particular, increasing civic and political activism of various groups that have been critical of the top-down impositions of identifying the nation either from religious or ethnic perspectives have led to the gradual erosion of Kemalist statism and its ideal of monolithic national identity. These counter-hegemonic groups can be categorized under pro-Kurdish, pro-Islamic, and pro-Alevi claim-making political and civic organizations in the 1990s.⁴⁹⁷ These counter-hegemonic

⁴⁹⁵ Fernee, Tadd Graham. "Modernity and Nation-Making in India, Iran, and Turkey." *International Journal of Asian Studies* 9(1): 71-97.

⁴⁹⁶ For a comprehensive study on the ideological roots of the Turkish Republic along with its hegemonic discourse of Kemalism, see Taha Parla and Andrew Davison, *Corporatist Ideology in Kemalist Turkey: Progress or Order?* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004).

⁴⁹⁷ These groups are neither mutually exclusive from each other nor do they refer to internally homogenous and externally bounded groups. In fact, their discourses have often contradicted each other.

groups have had various common characteristics: (1) they have been transnational, (2) they have been represented in many NGOs, media organizations, and political parties, and (3) they have been critical of singular and secular conceptions of Turkishness from their own identity stances.

Firstly, these groups have been involved in transnational activism beyond Turkey. Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink have built the theoretical basis of such activism around the world by arguing that “states no longer look unitary from the outside” and “increasingly dense interactions among individuals, groups, actors from states and regional and international institutions appear to involve much more than re-presenting interests on a world stage.”⁴⁹⁸ The notion of transnational advocacy networks highlights the era of global politics where states are not the ultimate sovereign bodies anymore as argued previously. In Keck and Sikkink’s seminal study of transnational advocacy networks, it is emphasized that political claim-making or rights claim are the prototypical discourses in the aim of changing the behavior of the state of subject matter. Adopting a repertoire of action from information, leverage, symbolic, and accountability politics, transnational advocacy networks become better off to voice their demands and concerns from the outside rather than from within.⁴⁹⁹ The goal is to establish legitimate claims that would persuade masses in order to transform the status quo of the state. The more the network can legitimize its discourse, the less autonomous the state becomes in

However, what brings them into a basket of coalition is their common critiques on the singular and secular understandings of Turkishness. For the theoretical approach to the misleading understandings of ethnic or religious groups as internally homogenous and externally bounded, see Rogers Brubaker., *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

⁴⁹⁸ Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 99.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

maintaining the status quo regime.

Many pro-Kurdish and pro-Alevi communities in Europe have campaigned against the alleged discrimination over their identity in Turkey.⁵⁰⁰ Referring to the Kurds in Europe, Vera Eccarius-Kelly states that “as European voters, they can raise expectations with regard to Turkish membership in the European Union, and as Diaspora Kurdish nationalists, they can pursue the option of encouraging critical examinations of Turkey’s treatment of the Kurdish minority.⁵⁰¹ Through lobbying activities in Europe, the Kurds have sought new ways of legitimizing their political claim-making which has been in direct opposition to the monolithic conception of Turkishness. The transnational nature of pro-Kurdish activism has, to some extent, delegitimized monolithic Turkishness along with the other political movements. As Nathalie Tocci argues, “the EU discourse has legitimized what were previously considered taboo subjects, providing political space both for suppressed Kurdish demands to come to the fore and for these to be discussed (albeit not necessarily accepted) within the more liberal segments of the establishment.”⁵⁰² Moreover, Jeremy Walton in his ethnographic study of confessional pluralism in contemporary Turkey argues that pro-Islamic groups, especially the Sunni Hizmet organizations, and the Alevi institutions such as Cem Foundation and the Haci Bektas Veli Anatolian Culture Foundation have institutional ties with like-minded organizations

⁵⁰⁰ See Elise Massicard, *Alevi in Turkey and Europe: Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Vera Eccarius Kelly, “Reframing Kurdish Nationalism: Kurdish Civil Society Activism in Europe” in *Symbiotic Antagonisms: Competing Nationalisms in Turkey*, ed. Ayse Kadioglu and E. Fuat Keyman (Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 2011).

⁵⁰¹ Vera Eccarius-Kelly, “Reframing the Nationalist Perspective: Kurdish Civil Society Activism in Europe,” in *Symbiotic Antagonisms: Competing Nationalisms in Turkey*, ed. Ayse Kadioglu and E. Fuat Keyman (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), p. 291.

⁵⁰² Nathalie Tocci, “The Europeanization of Turkey’s Kurdish Question,” In *Turkey and the European Union: Internal Dynamics and External Challenges*, ed. Joseph S. Joseph (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.133.

outside Turkey.⁵⁰³ In his comprehensive and critical interpretation of the Fethullan Gulen movement—the primary pro-Islamic claim-makers against the Kemalist state and the Turkish Armed Forces—Hakan Yavuz articulates the transnational activism of the movement through establishing private schools and charity and cultural organizations in Europe, North America, and Central Asia.⁵⁰⁴

Secondly, all of these organizations have been very active in the public sphere in Turkey through establishing foundations and institutions and running media organizations including newspapers and television channels. Despite their nongovernmental politics within civil society,⁵⁰⁵ they either dominate a political party or have strong ties with major political parties in Turkey. For instance, pro-Kurdish groups have been successful in founding various political parties despite their closure by the Constitutional Court.⁵⁰⁶ Despite their closures, the first establishment of the People's Labor Party (Halkin Emek Partisi-HEP) in 1989 to the Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi-DEP) in 2005 has represented the pro-Kurdish political agenda. The current governing Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi-AKP) has had close ties with the Gulen movement in its formative years.⁵⁰⁷ Moreover, pro-Islamic discourses within the claim-makings of *Milli Gorus* (National Vision) during the 1990s, especially with the rise of Necmettin Erbakan's Welfare Party, mobilized many grassroots organizations against the tutelage of the Kemalist elites. The

⁵⁰³ Jeremy F. Walton, 2013. "Confessional Pluralism and Civil Society Effect: Liberal Mediations of Islam and Secularism in Contemporary Turkey." *American Ethnologist* 40(1): 182-200.

⁵⁰⁴ M. Hakan, Yavuz, *Toward an Islamic Enlightenment: The Gulen Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁵⁰⁵ Walton 2013

⁵⁰⁶ Watts 2009

⁵⁰⁷ Yavuz 2013

28th February process in 1997, which is often referred to as a post-modern *coup d'état*, took Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan out of his office on the grounds of 'reactionary rise' against the Kemalist principles of the state. Many of the current governing AK Party's founders have come from Erbakan's *Milli Gorus* with strong critiques of military tutelage.

Thirdly, these groups promote claim-makings that are critical to certain conceptions of Turkishness under the hegemony of the Kemalist state. The pro-Alevi groups are concerned with the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the compulsory religion courses from a perspective of the Sunni interpretation in public education—especially after the Turkish-Islam turn following the military coup in 1980—as the representative of the dominant Sunni Turkishness, Pro-Islamic groups have reacted to the monopolization of Islam by the Kemalist secular state which had hindered free expression of religious customs and traditions such as the ban on headscarves in public institutions including universities and the Turkish parliament. The secular emphasis of being a Turk has been criticized. On the other hand, pro-Kurdish groups have framed and criticized Turkishness as an ethnic identity. In fact, the rise of the AK Party in 2002, just like the Democrat Party in 1950, have come into being through a strong coalitional establishment which largely included the Kurds, pious Muslims, liberals, and Alevis who have been more or less critical to certain characteristics of the founding philosophy of modern Turkey and their guardians in military and bureaucratic circles.

