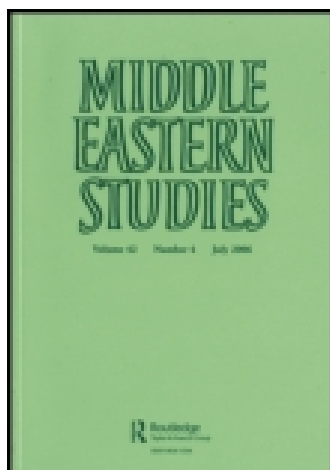


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Ethnic Groups at ‘Critical Junctures’: The Laz vs. Kurds

ZEKI SARIGIL

The Turkish Republic emerged onto the world stage as a secular and centralized nation state in the early 1920s from the remnants of the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual Ottoman Empire. The newly created nation state was established on the bedrock of Turkish nationalism. However, there are numerous ethnic groups in the country.¹ Among these, the Kurds constitute the second largest ethnic group after the Turks.²

Since its initiation, the Republic has encountered strong Kurdish ethnonationalism in both violent and peaceful forms. For instance, during the 1920s and 1930s, the Republic was contested by several Kurdish revolts with strong ethnoreligious elements. Major rebellions were: *Shaykh Said* (1925); *Ağrı* (1930); and *Dersim (Tunceli)* (1937–38).³ In the mid-1980s, an armed conflict emerged between the security forces and the separatist PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party, *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*). In the 1990s, the Kurdish movement led by the PKK became more ethnonationalist and also much more violent. For instance, from 1984 to 1999 the number of people killed is estimated to be more than 30,000 (half of them PKK members, one-quarter civilians and one-quarter security members) and the cost of fighting during this period was hundreds of billions of dollars.⁴

Besides these violent formations and movements, the country has also witnessed the founding and eventual closure of successive pro-Kurdish political parties operating within the Turkish political system in the last two decades. The major ones were the People’s Labour Party (HEP, 1990–93); the Democracy Party (DEP, 1993–94); the People’s Democracy Party (HADEP, 1994–2003); the Democratic Society Party (DTP, 2005–9). These parties were accused of involvement in separatist activities and fomenting propaganda against the indivisible unity of the state’s people and its territory and of helping the separatist PKK. As a result, they were banned by the Constitutional Court.⁵

Although Kurdish ethnonationalism has been one of the biggest challenges to the Turkish state and democracy in the last three decades,⁶ it is difficult to observe any similar movement within other groups such as the Laz, a distinct ethnic group of Caucasian origin mostly living at the eastern end of Turkey’s Black Sea shore in the coastal lowlands, especially in the provinces of Rize and Artvin. Large numbers of the Laz also reside in western provinces such as Bolu, Bursa, Istanbul, Kocaeli, Sakarya and Zonguldak and in Western Europe, especially in Germany.⁷

It becomes even more puzzling that although one can observe the revival of interest in Laz history, language and culture among Laz intellectuals and activists in the last two decades, especially among those living in Istanbul, Ankara and Germany, the Laz have never become embroiled in an ethnonationalist challenge against the Turkish state. For instance, the Laz activists have initiated certain periodicals in Lazuri such as *Ogni* (Istanbul, 1993–94), *Mjora* (2000), *Skani Nena* (2009–) and established certain cultural and solidarity organizations or associations such as *Sima Doğu Karadenizliler Hizmet Vakfı* (the Sima Foundation for People from East Black Sea Region, Izmit, 1996–); *Lazebura* (Cologne, 1998–) and *Laz Kültür Derneği* (the Laz Cultural Association, Istanbul, 2008–). The common purpose of these activities has been stated as the preservation and promotion of the Laz culture and language. Having such a goal, Laz activists have demanded publishing and TV broadcasting in Lazuri and the restoration of certain Laz place names.⁸

Several scholars conclude that this unprecedented activism should be treated as a cultural revival rather than an ethnonationalist movement. Benninghaus, for instance, observes that:

The feeling of being a separate ethnic group, which is based especially on the awareness of speaking a language completely different from Turkish, did not lead the Laz into political or cultural opposition to the Turks as has apparently been the case with many Kurds.⁹

Similarly, Beller-Hann and Hann, who conducted extensive fieldwork in the region between 1983 and 1999, conclude that ‘At present, few Laz see themselves as constituting an *etnik grup* [ethnic group]. They feel more strongly about other belongings: to localities, to counties, to their country and to the universal community of Islam.’¹⁰ With respect to Laz intellectuals, Aksamaz proclaims that ‘Laz intellectuals and activists do not endorse/approve of ethnic nationalism, neither do they sympathize with ethno-political organizations. However, they are sensitive about the survival of their language and culture.’¹¹

Evidence from the author’s interviews with several Laz activists and intellectuals also shows the absence of ethnonationalist orientations among the Laz (see the appendix for a list of interviewees). Almost all interviewed activists emphasize that their efforts at promoting Laz language and culture cannot be regarded as ethnic mobilization or a type of ethnic nationalism. For instance, Gülay Burhan, the chairperson of SIMA, stated to the author that:

I would like to stress that our objective is to keep the Laz language and culture alive. However, we are definitely against any ethnic nationalism or separatism. The Laz people identify themselves primarily as Turks and secondarily as Laz. They think that they are part of Turkey and they have a strong will to fight for the interests of the country.

Similarly, Mehmedali Baris Besli, the chairperson of the Laz Cultural Association, indicated that ‘The Laz people view themselves as both Turks and Laz ... Our movement cannot be labelled as ethnonationalism. We are only concerned with the

protection and promotion of the Laz language and culture.' Likewise, Aytekin Lokumcu from the Laz Cultural and Solidarity Association (Ankara) expressed that 'We only care about our language and culture ... We do not have any further demands or needs such as education in Lazuri, the recognition of Lazuri as an official language, a political party or any type of autonomy or separation.' Some Laz activists even stated to the author that the demands for cultural rights such as broadcasting in Lazuri are not really an issue for the majority of the Laz people.¹²

Thus, a certain degree of cultural revival initiated and promoted by the Laz intellectuals and activists in the last decades does not change the fact that the Laz have avoided engagement in an ethnonationalist challenge vis-à-vis the Turkish state. Rather, one can discern instead strong Turkish nationalism within the Laz community. For instance, as Table 1 shows, the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP) has been relatively more popular in the East Black Sea region, compared to south-eastern Turkey inhabited mostly by the Kurds. This provides further evidence for the weakness of ethnonationalist orientations among the Laz.

In brief, even if certain sections of the Laz people are increasingly aware of their distinct ethnic origins, language and culture, interestingly they tend to treat those differences as something embedded within Turkishness. In other words, contrary to the Kurdish case, any ethnic consciousness among the Laz does not cause the rejection of Turkish identity or any tension with the Turkish state. As Hann observes:

if pressed, most will state that their language is not Turkish and must be related to other languages of the Caucasus. But even those who do associate the language clearly with the Caucasus do not necessarily see this as diminishing their identity as Turks.¹³

Table 1. The electoral performance of the ultranationalist MHP in the Southeast and East Black Sea regions.

