



YAŞAR UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

MASTER IN ARTS THESIS

**AN ANALYSIS OF *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS*
IN TERMS OF THE TURKISH NATION-STATE
BUILDING PROCESS**

EBRU MCCALLUM

THESIS ADVISOR: ASST. PROF. ESEN KARA

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

BORNOVA / İZMİR
02/2024

JURY APPROVAL PAGE

We certify that, as the jury, we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Jury Members:

Signature:

Asst. Prof. Esen Kara Göktoğan

.....

Yaşar University

Assoc. Prof. Funda Civelekoğlu

.....

Ege University

Asst. Prof. Evren Akaltun Akan

.....

Yaşar University.

Prof. (PhD) Yücel Öztürkoğlu
Director of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS* IN TERMS OF THE TURKISH NATION-STATE BUILDING PROCESS

McCallum, Ebru

MA/ English Language and Literature

Advisor: Asst. Prof. Esen Kara

02.2024

The rise of nationalism in Europe in the late 19th century led to the collapse of big empires and establishment of smaller nation states. The Ottoman Empire was one of these great empires and it was replaced by Turkish nation-state in its remaining territory: Anatolia. The transition from a multi-ethnic and multi-faith social structure to one that aimed to create a uniformly Turkish and Muslim society necessitated some social engineering which relied heavily on the ideals of Westernization and a rejection of the Ottoman cultural heritage. This meant imagining the many aspects of the community of the new Turkish nation-state including the national identity, which aimed for homogenization. The Turkish nation was imagined to be Turkish speaking Muslim citizens of predominantly Turkish descent. Such an imagination meant excluding the elements of the society that did not fit.

In his *Birds without Wings*, Louis de Bernieres takes his reader to an imaginary heavenly town on the Mediterranean coast of Anatolia with a diverse and harmonious population and shows how it experiences the era from World War 1 through the establishment of the Turkish nation state. The inhabitants of the town all experience the pain and suffering caused by the war in their own ways and the negative impacts of the greater world with its imperial wars and of Mustafa Kemal with his genius as a soldier and social engineer. The aim of this thesis is to analyze the insights Louis de Bernieres' *Birds without Wings* offers about the formation of the Turkish nation-state and the methods used to communicate these insights.

Keywords: Nation-state formation, Turkish modernization, the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange, homogenization, intercultural dialogue, multiculturalism

ÖZ

KANATSIZ KUŞLAR ROMANININ TÜRK ULUS DEVLETİNİN İNŞASI SÜRECİ AÇISINDAN ANALİZİ

McCallum, Ebru

Yüksek Lisans/ İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı

Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Esen Kara

02.2024

19. yüzyılın sonlarına doğru Avrupa’da milliyetçiliğin yükselmesi büyük imparatorlukların çökmesine ve yerlerini küçük ulus devletlerin almasına neden oldu. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, bunlardan biriydi ve 1. Dünya Savaşı ve Yunan İstilasası sonucunda gitgide daha da çok toprağını ve nüfusunu kaybederek, geriye kalan toprakları olan Anadolu’da bir Türk ulus devletinin kurulmasıyla tarihe karıştı. Etnik ve inanç açısından zengin bir sosyal yapıdan, yekpare bir Türk ve Müslüman topluma geçiş, Batılılaşma ideallerini benimseyen ve Osmanlı’nın kültürel mirasını reddeden bir sosyal mühendislik gerektirdi. Bu homojenleşmeyi hedefleyen ve milli kimliği de içeren pek çok bileşeniyle yeni ulus devletin tahayyül edilmesi demekti. Türk ulusu Türkçe konuşan, çoğunluğu Müslüman ve Türk olan bir ulus olarak tahayyül edilmişti. Bu tahayyül, ona uymayan bileşenlerin devre dışı bırakılmasını gerektiriyordu.

Kanatsız Kuşlar romanında, Louis de Bernieres okurunu Anadolu’nun Akdeniz kıyısında, etnik olarak çeşitli bir nüfusu olan, hayali ve cennet gibi bir kasabaya davet eder ve bu kasabanın 1. Dünya Savaşı’ndan başlayan ve Türk ulus devletinin kuruluşuna kadar olan zamandaki hikayesini anlatır. Kasabanın sakinleri emperyal güçlerin neden olduğu savaşın yarattığı acıyı yaşarken, Mustafa Kemal’in askeri ve sosyal mühendislik dehasıyla bu acıdan çıkışı da deneyimler. Bu tezin amacı, Louis de Bernieres’in *Kanatsız Kuşlar* romanının Türk ulus devletinin inşasına dair sunduğu tespitleri ve bu tespitleri sunarken kullandığı araçları analiz etmektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ulus-devlet inşası, Türk modernleşmesi, Türk-Yunan Nüfus Mübadelesi, homojenleşme, kültürlerarası iletişim, çok kültürlülük

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer my heartfelt appreciation to my grandfather, a Muslim immigrant from Drama, whose stories of his longing for his homeland got me interested in other such tragedies and curious to hear those stories, my family and friends who supported me immensely through this period, and my advisor, Assist. Professor Esen Kara for her enthusiasm, support, positive energy and willingness to make my journey richer and more rewarding.

Ebru McCallum
İzmir, 2024

TEXT OF OATH

I declare and honestly confirm that my study, titled “AN ANALYSIS OF *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS* IN TERMS OF THE TURKISH NATION-STATE BUILDING PROCESS” and presented as a Master’s Thesis, has been written without applying any assistance inconsistent with scientific ethics and traditions. I declare, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that all content and ideas drawn directly or indirectly from external sources are indicated in the text and listed in the list of references.



Ebru McCallum

02.02.2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JURY APPROVAL PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZ	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
TEXT OF OATH	xi
1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1. The Origins of the Nation State	9
2.2. The Origins of Turkish Nationalism:	16
2.3. The Situation of the Minorities in Late Ottoman and Early Republic Periods and the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange	25
2.4. Literature on the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange	33
CHAPTER THREE: BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS AND PURGING UNWANTED ELEMENTS.....	39
3.1. The Greek Exodus:.....	39
3.2. The Departure of the Armenians:.....	52
4. CHAPTER FOUR: DIVERSITY AS ONE OF THE DEFINING ASPECTS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE EXPLORED IN BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS.....	59
4.1. Diverse Narrators and Characters:	63
4.2. Use of Multiple Narrative Styles and Allusions	71
4.3. References to Multiculturalism:.....	87
5. CHAPTER FIVE: BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS AND ASPECTS OF NATION STATE FORMATION	93
5.1 History of nation state formation in the Turkish context	93
5.2. How Wars Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:	95

5.3. How the Concept of The Other Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:.....	97
5.4. How Religion Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:.....	99
5.5. How Language Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:..	102
5.6. The Role of Mustafa Kemal’s Leadership on the Construction of the Turkish Nation State:.....	104
CONCLUSION	109
REFERENCES.....	115



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This thesis answers the question “what insights does Louis de Bernieres’ *Birds without Wings* offer about the formation of the Turkish nation-state and what methods are used to communicate these insights? This question could not be answered without also looking at what aspect of the Ottoman Empire the novel is focusing on, even raising, to make a stronger point about the insights about the formation of the Turkish nation-state. These aspects stand out to be multiculturalism and diversity. The messages de Bernieres is giving on these two concepts are that they created a more lively, tolerant, and colorful society and that the nation-building project destroyed them with its homogenization ideal. An analysis of the specific historical events the novel presents to show how the multicultural and diverse nature of the Ottoman Empire was lost in the nation-building process leads to two very historical events: the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange and the Armenian exodus. These events are covered in the first chapter of the novel analysis. The second chapter consists of an analysis of how the novel presents the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity and what it says about their loss. The final chapter focuses on the tools used in the process of Turkish nation state formation through relevant quotes and their close-reading analysis.

In *Birds without Wings*, Louis de Bernieres creates a utopian setting, Eskibahçe, a town with amazing natural beauty, beautiful houses and streets, and an ethnically diverse population. Eskibahçe literally means the old garden and alludes to the Lost Heaven. Life in Eskibahçe is vibrant and colorful with artisan shops, farmers, Christian, Muslim, and Armenian residents, who live side by side without any conflict or tension. The story takes place during the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the early days of the Turkish Republic. Constant wars and nationalism change the town’s character and the tolerance for ethnic and religious differences that has always been a part of the culture of the town starts to wane. The novel offers a detailed account of how brutally those considered “the others”, hence the Armenian and the Greek residents of Eskibahçe were uprooted from their homes to show not only what happened in Eskibahçe but also all the Asia Minor during the 1923 Greek-Turkish Population Exchange.

The characters in the book are quite diverse and somehow eccentric as well. Ali the Snowbringer, who is so poor that he and his family live inside a tree that has hollowed out. The priest and imam of the town, Father Kristoforos and Abdulhamid Hodja enjoy a genuine friendship and enjoy calling each other “Infidel Efendi”, a sign they appreciate each other and are true friends. Another pair of friends who do not mind the difference in their religions are Karatavuk and Mehmetçik; the bond between them is so strong that they are prepared to die for one another. Iskandar the Potter, Karatavuk’s father, makes pots for all the households and he enjoys playing with words and creating proverbs of deep messages. Another central character is the landlord of the town, Rüstem Bey, who gets his wife, Tamara, stoned for adultery and finally finds joy, passion, and happiness with his mistress, Leyla Hanım, who he falsely thinks is Circassian while she is Greek. The town has two mad men: the Dog who lives in a tomb and has a very eerie look, and the Blasphemer who curses any holy man he comes across with. Another interesting pair is Philothei and Drousola, the former of such incredible beauty that she must be veiled and the latter of incredible ugliness. Philothei has a lover who has been madly in love with her ever since they were small children: Ibrahim the Goatherd. Ibrahim is traumatized by the war and is driven to madness. Drousola also has a childhood lover who becomes her husband and is brave and skilled enough in the sea to take his family to his village in Greece on his small fisherman’s boat. There is Leonidas, an ultra-nationalist character devoted to the idea of a Greater Greece and who has moved to Eskibahçe from İzmir to indoctrinate the Greek children of the town. Leonidas’ father’s friend, Georgia P. Theodorou, who is a philanthropist and has sponsored the construction of a fountain at the entrance of the town. Finally, there is Mustafa Kemal, whose biography is narrated in detail and his ingenuity not only as a soldier and a commander, but also as a visionary social engineer makes him an influential figure for Anatolia, Europe, and the Middle East. All the characters experience loss and pain because of the war to differing degrees just like their beloved town, Eskibahçe. At the end of all the wars and the fighting, some are dead, some are far away, some are behind in what is now a dead and crumbling town, while some have lost their loved ones, their youth, or their health. What is presented to the reader is layers and layers of tragedy. It is no wonder that Louis de Bernieres has dedicated his book to millions of people who experienced World War 1.