These separate and often rival groups with different discourse backgrounds on how to change the institution of nationhood have mostly referred to international human rights norms in general and the European rights regime surrounding the EU and the

Council of Europe in particular. Between 1959 and 2011, the European Court of Human Rights has delivered 2,747 judgments for Turkey which constitute the largest share (18.49%) of all judgments.⁵⁰⁸ The right to a free trial (729), protection of property (611), and right to liberty and security (554) constitute the largest share in these cases.⁵⁰⁹ Many Islamic and pro-Kurdish groups in the 1990s have referred to the institutions of the European Union in order to safeguard their discourses especially against the military tutelage of the state.

National Security Agenda of the State After the 1980s

Since I emphasize the post-1980 political activism of various groups especially after the collapse of the bipolar international system, it would be misleading to assume that state-society relations during the 1960s and 1970s were any steadier or calmer. For instance, in terms of Kurdish nationalism, Hakan Yavuz frames 1961 to 1983 as the period of secularization of the Kurdish question through socialism.⁵¹⁰ In this period, Kurdish identity along with Alevi identity was one of the markers of the broader socialist mobilizations in Turkey. Organizations such as the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKO in Turkish acronym), media circles such as *Dicle-Firat* and *Deng*, and the socialist Labor Party of Turkey (TiP in Turkish acronym) all promoted antistate ideas

⁵⁰⁸ European Court of Human Rights Report can be accessed at http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/ronlyres/E58E405A-71CF-4863-91EE-779C34FD18B2/0/APERCU_19592011_EN.pdf. Accessed at March 19, 2013.

⁵⁰⁹ European Court of Human Rights Report can be accessed at http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/ronlyres/E58E405A-71CF-4863-91EE-779C34FD18B2/0/APERCU_19592011_EN.pdf; also see some important case decisions of ECHR on Turkey at http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/ronlyres/53726604-BC07-4247-8D82-5053943D458E/0/PCP_Turkey_EN.pdf. Accessed March 19, 2013.

⁵¹⁰ Yavuz, "Five Stages of the Construction of the Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 7, no. 3 (2001): 1–24.

surrounding the Marxist-Leninist norms of national self-determination and ethnic federalism within the socialist idiom of the ‘brotherhood of peoples’ (*halkların kardeşliği*). Rather than tribal and traditional Kurdish leaders, urban and educated youth were mostly involved in such mobilizations and claim-makings. On the other hand, Turkish nationalism along with pro-Islamic discourses was sided under the anti-communism coalition. During the Cold War years, there was an increasing Islamic turn in Turkish nationalism due to the anti-Kemalist sentiments, demographic change, and electoral behavior.⁵¹¹ For instance, political and cultural activities of an organization called the Intellectuals’ Hearth (*Aydınlar Ocacı*) led to the dissemination of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis after the 1980s.

Structural conditions affected the domestic political contestations and how they were framed by the political elites. The difference between the pre- and post-1980s political contestations and activism in Turkey is that the pre-1980s political context from a national security perspective by the state was framed as the left-right polarizations due to the structural Cold War environment. Since Turkey was an ally of the anti-Soviet bloc, communism was the main threat to the security of the state. Communist activism rather than identity claims was primarily securitized. However, after the military coup of 1980, Islamic political identity and Kurdish identity became the two top concerns in the national security agenda. The beginning of armed insurgency by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) also put concepts such as ‘separatism’ and ‘ethnic separatism’ as the main idioms of national security perception.

Amid the increasing terror environment between the PKK and Turkish military at

⁵¹¹ Ayturk “Nationalism and Islam in Cold War Turkey, 1944-1969.”

the turn of the 1990s, perhaps Turgut Ozal was the first leader in Turkish politics who publicly offered alternative paradigms in the fight against the PKK. Ozal understood the problem with the PKK in particular and the Kurdish question in general beyond a security paradigm by uttering the liberty paradigm through human rights and democracy.⁵¹² The reason behind this paradigm in Ozal's mindset was the different realities of the internal and external realities. Ozal viewed Turkish identity within the philosophy of the melting pot as similar to the American identity and raised a question about the potential results of whether Mustafa Kemal would name the Republic as the Ottoman Republic rather than the Turkish Republic.⁵¹³ One of Ozal's important moves was to lift the ban on the Kurdish language in 1991.⁵¹⁴

Islamist circles in the 1990s also began to debate multiculturalism under Islam. The Welfare Party (RP-Refah Partisi) with the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan envisioned an Islamic *ummah* where the Kurds would be granted linguistic and cultural rights.⁵¹⁵ "The Medina Contract"—in which Prophet Muhammad granted rights for the Jews and Christians in the first society of Medina—appealed to Islamist circles as well as liberals (Bulac 1993).⁵¹⁶ Erbakan's framework for solving the PKK terrorism was based on the Islamic brotherhood. In one of Erbakan's visits to Bingöl—a heavily Kurdish-populated city—he stated that "Even though for centuries children of this country began school with *besmele* [in the name of God], you removed *besmele*. What did you put

⁵¹² "Meselenin bugün artık eski usullerle çözülmesi hadisesi söz konusu değildir... Yani insan hakları ve demokrasi...25 isyan soyle çözülmüş, böyle çözülmüş...Bugün o dönem kapanmıştır" An interview on 12 November 1993, Hurriyet.

⁵¹³ Isin Celebi. *Türkiye'nin Donusum Yillari* (Alfa Yayıncılık, 2012); Aktuel 1992.

⁵¹⁴ "Ozal'in Kurt Planı" <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1999/06/19/haber/hab02.html>

⁵¹⁵ Fehmi Calmuk., *Erbakan'in Kurtleri: Milli Gorus'un Guneydogu Politikasi* (Istanbul: Metis Yayinlari, 2004).

⁵¹⁶ Ali Bulac, "Medine Vesikası Uzerine Tartismalar," *Birikim* 47 (1993): 40-6.

instead? I am a Turk, I am right, I am hardworking.”⁵¹⁷ Saying this entitled a Muslim child of Kurdish origin to reply, “Is that so? Then I am a Kurd, I am more right, and I am more hardworking.”⁵¹⁸

Although Erbakan’s party gained great support from the Kurdish areas of east and southeast Anatolia in the 1995 general elections and was able to form a coalition government with the center-right True Path Party (DYP in Turkish), this government was taken out of office by military intervention in 1997. Overall, Ozal’s neo-Ottoman discourses on the one hand and Erbakan’s Islamic multiculturalism on the other were signs that monolithic Turkishness was in decline during the 1990s. While Ozal was more endorsing the European Union membership and adopted human rights discourse towards that end, Erbakan was not very fond of the idea that Turkey would become a member of the EU. Social democrats and pro-Kurdish political parties in the 1990s, however, heavily relied on the EU norms regarding minority rights which occasionally strained Turkey’s foreign affairs with Europe. Overall, despite the increasing challenges to monolithic Turkishness from within and outside, the monopolization of Turkishness under the guardianship of the Kemalist military elites was an important hindrance until the AK Party came into power in 2002 with a hegemonic power base.

The Justice and Development Party, Elite Change, and Power

Consolidation

In the previous sections, I articulated the counter-hegemonic mobilizations in the domestic political structure that has been shaped and reshaped within the systemic

⁵¹⁷ From the national oath which students in public schools used to read every day by law.