Region	Province	1995 (%)	1999 (%)	2002 (%)	2007 (%)
Southeast	Diyarbakır	1.95	2.76	1.52	2.45
	Van	7.14	8.04	3.21	3.24
	Siirt	6.87	5.01	0	2.77
	Şanlıurfa	3.74	8.49	7.94	5.38
	Muş	5.85	4.36	3.09	2.31
	Mardin	5.43	1.93	2.77	1.33
	Hakkari	2.17	2.04	3.99	1.85
	Şırnak	4.26	4.99	2.88	2.87
	Batman	1.49	2.07	1.98	0.94
	Bitlis	7.56	11.36	6.44	5.73
	<i>Regional Average</i>	<i>4.65</i>	<i>5.11</i>	<i>3.38</i>	<i>2.89</i>
East Black Sea	Trabzon	7.72	21.91	8.4	14.06
	Rize	1.91	9.02	3.17	5.87
	Artvin	6.41	16.7	10.24	10.97
	<i>Regional Average</i>	<i>5.35</i>	<i>15.88</i>	<i>7.27</i>	<i>10.30</i>
	<i>National Average</i>	<i>8.18</i>	<i>17.98</i>	<i>8.35</i>	<i>14.17</i>

Sources: <http://www.ysk.gov.tr> and <http://www.belgenet.net>.

This study is concerned with this puzzling contrast between these two groups¹⁴ and broaches the following questions: How can we explain the lack of ethnonationalism among the Laz in Turkey, while the elements of the Kurdish population have involved in a rather strong ethnonationalist movement against the state? What lessons can be learned from this case that could be applicable to the broader theoretical debate on ethnonationalism phenomenon?

This article argues that the existing structural, agential and identity-related theoretical frameworks remain rather limited in explaining this contrast. As an alternative approach, this study provides a ‘historicist perspective’. It is shown that the Laz people experienced an ‘existential threat’ due to the Russian occupation of their historic homelands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These catastrophic events constituted an exogenous shock for the Laz community and promoted their statist and nationalist (Turkish) orientations and loyalties. Although the Kurds went through similar calamities as a result of the Russian advance into the Eastern Anatolia, such a path did not emerge among the Kurds because of tribal divisions and hostilities. This analysis suggests that certain contingent or stochastic occurrences at specific time periods might either exacerbate or stifle ethnonationalist tendencies within an ethnic group. It is concluded that ‘history’ also matters in the ethnonationalist processes. Therefore, the path dependent approach, in particular its ideational version, appears to be rather useful in enhancing our apprehension of the ethnonationalism phenomenon.

The article proceeds as follows. The following section briefly presents the main premises of various theoretical accounts on the sources of ethnonationalism and addresses the extent to which these explanations shed light on the puzzling divergence between the Laz and Kurds in Turkey. The article then presents an alternative approach and suggests that the idea of path dependence might be more helpful in our efforts to comprehend ethnonationalist processes. The subsequent part applies these arguments to the Laz case. The concluding section restates the main arguments of the study and presents some implications for broader theoretical debate on the ethnonationalism phenomenon.

In the last few decades, ethnic and religious tensions have constituted the most salient source of conflict around the world. Parallel to this, the scholarly community has paid increasing attention to the various aspects of ethnonationalism. The growing literature emphasizes the role of various *structures* – institutional, political or economic – and also *agential* and *identity-related* factors as driving forces behind ethnonationalist ideas and movements. The following section briefly presents the main premises of some of those theoretical frameworks and addresses the question to what extent these accounts might be useful in understanding the puzzling difference in the degree of ethnonationalist tendencies among the Laz and Kurds in Turkey.

As a structural approach, institutional theory asserts that institutional structures have autonomous causal impact on observable political outcomes and behaviours.¹⁵ From an institutional perspective, one might posit the possibility of state-sponsored discrimination along group lines as creating this difference.¹⁶ However, this is not valid in the Turkish case because it is difficult to maintain that the state has been discriminating against the Kurds while upholding the interests of the Laz people. For instance, the newly created Republic based on Turkish nationalism officially forbade

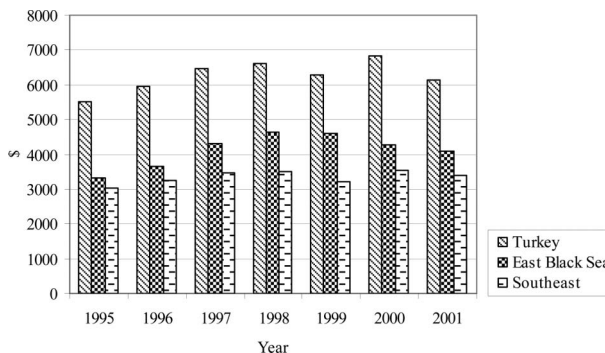
the designation of Lazistan¹⁷ in 1926. The Republic even banned speaking Lazuri in public places such as schools and changed several Laz place names in the region.¹⁸ Another interesting example of state reluctance to recognize Laz identity is that the government also banned the Lazuri newspaper *Mç'ita Muruntskhi (Kızıl Yıldız)* in 1930.¹⁹ Thus, in tandem with similar actions towards the Kurds, the Turkish state also ignored the linguistic and cultural differences of the Laz.²⁰

Approaches emphasizing the role of socio-economic structures draw attention to the impact of socio-economic and material structures such as capitalist development and modernization processes on ethnopolitical movements. One prevalent argument, for instance, asserts that ethnonationalism might result from the uneven development of capitalist economy, which also refers to *relative deprivation theory*. For this theory, the deprivation of a certain group creates disappointment among the members of that group. This in return leads to resentment, aggression and hostility vis-à-vis the perceived aggressor(s) and consequently to ethno-political mobilization in different forms.²¹ Such an account of ethnonationalism also fails to solve our puzzle as there is not really a major socio-economic or modernization gap between these two regions. For instance, Figure 1 provides a comparison of income levels in the Southeast and East Black Sea regions. As clearly seen, average per capita income in both of these regions has been below the national average. In other words, both of these regions constitute economically the least developed parts of Turkey. Despite this, ethnonationalism is present in one region but not in the other. This fact raises doubts about the validity of economic approaches in this case. In other words, if economic underdevelopment triggers ethnonationalist tendencies, then we should have seen a similar development in the East Black Sea region.