The close reading of the novel in this thesis focuses on decoding the background plot of the novel against which the above summarized plot, which mostly unfolds in the town of Eskibahçe, stands. The background plot is the process of Turkish nation-state building and Westernization from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. To be able to do that, some knowledge of the history of Turkish modernization that starts with the Tanzimat period, gains momentum during the war of independence, and reaches its climax in the early years of the Turkish Republic is necessary. The history of Turkish modernization offers realizations and insights into the methods used by agents of modernization, their inherent beliefs and motivations, their shortcomings, the influences they were under, and the concrete differences they initiated. Among the realizations is the mix-bag aspect of the modernization process with its ability to initiate progress but also the pain and suffering it caused by trying to fit people in artificial categories, declaring certain groups unwanted, and causing the loss of diversity and multiculturalism in Anatolia. Another realization is the absurdity of the myths created, trying to appear as “scientific” theories, in efforts to create a new identity that is cut off from the ghosts of the Ottoman Empire. Another topic that contributes to the close reading of the novel is the history of the nation-state and theories around the nation state by people such as Benedict Anderson, Charles Lily, Ernest Gellner, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabba. This helps to understand the “nation” and the “state” parts of the nation state as well as its artificial and violent nature, its qualities, the myths and agents of violence that are necessary for its construction and continuation. Why and how the nation state is a tool of suppression by its critiques is another important area that informs the close reading. All this theory has guided the researcher in formulating the research question and deciding how to break that question down to its components.

Another preliminary research point to achieve a deeper close reading of the novel is the Armenian Question and the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange, which has helped with analyzing de Bernieres’ presentation of these historical events. Lastly, academic work and literary work about the topic of population exchange by Greek and Turkish writers has been useful in evaluating the position of *Birds without Wings* among the novels exploring the exchange.

Chapter 1 gives information about the history of the nation state and stresses the violent nature of nation state building. The differences between state and nation are clarified

as the former being about institutions, structures, and the land within borders and the second one about ideology and the imaginings around a community. The personal, subjective, and emotional aspect of a national identity and the sense of belonging it appeals to are emphasized. The opinions of political theorists in the area such as Benedict Anderson, Charles Lili, and Ernest Gellner are presented, one of which is the opinion that nations are not discovered but invented. In Anderson's words, a nation is an imagined community.¹ The unique conditions that led to the formation of the nation state are also explained such as the weakening of religion, the vernacularization of the printing press, the Enlightenment, and the spread of ideas through the spread of books and newspapers in vernacular languages. The necessity to create a story of "we" through myths and legends and to connect the young nation to a glorious distant past is explained as an aspect of nation-state building. This also means the necessity to forget elements of the past. Examples to such myths from both the Turkish and Greek contexts are provided.

Lastly, opinions of the critiques of nation states such as Homi Bhabha and Edward Said are presented. Shortly, nation states are criticized for their tendency to "suppress marginality, heterogeneity and difference."² It is also criticized for being xenophobic, exclusivist and tribalist. Edward Said is more cautious and asserts this does not have to be the case if the state in question is anti-imperialist and anti-authoritarian.

The next part of the chapter focuses on the origins of Turkish Nationalism. The Tanzimat period marks the beginning of the Turkish nationalist movement, which has always taken European Civilization as the symbol of progress and modernity and as its model. The opinions of Ziya Gökalp, the father of Turkish nationalism, are presented and their role in the Tanzimat and early republican era is clarified: anti multiculturalism, anti-diversity in education system, pro Westernization, Renaissance humanism, political and economic national independence.³

The reforms and social changes launched as a part of the Turkish nation building project such as the Alphabet Reform, Language Reform, Clothing Reform, and

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, (Verso Books, 2016), 27

² Jan Selby, "Edward W Said: Truth, Justice, and Nationalism," *Interventions*, 8:1, (2006): 47.

³ Niyazi Berkes, "Ziya Gökalp: His Contribution to Turkish Nationalism," *Middle East Journal* 8, no. 4 (1954): 377

Education Reform and the motivations behind them and reactions to them are explained. These reforms are among the methods used by the ruling elite to cut ties with the Ottoman past. To this end, myths that connect the Turkish race and the Turkish language to a distant past, hence the Turkish History Theory and Sun Language Theory are created and spread.

The next part of the first chapter explores the situation of the minorities in the late Ottoman and early Republic periods and the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange. The spread of nationalist ideas in and around the Ottoman Empire and the formation of new nation states means the millet system that ensured the coexistence of different ethnicities and nations is weakened. Members of the minorities start to leave the country, causing the multicultural system to disintegrate. The immigration of Muslims from the Balkan region to Anatolia and the exodus of a considerable number of Greeks and Armenians resulted in the Islamification and Turkification of Anatolia. This meant the minority populations were considerably smaller in the young Republic than they used to be in the Ottoman Empire. The young Republic did not treat its non-Muslim citizens in a welcoming and inclusive manner. Brutal policies such as ‘Citizen, Speak Turkish!’ campaign and the Law on Settlement that made it impossible for minorities to live in regions close to borders with Greece and Bulgaria were put into action. Both made them feel as “the other”, as the untrusted and unwanted component of the society. They were exposed to racist violence. The young men had to serve in the army doing very heavy labor and not as soldiers. To make things worse, the Law on Capital Tax that required taxes ten times more for the minorities than the Turks resulted in minorities selling their estate or giving their savings to the state, resulting in the Turkification and Islamization of the estate in the country. Such policies made leaving Anatolia, thus the Turkish Republic, more attractive than staying. One other historical decision that resulted in further Islamization and Turkification of Anatolia was the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange devised in the Lausanne Treaty. This resulted in a hasty uprooting of around two million people on both sides and much human tragedy on the roads. The trauma of the exchange lived on for generations to come. The implications of the exchange for the Turkish economy were brutal due to the loss of trained and educated workforce. Thus, Anatolia became more and more Muslimized, Turkified, and homogeneous, losing the multicultural and colorful spirit of the Ottoman Empire. The same was true for all the nation states that were established in

the region. Next, I researched novels and academic work by both Greek and Turkish authors on The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange, as it is one of the most important components of the plot with the insights it gives about the means and implications of nation-state building.

Chapter 2 analyzes the two chapters in the novel that narrate the Greek exodus with the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange and the departure of the Armenians with an enforced state policy using the close-reading technique. This close reading is backed by scholarly work on the history covered in the chapters, namely the population exchange and the Armenian question. The conclusion reached at the end is the brutal, impersonal, and often traumatic aspect of nation-state formation. It is not necessarily the local agents of nation-building endeavors but mostly the great powers that are held responsible for the misery and trauma. The sense of loss and grief experienced by those who leave and who stay communicates the great loss everyone suffers from with the disintegration of a multi-faith and multiethnic society.

The two techniques Louis de Bernieres uses in the chapters from the novel are presented. One is the history book style with information about the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange or the Armenian question at the beginning, which help to put the later narrated events in Eskibahçe in a greater context. What follows these factual introductory sections is the narration of how the residents of Eskibahçe experience these historical events, which includes dialogues, inner dialogues, and detailed description, all of which communicate the pain and misery experienced by the characters.

Chapter 3 explores the message given in the novel that multiculturalism is highly valuable for a society to be rich and tolerant, and that nation state building weakens or even destroys multiculturalism. One of the methods used by the author are characters reflecting on the beauty of the multicultural life of the past and the impoverished society that has replaced it. Other methods are the use of diverse narrators and characters, the use of diverse narrative styles and allusions, and references to multiculturalism. The use of diverse narrators and characters is a representation of the diverse population in not only Eskibahçe but also the Ottoman Empire in general. It also serves to explore a variety of social issues and to give a voice to the unvoiced. The use of multiple narrative styles and allusions to great literary works also consolidates the concept of diversity. With the close reading approach and research

findings by others, these allusions and narrative styles are quoted and analyzed. The allusions include the journey of Odysseus, Homer's *Iliad*, *Tolstoy's War and Peace*. The narrative styles used are the diary, poetry, the dramatic form of the soliloquy, epistolary novel, old travel narratives, mystery and horror writing, epic, magical realism, and history book. References to multiculturalism include descriptions of cities such as İstanbul and İzmir for the diversity of civilizations in their roots and the diversity of ethnicities residing in them. The intercultural friendships and hybrid religious practices are also elaborated, all making the cosmopolitan and multicultural aspect of the Ottoman Empire tangible to the reader.