⁵¹⁸ Calmuk, *Erbakan’in Kurtleri*, p. 8; Akturk, *Regimes of Ethnicity*, pp. 173-174.

context of international norms of human rights and its extension toward group rights or minority rights. The major outcome of this political context has been the society becoming autonomous from the state and its reflection of increasing identity-based activism. These two mutually constitutive forces have destabilized the taken-for-granted notions of Turkishness as an institution of nationhood in Turkey. After the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP in Turkish) in 2002 which fused Ozal's neo-Ottoman and Erbakan's Islamic discourses together, the singular and monolithic social engineering project of constructing a Turk has experienced a critical juncture where its content and extent has been deconstructed and has become a contested zone. Then the Prime Minister and currently the President—Recep Tayyip Erdogan—has promoted the AKP as the party that stomp all sorts of nationalisms (“*milliyetçilikleri ayaklar altına alan parti*”) and the Party in its first government program under Abdullah Gul defined their philosophy as “let the people live so that the State can live” (“*insani yasat ki devlet yasasin*”).⁵¹⁹ This statement one way or another has been the AKP's policy which one way or another pluralized Turkishness. In other words, the monopoly on the definition of Turkishness was shattered when Erdogan stated that there were around thirty different ethnic identities in Turkey such as Kurdish, Laz, Circassian, and Bosniak which constituted the subidentities of the citizenship of the Republic of Turkey—that is the one and only supraidentity.⁵²⁰ While the state television (TRT) channel started broadcasting in languages other than Turkish, the AKP government introduced the program of

⁵¹⁹“İnsanı yaşat ki devlet yaşasın” düşüncesinden hareket eden Hükümetimiz, bütün politikalarının merkezine insanı koyacaktır” Retrieved from The Grand National Assembly of Turkey at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/hukümetler/HP58.htm> on October 7, 2014.

⁵²⁰ *Milliyet*. 2005. “Kimlik degisimi!” At www.milliyet.com.tr/2005/12/13/siyaset/axsiy02.html, accessed March 8, 2013.

integration rather than homogenization under the narratives of “Kurdish Opening” and “Democratic Opening.” Such a paradigmatic shift in the logic of the political elites has been in tandem with the AKP’s reformism with the intention of EU membership as well. Why could the previous governing parties before the AKP not initiate a similar package of reform targeted to integrate alternative identities other than defined by the state? The veto players, especially the military tutelage which designed the Turkish politics as the guardian of the founding Kemalist principles played an important role in the persistence of monolithic Turkishness.

Veto player is an “individual or a collective actor whose agreement is required for a policy decision.”⁵²¹ George Tsebelis argues that “policy stability of a political system increases when the number of veto players increases, when their congruence decreases, and when their cohesion increases.”⁵²² Although George Tsebelis’ argument primarily referred to legislative processes in liberal democracies, the notion of veto player can be adopted in a nonelectoral fashion. Hendrik Spruyt argues that actors who do not hold formal office can also exercise veto power as well, particularly when the preferences of the military might determine the outcome.⁵²³ In the political context of Turkey, the military as the guardian of official ideology has played the major role in being the veto player on the issues of national identity and state policies toward ethnicity and religion.

The military in Turkey has had two main tasks: to prevent any increase of ethnic

⁵²¹ George Tsebelis. 1995. “Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism, and Multipartism” *British Journal of Political Science* 25(3): 289-325.

⁵²² Tsebelis, p. 322.

⁵²³ Hendrik Spruyt, *Ending Empire: Contested Sovereignty and Territorial Partition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

consciousness other than the state-defined Turkishness—that is to protect the indivisibility of the nation and state—and to safeguard the state against the infiltration of pro-Islamic groups—thus, defining the depth and breadth of secularism. Any attempt to foster these two ‘threats’ has been suppressed forcefully: modern Turkey has experienced four military interventions in politics.

Umit Cizre states that "anti-military sentiment has always been limited to very small group consisting of a handful of a Western-influenced group of intellectuals and human rights advocates."⁵²⁴ Moreover, Nil Satana argues that "after Republic, Turkish military, as the most prominent guardian of the Kemalist principles, followed a national defense policy based on protection of national unity, national borders and population homogeneity."⁵²⁵ Due to the "distrust of politics" and "fear of the state collapse," states Ersel Aydinli, the military has been the most prestigious and trusted institution in Turkey.⁵²⁶ Moreover, he argues that "society has had a primary relationship with the army and a secondary relationship with politicians."⁵²⁷ TSK, as an autonomous body of Turkish polity, has a unique place as Mustafa Kemal settled a separation of the military from politics.⁵²⁸ Besides, Sam Kaplan argues that "the state school system fosters identification with the military institution and values."⁵²⁹ In 2007, when the General Staff

⁵²⁴Umit Cizre. 2003. "Demythologizing the National Security Concept: the Case of Turkey," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 57, No.2, pp. 213-229, p. 216.

⁵²⁵ Nil Satana. 2007. "Transformation of the Turkish Military and the Path to Democracy," *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 357-388, p. 365.

⁵²⁶ Ersel Aydinli. 2009. "A Paradigmatic Shift for the Turkish Generals and an End to the Coup Era in Turkey," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 63, No. 4, pp. 581-596.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p. 585.

⁵²⁸ David Capezza. 2009. "Turkey's Military is a Catalyst for Reform," *Middle East Quarterly* Vol. 16, pp. 13-23.

⁵²⁹ Sam Kaplan. 2002. "Din-u Devlet All over Again? The Politics of Military Secularism and Religious Militarism in Turkey following the 1980 Coup." *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*,

of the Turkish military aired an e-memorandum against the presidential candidacy of the AKP's Abdullah Gul whose wife wears a headscarf, such a statement was justified on the Republic's secular values and principles within which political Islam was identified as anathema. This e-memorandum stated that "It is observed that some circles who have been carrying out endless efforts to disturb fundamental values of the Republic of Turkey, especially secularism, have escalated their efforts recently."⁵³⁰ In the statement, there were reactions to the AKP's alternative understanding of national unity which has been somewhat similar to Islamic multiculturalism influenced by the Ottoman nostalgia:

Those activities include requests for redefinition of fundamental values and attempts to organise alternative celebrations instead of our national festivals symbolizing unity and solidarity of our nation. Those who carry out the mentioned activities which have turned into an open challenge against the state, do not refrain from exploiting holy religious feelings of our people, and they try to hide their real aims under the guise of religion. Developments in our region give numerous examples that playing on religion and manipulating the faith into a political discourse can cause disasters. Those who are opposed to Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's understanding 'How happy is the one who says I am a Turk' are enemies of the Republic of Turkey and will remain so. The Turkish Armed Forces maintain their sound determination to carry out their duties stemming from laws to protect the unchangeable characteristics of the Republic of Turkey. Their loyalty to this determination is absolute.⁵³¹

This was the first serious intervention of the military into civil politics after the 28th February 1997 intervention which took the Erbakan government down. The Justice and Development Party used this attempt to initiate the so-called Ergenekon trials against many military-bureaucratic officials on the grounds of a coup plot against the government. Ilker Basbug, a former General Staff, was sentenced to life in prison.⁵³²

Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 113-127, p. 115.