Agential approaches, on the other hand, highlight the role of *human agency* in the rise of ethno-nationalist movements. One theoretical orientation within this approach is *elite analysis*, which postulates that elite interaction and struggle for power plays a significant role in ethnic mobilization. For instance, Brass professes that:

ethnicity and nationalism are not 'givens', but are social and political constructions. They are creations of elites, who draw upon, distort, and

Figure 1. A comparison of income levels (per capita income, ppp) in the East Black Sea and Southeast regions of Turkey. Turkish Statistical Institution (<http://www.tuik.gov.tr>).



sometimes fabricate materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves.²²

Similarly, Lecours suggests that elites are 'not only active in nationalist mobilization but also in the construction, transformation and politicization of ethnic identities'.²³ As political or ethnic entrepreneurs, elites construct and manipulate symbols, myths or ideas to legitimize their power, to realize their own interests and to compete with other elites internal or external to their group. Such competition and conflict among political elites are expected to constitute the dynamic force behind ethnonationalist processes. Thus, for the elite analysis, ethnic identity is not a fixed or given disposition but something instrumentally invented or constructed by elites or entrepreneurs motivated by their self-interests.

There are, however, some difficulties with such agential accounts. First, these approaches are criticized for ignoring the cultural and historical roots of ethnic identity.²⁴ Secondly, and most importantly, we should not assume that elites would always politicize and mobilize ethnic identities. In other words, it is problematic to assume that the struggles of elites for power would automatically lead to creation, transformation and crystallization of ethnic identities. Rather, elites might also be involved in certain actions or inactions which might depoliticize existing ethnic identities. This can actually be observed in our case. Although Kurdish political elites (e.g. the leaders of pro-Kurdish ethnic parties in the 1990s) involved in various activities of identity construction, interest definition and politicization and mobilization of Kurdish ethnic identity,²⁵ we do not see such a tendency among the Laz leaders and activists. Instead, there is a tendency among the latter toward Turkish nationalism rather than ethnic particularities. In brief, rather than solving the problem, agential analyses, emphasizing elite-driven, instrumentalist methods of identity creation, raise further puzzling questions. Hence, such analyses also remain trifling in our efforts to grasp the contrast between the Laz and Kurds.

In elucidating the surge of nationalist or ethnonationalist tendencies, identity approaches draw attention to the presence of a distinct group identity or consciousness constituted by certain objective (e.g. kinship ties or common descent, language) and/or symbolic or ideational (e.g. norms, values, traditions, symbols) elements. One orientation within this approach, for instance, treats nationalist or ethnonationalist activity as a result of 'historical ethnic identities', which is regarded as something 'primordial', 'natural' and 'given', eventually and spontaneously appearing in political forms. For instance, Connor emphasizes the *sense* of kinship as an important driving force behind ethnonationalism. Using his words, 'the national bond, because it is based upon belief in common descent, ultimately bifurcates humanity into "us" and "them"'.²⁶ According to Connor, ethnonational identity is strong and resistant to change because it is based on strong emotional feelings linked with ethnicity, which has psychological roots in common descent. Thus, an ethnonational bond is not necessarily conscious and rational but rather subconscious, emotional and psychological.²⁷ Smith likewise rejects the idea that nationalism might simply be a product of elite creation and manipulation. Instead, he notes that national identity is based on certain pre-existing myths, memories, values, symbols and ethnicity (i.e. a given ethnic identity).²⁸

However, identity-related approaches are also inadequate to explain the differences for a very simple reason. If the presence of a distinct group identity constituted by common descent, language or cultures is the driving force behind ethnonationalist mobilization, then one would expect to observe the same tendency among the Laz, who do have strong kinship or linguistic ties. Besides a distinct language (i.e. Lazuri) and a historic homeland (Lazona or Lazistan), the Laz also have a distinct culture with particular folk tales, music (performed by *tulum* and *kemençe*), dances (e.g. *horon*), traditions and values.²⁹ Despite such distinct group characteristics, ethnonationalist tendencies among the Laz have never manifested themselves in the history of the Turkish Republic. As anthropologist Hann also concludes, 'The Lazi of North-east Turkey have a fairly clear profile as a linguistic category, but they currently fall well short of mobilization as an ethnic group, let alone political separatism.'³⁰

Regarding group features, one might further argue that 'group size' should also be taken into account. It is a fact that compared to the Kurds, the Laz constitute a relatively minor ethnic group inside Turkey. This difference in group size might account for the absence of ethnonationalist orientations among the Laz. Having said that, the size hypothesis remains as *inconclusive* because several cases across the world do indicate that not only major groups (e.g. Canada's Quebec region, 23 per cent; Sri Lanka's Tamils, 14 per cent) but also much smaller groups (e.g. Georgia's Ossetia 1 per cent; France's Basque, 0.4 per cent; Russia's Chechnya 1 per cent) also involve ethnonationalist or separatist movements.

In brief, none of the possible explanations presented above sufficiently address the puzzling divergence between the Laz and Kurds. This study suggests that ethnonationalism might also emerge out of the constellation of certain stochastic events at specific periods of time. In other words, the existence or absence of ethnonationalism among the members of a certain ethnic group might be due to some *contingent* occurrences or non-occurrences at certain historical junctures, which create self-reinforcing patterns across time (i.e. a path dependent process). If that is the case, then *historicist* approaches might be also helpful in our efforts to grasp the ethnonationalism phenomenon.³¹ Thus, the following section conducts a *plausibility probe* of the impact of historical contingencies on the evolution or suppression of ethnonationalist tendencies among the members of a particular ethnic group. It will be shown that 'historical causation', which refers to the processes in which 'some original ordering moment triggers particular patterns, and the activity is continuously reproduced even though the original event no longer occurs',³² provides us a much better understanding of this intriguing contrast.

The notion of path dependence has been quite popular over the last two decades. Probably because of this, one can detect quite different usages and conceptualizations of this fashionable term. The following, however, is a brief presentation of its defining features. This approach basically contends that 'what happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time'.³³ Thus, it is emphasized that history matters because 'where we go next depends not only on where we are now, but also upon where we have been'.³⁴ This, however, does not mean that any continuity, pattern or sequence of events constitutes a path dependent process. It is important to

indicate that paths arise out of some *contingent, accidental occurrences*, either initially or at critical junctures/moments that open new paths.³⁵ Such contingent occurrences are important because, once they take place at a certain point in time, they have a significant and long-standing impact, leading to new sequences of events or patterns.³⁶

Paths, once emerged, become inflexible in the sense that further steps make shifting from the extant path to another one very difficult.³⁷ Put differently, once an equilibrium is reached, this equilibrium maintains itself or locks itself in.³⁸ Although a path emerges out of stochastic processes, it is reproduced through certain causal mechanisms. A highly emphasized mechanism of path reproduction (self-reinforcement) is increasing returns (or positive feedback processes). This notion suggests that when a certain path produces increasing benefits with its continued adoption, this creates incentives for path maintenance, leading to inertia.³⁹ Pierson, for instance, states that 'each step along a particular path produces consequences which make that path more attractive for the next round'.⁴⁰ Such positive feedback processes over time make it more and more challenging to switch to another path or to return to the initial conditions.