Chapter 4 uncovers the factors that made the formation of the Turkish nation-state and Turkishness possible. These factors are presented through a close reading of quotes provided. These quotes clearly show how these factors contributed to the formation of the nation-state. One factor is wars. With ongoing wars and the Ottoman Empire disintegrating further and further, and the onset of the war of independence after its collapse, soldiers gradually embrace being a Turk and no longer an Ottoman. This is in line with the principle "wars make nations and nations make wars."⁴ Another factor is religion. De Bernieres shows the creation of Turkish Islam as one of the glues of the new nation. This version of Islam not only puts Turks in a position of contrast with the Western powers and the minorities of Anatolia, but also the other Muslim nations that were once Ottoman also. This is also true for the concept of "the other" as a factor that contributes to nation-state building. De Bernieres puts Anderson's assertion that a nation-state is finite and the existence of one necessitates the existence of others in action. Defining the new Turkish identity for the people in authority and internalizing it by the people necessitates clarifying its differences from other nations and nationalities. There is also an element of claiming superiority over them to establish pride as a motivational factor in the acceptance of the new identity. Another factor presented in the Turkish nation-building process is Mustafa Kemal. Firstly, the author puts a touch of magic and the supernatural around him by presenting him as the chosen one with many signs pointing to this fact. This is in line with the necessity of myths in the nation building process. His insights and achievements as a soldier, and later as a

⁴ Taylor Brian D. & Roxena Botea, "Tilly Tally: War-Making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World," *International Studies Review* 10, no. 1 (2008): 28.

statesman are explained in detail. His formative influences such as being born in cosmopolitan Salonikios, the time he spends in cosmopolitan Sofia and İstanbul, both places of culture and art are narrated by linking his realizations and dreams for the future of his country to the reforms he initiates in the young Republic. There is a touch of criticism also in the top-down nature of some of his reforms and convictions about religion and the right way to live.

To sum up, the thesis aims to offer a deep analysis of Louis de Bernieres' novel *Birds without Wings* from the point of the Turkish-nation state building against the backdrop of theory of nation-state construction and Turkish history. The close reading of the novel attempts to make connections to theory, making the events in the plot and the characters its firsthand manifestations. The tools the author uses and the messages he attempts to give about the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish nation-state are presented with the hope that this work will provide future researchers with useful analyses in their attempt to further study literature on the Turkish nation-state building.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Origins of the Nation State

At a time in human history when the nation-state is the universal norm, and the concepts of “nation” and “state” are so intertwined, it is hard to imagine one without the other. The birth of the nation-state dates to the Westphalian Peace Treaties of 1648 which ended the Thirty Years’ War in the Holy Roman Empire and the Eighty Years’ War between Spain and the Dutch.⁵ The idea of an independent political community governed by a sovereign, with full authority over decisions within an acquired territory, including decisions on religion, did not exist before then. Once the idea came, it took fighting for it. In other words, the building of a nation-state is not “an orderly process of design and negotiation” but a violent fight between “organized criminal groups.”⁶ Charles Tilly, American sociologist, and political scientist expresses the violence necessary for the birth and survival of a nation-state as follows: “War makes nations and nations make wars.”⁷ In other words, violence is an inherent aspect of the nation-building project.⁸ This violent origin of the nation-state is worth making a note of as the construction and sustaining of a national identity also has an element of violence in its applications.

The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933) defines a state as “a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: a) a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) government; and d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states.”⁹ On the other hand, Benedict Anderson defines

⁵ Mostafa Rejai & Cynthia H. Enloe, “Nation-States and State-Nations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1969): 142

⁶ Rene Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building and State-Building and the Challenge of Fragility,” in *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States* (Amsterdam University Press, 2016): 33-34

⁷ Taylor & Botea, “War-Making,” 28

⁸ Alina Sajed & Timothy Seidel, “Introduction: Escaping the Nation? National Consciousness and the Horizons of Decolonization,” *Interventions*, 21:5 (2019): 585

⁹ Grotenhuis, “Nation-building,” 25

nationality as “a cultural artifact of a particular kind... [with a tremendous potential to arouse] deep attachments.”¹⁰ As can be seen, the nation has to do with “identity and self-identification” and is a form of “collective subjectivity”, whereas the state is all about “institutions, structures and systems, and territory” and should be seen as a form of “collective objectivity.”¹¹ In other words, our psychological need to identify with a community for safety and security, and ego-affiliation instills in us “an ideological commitment to the pursuit of unity, independence, and interests of a people who conceive of themselves as forming a sovereign community,”¹² which is the nation. Being a part of a nation appeals to our sense of belonging and our sense of identity, aspects of which we share with our fellow members of our nation. The state, on the other hand, is clearly defined and is there to bring clarity to duties and expectations on both sides: the state and the members of the state.

Nationalists argue that a nation is the continuation of an ancient community that shares a common history, blood, language, culture, and a territory. Gellner explains the contrasting opinions of these nationalists and theorists like himself and Anderson as follows: "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness. It invents nations where they do not exist."¹³ Similarly, Anderson argues that nations are imagined communities and despite this, the concept of the nation is powerful enough for its members to be prepared to die and kill for it.¹⁴ Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community" that is "imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."¹⁵ It is imagined because it is impossible for all its members to know one another, it is imagined as a community because it is imagined to have a deep fraternity across all its members despite the inequalities inherent in it; and nations are also imagined as limited, unlike the religious communities that aspired to universality.¹⁶ The existence of a nation presupposes the

¹⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4

¹¹ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 28

¹² Michael Turner, “A. Ziya Gökalp and the Fundamental Bases of Turkish Nationalism,” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (1977): 6

¹³ Ernest Gellner, “Nationalism,” *Theory and Society* vol. 10, no. 6 (1981): 754

¹⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 12

¹⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 27

¹⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 30

existence of other nations, thus is limited by them. Finally, the nation is imagined to be sovereign, thus having full political authority over its own affairs.¹⁷

Anderson argues that nationalism is different from political ideologies in that it has an existential dimension and has more in common with religion¹⁸. The uncertainty, the possibility of adversity and ultimately one's finitude is discomfoting to men and religions offer a relief through the belief in the afterlife. The weakening of the place of religion in man's psyche with the pluralization and gradual collapse of religions with the Enlightenment era meant an existential void, which offered nationalism a perfect environment to flourish.¹⁹ Like religion, nationalism offers the individual a historical and social context to transcend one's limited time on earth. This makes nationalism a secular substitute for religion.²⁰

Nationalism evolved under specific historical circumstances, one of which was the decline of the religious communities of Latin Christendom and the Muslim Ummah.²¹ These communities spread vast territories and ruled over large and ethnically and linguistically diverse populations around a shared faith and a sacred language. They were organized in kingdoms and kings were seen as representatives of God on earth. The second half of the 18th century, with Enlightenment, resulted in a decline in the power of these religious communities, thus creating the ground for another political and social structure.²² In other words, one major factor behind the evolution of the concept of a nation was the human need to feel they belong to something much greater than themselves that goes back in history and extends into the future, giving their existence a meaning.

The decline in the power of religious communities was not the only factor that facilitated the evolution of nationalism. The interaction of capitalism and the printing press enabled the production and spread of books and newspapers in vernacular

¹⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 35-46

¹⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 20

¹⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 22-24

²⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 25-28

²¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 23

²² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 24-27.

languages.²³ The circulation of books and newspapers created communities of people in specific territories relating to one another around shared ideas and narratives, which created the ground for the idea of the nation.²⁴ The circulation of books and newspapers also led to the standardization of dialects, thus the creation of national languages, which contributed to the birth of European nationalism.²⁵ All nationalist movements in Asia revived and reformed vernacular languages and made them the language of the nation, making them more than a means of communication but “the spirit of a nation” and “the storehouses of the experiences and culture of nations.”²⁶ In other words, “an increase in the literacy rate in vernacular language should make nationalism, nation-building, and ultimately a transition to the nation-state more likely”.²⁷ Loughran gives America as an example to this process. He cites the widespread opinion that the founding of the American nation-state is attributed largely to the text-based process that included “the dissemination of Common Sense... [and] “the printed reproduction of the Declaration of Independence... [together with] “the newspaper debates over the Constitution.”²⁸ Clearly, one factor that contributes to the construction of a national identity is to have citizens read books and newspapers in a shared language.

The construction of a national identity, which is “a living, dynamic reality”²⁹ and the instilling of a notion of nationness is indeed a form of social reform. This reform requires many inventions to serve as the foundation of the imposed identity of the newly established political community: a delicate mix of the old and the new, historic myths and legends; shortly, a story of “we” that one can feel inspired to identify with. These myths and legends help to create a collective acceptance of and belief in historic roots that date back to the time long before the nation-state, which help to establish a sense of constancy in ever-changing circumstances. Such myths also necessitate

²³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 22.

²⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 23.

²⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 23-27.

²⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 23.

²⁷ A. Wimmer & Y. Feinstein, “The Rise of the Nation-State across the World, 1816 to 2001,” *American Sociological Review*, 75(5), (2010): 770-772.

²⁸ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 5

²⁹ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 30

deliberate collective forgetting of the cultural aspects that contradict with, or at least do not help with the new collective identity.³⁰ This necessity to forget aspects of the culture that do not fit the narrative is referred to as “a neurosis” and “a descent into dementia” by Tom Cairn.³¹ Evidently, this selective approach to what to take and what to leave behind is inherent to the process of nation building. In the Turkish context, Kader Konuk gives two examples to myths created to help construct an imagined national identity. As one of the intelligentsia behind the Turkish humanist movement aiming to base the national identity on European humanism, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu claims the conqueror of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmet II said the following:

God has reserved for me, through so long a period of years, the right to avenge this city and its inhabitants. For I have subdued their enemies and have plundered their cities and have made them the spoils of the Mysians. It was the Greeks and Macedonians and Thessalians and Peloponnesians who ravaged this place in the past, and whose descendants have now through my efforts paid the just penalty, after a long period of years, for their injustice to us Asiatics at that time and so often in the subsequent times.³²

Clearly, Eyüboğlu attributes a direct blood connection between the Ottomans and Trojans and a historical relationship of conflict between Ottomans and the Greeks. He also claims that Atatürk said something very similar at the end of the Greco-Turkish war of 1922 that he had taken revenge from the Greeks and avenged the Trojans.³³ These forced attempts to try to create a sense of continuity from the ancient civilizations- not the civilization the new one has brought down- serves the founders of the new regime. The founding fathers could not do everything by force and violence, some cooperation by the people is needed for a smooth transition to the new that has deep connections with the ancient. This mythical connection between the distant past and the glorious future is what the founding fathers build their promises on.