⁵³⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602775.stm>

⁵³¹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602775.stm>

⁵³² <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/court-announces-verdicts-in-turkeys-ergenekon-coup-plot->

Thus, reading Turkish politics only from an electoral framework (which Sener Akturk does) is a misleading approach since civil-military relations throughout the history of the Republic shaped and reshaped the autonomy and capacity of political parties to act of their own will. In other words, electoral victories of the AKP did not necessarily or directly transform them into a hegemonic force in Turkish politics. Interestingly, while the military's e-memorandum in 2007 prioritized the security of "the State" based on the founding principles of secularism and nationalism, the AKP's counter-discourses prioritized the security of the State as well, especially in the meta-narrative of its 'Democratic Opening.' The AK Party especially relied on the EU process in its initial years in government since the EU was an important shield against the veto players in Turkish politics (i.e., the military and judiciary). For instance, the Court of Cassation (*Yargıtay*) and the Chief Public Prosecutor (*Yargıtay Cumhuriyet Başsavcısı*) Abdurrahman Yalçınkaya attempted to close the AK Party in 2008 based on the principle of secularism stated in the constitution. In the closure indictment, it was stated that the founding members of the AK Party were all coming from ex-Islamist parties such as the Welfare Party (Refah) and the Virtue Party (Fazilet) and their previous statements contradicted with the Kemalist values of the Republic, most particularly secularism.⁵³³ In other words, the dynamics of Turkish politics cannot be solely read from an electoral perspective. In order to understand the elite competition, veto players, and hegemonic governments, one needs to look at the relationship between the major civil, military, and judiciary players. The AK Party's civilian base *vis-à-vis* the military and judiciary

trial-ex-army-chief-sentenced-to-life.aspx?pageID=238&nID=52034&NewsCatID=339

⁵³³ Anayasa Mahkemesi, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi Kapatılma İddianamesi, 2008, p. 142.

tutelages and their elimination as veto players led to the one party rule which is somewhat similar to the Republican People's Party's party-state hegemony in the formative years of the Republic. Sener Akturk aptly argues that political hegemony is one of the conditions for dynamics of change in the boundaries of one state's nationhood, however reading the trend of this political hegemony solely from the electoral victories or defeats is crucially misleading, especially in Turkey. In the struggle of the elites to control the state, the AK Party turned out to be victorious especially after 2008 when the party closure pressures and military e-memorandum threats were eliminated. This is why the full-fledged initiative under the title of Democratic Opening which primarily targeted a solution to the Kurdish question started in 2009. Yet, the 'Democratic Opening' has not come into being primarily with the ruling elites' normative motivations such as human rights or minority rights, but rather again the State and its survival has been essential in the metanarrative of this reformist mindset.

**The Justice and Development Party's Metanarrative of the
"Democratic Opening" and the Logic of Redefining
Nationhood**

Yalcin Akdogan, the former chief adviser to the then Prime Minister Erdogan and currently the deputy prime minister in Ahmet Davutoglu's government, has been one of the key official figures in the formation and evolution of the AK Party's 'Democratic Opening.' He has compiled the intent, processes, and dynamics of the 'Democratic Opening' in a book.⁵³⁴ Akdogan identifies two goals of the project: 1) democratization,

⁵³⁴ Yalcin Akdogan, *Demokratik Acilim Surecinde Yasananlar: "Insani yasat ki devlet yasin."*

and 2) ending the terror.⁵³⁵ He mentions Turkey's accession process to the European Union under the AK Party rule as the positive catalyst for democratization in general and the Kurdish question in particular.⁵³⁶ Democratic Opening, according to Akdogan, was a necessity in the EU accession process. In this process, the government's initiation of a television channel airing in the Kurdish language 24/7 in 2004 is reflected by Akdogan as the official recognition of the Kurdish identity by the state.⁵³⁷ According to Akdogan, the opposition (mainly the Republican People's Party and the Nationalist Action Party) against the Democratic Opening argued that this project would lead to ethnic separatism in Turkey. Akdogan cites some statements by the opposition leaders regarding the Democratic Opening:

Devlet Bahçeli (Nationalist Action Party): "It is the first time we witness a search for separation models in Turkey by a government in our political history.... The government's point of departure for PKK opening [defines Democratic Opening as such] is the definition of the separatism problem fed by terror as the question of ethnic and legitimate identity and rights claim-making."⁵³⁸

Deniz Baykal (Republican People's Party): "In its grand history since 1920, it is the first time that The Grand National Assembly of Turkey brings 'openings' that reverse the struggles of nation-building and that destroys the identity of the national state and nation-state identity by a ruling government to the agenda of The Grand National Assembly of Turkey.... The name of our state is Turkish, the name of our nation is Turkish.... They say this is an ethnic imposition! Be fair! So many Circassians, Albanians, Arabs, and millions of Kurdish-origin citizens don't feel this 'ethnic imposition' but do we have to feel that way just because the PKK sees it as such? The Turkish nation is not ethnic. This is the name that the world gave us. In democracies, none of the national states would allow practices and

(Istanbul: Meydan Yayıncılık, 2010).

⁵³⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵³⁶ "AB'ye uyum süreci, genel anlamda demokratikleşmeye, özel anlamda ise Kurt meselesinin demokratik çözümüne olumlu bir etki yapıyordu." p. 27.

⁵³⁷ "TRT Ses'in kurulması, devlet nezdinde Kurtçe'nin tanınması anlamına geliyordu." p. 17.

⁵³⁸ "Hükümet eliyle Türkiye için bölünme modelleri arayışına girilmesine siyasi tarihimizde ilk defa şahit olunmaktadır...Hükümetin PKK aciliminin hareket noktası, terörden beslenen bölücülük sorununun etnik ve mesru kimlik ve hak talebi sorunu olarak tanımlanmasıdır" p. 73.

policies that would encourage the separation of their people.⁵³⁹

However, on the other hand, then the Prime Minister (currently the President) Recep Tayyip Erdogan introduced a different paradigm by referring to the founding years of the Turkish Republic:

One of the most important successes of Ataturk was to strengthen the consciousness of being a nation by first to bringing all the [identity] differences under the roof of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and then integrate them under the citizenship of Republic of Turkey. It is important to remember the statements made by Ghazi [referring to Ataturk] in the opening of the first Assembly... ‘*Efendiler[Misters], the intention here and the people who form the Assembly are not only Turks, Circassians, Kurds, or Lazs. But it is the elements of Islam [Anasiri Islamiye] out of all.*’ This Assembly had kneaded the dough of our dear nation with the ‘unity in diversity’ understanding and had established the soul of our nation’s solidarity and unity.⁵⁴⁰

Erdogan’s discourse in revising the boundaries of belonging to the nation and the state emphasizes Islam on the one hand and ethnic diversity under Islam on the other. This approach becomes distant from the monolithic Turkishness that the founding elites seeded and later the political elites promoted nearly until the end of the Cold War. Although Turkishness was never separate from Islam, it was blind to ethnic diversity.

⁵³⁹ “İlk kez Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 1920’de başlayan büyük tarihi içinde, uluslaşma mücadelesini tersine çevirmeye yönelik, milli devlet kimliğini, ulus devleti kimliğini tahrip etmeye yönelik acilimleri, Hükümet eliyle, iktidar aracılığıyla Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi gündemine tasimistir” pp. 74-75. “Devletimizin adı Türk devleti, milletimizin adı Türk milleti, ‘Bu, bir etnik dayatma’ diyor. İnsaf ediniz! Yani bu etnik dayatmayı Türkiye’de cerkezler hissetmiyor, Araplar hissetmiyor, Arnavutlar hissetmiyor, milyonlarca Kurt kokenli vatandaşımız hissetmiyor da PKK hissediyor diye biz de oyle hissetmek zorunda miyiz? Burada Türk milleti lafi etnik bir anlam tasimaz. Bu, bize dunyanin verdigi bir addir. Demokraside hicbir milli devlet kendi icinde ki insanlarin ayrismasini tesvik edecek uygulamalara kesinlikle izin vermez” p. 75.