Regarding 'change', the general tendency in the path dependent approach is to treat it as an incremental, evolutionary development (i.e. path following).⁴¹ Substantial, revolutionary or path-breaking changes are expected to happen at critical moments or junctures, which emerge after a long period of continuity.⁴² At these branching points, which are usually created by some externally driven events,⁴³ a new path unfolds.

One drawback of the path dependent approach, however, is that its extant versions are primarily concerned with the efficiency or the costs and benefits of the existing path. In other words, it suffers from a materialist bias. The materialist propensity is rather eminent in its applications in institutional economics.⁴⁴ As Greener observes, the application of path dependence in economics is 'almost inextricably about increasing returns',⁴⁵ which is based on utilitarian cost-benefit assessments. The disposition to materialist factors and dynamics in the path dependent approach is not limited to its applications in institutional economics. One can find the same tendency in political studies. For instance, Pierson, who has provided the most systematic studies of path dependence in political science, embraces the same materialist 'increasing returns' logic in economics and employs it in political analyses.⁴⁶ For instance, he suggests that:

In an increasing returns process, the probability of further steps along the same path increases with each move down that path. This is because the *relative* benefits of the current activity compared with other possible options increase over time. To put it in a different way, the costs of exit – of switching to some previously plausible alternative – rise.⁴⁷

This constitutes a limitation because non-material factors and considerations (i.e. ideas, values and legitimacy concerns) might also constitute a path. In other words, actors may stick to a certain path not because of an expected utility down the path but primarily because of believing in the appropriateness of certain ideas and values.⁴⁸ Thus, path maintenance might be primarily a non-strategic process.

The main mechanism of self-reinforcement or path reproduction in such ideational continuities is taken-for-grantedness or legitimation rather than cost-benefit assessments (i.e. increasing returns), which is also known as 'cognitive locking'. For example, in his study of the continuation of the Scandinavian model of the welfare state, Cox shows that although the Scandinavian model experienced several reforms in the 1990s, the distinctiveness of the model remained intact due to the attachment to the 'idea' of the 'Scandinavian model', which is based on a particular combination of the values of universality, solidarity and market independence (decommodification).⁴⁹ This study expects that such cognitive paths should also play some role in ethnonationalist processes.

Since nationalist and statist tendencies among the Laz are well-known and a lot has been written on the evolution and persistence of Kurdish ethnonationalism in the Turkish context, the following section focuses on the stage of *path emergence* (i.e. the rise of contrasting orientations between these two groups) rather than path maintenance or evolution. In other words, by employing ideational version of the path dependent approach, the following part explicates the emergence of different orientations among Kurdish and Laz people vis-à-vis the central authority.

As indicated above, the Laz are known as one of the autochthon peoples of the Caucasus. Living in a region with substantial geopolitical importance, the Laz communities witnessed decades-long struggles and warfare between the Ottomans and Russians aimed at the conquest of the Caucasian territories. After putting an end to the Pontic/Greek Trabzon Kingdom in 1461, the Ottomans also incorporated a substantial part of the historic Lazistan region (i.e. the south-eastern shore of the Black Sea, between Trabzon and Batumi) in the late sixteenth century. The Ottoman advance in the region led to the gradual conversion of Christian Laz people to Islam. The conversion, which accelerated after 1580, was almost complete by the late nineteenth century.

On the Russian side, beginning with the reign of Tsar Peter I the Great (1689–1725), which turned the Russian tsardom into an Empire, the Russian interest in the southern and Caucasian lands, inhabited mostly by Muslims, increased.⁵⁰ Although the Russian influence over the region declined following the death of Peter I the Great, Russian expansionist policies towards the Caucasus were revitalized under the reign of Catherine II the Great (1762–96). For the Russians, the Caucasus was an ideal base camp from which they could achieve their imperial projects in Asia.⁵¹ Thus, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Russians engaged in large-scale warfare against the Ottoman Empire and Persia for control of the Caucasus. Following the 1828–29 Ottoman–Russian War, the Russians dominated the majority of the Caucasus. Finally defeating the Circassian resistance in 1864, the Russians were able to complete the conquest of most of the Caucasus.

McCarthy, a prominent student of Ottoman history and demography, suggests that 'much of Russian expansion was at the cost of Muslim peoples'.⁵² The Russian advance in the Caucasus led to the emigration of large numbers of Muslim people from the region.⁵³ Much of the Muslim population of North Caucasus, Abkhazia and coastal Georgia, including the Laz, fled or was forced to move to the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁴ The Laz people suffered even more during and after the 1877–78 Ottoman–Russian War (the 93 War), which was also disastrous for the Ottoman

Empire. According to the Congress of Berlin (1878), which settled the war and redrew the Ottoman borders, the South Caucasian region and the large areas of Lazistan (i.e. Batumi and Artvin) were given to the Russian tsar.⁵⁵

To tighten its grip over the Caucasian lands, the Russians pursued a policy of ‘Russification’ of the Caucasian people. McCarthy, for instance, suggests that:

The seeming intent was to replace Muslim demographic and political domination in the Caucasus with Christian demographic and Russian political preponderance as in the Crimea. Their demographic policy had two pillars – the exodus of Muslims and the immigration of Christian elements, Slavs in the North Caucasus, Armenians in the South Caucasus and later in Anatolia.⁵⁶

Those who resisted the Russian conquest or ‘Russification’ measures faced poverty, expulsion or death.⁵⁷ Thus having suffered political, economic and cultural pressures from the Russians, many Laz and Georgians left their historic homelands and migrated to Anatolia, especially to provinces in Western Anatolia such as Bursa, Yalova, Karamürsel, Izmit, Adapazarı and Sapanca.⁵⁸ For instance, according to the Ottoman statistics, around 40,000 Laz and Georgians had settled in the Empire by 1882.⁵⁹

After controlling the region for almost 40 years, the Russians expanded their occupation to the rest of the East Black Sea region during the First World War (1914–18) and invaded the provinces of Rize and Trabzon which led to the second round of suffering and emigration.⁶⁰ However, following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the Russian forces had to withdraw from the region and finally left the area to the Ottoman-Turkish forces in March 1918.⁶¹

The Russian invasion and occupation of a large part of Lazistan for almost four decades and the associated ‘Russification’ measures such as forcing the local people to migrate to the Anatolian inlands, the deployment of a Christian population in the region, mass deportations to other parts of Russia such as Siberia or mass atrocities against civilian populations⁶² constituted a major trauma for the Laz people.⁶³ The sufferings caused by Russian imperial expansion, however, strengthened the Laz’s loyalty and attachment to the Ottoman-Turkish state.⁶⁴ Therefore, by either joining the voluntary civilian battalions or participating in the regular military forces, the Laz people sided with the Ottomans and heroically fought against the Russians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁶⁵ The memories of Russian presence in the region are still alive in the minds of the people. The local people, for instance, remember that period as ‘Black times’.⁶⁶ Furthermore, once occupied regions still organize ceremonies to celebrate their liberation from occupying Russian forces. The Laz associations or organizations in Western Anatolia also commemorate the liberation from foreign occupation by organizing special meetings and activities during the liberation days of their respective provinces.