³⁰ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 26-28

³¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5

³² Kader Konuk, *East West Mimesis: Auerbach in Turkey* (Stanford, California Stanford University Press, 2016), 78.

³³ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 79

The two nations, the Greek and Turkish, whose transition to nation states are narrated in *Birds without Wings* provide examples to such myths in their history textbooks: Greeks claim to be the founders of world civilization, and “the Turks claim that the ancient Aegean civilization (that is, the ancient Greek civilization) flourished because of the Turks! According to the Greek sixth-grade textbook, the Greek nation is already around 4,000 years old:”³⁴

After the wars against the Persians . . . a new Greek civilization was created, which the whole world still admires . . . This civilization was later conveyed and spread to deepest Asia by Alexander the Great. When the Greeks became Roman subjects, this civilization was carried to Europe and formed the basis of present-day civilization. [During the Byzantine era the Greeks] fought against the barbarian nations to save civilization and Christianity. When Sultan Mehmet II brought this long and glorious historic period to a close, Greek intellectuals escaped to the West and took with them the torch of Greek civilization, helping to kindle the Renaissance in Europe . . . The Greeks were enslaved by the Turks for almost 400 years . . . With its trust in God and its patriotic devotion, the eternal Greek race was reborn.³⁵

The textbooks for mainstream education, clearly aim to create minds that connect Greeks of today to such a distant past and attribute their ancestors a great achievement in spreading their civilization to the West and contributing to humanity’s progress. The Turkish textbook for the same school year, similarly, tells a story favoring Turks and their contribution to civilization:

Archaeological excavations and research in Central Asia have shown that the oldest civilization in our world was the creation of the Turks . . . Turks from Central Asia migrated to various parts of the world and helped the natives who still lived in the Paleolithic Age to move on into the Neolithic Age. They learned from the Turks how to cultivate and how to work metals. In these new countries the Turks made further advances, building big cities and founding

³⁴ Herkul Milas, “Short Bibliography (H. Millas, 2016),” 12

³⁵ Milas, “Short Bibliography,” 12

strong states. Important centers of civilization were thus created in Mesopotamia, in Anatolia, in Syria and around the Aegean Sea.³⁶

Again, this quote shows the connection attempted to be established between Turks of today and the distant past and Turks are attributed a greatness and incredible achievements.

The desire to create a society around a shared identity based on perceived common links to the past leads to a homogeneous social organization and this is exactly why the nation-state is problematic in terms of identity. Although the nation state is a progressive political organization compared to kingdoms that preceded it³⁷, its critiques, namely postmodernists reject “all the great collective social identities of class, of race, or nation, of gender, and of the West [because of their tendency to] Homi Bhabba, for example, defines the nation as “one of the dark corners of the earth.”³⁸ Edward Said, while not an anti-nation state all together, was also critical of it stating that “the nation... is always triumphalist, always in a position of authority, always exacting loyalty and subservience rather than intellectual investigation and re-examination.”³⁹ He goes further to call the State “the chief, most official, forceful and coercive authority...with its borders, customs, ruling parties and authorities.”⁴⁰ However, he makes a point of describing which states he is referring to by qualifying them for example as “exclusivist”, or with a national consciousness that is “untutored about xenophobia, or tribalism, or nativism. In other words, he is not critical of liberal and democratic nation states and the national identity within that.”⁴¹ According to Edward Said, if a national identity is a product of imperialism or authoritarianism, it tends to be based on “patriotic sovereignty” and inhuman policies of arrogant interventionism.”⁴² If it is instead based on anti-imperialism and anti-authoritarianism,

³⁶ N. Akşit, *Milli Tarih (National History)*, 25

³⁷ Senar Aslaner, “Reviewing the Theories of Nationalism: Classifying and Inquiring the Conceptualization,” 111.

³⁸ Homi Bhabba. *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge, 1990, 319

³⁹ Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (London: Vintage, 1994): 27

⁴⁰ Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, 215

⁴¹ Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, 64

⁴² Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, 50

it can serve freedom and evolve into a consciousness greater than the nation.⁴³ In this sense, the nation state can serve towards world peace and progressive thought.

The nation state is an old phenomenon that seems to be here to stay as the world today is organized around nation states. Projects such as the EU and the UN have not managed to make the notion of the nation state any weaker and “the scheme of a world where people of all seeds and creeds live together without major disputes is doomed to remain a utopia.”⁴⁴

To conclude, the “state” part of the nation state is to do with institutions and regulations while the “nation” part is to do with identity, customs, and culture. The construction and sustaining of a nation state are processes that require violence as people may need to be coerced into acting in certain ways and conforming to certain rules. The construction and the further evolution of a national identity is also a process that requires great effort and force on the people in charge. One gentle method used is the construction of myths that connect the nation to a distant past and purposeful forgetting of the nearer past. These are all imaginings around an imagined community, which is the nation.

2.2. The Origins of Turkish Nationalism:

The Turkish nationalist movement dates to the Westernization and modernization efforts of the Tanzimat period of the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1871.⁴⁵ One of the two tools used by this social reform was centered around the Turkish language and especially the novel. The novel acted as an important tool in the process of nation building and the Tanzimat era novelists aimed to get the cooperation of the people as the literary form, which played an important role in the transmission of certain principles and values deemed important by the hegemonic powers in charge.⁴⁶ In the first decades of the 20th century, the Young Turks carried out a language reform that aimed to simplify Ottoman Turkish to make language more accessible to the less

⁴³ Selby, “Edward W. Said,” 49

⁴⁴ Nazmi Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism: Birds Without Wings by Louis de Bernières,” *Dergi Park Literacy Park*, vol. Volume: 7, no. 2, (2021): 81

⁴⁵ Erich Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*, (N.p.: I.B.Tauris 2014), 87.

⁴⁶ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 54.

educated speakers of the vernaculars to be able to spread nationalistic ideas (Zürcher 2014, 89).

The architect behind Turkish nationalism during the Ottoman times was Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), a sociologist with a very strong ideal of creating a uniform Turkish culture.⁴⁷ Gökalp associated anything to do with the Ottoman Empire and tradition with being backward, Western Europe with being advanced, and modernity with progress. For him, building a modern nation required purifying ethnic and cultural origins, in other words, getting rid of ethnic and cultural diversity.⁴⁸ Gökalp believed in creating a single entity imbued with what he referred to as “the nation’s soul.”⁴⁹ This, he believed, was possible through creating a uniform national culture through a uniform national education.

This belief resulted in him taking a stance against the cosmopolitan intellectual culture in the late Ottoman society and the diversity within the Ottoman education system. For example, he was very critical of the rich bookstores in İstanbul that sold books in Arabic, Ottoman, Persian and European languages.⁵⁰ Similarly, he advocated abolishing the three systems of education offered in religious, foreign, and Ottoman reformist schools and having a single system across the board that embraced secularism and Renaissance humanism through the study of ancient Greek and Roman texts; humanism was not an ideal, but a means to the ideal: nation building. Literature and fine arts were so as well.⁵¹

Gökalp’s ideas were put into further action by the Kemalist regime after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923; the aim was transforming an old, traditional, heterogeneous, and predominantly Muslim empire into a homogenous, modern, secular, and pro-Western nation.⁵² Gökalp can be “the best intellectual

⁴⁷ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 55; Turner, “A. Ziya Gökalp,” 7

⁴⁸ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 56; Turner, “A. Ziya Gökalp,” 89

⁴⁹ Turner, “A. Ziya Gökalp,” 94

⁵⁰ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 56

⁵¹ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 57-58

⁵² Jale Parla, “The Wounded Tongue: Turkey’s Language Reform and the Canonicity of the Novel” (*PMLA*, vol. 123, no. 1 2008): 28

formulator of the main trends of the Turkish Republic: Westernism, democracy, political and economic national independence, and secularism.”⁵³

Turkish nation building project was a monumental one in that in the attempt to create a homogenous body that shared a religion, language, culture and sentiments, the elites told people how to dress, how to furnish their houses, which alphabet and vocabulary to use, which history to learn, and even which music to listen to.⁵⁴ After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, though, a more ambitious and multifaceted language reform was launched, and the Alphabet Reform of 1928 meant embracing the use of the Latin Alphabet and abolishing the use of the Arabic and Persian letters.⁵⁵ Debates over the alphabet had already started back in the Tanzimat period, the 1850s and 1860s. These debates were centered around whether the Arabic alphabet was suitable for the Turkish language with its only three vowels and not enough consonants for all the sounds in Turkish.⁵⁶ What complicated things more was the lack of set rules regarding the spelling of words. This reform idea had to wait for the founding of the Turkish Republic to be realized.⁵⁷ Mustafa Kemal was personally involved in the Alphabet Reform and traveled around the country to encourage people to learn the new alphabet. This was not an easy task indeed, which he considered to be a war against ignorance, and that its victory would be much greater than the victories in the battle fields.⁵⁸ What followed was a country wide literacy campaign which mandated all citizens between the ages of sixteen and forty, men and women to participate; campaign photos showed women reading newspapers or books as they were riding on the ferry or waiting for the bus to go to work.⁵⁹ Clearly, the new Turkish identity was taking shape: Western, educated, and a resource for the nation. The army also played

⁵³ Berkes, “Ziya Gökalp,” 377

⁵⁴ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism: Greco-Turkish population exchange,” 532; Soner Çağatay, *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 88

⁵⁵ Parla, “The Wounded Tongue,” 28

⁵⁶ Parla, “The Wounded Tongue,” 28; Hale Yılmaz, Learning to Read (Again): The Social Experiences of Turkey’s 1928 Alphabet Reform,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 678; Yılmaz Çolak, “Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004): 68.