⁵⁴⁰ “Ataturk’un en buyuk basarilarindan biri, her turlu farklilik once Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi catisi altinda, ardindan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandasligi paydasinda birlestirmek, millet olma bilincini guclendirmek olmustur...İlk Meclisin acilisinda Gazi’nin dile getirdigi su ifadeler her an hatirda bulundurulmalidir. Daha once de ifade ettim yine bu kursude, ama biliyorsunuz tekrarda fayda vardir: ‘Efendiler, burada maksut olan ve Meclisi alinizi teskil eden zevat, yalnız Türk degildir, yalnız Cerkez degildir, yalnız Kurt degildir, yalnız Laz degildir. Fakat hepsinden murekkep anasiri Islamiye’dir, samimi bir mecmuadir.’ Bu Meclis, aziz milletimizin hamurunu ‘cokluk icinde birlik’ anlayisiyla yogurtmus, milletimizin birlik ve butunluk ruhunu tesis etmistir” p. 76.

Erdogan's narrative on this new Turkishness adds emphasis on ethnic diversity under the Islamic unity. This shift pluralizes Turkishness on the one hand and hyphenates it with particularistic identities such as Kurdishness. But it is essential to understand the logic of the AK Party in its new approach to nationhood. It would be misleading to diminish this paradigmatic shift either to the AK Party's ideological tendency surrounding Islam or to a transnational normative context within the EU accession process. Rather, the crucial aspect here is the State, the ontological security of it, and how the AK Party understands this security dimension (*Devletin Bekası*). Akdoğan reflects on this security dimension:

Those, who see the 'opening' as the destruction project, do not want to see that if this project is not put in effect, Turkey will be encountering a survival question... Thus, the [AK Party] government explains the opening process both as humanitarian and democratic move as well as considering it as a security and survival question.⁵⁴¹

Recep Tayyip Erdogan also emphasized this security dimension of the opening:

Rationally and conscientiously accepting the status quo which will put Turkey in greater dangers and risks is not possible.... Strong states do not insist on unsustainable policies.... War on terror cannot be effective solely by military means. It has psychological, sociological, diplomatic, and economic dimensions.⁵⁴²

This is why the AK Party always framed the 'Democratic Opening' as the project of the state, not the Party. The project has intended to enhance people's identification with the state of Turkey which had been weakened in the past, according to Akdoğan.

⁵⁴¹ "Acilimi 'yıkım projesi' olarak görenler, bu politikaların devreye sokulmaması halinde Türkiye'nin bir beka sorunuyla karşı karşıya gelebileceğini görmek istemiyorlar...Hükümet bu yüzden Acilim sürecini hem insani ve demokratik bir duyarlılıkla izah ediyor, hem de güvenlik ve beka meselesi olarak görüyordu" p. 14.

⁵⁴² "Türkiye'yi daha büyük tehlikelere, daha büyük risklere sokacak olan bir statükoyu benimsemek ne aklın ne mantığın ne vicdanın mümkündür... Sürdürülemez bir yaklaşımda ısrar etmek büyük devletlere yakışmaz... Demek ki terörle mücadele, salt olarak, güven sorunu olarak sadece güvenlik güçleriyle çözülecek bir sorun değil. Bunun psikolojik boyutu var, bunun sosyolojik boyutu var, bunun diplomatik boyutu var, bunun ekonomik boyutu var." p. 80.

Thus, the project has been structured as a peace project between the state and its nation. It is interesting that how the old ruling elites (i.e., military-bureaucratic cadres) before the AK Party and the AK Party itself have common understandings of the identity question as the question of the ontological security of the state. However, the difference is that while the AK Party defines security in its wider meaning (i.e., military, social, cultural, and economic), the old elites defined security more narrowly (i.e., physical) that understood the Kurdish question in particular and any other identity threat to monolithic Turkishness in general to be dealt with militarily. It is no surprise that the State Security Courts in Turkey functioned as the mechanism of the narrow security understandings of the old elites. The AK Party abolished the State Security Courts due to the wider understanding of security.

Theoretical debates on security among the scholars and policymakers of international relations have been built on the questions of what security is, what should be or is being secured, what leads to insecurity and how insecurity should be best resolved.⁵⁴³ While realists and neorealists prioritize the state as the main referent of security in the sense of the protection of the territorial integrity from external aggression and address such insecurities mostly in the self-help system and through the degree of military strength,⁵⁴⁴ liberals recognize the role of the state and nonstate actors such as international institutions in building interdependent relations to maintain and seek

⁵⁴³ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity, and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Alice Edwards and Carla Fertsman, *Human Security and Non-Citizens: Law, Policy, and International Affairs* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁵⁴⁴ Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Thompson, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (McGraw-Hill, 1985); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (McGraw-Hill, 1979).

security.⁵⁴⁵ Constructivist scholars have challenged the fixed and essentialist understandings of security especially in realist and neorealist frameworks and introduced the malleability of the taken-for-granted concepts and behaviors within the social processes and interactions between the state and nonstate actors.⁵⁴⁶ The post-Cold War era increased the pace of critiques on state-centric understandings of security since many challenges such as “transborder threats such as poverty, globalization and environmental disasters, internal armed conflicts and international terrorism—have failed to be resolved by traditional realist responses.”⁵⁴⁷ The AK Party represents the post-Cold War understandings of security which define the strength of the state not just through hard power that is solely based on the military capabilities but also through soft power such as diplomatic, cultural, and normative capabilities that empower the external and internal legitimacy of the state.

Conclusion

This chapter first discussed the path dependency in monolithic Turkishness through the 1990s and explained how the international context and domestic affairs were not favorable for policy change toward hyphenated Turkishness. However, as the new societal actors such as the PKK entered the political scene of Turkey after the Cold War and the eastern question of the 1960s and 1970s have become the Kurdish question within the EU ideals of the state, the sustainability of monolithic Turkishness has been more and more questioned. As such questioning gradually continued through the 1990s,

⁵⁴⁵ Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Longman, 2001).

⁵⁴⁶ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵⁴⁷ Edwards and Fertman 2010, p. 13.

the political hegemony of the AK Party eliminated the old Kemalist elites within the military and judiciary and opened the path of change in the state policy toward nationhood in Turkey.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

“Theoretically, no exogenous factor can in and of itself explain the specific forms that institutional change takes. While the destabilization of existing institutions can be exogenously driven, moving from such a position to a new stable institutional order must be seen as an endogenous process. Specifically, how agents redesign and rebuild institutional orders, and the conditions under which these activities take place, need to be explained.”⁵⁴⁸

In understanding the conditions under which the state elites are more likely to change the boundaries of nationhood (between hyphenated, monolithic, asymmetric, and hierarchical) or their policies of nation-building (i.e., assimilation versus cultural pluralism) and why they do so in the first place, recent studies have emphasized external dimensions informed by theories of International Relations such as realism and constructivism on the one hand⁵⁴⁹ and internal dimensions informed by theories of Comparative Politics such as elite competition within the state and social movements as agents of transforming the state itself on the other.⁵⁵⁰ While analyses primarily emphasizing international dimensions tend to black box the state as a unitary actor and neglect the intrastate elite competition and the role of subnational actors such as minority groups, studies that primarily emphasize domestic dynamics tend to assume that states

⁵⁴⁸ From *Great Transformations*, Mark Blyth 2002, p. 8.

⁵⁴⁹ Mylonas 2013; Zarakol 2011.