However, we see a considerably different picture on the Kurdish side. It is a historical fact that the Kurds, who enjoyed a varying degree of autonomy under Ottoman rule,⁶⁷ experienced similar devastations due to occupation by a foreign power. During the First World War, the Russians, assisted by Armenian nationalists and rebels, also advanced into Eastern Anatolia and invaded Erzurum, Erzincan, Muş, Van and Bitlis in 1915 and 1916.⁶⁸ The Ottoman-Turkish forces under the

leadership of Mustafa Kemal, however, regained Muş and Bitlis provinces, and in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917) the Russians also withdrew from Eastern Anatolia.

Similar to the local people in Lazistan, the Kurds also suffered from the Russian invasion and occupation of a major part of their historic homelands.⁶⁹ It is, however, rather striking that the foreign invasion and occupation of Kurdish regions and the resultant suffering did not create a similar patriotic ideational path among the Kurds. Why not? The answer lies with *tribalism*, which has constituted the heart of Kurdish social organization.⁷⁰ While it is true that many Kurdish tribal chieftains took sides with the Ottoman-Turkish forces and mobilized their tribesmen against the Russians and Armenian nationalists in the region, it is also a fact that several other leading Kurdish tribal chieftains and their followers, alienated by the Ottoman centralization policies of the nineteenth century, either cooperated with the Russian forces or deserted in droves from the Ottoman army during the war.⁷¹ Some other Kurdish tribal leaders such as Sayyid Abdulkadir and Bedirhanis sought to attain British support for Kurdish autonomy or independence.⁷²

One assumption in the literature is that tribal structures have constituted a major obstacle to the rise of Kurdish nationalism.⁷³ One might, however, interpret the historical record differently. As intermediary actors between the central authority and local people, Kurdish tribal leaders always played rather *political* roles not only in the Ottoman Empire but also in the Republican period.⁷⁴ For instance, to maintain their political and economic prerogatives, the tribal chieftains frequently revolted against the Ottoman policies of centralization throughout the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ In the later period, the Kurdish tribal aristocracy involved in relatively more nationalistic activities.⁷⁶ For example, in the early decades of the twentieth century, Kurdish notables formed several pro-Kurdish societies in urban centres such as the *Hewî-Kürt Cemiyeti* (Kurdish Hope Society); the *Kürdistan Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Society for the Mutual Aid and Progress of Kurdistan), the *Kürt İstiklal Cemiyeti* (Society for Kurdish Independence), the *Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti* (Society for the Advancement of Kurdistan) and the *Kürt Teşkilat-ı İctimaiye Cemiyeti* (Society for the Kurdish Social Organization). The educated members of tribal or religious elite also initiated numerous pro-Kurdish periodicals or newspapers such as *Kurdistan* (the first newspaper in Kurdish), *Roja Kurd* (Kurdish Day), *Hetawe Kurd* (Kurdish Sun), *Jin* (Woman) and *Bangi Kurd* (Kurdish Call).⁷⁷ These pro-Kurdish formations demanded either autonomy or independence for the Kurds.⁷⁸ This unprecedented activism organized and led by tribal chieftains (*aghas*), notable families and sheikhs abided during the early Republic and led to major ethnoreligious revolts posing a survival threat for the newly established Turkish state in the 1920s and 1930s. This trajectory indicates that tribal structures and feuds due to personal and factional interests might also have created favourable conditions for the rise of nationalism among the Kurds. While some tribal chieftains remained loyal to the Sultan/Caliph, others were hostile to those tribes involved in nationalist or secessionist movements and cooperated with major powers in the region. Using the words of Özoğlu, 'Kurdish notables, or *ayan*, were the catalyst for social and political change among the Kurds and played a major role in the emergence and subsequent development of Kurdish nationalism'.⁷⁹

Considering all of the above, the Russian occupation of Lazistan for several decades constituted a major exogenous shock for the local people. Large groups of the Laz fled Russian expansion and settled in the western and eastern parts of the Black Sea and the Marmara region. Experiencing such a calamity, the Laz viewed the Ottoman-Turkish state as ‘saviour’ and ‘protector’. Consequently, the Laz had rather patriotic and nationalist feelings and attachments to the Ottoman-Turkish state. Despite the state’s non-recognition of a separate Laz ethnic identity, this cognitive path has persisted throughout the Republican era (1923 onwards). Therefore, the awareness of non-Turkic origins and unprecedented cultural activism among the Laz in recent decades does not lead to ethnonationalist defiance against the Turkish state within this ethnic group. As Beller-Hann and Hann also observe:

Even though many [Laz] are aware that Greek and other languages were widely spoken along the Black Sea coast until quite recently, and many can trace their family origins back to territories that lie outside the present boundaries of the modern Turkish state, virtually all the residents of Lazistan consider themselves to be Turks and evaluate this identity positively. *They take this identity to a large extent for granted.*⁸⁰

Thus, the Russian occupation of the region and Russification policies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was an exogenous shock that created a critical juncture at which a new ideational path (i.e. strong attachments and loyalties to the Ottoman-Turkish state) emerged within the Laz community. The taken-for-grantedness of Turkishness or positive approach towards that identity among the Laz is due to such a ‘cognitive locking’. As a result, the Laz people not only reject ethnonationalism but also openly denigrate those groups involving in such actions against the state. Almost all interviewed activists, for instance, forthrightly expressed their disapproval of Kurdish demands for certain group rights (i.e. education in Kurdish) or regional autonomy. Such actions are simply considered as ‘inappropriate’ or ‘treacherous’.

On the Kurdish side, however, we see a substantially different picture. Interestingly, the impact of this exogenous shock was conditioned by some endogenous factors (i.e. tribalism) and led to a different outcome. Although the war and migration effect fostered statist and nationalist (Turkish) orientations and created unfavourable soil for the seeds of ethnonationalism among the Laz, the prevalence of tribal divisions and hostilities within Kurdish society prevented the critical juncture from cultivating a similar pro-state ideational path among the Kurds. Contrary to the Laz, the Kurds viewed the state as the ‘occupier’ of their land rather than as their protector. Such an understanding continued during the Republican period. While the state denial and suppression of different ethnic identities accelerated Kurdish activism and promoted the ethnonationalist path among the Kurds during the Republican period, the fear of a Pontic state in the East Black Sea region and the communist Soviet threat reinforced the nationalist/statist path on the Laz side.