⁵⁷ Yılmaz, Learning to Read (Again),” 678.

⁵⁸ Yılmaz, Learning to Read (Again),” 680

⁵⁹ Yılmaz, Learning to Read (Again),” 682

an important role in spreading literacy across the population. The young men who joined the army learned to read and write, some becoming literacy teachers back home.⁶⁰

The successful transition to the Latin Alphabet set the ground for the Language Reform of 1936, which aimed to purge words borrowed from Arabic and Persian and replace them with “pure Turkish” words, invented vocabulary of a newspeak, which “would be a device to spread culture among people. It should be a language through which the flow of thought and idea from *above* is possible to publicize and inculcate culture.”⁶¹ This new language meant an abrupt cutting off the ties with Ottoman history and culture as all the literary heritage from that era became inaccessible to generations born into the nation as of 1925.⁶² This served the plans of the nationalist elites trying to create a new nation and a new national identity as it “burn[ed] the bridges connecting the nascent republic to its Islamic, oriental predecessor.”⁶³ This inevitably led to the loss of historical consciousness for many. As a witness to and an indirect agent in the bigger picture which purification of the Turkish language was only a part of, the German Jewish professor of Romantic philology, Ernst Auerbach equates “no young person [being able to] read the older literature any more” with the “reign[ing] of an intellectual directionlessness that is extremely dangerous” and calls this practice fanatical and barbaric.⁶⁴ It seems critiques of the language reform see the aspect of violence and loss of a great culture and body of knowledge.

However, the ruling elites and the official body behind the reform, Turkish Language Institute, justified the language reform from a pragmatic and utilitarian point that the pure Turkish was much less difficult, which would make education more accessible to more citizens, which in turn would create active participation and a lively

⁶⁰ Yılmaz, “Learning to Read (Again),” 685

⁶¹ Çolak, “Language Policy and Official Ideology,” 68

⁶² Parla, “The Wounded Tongue,” 28-29; Çolak, “Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey,” 69

⁶³ Yeşim Bayar, “The trajectory of nation-building through language policies: the case of Turkey during the early Republic (1920–38),” *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume: 17, Issue: 1 (2010): 36

⁶⁴ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 69

democracy.⁶⁵ Evidently, the Kemalist establishment aimed to create socially and politically active citizens who had a clear identification with their Turkishness, which is in line with Fanon's argument that “once national consciousness is reached “we must switch from a national consciousness to a social and political consciousness.”⁶⁶ He explains the reasons for this as follows:

A bourgeoisie that has only nationalism to feed the people fails in its mission and inevitably gets tangled up in a series of trials and tribulations. If nationalism is not explained, enriched, and deepened, if it does not quickly turn into a social and political consciousness, into humanism, then it leads to a dead end. A bourgeois leadership of the underdeveloped countries confines the national consciousness to a sterile formalism. Only the massive commitment by men and women to judicious and productive tasks gives form and substance to this consciousness ... The living expression of the nation is the collective consciousness in motion of the entire people ... If the national government wants to be national it must govern by the people and for the people, for the disinherited and by the disinherited.⁶⁷

Although active citizenship around a national identity and an educated population as the vanguards of the Kemalist establishment was the desired outcome, there were some problems in the realization of this reform. As with any top-down imposition by an authority over a diverse population, the Language Reform was not welcome all together by the populace; only some of the newspeak vocabulary was accepted and the rest failed. Mustafa Kemal made a couple of speeches in pure newspeak in 1934 only to return to the actual living language of Turkish with Arabic and Persian words a year later (1935).⁶⁸ What rescued the reformers from this evident failure was a new theory of Turkish language: The Sun Language Theory, which was declared in the First History Convention in 1932.⁶⁹ According to this theory, all languages evolved from a

⁶⁵ Bayar, “The trajectory of nation-building through language policies,” 40

⁶⁶ Alina Sajed & Timothy Saidel, “Introduction: Escaping the Nation? National Consciousness and the Horizons of Decolonization,” *Interventions*, 21:5 (2019):585

⁶⁷ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Translated by Richard Philcox New York: Grove Press, 2004: 143–144

⁶⁸ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 28

⁶⁹ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 28

single language spoken in Central Asia in a primordial past and the language closest to it is Turkish, which served as the universal bridge between any language spoken around the globe and the original language at one point.⁷⁰ Though approached with great suspicion by Turkish linguists of the time, the linguist behind the theory, Kvergic from Vienna managed to inspire and convince Mustafa Kemal and those around him. He, maybe indirectly, rescued them from the impossible task of imposing the newspeak onto the citizens of the new Turkish nation as the need to do that no longer existed.⁷¹ Thanks to this theory, all those Arabic and Persian words were, suddenly, miraculously related to Turkish.

Another way the Sun Language Theory served the Kemalist establishment was a new understanding of Turkish history that was more distant, more simplistic, and more homogenous and an invitation to the Turkish people to see their young nation as a continuation of a long history of civilizations that date back to a primordial past in Central Asia to which earlier civilizations such as the Hittites, the Sumerians, the Chinese, and the earlier European civilizations belonged, which consolidated the disidentification from the Ottoman heritage that was aimed through the Language Reform.⁷² The aim of cutting the nation's ties with its more recent and real past and roots in the Ottoman past and heritage necessitated the creation of a connection to a mythical and distant past with the hope to speed up the process of nation-building, modernization, and secularization.⁷³ The Sun-Language Theory also instilled in the populace an idea of being a part of an imagined race, one that is superior and a source of pride.⁷⁴ Kader Konuk argues that this sense of superiority through the new national identity helped to "ease the painful process of Westernization."⁷⁵ It is important to note that The Sun-Language Theory was announced after the Turkish History Thesis was declared by a state organization called the Society for the Study of the Turkish Language contending that "the Turks were a great and ancient race...whose roots went

⁷⁰ Çolak, "Language Policy and Official," 83

⁷¹ Zürcher, *The Young Turk*, 276

⁷² Parla, "The Wounded Tongue," 30

⁷³ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 67-70

⁷⁴ Parla, "The Wounded Tongue," 90

⁷⁵ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 68

back to Central Asia where...they created a bright civilization around an inner sea.”⁷⁶ With the drying up of this sea, they moved to all parts of the world and took their civilization with them as far as China, India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Anatolia, Greece, and Italy.⁷⁷ This theory prepared the ground for the Sun Language Theory in many ways by making Turks “the inheritors of the glories of ancient Sumerians, Egyptians, and Greeks” and “all Anatolia’s inhabitants ... Turks.”⁷⁸ A US diplomatic correspondent sums up the importance of these two projects as follows:

Both the History and Language congresses tended to prove the potency and historical significance in ancient times, the decline under the influence of foreign factors and elements and, finally the renaissance under the Republican regime of the Turkish people and language respectively.⁷⁹

Myths such as these aimed to create a unified national identity from the not long-ago subjects of a multi-ethnic and multi-faith society.⁸⁰ As in other examples of nation building, Turkish history is marked by homogenization.⁸¹ The Kemalist establishment tried to do this by claiming all the inhabitants of Anatolia from the past to the present were Turkish ethnically and racially. For example, not only the Hittites of the past but also ethnic groups of the time such as the Armenians suddenly became of Turkish race.⁸² The intelligentsia of the regime thought this would make homogenization easier in a society that was still very diverse with Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Gregorian Armenian, Catholic, Protestant, Kurdish, Arabic, Circassian, Laze, Armenian, Georgian, Judeo-Spanish, Pomak, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Spanish, Abzkhaz, Romani, and French speaking citizens living within the boundaries of the Turkish Republic by

⁷⁶ Soner Çağatay, “Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey: A Study of Turkish Nationalism,” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 25/26, no. 2/1 (2001): 89

⁷⁷ Soner Çağatay, “Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 3 (2004):89

⁷⁸ Çağatay, “Race, Assimilation and Kemalism,” 89

⁷⁹ Çağatay, “Race, Assimilation and Kemalism,” 93

⁸⁰ Kemal Kirişçi, “Disaggregating Turkish Citizenship and Immigration Practices,” 15;

Erol Ülker, “Assimilation of the Muslim communities in the first decade of the Turkish Republic (1923–1934),” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2007): 89

⁸¹ Ayhan Kaya, “Multiculturalism and Minorities in Turkey,” *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, edited by Raymond Taras, Edinburgh University Press (2013): 298

⁸² Çağatay, “Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey,” 94

1935.⁸³ Once they got the myths established through The Sun Language Theory and The Turkish History Theory towards a Turkish speaking national identity, the Kemalist establishment launched a campaign called *Citizen, Speak Turkish*.⁸⁴ In short, the aim of the ruling elite was to create a national identity that considers the Turkish race as an ancient and universal one whose language provided the basis for many languages spoken around the world, thus is Turkish speaking. Another equally important aim was to create a society that identified themselves as affiliated with European civilization.