⁵⁵⁰ Akturk 2012; Nesrin Ucarlar, *Between Majority Power and Minority Resistance* and *Turkiye Siyasetinde Kurtler - Direnis, Hak Arayisi, Katilim* (Iletisim 2012).

are isolated from the normative and empirical realities of the international system. However, both internal and external dynamics should be approached comprehensively rather than seeing them both as mutually exclusive in influencing the decision-making process of the state elites in nationhood and nation-building policies. I tackle this significant theoretical puzzle in understanding the state policy changes toward nationhood and nation-building first by placing the state in the historical context of the international system and second by unpacking the state through analyzing intraelite competition in relation to the counter-discourses generated by minority groups. Thus, I combine the insights of International Relations perspectives with the theoretical intuitions of Comparative Politics.

By placing the realist notion of the state's physical security at the center of his analysis, Harris Mylonas (2013) seeks to explain "the conditions under which a state is likely to assimilate, accommodate, or exclude a non-core group."⁵⁵¹ He argues that "the foreign policy goals of the host state and its interstate relations with external powers drive a host state's choices of nation-building practices toward non-core groups."⁵⁵² He contextualizes his theoretical framework through the cases of the post-Ottoman Balkan states after World War I. There are a few weaknesses in the theoretical proposition of Mylonas. First of all, he reduces the dynamics of nationhood and nation-building choices of the political elites into their pure security perceptions. Although security is an integral

⁵⁵¹ Mylonas, p. 2. Mylonas innovates the term 'non-core group' instead of minorities: "*I will use the term 'non-core group' to refer to any aggregation of individuals that is perceived as an unassimilated ethnic group (on a linguistic, religious, physical, or ideological basis) by the ruling political elite of a country. I reserve the term 'minority' only for groups that have been granted minority rights by their host state*" p. xx.

⁵⁵² Ibid. p. 5.

part of the elites' nationhood policy choices, Mylonas understands security in its narrow definition (i.e., physical, military, hard power) promoted by realist scholars of International Relations. However, he neglects that different security understandings of the political elites may lead to change in nationhood policies of the state as I demonstrated in Chapter 8. The AKP government in contemporary Turkey has understood security in its wider meaning (i.e., military, socio-economic, and cultural) and this has led to these new elites' different approaches to nationhood frameworks in contrast to the founding philosophy of homogenization of the society and the promotion of a monolithic nationhood. The reason why the theory introduced by Mylonas cannot grasp my nuanced narrative of nationhood change is that he does not look at the cases in their continuity but rather provides a snapshot view of state policy changes in nation-building. However, I take three different cases in their continuity within the late Ottoman/modern Turkish context. Since Mylonas only pays attention to postimperial nationhood policies, his theory is less likely to grasp the dimensions of continuity and change in state policies toward nationhood across and within empires and nation-states. Since my comparative historical analysis covers cases across and within and pre- and postimperial contexts, it provides a larger picture. Moreover, in his own words, Mylonas also states that his study "focuses instead on explaining the initial selection of policies, not their successes or failures."⁵⁵³ Although the scope of my research question does not include the success/failure dimension of nationhood policies, my analysis process traces three different cases of change in the same socio-political and historical context. Thus, my comparative case study along with diligent process tracing does not only look at the

⁵⁵³ Ibid. p. 3.

initial selection of policies but considers nation-building as a continuous rather than a static process. Since I do not frame any policy change as 'initial' or 'last', I build my theoretical framework within the vicious cycles of continuity and change in state policies toward nationhood.

Secondly, Mylonas black boxes the state and reduces it to a unitary actor in the international system, again with the basic assumptions of realist theory. Thus, his analysis neglects the intraelite competition within the state over the policies of nationhood. Yet, one should note that there is a continuous political competition among political elites over designing and implementing state policies toward nationhood. In all of my three cases, I have shown how political elites competed to consolidate their power within the state in order to either maintain the status quo or change it. For instance, while the military elites (the Janissaries) and religious elites (ulema) in the first half of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century functioned as veto players against changing the status quo, the civilian bureaucratic elites who had had education and missions in the European context (Tanzimat reformers) were the ones who challenged the status quo institutions of the Ottoman Empire and introduced new political concepts and institutions for the empire, the most significant one being the project of Ottomanism. Thus, seeing like a state entails unpacking the state itself and observing the political competitions among the elites. Mylonas' theoretical proposition is far from taking these state dynamics into account.

Thirdly, Mylonas only gives agency to noncore groups as the 'fifth column' that cooperates with external powers in order to undermine the host state. This narrow security mindset in his analysis neglects the broader roles of the domestic nonstate actors

that can directly or indirectly involve in influencing the political elites' policy choices. For instance, it was the Kurdistan Workers' Party after the 1980s that transformed 'the eastern question'—understood by the political elites and political activists in socio-economic terms—into 'the Kurdish question' as an ethnic and cultural problem. The AKP's Democratic Opening has directly targeted solving the ethnic problems generated by the PKK terrorism. Thus, nonstate actors can have agency in influencing the discursive capacities of the political elites and such agency may become a game changer in the elite competition for greater control of the state.

Ayşe Zarakol⁵⁵⁴ approaches the identity paradoxes of states through a lens of an International Relations scholar as well. In her cases of Turkey, Japan, and Russia, she brings a critique to the realist notions of security and introduces a psychological dimension of socialization among Western and non-Western states in the international system. Thus, she argues that the non-Western states such as Turkey, Japan, and Russia have historically been stigmatized by Western states with degenerative banners such as 'backward,' 'uncivilized,' and 'barbaric.' Since these states seek respect and equal recognition in the international system, they align their domestic norms with the normative ideal of the international system at a given period in order to overcome external stigmatization. This is especially the case, Zarakol argues, when external shocks such as a major defeat in a war or state breakdown lead to domestic contestations over defining the identity of the state and the nation. In other words, Zarakol understands the states' identity policy changes in a socio-psychological meaning of security understood by the political elites. Zarakol's analysis differs from the theoretical proposition of

⁵⁵⁴ Zarakol 2011.

Mylonas in the sense that Mylonas understands security in different terms. However, neither Zarakol nor Mylonas gives sufficient agency to domestic nonstate actors. Zarakol also falls into the trap of a snapshot analysis of her cases without broader research on the continuity and change within each specific case such as Turkey. The other problem in Zarakol's analysis is that she reduces policy change on an external shock.

In addition to these IR perspectives to the identity policy changes of the state elites, Sener Akturk⁵⁵⁵ introduces a theory of ethnicity regime change by solely relying on domestic dynamics and thus taking the concept of state as completely isolated from the external world it is embedded in. According to Akturk, three conditions jointly become sufficient in state policy changes toward nationhood: 1) counter-elites; 2) new discourse; and 3) political hegemony. He states that "if 'counterelites' representing constituencies with ethnically specific grievances come to power, equipped with a 'new discourse' on ethnicity and nationality, and garner a 'hegemonic majority,' they can change state policies on ethnicity."⁵⁵⁶ The major weakness in Akturk's theory is that he does not explain where 'new discourses' of nationhood and ethnicity come from in the first place. In his analysis of the Turkish case in addition to Germany and Russia, for instance he argues that the Democrat Party in the 1950s was the first counter-elites against the Kemalist regime with hegemonic electoral successes (see Chapter 8). However, according to Akturk, the Democrat Party did not change Turkey's nationhood policies because they did not have a new discourse although many Kurds electorally supported them. But Akturk does not explain why the Democrat Party did not have a new

⁵⁵⁵ Akturk 2012

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 5.

discourse of nationhood in the first place. His theory cannot explain this because it is only inward-looking that assumes states and their political elites are completely isolated from the international political and social context. He also does not give agency to domestic nonstate actors in their potential of generating new discourses for the political elites. As I argued in Chapter 8, the Democrat Party did not have a new discourse of nationhood in the 1950s because of the restraints of the international Cold War context on the one hand and the absence of the “Kurdish question” in the national security agenda of the state elites on the other.