In conclusion, the existing structural, agential and identity-related factors have limited leverage in accounting for the absence of ethnonationalism among the Laz, while the Kurds have been engaged in a major ethnonationalist challenge against the

Turkish state. This study suggested that solving this puzzle requires a historically sensitive approach. The Laz people experienced an 'existential threat' due to the Russian invasion and occupation of their historical homelands in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These catastrophic events nourished statist and nationalist (Turkish) orientations among the Laz. In other words, relatively stronger patriotic orientations within the Laz community emerged at a particular historical juncture and then reproduced itself over time. Similar experience and suffering due to Russian advances into Eastern Anatolia did not generate a similar patriotic path among the Kurds because this exogenous trigger interacted with an endogenous factor (i.e. tribal divisions and hostilities) and led to a totally different outcome.

Regarding broader implications, given the likelihood that past events and memories should constitute an important place in the formation of ethnic consciousness and identity, it becomes surprising that extant theoretical frameworks make short shrift of 'contingent historical conditions' as opposed to 'constant' causes in the analyses of ethnonationalist processes. This study indicates that certain contingent, accidental occurrences at certain points in time might either promote or quell ethnonationalist tendencies. Thus, 'history' also matters in ethnonationalist processes in the sense that contingent occurrences or non-occurrences might have a long-lasting impact on ethnic consciousness. This finding denotes that path dependence, especially its ideational version sensitive to cognitive locking processes, would be a valuable tool to employ in studies of ethnonationalism. The research results finally imply that the phenomena of ethnicity and ethnonationalism might also appear as elastic, contingent and constructed rather than as essential or primordial.

Notes

1. See P.A. Andrews, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey* (Göttingen: Hubert and Co. 1989).
2. Although the origin of the Kurds is still disputed, one prevalent view asserts that the Kurds are the descendants of Medes, an Indo-European tribe. See N. Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism* (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), p.3; P.J. White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers? The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2000), p.14. There has been no consensus on the size of the Kurdish population in Turkey. For a widely-shared view, there are about 25 million Kurds living in the Middle East and at least half of them live in Turkey, corresponding to 17 per cent of total population (see M.M. Gunter, *The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma* (Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), p.1; D. McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), p.3. Regarding its linguistic and religious characteristics, the Kurdish language is identified as a member of the Iranian languages, which stem from the Indo-European family (Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*, p.4; White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, p.16; W. Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006), p.11. Like their Turkish compatriots, most Kurds are Sunni Muslim.
3. See Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*, pp.81–9; Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, pp.203–18; White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, pp.54–92.
4. For more discussion on Kurdish ethnonationalism in Turkey, see H.J. Barkey and G.E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998); Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*; M.M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); K. Kirişçi and G.M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of Trans-state Ethnic Conflict* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997); McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*; R. Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and The Middle East* (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 1996); White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary*

- Modernizers?*; M.H. Yavuz, 'Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol.7 (2001), pp.1–24.
5. Currently, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), set up as a successor to the banned DTP, represents the above-mentioned Kurdish interests in the political arena.
 6. See also Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey*, p.127; Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s*, p.1; M. Somer, 'Resurgence and Remaking of Identity: Civil Beliefs, Domestic and External Dynamics, and the Turkish Mainstream Discourse on Kurds', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.38 (2005), p.595.
 7. Even though the people living on the Black Sea coast anywhere east of Samsun are sometimes referred as 'Laz' in Turkey, the term 'Laz' in this study refers to a specific ethnic group mostly living on the East Black Sea coast (concentrated in the region between Pazar and Sarp districts) and speaking the Laz language (also known as Lazuri). See also I. Beller-Hann and C. Hann, *Turkish Region: State, Market and Social Identities on the East Black Sea Coast* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2001) and M.E. Meeker, 'The Black Sea Turks: Some Aspects of Their Ethnic and Cultural Background', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.2 (1971), p.321. There are competing arguments about the origins of the Laz. For instance, they have been associated with the Georgians: M. Vanılışı and A. Tandilava, *Lazların Tarihi* (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1992)); the Turks (M.F. Kızıoğlu, 'Bir Kitabın Anatomisi: Gürcüstan', *Milli Işık*, Vol.3 (1969), pp.10–13; A. Sırtlı, *Doğu Karadeniz Türklüğü (Gürcüler, Hemşinliler, Lazlar, Çepniler) ve Karadeniz Fıkraları* (Istanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1996)) or the Greeks (O. Asan, *Pontos Kültürü* (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1996)). A more convincing argument, however, is that the Laz constitute one of the autochthon peoples of the Caucasus, with a distinct language and culture (see A.I. Aksamaz, *Dil, Tarih, Kültür ve Geleneleriyle Lazlar* (Istanbul: Sorun Yayınları, 2000); R. Benninghaus, 'The Laz: An Example of Multiple Identification', in P.A. Andrews (ed.), *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey* (Göttingen: Hubert and Co. 1989), pp.497–502; Beller-Hann and Hann, *Turkish Region*; W. Feurstein, *Lazuri Alfabe; Lazca Alfabe; Entwurf eines Lazischen Alphabetes (Parpali 1)* (Gundelfingen: Lazebara, 1984); B. Geiger, T. Halasi-Kun, A.H. Kuipers and K.H. Menges, *Peoples and Languages of the Caucasus: A Synopsis* (Hague: Mouton and Co. Printers, 1959), pp.14–15; M.R. Özgün, *Lazlar* (Istanbul: Çiviayızları, 1996).
- The Laz language (*Lazuri*), for instance, is classified as one of the main languages of the Southern Caucasian family (Ibero-Caucasian or Kartvelian). It is related to Mingrelian and more distantly to Georgian languages. Regarding religion, the vast majority of the Laz are Sunni Muslims. There are also substantial numbers of Christian Laz people, known as Mingrelians, living in the Samegrelo region of Georgia (i.e. the western part). However, the majority of the Laz (around 1.5 million) reside in Turkey.
8. 'Lazlar da TV istiyor', *Radikal*, 13 Jan. 2009; 'Bu Lazlar da nereden çıktı?', *Birgün*, 6 July 2008. See also Aksamaz, *Dil, Tarih, Kültür ve Geleneleriyle Lazlar*, pp.25–6; S. Koçiva, *Lazona: Laz Halk Gerçekliği Üzerine* (Istanbul: Tüzmamanlaryayincilik, 2000), pp.96–7; H. Yılmaz, 'Constructing a New Laz Identity in Turkey and its Future Prospects', in Y. Kalogeras, E. Arapoglou and L. Manney (eds.), *Transcultural Localisms: Responding to Ethnicity in a Globalized World* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2006), pp.266–9.
 9. Benninghaus, 'The Laz', p.501.
 10. Beller-Hann and Hann, *Turkish Region*, p.208. See also C. Hann, 'Ethnicity, Language and Politics in North-east Turkey', in C. Govers and H. Vermeulen (eds.), *The Politics of Ethnic Consciousness* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), pp.121–56, and C. Hann, 'The Nation-State, Religion, and Uncivil Society: Two Perspectives from the Periphery', *Daedalus*, Vol.126 (1997), p.35; M.E. Meeker, 'Concepts of Person, Family, and State in the District of Off', in G. Rasuly-Paleczek (ed.), *Turkish Families in Transition* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996), pp.45–60.
 11. A.I. Aksamaz, *Kafkasya'dan Karadeniz'e Lazların Tarihsel Yolculuğu* (Istanbul: Çiviayızları, 1997), p.45; see also Koçiva, *Lazona*, pp.28–41.
 12. Author's interview with Gürbüz Akyüz, the Artvin Cultural and Solidarity Association, Ankara, July 2009 and Orhan Küçükali, the Association of People from Hopa, Istanbul, July 2009.
 13. Hann, 'Ethnicity, Language and Politics in North-east Turkey', p.141.
 14. These cases are selected for comparison because these ethnic groups are similar across several background conditions, such as having a distinct language and culture, regional concentration, and a kin group across the border that might affect the outcome of interest (i.e. ethnonationalism).