In other words, the group of elites behind the nation-building project needed a narrative, a story to fashion a national identity which would motivate the people strongly enough to adopt this new sense of self as a member of this new society and culture.⁸⁵ The focus of the movement was education, predominantly higher education, and the mission assigned to the education of the nation was to instill a sense of connection to the Western European's humanist culture and its classical heritage. Thus, a Turkish Renaissance through the study of Greek and Western classics was the means to the construction of the new Turkish national identity and Turkish nationalism.⁸⁶ This consolidated the Kemalist establishment's plans to make Turkish society a Europeanized one.⁸⁷

To this aim, in 1926, the Islamic calendar was abolished to be replaced by the Western calendar, thus a switch to the European time frame was achieved. The alphabet reform of 1928 had a similar aim.⁸⁸ In the late 1920s and early 1930s, a thorough educational reform was carried out with Western education experts in charge. Ironically, the dream of a Turkish Renaissance coincided with a time in Europe when the fruits of the European Renaissance was under attack by Nazism. What provided the Turkish humanist movement with the intelligentsia was the more than eight hundred German

⁸³ Çağatay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey," 94

⁸⁴ Çağatay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey," 94

⁸⁵ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 54

⁸⁶ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 56; Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı düşüncesinin doğuşu*, 7; Metin Özkan, "Türk Hürmanizmasından Mertebeler Devletine: Hilmi Ziya Ülken'in Hakimiyet'i," *Dergi Park* 23, 3 (2022): 144

⁸⁷ Çağatay, *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey*, 6

⁸⁸ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 60

Jewish or anti-fascist academicians who took refuge in the young Turkish Republic to be employed in state run universities, museums, and institutions.⁸⁹ The aim of all the reforms listed above was not to just copy European culture but to generate a unique Turkish renaissance that was claiming the ancient civilizations of Ancient Greece to create a new sense of history, belonging, and identity.⁹⁰ To sum up, the educational institutions of the Turkish reform movement were educating the next generations of the young Republic who identified with the Western civilization and distanced themselves from the Ottoman heritage. Şerif Mardin explains the progress made in Westernization as follows:

Atatürk believed that the greatest achievement of the Western civilization was in the social structure it created and the advancements in social sciences they achieved. For this reason, for the young republic, he preferred a parliamentary system and rule by the people. What was behind this ideal was the “honor of the individual.”⁹¹

Unlike the West, the Islamic civilization did not pay the individual much attention or value and expected them to fit in the big context of the Islamic state and the Islamic community. In the new republic, though, the individual was to be free. This new way of looking at the members of the society and the space to be free, for Atatürk, was what progress meant and depended on, thus what the young Turkish Republic needed.⁹² Clearly, the dream of the Kemalist regime was to create a democratic and progressive nation.

To sum up, the Turkish national movement that started in the late Ottoman period and continued with the construction of the Turkish Republic aimed to create a Western, modern, and secular state from the remnants of a multiethnic and multi faith population that was predominantly Muslim. A series of reforms and myths such as the Sun Language Theory and the Turkish History Theory were needed. Efforts to cut the people’s ties with the Ottoman Empire necessitated the construction of ties with

⁸⁹ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 63

⁹⁰ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 64

⁹¹ Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi Makaleler*, 2nd ed. İstanbul, Çağaloğlu: İletişim Yayıncılık A.Ş., (1991): 20

⁹² Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, 21

civilizations from the distant past and to instill a sense of pride in people for being Turkish. Education was the most important tool in creating a Western civilization and the young Republic put considerable effort in this realm. The imaginings of a Westernized Turkish civilization led to a national identity that identified with the values of the modern Western civilization, which were to be taken and made Turkish in a unique way and not merely imitated. The new Turkish citizen read and wrote in Latin script, dressed in Western style clothes, used the modern calendar, read translations of World Classics, and felt proud to come from the ancient civilizations of Anatolia. In other words, the imaginings of a new nation led to imaginings of a whole new lifestyle and a whole new citizen.

2.3. The Situation of the Minorities in Late Ottoman and Early Republic Periods and the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange

Minority rights is an important tricky point in the nation-building process. In the Turkish case, the nation-building process, in time, created a homogenous society from a multicultural one.⁹³ This is not particular to Turkey as “the nation-building process in various parts of the world went hand in hand with the elimination of ‘undesirable’ others who remained outside the mainstream identification category.”⁹⁴ This elimination takes place through migration. The authorities in power in the newly founded Turkish nation-state chose Islam as its defining aspect because what “a Turk” referred to was quite ambiguous.⁹⁵ In line with this, policies aiming to Islamize the society were put in place by treating the non-Muslims as ‘the others’ and trying to Turkicize them through policies such as the “Vatandaş, Türkçe Konuş” (Citizen, speak Turkish), which led to their emigration. With shrinking minority populations, the Turkish nation ended up being united in ethno-cultural terms.⁹⁶

⁹³ Ahmet İçduygu, Şule Toktaş & B. Ali Soner. “The politics of population in a nation-building process: emigration of non-Muslims from Turkey”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31:2 (2008): 358

⁹⁴ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, “The politics of population,” 359

⁹⁵ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, “The politics of population,” 360; Çağatay, “Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey,” 3

⁹⁶ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, “The politics of population,” 361; Çağatay, “Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey,” 3

This was not the case at all in the multi-religious and polyethnic Ottoman Empire where the millet system granted the non-Muslim the Greek Orthodox, Armenian-Gregorian, and Jewish communities' autonomy in their religious, educational, juridical, and fiscal affairs. The millet system continued until nationalism started to influence the rulers and people of the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁷ This gradually destroyed its cosmopolitan culture, and non-Muslims began to leave the country relying on the support of Western powers.⁹⁸ Greek and Armenia declaring their independence created nationalist sentiments among the non-Muslims⁹⁹ whereas the Muslim intelligentsia of the Empire was also greatly influenced by the waves of nationalism with some aiming for an Ottoman nation, others dreaming of either a state based on Islam, or a Turkish nation based on ethnicity.¹⁰⁰ The modern Turkish state chose the last one as its policy and made Islam an important defining aspect.¹⁰¹

The demographic changes that took place in this nation-building process were phenomenal. For example, in the 1820s, Muslims made up 60 percent of the population. This increased to 69 percent in the 1870s and 76 percent in the 1890s. In the early twentieth century, Muslims made up 80 percent of the population with 11 percent Greeks, 7 percent Armenians, and 1 percent Jews.¹⁰² The non-Muslim population dropped even further after the Balkan Wars that resulted in the establishment of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, and Greece. The non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire emigrated to these states. The Muslim population increased even further with Bulgarian Muslims emigrating to Ottoman Thrace.¹⁰³ Another factor in the decrease in the Muslim population was thousands of Armenians

⁹⁷İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population," 361

⁹⁸ Çağatay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey," 1

⁹⁹ Çağatay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey," 2

¹⁰⁰ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population," 361; Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913): Awakening from the Ottoman Dream", *War in History* 12, no. 2 (2005):159

¹⁰¹ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population," 362

¹⁰² Çağatay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey," 87

¹⁰³ Harry Psomiades, *The Eastern Question: The Last Phase*, (Institute for Balkan Studies, 1968), 60 ; Çağatay "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey: A Study of Turkish Nationalism," 2

being forced to move to southern provinces under very harsh conditions.¹⁰⁴ The clashes between the Armenian rebels and the Muslims also led to the death of thousands of Armenians.¹⁰⁵ The Turkish War of Independence can be described as a war against the occupying forces and minorities, which prompted the members of minorities to immigrate from Anatolia during the war.¹⁰⁶ Kasaba explains the transformation in the status of the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire from the end of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century as follows:

It's quite clear that starting from the final decades of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman, the Young Turk, and the nationalist administrations became increasingly suspicious of the position and aspirations of the Greek and Armenian residents of the empire. The persecution of the Muslims in the Balkans after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78, the shifting policies of the great powers, and the uncertainties inherent in Turkish nationalism are some of the factors that brought about this general mistrust. By the early decades of the twentieth century, the Greeks and Armenians had become the "others" of Turkish nationalism.¹⁰⁷

In the early days of the nation-building project, although the minorities were officially recognized and given autonomy over their education, religious practices and social lives, the mainstream sentiments for them were very negative.¹⁰⁸ The population and the rulers could not forget their collaboration with the occupying forces. This made them "the others" and excluded them from the definition of what being a Turkish citizen entailed ethically, culturally and in terms of religion.¹⁰⁹ Those who did not fit in with this definition were not welcome, so efforts to make the minorities fit in, the rulers carried out rather brutal policies. One was the 'Citizen, Speak Turkish!' campaign in the 1920s in which competency in and preference over Turkish language

¹⁰⁴ Raoul Blanchard, "The Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey," *Geographical Review* 15, no. 3 (1925): 450

¹⁰⁵ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population," 354

¹⁰⁶ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population," 365

¹⁰⁷ Melike Metintaş & Mustafa Y. Metintaş, "The Economic Aspects of Turkification Policies in the Early Republican Period: Wealth Tax.," *DergiPark* 3, (2019): 58

¹⁰⁸ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 335

¹⁰⁹ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 335

became a defining feature of Turkishness.¹¹⁰ Another was the Law on Settlement (1934) that meant non-Muslims could not live in the strategic regions of the country.¹¹¹ This meant regions close to the borders with Greece and Bulgaria: Thrace and Gallipoli. The Jewish population did not only receive unsigned letters telling them they were not welcome to continue living there but also were exposed to economic boycotts, verbal, and physical violence.¹¹² As a result, more than half of them moved to İstanbul to take refuge. In the years of the Second World War, the policies towards non-Muslims continued to be motivated by security concerns.¹¹³ The non-Muslim men were recruited to the army but seen as untrustworthy and not given any arms but instead made to work in manual jobs such as collecting garbage, building roads and national parks.¹¹⁴ To make things worse, the government introduced another law called the Law on Capital Tax which called for a one-time tax from all citizens based on their properties and money at hand to create a budget for wartime expenses.¹¹⁵ Although the tax called for all citizens to contribute to the state's budget for war expenses, the non-Muslims had to pay five to ten times higher than the Muslim citizens. The finance minister of the time, Şükrü Sarıoğlu, announced their reasons for the tax in a speech he made to the nation:

Our military expenses are high, our budget has a deficit; it is not possible to balance it with current taxes and with state revenues. In our country, some capital owners, brokers, black market traders who have the opportunity to do business with foreign countries gained great wealth. While our people are in misery, struggling with the difficulties of war, they have provided great profits. Now, with the wealth tax, the government needs to impose such a tax, both to

¹¹⁰ Metintaş & Metintaş, "The Economic Aspects of Turkification Policies," 62

¹¹¹ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 335-336; Metintaş & Metintaş, "The Economic Aspects of Turkification," 62