Another weakness of Akturk’s theory, especially in the Turkish case, is that he frames political competition among the elites only in electoral means. Yet, a more attentive scholar of Ottoman/Turkish studies should pay attention to the civil-military relations and the centrality of state survival (*Devletin Bekasi*) in the zones of struggle for a hegemonic position in the state. A landslide electoral victory of a political party does not necessarily make that party the political hegemony since many military coups have shown otherwise in the Ottoman/Turkish political context. Reading the elite competition from an electoral struggle is a major misconception of understanding Turkey’s deeper state culture which incorporates the veto players beyond electoral politics such as the military and the judiciary. Overall, Akturk may be right in stating that the counter-elites with new discourses who attain a hegemonic position within the state are more likely to change the nationhood structure, but he fails to explain within which context such new discourses emerge. In order to do this, one needs to look at the international context on the one hand and the domestic nonstate actors on the other in addition to the intrastate analysis.

In conclusion, recent studies on state policy changes toward nationhood fail to provide a comprehensive picture in understanding the conditions within which such changes occur and to depict the underlying logic of the state elites in policy change. As my analysis is informed by continuity and change within and across three significant cases of late Ottoman/modern Turkish political context in *longue durée* fashion over the course of two hundred years, a nuanced understanding of the conditions under which and why the state elites are more likely to change their identity policies in relation to nationhood surfaces.

In the Ottoman/Turkish political context, there is a pattern of the political elites' quest for a 'suitable' and 'appropriate' identity for the populations they rule and speak for, especially since the Tanzimat reformers' policy initiative of Ottomanism. If Ottomanism was the first paradigmatic shift in this quest which eliminated the institutional basis of the millet system of the empire, the Kemalists' successful shift to and construction of monolithic Turkishness by eliminating the 'Ottoman' identity was the second paradigmatic shift in this quest. The AK Party era in contemporary Turkey and the so-called Democratic Opening is the third significant conceptual shift which ethnically diversifies Turkishness by placing Islam at the center of national identification.

If one process traces these three cases of identity transformation, there is a common pattern of certain variables (under what conditions) that lead to nationhood change: 1) a favorable international context for change; 2) the influence of domestic non-state actors in increasing the leverage for change; and 3) the anti-status quo elites controlling the state by eliminating the pro-status quo veto players. I frame these conditions as external necessities and internal opportunities. As the first two conditions

make change a necessity for the state, the third condition creates the opportunity for change. Thus, while the first two conditions make nationhood change contextually possible, the third condition makes it happen rapidly. In the absence of the first two conditions, the third condition becomes a null element because the anti-status quo elites build their discourses in relation to the first two conditions. Although the first two conditions may lead to a very gradual change without the third condition, the third condition functions as the tipping point and it makes change largely possible and rapid.

Also, the first condition (international context) largely determines the direction of nationhood change (assimilation versus pluralism; legal exclusion versus legal inclusion). For instance, while the domestic Kurdish statehood threat led to the adoption of assimilation by the Kemalists in the 1920s, a similar threat led to more pluralist understandings of nationhood in the post-Cold War context since assimilation has become *actus non grata* (an unwelcome act). Yet, this does not mean that the state elites unconditionally adapt to the international normative and political system, but rather they vernacularize trending international discourses and practices for their own purposes and from their own standpoint. For instance, the AKP successfully framed the EU's liberal multicultural discourses within the boundaries of Islamic or neo-Ottoman understandings of diversity.

However, although these conditions articulate the approximate timing of nationhood change, they do not necessarily unpack the underlying logic of the state elites in adopting change. As I articulated nationhood change throughout the three cases, it becomes explicit that the metanarrative of the state elites in adopting change rather than the status quo in nationhood structure across the three cases is the ontological security of

the state. If Ottomanism was an antidote to the question of antistate rebellions (the Eastern Question) of the Ottoman Empire especially after the first successful separatist movement of the Greeks in 1832, the Kemalists' monolithic Turkishness was an antidote to the question of the various internal rebellions such as the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925 as well as an anchor for the future of the Turkish question in Anatolia. Finally, the AK Party's diversification of Turkishness with a broader attachment to Islam has been introduced to be an antidote to the PKK question in particular and the Kurdish question in general.

When the Ottoman Empire entered into the nineteenth century with considerable relative weakness in relation to the rapidly advancing European states, state centralization and popular sovereignty as opposed to loose dynastic and monarchical rules and inter-communal integration under the notions of fatherland were on the rise, especially due to the international dissemination of ideas and practices engendered by the French and American Revolutions. These practices and ideas were in fact game changers in the empires' domestic and foreign affairs. As new institutions and tools of governance gradually emerged surrounding the notions of popular sovereignty, fatherland, and constitutionalism, these ideas and practices formed the toolbox of political and military contestation among states on the one hand and between state actors and their domestic rivals on the other. First, the Ottoman Empire tuned into 'the Sick Man of Europe' having the cancer of the 'Eastern Question' (see Chapter 6) and thus became a site of external intervention by other states such as Great Britain and Russia due to being a late-comer in the adaptation of the new rules of the game. Second, Serbian uprisings in 1804 and Greek independence in 1832 which were directly influenced by and seized opportunities from

the changing international context shook and shaped the new generation of the Ottoman ruling elites' mindset. While the interconnectedness of the changing international context with the domestic antistate discourses made the traditional millet system a fault line and malfunctioning for the Ottoman state system, the rise and power consolidation of the mostly European-educated reformers within the Ottoman state with the beginning of the Tanzimat (1839) led to the policy of Ottomanism in order to establish a common and all-embracing Ottoman identity for different ethnoreligious communities of the empire. The ontological security of the state was at stake for these new reformist elites.

After World War I with the knockout defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the euphoria of Wilson principles and the crystalizing idea of nation-state as the new order of the international system increased the leverage of the various ethnoreligious communities' quest for statehood as stated clearly in the Treaty of Sevres of 1920 (see Chapter 7). The surrender-and-survive mentality of the Sultan and the Istanbul government not only detracted from the sovereignty of the state under the imperative of the Allied Powers but it also put the future existence of Turkishness in Anatolia at risk. In opposition to the Istanbul government, the Kuva-yi Milliye movement under the command of Mustafa Kemal came into being as a reaction to these changing political realities and raised its discourse of state and nation within this context. When Mustafa Kemal was able to control the state by eliminating all the veto players inside his movement and in Istanbul and harshly suppress any alternative claim-making uprisings such as the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925, his cadres subtly and insightfully designed inclusive but monolithic Turkishness as the identity of the nation and state. This nationhood design was congruent with the Wilsonian idea of national sovereignty and national self-determination which

would ontologically secure the state both externally and internally.