15. See J.G. March and J.P. Olsen, 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', *American Political Science Review*, Vol.78 (1984), pp.734–49.
16. D.J. Smith and G. Chambers, *Inequality in Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
17. Lazistan was an Ottoman sub-province (*sancağ*), which was created in the mid-nineteenth century and extended from Trabzon to Batum inside the modern Georgian Republic.
18. The new town names were introduced in the first decade of the Republic. For instance Pazar rather than Atina; Fındıklı rather than Vitse; Arılı rather than Papilat. For more examples, see Aksamaz, *Kafkasya'dan Karadeniz'e Lazların Tarihsel Yolculuğu*, pp.27–9.
19. A.I. Aksamaz, *Doğu Karadeniz'de Resmi İdeolojiler Kuşatması* (Istanbul: Sorun Yayınları, 2003), p.50; Koçiva, *Lazona*, pp.63–4.
20. See also Aksamaz, *Kafkasya'dan Karadeniz'e Lazların Tarihsel Yolculuğu*, and *Doğu Karadeniz'de Resmi İdeolojiler Kuşatması*, pp.47–53; Beller-Hann and Hann, *Turkish Region*; Koçiva, *Lazona*.
21. T.R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970) and 'Why Minorities Rebel: A Global Analysis of Communal Mobilization and Conflict Since 1945', *International Political Science Review*, Vol.14 (1993), p.167.
22. P.R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (New Delhi, Newbury Park and London: Sage Publications, 1991), p.8.
23. A. Lecours, 'Ethnonationalism in the West: A Theoretical Exploration', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol.6 (2000), p.118.
24. J. McGarry, 'Explaining Ethnonationalism: The Flaws in Western Thinking', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol.1 (1995), p.134.
25. See N.F. Watts, 'Activists in Office: Pro-Kurdish Contentious Politics in Turkey', *Ethopolitics*, Vol.5 (2006), pp.125–44.
26. W. Connor, 'Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.16 (1993), p.386.
27. *Ibid.*, p.384.
28. A.D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1991).
29. See W. Feurstein, 'Untersuchungen zur Materiellen Kultur der Lazen' (MA thesis, Universitate zur Freiburg, 1983); Koçiva, *Lazona*; Yılmaz, 'Constructing a New Laz Identity in Turkey and its Future Prospects'.
30. Hann, 'Ethnicity, Language and Politics in North-east Turkey', p.122.
31. There are few studies of ethnonationalism employing path dependence approach. For some examples, see J. Ruane and J. Todd, 'The Roots of Intense Ethnic Conflict may not in Fact be Ethnic: Categories, Communities and Path Dependence', *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol.45 (2004), pp.209–32; 'Path Dependence in Settlement Processes: Explaining Settlement in Northern Ireland', *Political Studies*, Vol.55 (2007), pp.442–58.
32. P. Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.94 (2000), p.263.
33. W.H. Sewell, 'Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventual Sociology', in T.J. McDonald (ed.), *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp.262–3.
34. S.J. Liebowitz and S.E. Margolis, 'Path Dependence', 1999, p.981, <http://encyclo.findlaw.com/0770book.pdf> (accessed 6 Jan. 2011). See also S. Berman, 'Path Dependency and Political Action: Reexamining Responses to the Depression', *Comparative Politics*, Vol.30 (1998), pp.379–400.
35. W.B. Arthur, *Increasing Returns and Path Dependence in the Economy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp.37, 44, 45; F. Gains, P.C. John and G. Stoker, 'Path Dependency and the Reform of English Local Government', *Public Administration*, Vol.83 (2005), p.28; J. Mahoney, 'Path Dependence in Historical Sociology', *Theory and Society*, Vol.29 (2000), p.511; Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', p.253.
36. P. Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); H. Schwartz, 'Down the Wrong Path: Path Dependence, Markets and Increasing Returns', <http://people.virginia.edu/~hms2f/Path.pdf> (accessed 6 Jan. 2010).
37. Pierson, *Politics in Time*, p.157.
38. S.J. Liebowitz and S.E. Margolis, 'Path Dependence, Lock-In, and History', *The Journal of Law, Economics and Organization*, Vol.11 (1995), pp.205–26.
39. See Mahoney, 'Path Dependence in Historical Sociology', p.508; Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', pp.253–4.

40. Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', pp.253–4.
41. See D.G. Dimitrakopoulos, 'Incrementalism and Path Dependence: European Integration and Institutional Change in National Parliaments', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.39 (2001), pp.405–22; P. Genschel, 'The Dynamics of Inertia: Institutional Persistence and Change in Telecommunications and Health Care', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, Vol.10 (1997), pp.43–66; M. Levi, 'A Logic of Institutional Change', in K.S. Cook and M. Levi (eds.), *The Limits of Rationality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p.415; J. Mahoney, 'Path-Dependent Explanations of Regime Change: Central America in Comparative Perspective', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol.6 (2001), pp.111–41; Pierson, *Politics in Time*, p.153; D.J. Solinger, 'Path Dependency Reexamined: Chinese Welfare Policy in the Transition to Unemployment', *Comparative Politics*, Vol.38 (2005), pp.83–101.
42. R.B. Collier and D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); J. Mahoney, 'Path-Dependent Explanations of Regime Change', p.113.
43. S. Krasner, 'Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics', *Comparative Politics*, Vol.16 (1984), pp.223–46.
44. See W.B. Arthur, 'Competing Technologies, Increasing Returns, and Lock-In by Historical Events', *Economic Journal*, Vol.97 (1989), pp.642–65; Arthur, *Increasing Returns and Path Dependence in the Economy*; P.A. David, 'Clio and the Economics of QWERTY', *American Economic Review*, Vol.75 (1985), pp.332–7.
45. I. Greener, 'Two Cheers for Path Dependence – Why it is Still Worth Trying to Work with Historical Institutionalism: A Reply to Ross', *British Politics*, Vol.2 (2007), p.101.
46. Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics'.
47. *Ibid.*, p.252.
48. See also M. Blyth, 'The Transformation of the Swedish Model: Economic Ideas, Distributional Conflict, and Institutional Change', *World Politics*, Vol.54 (2001), pp.1–26; R. Cox, 'The Path-dependency of an Idea: Why Scandinavian Welfare States Remain Distinct', *Social Policy and Administration*, Vol.38 (2004), pp.204–19.
49. Cox, 'The Path-dependency of an Idea'.
50. J. McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims 1821–1922* (Pennington, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc., 1995), p.32.
51. H. Bammate, 'The Caucasus and the Russian Revolution', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol.10 (1991), p.5.
52. McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, p.15; M.E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p.288.
53. See S. Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri 1878–1908* (Trabzon: Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, 1996); McCarthy, *Death and Exile*; A. Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri 1856–1876* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997).
54. N. Ascherson, *Black Sea* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995); Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri 1856–1876*; S.J. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I (Volume 2: Triumph and Tragedy November 1914–July 1916)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008), p.871. Based on various estimates, it is concluded that approximately 1.2 million Caucasians emigrated from Russian-conquered lands; 800,000 of them were able to reach the Ottoman lands (McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, p.36). For more on massive Muslim migration to the Ottoman Empire, see also K. Karpas, *Ottoman Population 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).
55. The Russian forces also gained the control of some parts of the Eastern Anatolia such as Kars and Ardahan.
56. McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, p.30.
57. *Ibid.*, p.30.
58. Aksamaz, *Kafkasya'dan Karadeniz'e Lazların Tarihsel Yolculuğu*, pp.25–6 and *Dil, Tarih, Kültür ve Gelenekleriyle Lazlar*, p.22; Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri 1878–1908*; McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, pp.113–15; M.A. Özder, *Artvin ve Çevresi 1828–1921 Savaşları* (Ankara: Artvin Turizm ve Tanıtma Derneği, 1971), pp.78, 149–56; Özgün, *Lazlar*, p.93.
59. It is estimated that the total number of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus during and immediately after the war of 1877–78 was greater than 70,000. See McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, pp.113–16.
60. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, p.836.
61. Bammate, 'The Caucasus and the Russian Revolution', pp.5–6.

62. McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, p.14; Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, pp.774, 797, 836–7.
63. Aksamaz, *Doğu Karadeniz'de Resmî İdeolojiler Kuşatması*, p.86; Özgün, *Lazlar*, pp.93–4.
64. Several studies (e.g. S. Aydın, 'Amacımız Devletin Bekası': *Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Devlet ve Yurttaşlar* (Istanbul: Teşev Yayınları, 2005); Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830–1914*, pp.76–7) observe a similar tendency toward Turkish nationalism and statism among other immigrants to the Ottoman Empire such as Circassians, Crimean Tatars and Georgians.
65. See Aksamaz, *Doğu Karadeniz'de Resmî İdeolojiler Kuşatması*, p.46; Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri 1878–1908*; McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, p.114; Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, pp.285–317; Özder, *Artvin ve Çevresi 1828–1921 Savaşları*; Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*.
66. Özder, *Artvin ve Çevresi 1828–1921 Savaşları*, p.74.
67. S. Aydın and O. Özel, 'Power Relations between State and Tribe in Ottoman Eastern Anatolia', *Bulgarian Historical Review*, Vol.3–4 (2006), pp.51–67; M. Heper, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp.35–57; C. Houston, *Kurdistan: Crafting of National Selves* (New York: Berg, 2008), pp.35–48; Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, p.17; White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, p.55.
68. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*.
69. See K.M. Ahmad, *Kurdistan during the First World War* (London: Saqi Books, 1994).
70. See Aydın and Özel, 'Power Relations between State and Tribe in Ottoman Eastern Anatolia'; M.V. Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Books, 1992); Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*; H. Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.33 (2001), pp.383–409.
71. See Ahmad, *Kurdistan during the First World War*, pp.91–3; Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, pp.115–24, 128–32; Z. Zardykan, 'Ottoman Kurds of the First World War Era: Reflections in Russian Sources', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42 (2006), pp.74–5.
72. Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, pp.129–32; Ozoglu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era', pp.393–5, 402.
73. For instance N. Kendal, 'The Kurds under the Ottoman Empire', in G. Chaliand (ed.), *A People Without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan* (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1993), pp.15–16.
74. See Aydın and Özel, 'Power Relations between State and Tribe in Ottoman Eastern Anatolia'.
75. For Kendal, more than 50 revolts took place in this period. Major ones were the Baban Revolt (1806–8), the Mir Muhammed Revolt (1833–37), the Bedir Khan Revolt (1847) and the Sheikh Ubeidullah Revolt (1880–81). See also Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era'; and Jwaideh, *Kurdish National Movement*, pp.54–101.
76. See Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era'.
77. Ahmad, *Kurdistan during the First World War*, pp.60–64; Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era'.
78. See Ahmad, *Kurdistan during the First World War*, pp.6–3; Entessar, *Kurdish Ethnonationalism*, p.82; Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era'; White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernizers?*, pp.65–9.
79. Özoğlu, 'Nationalism and Kurdish Notables in the Late Ottoman–Early Republican Era', p.403.
80. Beller-Hann and Hann, *Turkish Region*, p.38 (emphasis added).

Appendix: A List of Interviewees

- Aytekin Locumcu, *Laz Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği* (Laz Cultural and Solidarity Association), Ankara, July 2009.
- Gülay Burhan, the Chairperson of *Sima Doğu Karadenizliler Hizmet Vakfı* (Sima Foundation for People from East Black Sea Region), Izmit, July 2009.
- Gürbüz Akyüz, the Chairperson of *Artvin Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği* (the Artvin Cultural and Solidarity Association), Ankara, July 2009.
- Halim Çapan, the Chairperson of *Hopalılar Derneği* (the Association of People from Hopa), Istanbul, July 2009.

Mehmedali Barış Beşli, the Chairperson of *Laz Kültür Derneği* (Laz Cultural Association), Istanbul, July 2009.

Orhan Küçükali, *Hopalılar Derneği* (the Association of People from Hopa), Istanbul, July 2009.

Turan Kasımoğlu, the Mayor of Hopa, Istanbul, July 2009.