¹¹² İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 336

¹¹³ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 337; Metintaş & Metintaş, "The Economic Aspects of Turkification," 63

¹¹⁴ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 338

¹¹⁵ İçduygu, Toktaş & Soner, "The politics of population in a nation-building process," 338; Metintaş & Metintaş, "The Economic Aspects of Turkification Policies," 63

meet the challenges of the government and to resolve the livelihood of the low-income class.¹¹⁶

This meant most of the non-Muslims selling off their properties or ending up at labor camps. This not only made the non-Muslim population feel the extent of the resentment towards them but also ended up with 98% of non-Muslim real-estate and a large amount of capital being transferred to either the state or the Muslim citizens.¹¹⁷

In other words, capital and estate in the country ended up being nationalized and Muslimified.¹¹⁸ Treatments such as these and the daily tension ended up making migration from Turkey a more attractive choice. This happened gradually but consistently leading to steady decreases in the Jewish, Armenian, and Greek populations. The first step of the migration was internal with İstanbul and İzmir being the destinations.¹¹⁹ However, realizing they did not have much protection over them that they needed to be safe and to continue their culture, they had to migrate to countries outside Turkey: Palestine for the Jews, Greece for Greeks, France, and the US for the Armenians.¹²⁰

The Greek migration to Greece from Anatolia had already started long before the establishment of the Turkish state. Greece was the first nation to break away from the Ottoman Empire.¹²¹ After the Balkan Wars, it received enough migrants to double its population from 2.7 million to 4.8 million.¹²² Before the First World War, 330,000 Greeks from Ottoman territories, including Anatolia, had migrated to Greece. This number reached more than one million by the end of the war. In addition, in 1914, Greeks of Thrace and İzmir were exchanged with Muslims of Macedonia and Epiros.¹²³ During the war of independence and after the invasion of Greece of Western

¹¹⁶ Metintaş& Metintaş, “The Economic Aspects of Turkification,” 64

¹¹⁷ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, “The politics of population in a nation-building process,” 339

¹¹⁸ Ellinor Morrack, “Turkifying Poverty, or: the Phantom Pain of Izmir’s Lost Christian Working Class, 1924–26,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 55:4 (2019): 50.

¹¹⁹ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, “The politics of population in a nation-building process,” 339-340

¹²⁰ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, “The politics of population in a nation-building process,” 340

¹²¹ “Short Bibliography (H. Millas, 2016),” 9

¹²² Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 538

¹²³ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 539

Anatolia, this trend was reversed. The Greek authorities encouraged the Greeks who had been forced to migrate from Anatolia to return. This continued up until the end of the war and the establishment of modern Turkey.¹²⁴

The young republic was eager to rid itself of the Greek inhabitants, who were the direct descendants of the ancient Greek culture that it idealized as an important aspect of the new modern Turkish identity.¹²⁵ Still, the imagination of the new nation was one that was homogeneous,¹²⁶ Turkish, and Muslim so the minorities were excesses that had to be taken out of the picture. The Lausanne Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Population (1923) resulted in approximately two million people being displaced.¹²⁷ It is important to note that forced migration is not the only way for a nation state to deal with the problem of the minorities challenging the homogenization ideal. The other two possible ways are imprisoning the minorities through segregation or killing them through ethnic cleansing.¹²⁸ Although not as radical as the other two, the population exchange between the young Turkish state and the Greek state was brutal for those involved.¹²⁹ The first article of the convention stated, “As from 1st May 1923, there shall take place a compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox Religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory.”¹³⁰

This was too simplistic and did not address the diversity of identities after co-existence over centuries in an Empire. The cases of the Protestant and Catholic Greeks, the Arabs, Serbians, Greek Speaking Muslims, the Turkish speaking Greek Orthodox, and many others were not clarified.¹³¹ Approximately 400,000-500,000 Muslims migrated

¹²⁴ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 542; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 1

¹²⁵ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 538

¹²⁶ Konuk, *East West Mimesis*, 56; Turner, “A. Ziya Gökalp,” 89

¹²⁷ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism: Greco-Turkish population exchange,” 538; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 5; Blanchard, “The Exchange of Populations,” 449

¹²⁸ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 538

¹²⁹ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 541

¹³⁰ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 538; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 5

¹³¹ Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 6

from Greece to Turkey and 1,500,000 Greeks migrated from Anatolia to Greece.¹³² The number of Greeks that migrated before the Lausanne Treaty amounted to more than a million. Such big numbers necessitated diligent planning and logistics, which, unfortunately, was not the case.¹³³ The exchange was done in haste. The result was catastrophic for Turkey. More than half of the Greeks were urban and made up the highly skilled employment force of the population. With the Greeks gone, the country lost its merchants, professional artisans, tailors, shoemakers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, glaziers, and masons.¹³⁴ The Muslim migrants that replaced them were not able to fill this gap. Not only was their number considerably smaller, but also, they were mostly farmers and not artisans. The aim of homogenizing the population as the nation-state deems desirable was achieved with 97,4% of the population Muslims in 1927 from 80% in 1906. However, the price paid for this homogenization was an impoverished workforce.¹³⁵

The conference started on the 20th of November 1922 and had representatives from Great Britain, France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Turkey was represented by İsmet İnönü, who had successfully led the Turkish army in the Greco-Turkish war to victory, while Greece was represented by Eleftherios Venizelos, a successful and popular politician of modern Greece of the time.¹³⁶ The topics to be discussed were territorial and military issues, minority regime, and financial and economic problems with the most urgent one being “the compulsory separation of two populations... to relieve human catastrophe.”¹³⁷ This exchange had an impact on the lives of almost 1,6 million people on the two sides of the Aegean and the political, cultural, and human geography of Macedonia, Thrace, and Asia Minor. These formerly multi-religious and

¹³² Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 539-540; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 5

¹³³ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 539-540

¹³⁴ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 539-540

¹³⁵ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 540-542

¹³⁶ Aslı Emine Comu, “The Exchange of Populations and the Transformation of Two Mediterranean Cities, Adana and Mersin,” *Athens Journal of History*, Volume 4, Issue 4 (2018):329

¹³⁷ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 329-330; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 6

multiethnic places adopted homogeneity in faith and ethnicity under the leadership of the nationalist leaders of the time.¹³⁸

As stated above, this population exchange was not the first one to be put in effect. However, the exchange of Turkish and Greek populations that took place after the Lausanne Treaty is different because it was compulsory and much more systematic.¹³⁹ The Greek side was eager for the exchange because they had received a massive influx of Greek refugees and were trying to cope with their needs, the Turkish side was eager to get rid of all the non-Muslim population because of their treacherous actions during the war of independence.¹⁴⁰ However, the actual people who experienced the exchange were reluctant. They did not want to leave their homes and never return. They did all they could to avoid the exchange.¹⁴¹ For example, a group of Turks living in Greece signed a petition to the Greek government to be allowed to stay. On the Turkish side, some Greeks converted to Islam and some of the women married Muslim men to be able to stay. Similarly, a group of Creten Muslims wanted to be baptized, so they could stay in Greece.¹⁴² Unfortunately, the actual people whose lives were to be affected by the population exchange had to go through a very traumatic experience that affected millions of lives and their future generations.¹⁴³ Not everyone at the conference was as brutal as those who saw the population exchange as a necessity. One of the delegates, Lord Curzon from England said, “that the solution now being worked out should be the compulsory exchange of populations- a thoroughly bad and vicious solution, for which the world would pay a heavy penalty for a hundred years to

¹³⁸ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 330; Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 6

¹³⁹ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 330

¹⁴⁰ Shields, “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 2; Ginio, “Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars,” 171

¹⁴¹ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 331-332

¹⁴² Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 331-332

¹⁴³ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 332; Shields “The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange,” 2

come.”¹⁴⁴ This was indeed true with the most basic human rights being ignored for the sake of state interests.¹⁴⁵

Two million people being forced to leave the places they belonged to over many generations against their will and for the purpose of state building on both sides is indeed a terrible violation of human rights and a testimony to the impersonal and violent aspect of the state building process. With the nation state ideal sweeping Europe and Anatolia, and new nation states emerging, the situation of minorities of the Ottoman Empire and later the Turkish Republic inevitably came to a turning point. While the Muslim populations of Thrace and Eastern Europe immigrated to Anatolia, an influx of people of Greek, Bulgarian, and Armenian descent left Anatolia after the Balkan Wars in the late Ottoman era. Once the modern Turkish nation state was established, a Treaty was signed between the two young nation-states in the region, Greece, and Bulgaria, in Lausanne. The treaty entailed an exchange of Greek Christians living in Anatolia with Turkish Muslims living in Greece. The exchange was done without diligent planning and resulted in numerous tragedies. Two million people were forced to leave their homelands.

In the early days of the Republic, the remaining minorities were officially recognized and given autonomy over their education, religious practices, and social lives, many policies making them feel unwelcome were put into practice such as the requirement to speak Turkish and to give away their property and estate as tax to the Turkish government. This resulted in large numbers of minority populations migrating to Greece, Armenia, and Bulgaria. Thus, Anatolia became more and more Muslimized, Turkisized, and homogeneous, losing the multicultural and colorful spirit of the Ottoman Empire. The same was true for all the nation states that were established in the region.