Similar to global trends around the world, post-Cold War Turkey has been a site of contestation between a state-imposed identity and the revival of counter-identities. As opposed to the Cold War political contestations within the meta-narratives of communism versus nationalism or communism versus capitalist democracy, identity politics has become the overarching site of contestation in world politics after the Cold War. The rise of ethnic nationalisms in Eastern Europe and Africa, indigenous activism and uprisings in Latin America, and minority rights discourses in the EU all revealed the global trend of identity politics. In Turkey, secular versus pious Muslim, Alevi versus Sunni, and Turkish versus Kurdish has been the contestation zones among state and non-state actors. Perhaps the secularization and politicization of the Kurdish identity under the PKK insurgency have functioned as the primary rival to monolithic Turkishness since it has been a direct threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state. Without doubt, this domestic antistate mobilization and discourse has risen and perpetuated in parallel with the post-Cold War international context. The founding cadres of the AK Party have been raised within this political context of the 1990s and built cross-cutting coalitions by incorporating liberals, conservatives, Kurds, and Turkish nationalists in its formative years of establishment. When the party gradually consolidated the state by eliminating the pro-status quo veto players such as the military and the judiciary, the Kemalist construction of monolithic Turkishness has been deconstructed since then by emphasizing ethnic diversity under the banner of neo-Ottoman communal harmony discourses. Yet, the AK Party's intentions have been largely motivated by the ontological security of the state. Thus, unless reforms are introduced, the ontological security of the

state would be at jeopardy (see Chapter 8).

Thus, in terms of revealing the logic of the state elites (the question of why) in changing the boundaries of nationhood across these three cases, I argue that the first and foremost motivation was the ontological security of the State. Normative aspirations or ideological motivations toward change were/are mostly pretexts for securing the state (Devletin Bekası). That being said, the metanarrative of this study is that the logic and the underlying motivation of the state elites in exclusion and inclusion of alternative identity groups into the state-defined nationhood are equivalent: that is the ontological security of the state. This does not necessarily mean that the state elites do not have any normative or ideational concerns in relation to their state's acceptance and recognition within the international system, but such concerns are a means to an end, not an end in itself. The state elites' ideas and interests are not necessarily mutually exclusive motivations.⁵⁵⁷ Moreover, as the policy debates after the September 11 (9/11) attacks in the United States have shown, security versus liberty are often seen as zero-sum mechanism. As I have shown throughout this study, the state can grant liberty (in relation to identity claim-making) in order to increase the (national) security of the state.

In changing state policies toward nationhood, the political elites are primarily reactive to the external and internal political realities. It is particularly reactive to the existing and deteriorating domestic crises or problems such as antistate nationalist mobilizations, secessionism, or minority rights claim-making which to some extent restrict the states' internal and external sovereignty. However, the attempts of the state

⁵⁵⁷ Mark Blyth, *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

elites to redefine the boundaries of nationhood through identity reforms are also proactive in order to prevent further deterioration of an identity crisis that would eventually become a direct threat to the survival and integrity of the state. Thus, the state is less likely to be primarily proactive since the state elites are less likely to initiate identity reforms unless an identity becomes a problem and a politically salient force. In other words, identity reforms of the state are first and foremost reactive especially after an identity question is securitized by the state. Without the securitization phase, states are less likely to act.

There is a role for dynamism in the typology above which I developed and discussed in Chapter 3. In other words, the construction of such typologies can change over time as the relationship between the state and populace change. Historically, the direction of change seems to be from hierarchical and asymmetric nationhood structures toward the monolithic and hyphenated types. As the empires were gradually replaced with the nation-states, the formation of hierarchical nationhood declined. While most empires did not enforce assimilation and did not see ethnic diversity as a threat to the imperial community, the principle idea of nation-states has been homogenization and assimilation of diverse ethnic groups into a singular community. However, in the transition phase from empires to nation-states, establishing homogeneity mostly remained an ideal in which the minority questions in many nation-states have become the political and social problem of the twentieth century. Thus, “the very condition of identifying with a minority nationality in a state defined as the state of and for a majority nationality is by definition asymmetrical, and always involves asymmetries of power, position, and

perspective.”⁵⁵⁸ In other words, the formation and spread of the nation-state system in the twentieth century has led to the various nationhood structures between the types of asymmetric and monolithic.

As the international norms have begun to be established around the human rights discourse beginning with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in 1966, the leverage of the nation-states to repress and discriminate against minority ethnic groups has started to decline. This trend of human rights and later group rights especially after the Cold War has led to the spread of monolithic and hyphenated nationhood types. Today, minority and group rights are still a very highly contested issue although the forced assimilation policies of the twentieth century are in decline.⁵⁵⁹ Recognition demands of minority ethnic groups and their political mobilization around the counter-discourses to the monolithic nationhood in the last few decades have also promoted hyphenated nationhood which I see as the inevitable outcome in states with ethnic minority questions. Thus, I would argue that hyphenated nationhood is likely to be the direction of change in the next couple of decades. Hyphenated nationhood (1) does not impose and force assimilation against the will of minority groups; (2) it recognizes the diverse ethnic identities with choices of self-identification (e.g., American or Mexican-American); and (3) it does not put the survival of the majority identity into risk (such as the recognition of the Kurds in Turkey would not put Turkishness at risk of extinction).

⁵⁵⁸ Brubaker et al. *Nationalist Politics*, p. 211.

⁵⁵⁹ For this debate, see Rogers Brubaker, “The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24(4): 531-548 (2001); Christian Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 55(2): 237-257 (2004).

Due to such characteristics, for policy implications, hyphenated nationhood seems to offer the best solution to the ethnic questions of nation-states in our contemporary political world, unless secessionism prevails.

Contributions and Limitations of the Study

Overall, I believe this study makes a contribution in three specific ways to the existing literature of ethnicity and nationalism, on the one hand and political change, on the other. The first contribution is conceptual: I introduced a new typology of nationhood structures that states can adopt (see Chapter 3). This ideal-type typology is built on the insufficiencies of the conventional civic and ethnic dichotomy. Since this dual dichotomy is mostly based on the nation-state system, my four axis typology introduces a more sophisticated variety of state policies toward nationhood that takes imperial and postnational forms of belonging (e.g., European Union) into account. I think this typology is generalizable in its ideal-type structure, which can describe different nationhood structures around the world.

The second contribution is theoretical in the sense of demonstrating the conditions under which state elites are more likely to shift their nationhood policies from one nationhood structure to another within the typology I introduced. This policy change debate toward nationhood in relation to ethnicity and minorities are mostly explained in three ways: 1) as a result of minority group mobilization within the literature of social movements; 2) as a result of political elite change and political elites' ideational change; and 3) as a result of external dynamics such as norm adaptation to a supranational institution. These explanations are mostly partial in the sense that they do not provide a more holistic approach which would take transnational, national, and local aspects into

account as a whole. However, my comparative historical analysis, which looks at nationhood policy changes in three different cases within their continuity and change, bringing the conditions of international context, domestic nonstate actors, and state elites together.

The third contribution is more analytic in that it underlines the logic of the state elites in changing their policies toward nationhood. As many studies explain such logic based on a normative standpoint, I approach it from a realist standpoint. This is why I argue that the logic of the state elites in adopting either inclusionary or exclusionary policies is alike (i.e., the ontological security of the state). Depending on the internal and external context, the state elites decide whether to include or exclude certain groups within the boundaries of nationhood. This decision is driven by the motivation to secure the state.

The major limitation of this study is the lack of more case studies that would demonstrate the patterns of nationhood change in different historical and geographical contexts. If more cases could be analyzed, the scope of my theoretical proposition could be strengthened. Although this study does not claim a generalizing argument in nationhood change over time, its theoretical discussion has depth and breadth to be applied in various different cases across time and space. A further research agenda entails such broadening of case studies based on the typological framework and theoretical argument developed in this study.

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