2.4. Literature on the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange

Greece opened The Centre for Asia Minor Studies in the 1920s to preserve the cultural heritage of the refugees and collected an archive of the testimonies of 5.000 refugees

¹⁴⁴ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 332; Özsu, “A thoroughly bad and vicious solution,” 126

¹⁴⁵ Comu, “The Exchange of Populations,” 332

from all around Asia Minor. These testimonies reveal the emotional and psychological distress the refugees experienced and their personal reaction to the exchange.¹⁴⁶ Novels written by refugees did the same. *Benden Selam Söyle Anadolu'ya* (Farewell to Anatolia) by Dido Sotiriou and *Yitik Kentin Kırk Yılı* (A Forty Year Commemoration of a Lost Town) by Kosman Politis published in the 1960s were two of these books written by the actual people who were subjected to the exchange.¹⁴⁷

Dido Sotiriou was from the Anatolian side of the Aegean and was born in 1909, in a town in Aydın. Her novel offers an invaluable contribution in that it successfully presents three important historical facts. One is the fact that thousands of Greeks paid the price for the misdeeds of their fellowmen through the forced migration of The Population Exchange, the other is how the Great Powers deceived the Greeks with promises of a Great Greece and abandoned them. Finally, its representation of İzmir as a vibrant multicultural and multi faith city with Turkish, Armenian, Jewish, Greek, Levantine, and European cultures offers a historical first witness account of İzmir as it was before the exchange.¹⁴⁸

Kosman Politis, on the other hand, lived in a purely Greek village close to Ephesus. The village was on fertile soil and the Greek villagers made the best use of it. It was surrounded by Turkish villages and the Turkish communities in these villages had commercial ties and mutually friendly and trust-based relationship with the Greek community Politis was from. His novel depicts İzmir as a multicultural city as well, offering the reader a taste of multiculturalism. Another important achievement of the novel is the criticism of the politicians of the time around the Greek Invasion on Anatolia holding them accountable for causing much destruction and suffering.¹⁴⁹

On the Turkish side, however, literary works on the topic started to appear in 1960 but increased in number from the 1990s onward. Most of these books were written by second or third generation immigrants and combined real characters and events with fictional ones. Two of the most recent books on the Population Exchange are Yılmaz

¹⁴⁶ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 333

¹⁴⁷ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 333-334

¹⁴⁸ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 336-337

¹⁴⁹ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 338-341

Karakoyunlu's *Mor Kaftanlı Selanik* (Thessaloniki in Purple Kaftan) and Fügen Ünal Şen's *Bir Avuç Mazi* (A Handful of Past).¹⁵⁰

Yılmaz Karakoyunlu has no personal connection to the Population Exchange but as a novelist and politician, his personal interest in the matter prompted him to compile stories from many places in Turkey and Greece such as İzmir, Tekirdağ, Thessaloniki, Drama and Rethymno. The story starts at a time shortly before the Lausanne Treaty and continues into the migrants settling in Greece. Friendships between Muslims and Christians in Asia Minor are depicted, and the Christians being forced to leave are described as people who belong to that land. The characters experience great despair on having to leave their homes and believe neither Athens nor Ankara care about the migrants.¹⁵¹ The contribution of the novel is invaluable in that it gives a voice to so many people who were unvoiced and emphasizes the friendships between the Greeks and the Turks.

Fügen Ünal Şen, tells the story of only one Turkish family and the suffering they go through emotionally and financially, because of the forced migration in her book *Bir Avuç Mazi*. The reader learns about the fear experienced by the Turkish people because the Greeks are committing pillage and murder. They feel they no longer belong to their homeland in Greece or to Turkey. They see the Exchange of Populations as an invitation from Mustafa Kemal and decide to go. Stories of migrants from both sides of the Aegean are narrated and what they have in common is how exhausted, how lonely, and how foreign they feel. The novel ends with optimism the migrants feel that they will eventually be happy in their new homes.¹⁵² The novel's contribution is its communicating the overwhelming feelings of the migrants before, during, and after the population exchange.

A more recent novel on the Population Exchange is by Yaşar Kemal. Yaşar Kemal narrates the same experience of the Greek population of Western Anatolia hearing about the population exchange and departing their homes in the first book of his quartet of *The Stories of an Island* 1. The book effectively communicates the depths of the

¹⁵⁰ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 342-346

¹⁵¹ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 340-341

¹⁵² Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 343- 344

individual and collective trauma experienced by the Greeks and their Muslim friends in the neighboring town. Yaşar Kemal has also done a masterful job integrating elements of the Aegean nature into the narration almost yet another character lamenting the departure of the Greeks whose way of life is directly in harmony with this geography. The story of the population exchange ends with them sailing into the unknown. Yaşar Kemal's contribution to literature on the topic is his powerful emphasis on how the Greek people of Anatolia and the Anatolian Aegean region and sea were inseparable and should have never been separated.

In the Turkish context, the Population Exchange was mostly a topic in academic circles rather than literary at the beginning. Although it was the largest migration flow into the region, it was not unique as earlier forced migrations from the Balkans, Crimea and the Caucasus had taken place.¹⁵³ The officials saw this exchange as a continuation of the former ones and expected the migrants to adapt fully to Turkish society and culture. They were disappointed to see most of the migrants from Greece not able to speak Turkish and included them in the *Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş* (Citizen, Speak Turkish). One of the earlier academic works on the Exchange of Populations was *Büyük Mübadele Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç* by Kemal Arı.¹⁵⁴ This book rekindled an interest in the topic and led to many dissertations, books, and articles on the topic. Later, oral history and memoir books containing the recollections of the first-generation migrants were published such as *Emanet Çeyiz* (Entrusted Dowry) by Kemal Yalçın and *İki Vatan Yorgunları* (The Exhausted of the Two Homelands) by İskender Özsoy.¹⁵⁵ In addition, the non-governmental organization called Lozan Mübadilleri Vakfı (The Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants), founded in 2001, carried out conferences and workshops on the population exchange in order to create awareness in the general public.¹⁵⁶ A predominant figure in academic work on the Turkish- Greek relations and the population exchange is Herkul Milas. He is a Turkish resident of Greek ethnicity and a spokesperson for peace and dialogue between the two nations. He is a lecturer at Sabancı and Işık Universities and aims to encourage his

¹⁵³ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 338

¹⁵⁴ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 338

¹⁵⁵ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 338-339

¹⁵⁶ Comu, "The Exchange of Populations," 339

students to look at the Greek-Turkish relations from an informed and comprehensive point of view. Some of his books include *The Pot called the Cattle black*, *An Introduction to Greek-Turkish Relations*, *The Birth of the Greek Nation*, *An Introduction to Greek-Turkish relations*, *The City of Ayvalik and Venezis*, *The Turkish Novel and the “Other”- The Image of the Greek in national identity*, and many others. Herkul’s academic work has contributed to dialogue between the two nations.¹⁵⁷ Evidently, the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange of 1923 continues to be topical and a point of inquiry for people on both sides of the Aegean. This is only to be expected when two million lives were affected and the descendants of these two million people grew up hearing stories about life before, during, and after the exchange. In addition to works of fiction by first- and second-generation immigrants and by authors well informed about and touched by the exchange, academic work by both Greek and Turkish academicians provides facts about the exchange and its implications, all of which is a testimony to its place in the history of the modern Turkish nation state and its Greek counterpart.

¹⁵⁷ Milas, “Short Bibliography,” 1

CHAPTER THREE: *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS* AND PURGING UNWANTED ELEMENTS

An important aspect of the Turkish nation-state building was the deliberate choice to make Turkishness and Islam as the defining features of the national identity. Turkish nation-state was not alone in aiming a homogeneous society as “the nation-building process in various parts of the world went hand in hand with the elimination of ‘undesirable’ others who remained outside the mainstream identification category.”¹⁵⁸ The most universally practiced means of eliminating ‘undesirable’ others has been migration. In the Turkish case, “the undesirable others” were the Greeks and the Armenians. In *Birds without Wings*, Louis de Bernieres dedicates two long and dense chapters to the migration of these people.

3.1. The Greek Exodus:

In line with the narrative style of historical events in *Birds Without Wings*, the Greek population exchange is first explained as a history book would in the last chapter on Mustafa Kemal, namely chapter 86 entitled “Mustafa Kemal 22” and the detailed fictitious narration of the population exchange comes afterwards although it is alluded to many times throughout the novel up to that point.

The 86th chapter informs the reader of the Treaty of Lausanne that sets the conditions for the Turkish-Greek population exchange. One important fact behind the Lausanne Treaty that is given is the criteria for the exchange being explicitly religious and not ethnic with all Greek Muslims, regardless of the language they speak and regardless of the nationality they hold to be sent to Turkey and all Turkish Christians, regardless of the language they speak to be sent to Greece. This is an ironic aspect of the population exchange: although it is carried out within a nationalist and nation-building context, the criteria for the selection of the migrants to either young nation-state is religion.

¹⁵⁸ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner, “The politics of population,” 3

Another important fact is the catastrophic impact of the population exchange on the Turkish economy. It is also narrated that upon the signing of the Lausanne Treaty, committees are sent to places with Christian populations to “assess the value of property so that it can be sent ahead, or its value reimbursed to refugees on arrival. There is no transport provided, however, simply because Turkey has nothing left after the decade of war, and the goods will not arrive. For many of the refugees it turns out to be yet another death march.”¹⁵⁹ The reader clearly sees the terribly unfavorable conditions under which the population exchange took place and all the pain and suffering it caused.

In this chapter, Bernieres has deliberately made the decision to adopt a history book style narrative style at the beginning of the chapter, including many historical facts. It is almost a parallel history book for a reader interested in the late Ottoman era, thus can be read simultaneously with such books, and complement one another. The chapter has a lot to say- sometimes subtly through personal tragedies- about the brutal aspect of the population exchange detailed at the Lausanne Treaty and that was the end of multinational communities. The points le Bernieres makes on these two echo what Bademkiran and Bruce Clark say on the matter:

It is true that the great powers, with the decision on the population exchange at the Lausanne Treaty, “decided on the destiny of hundreds of thousands of people living on the same land for centuries by rupturing them from their lands, homes, and languages and by sending them to their so-called homeland, to where they had never been before.”¹⁶⁰

What hundreds of thousands of people went through is clearly violence imposed by two young nation-states for their ideal of nation building. This is in line with the argument that violence is an inherent aspect of the nation-building project.¹⁶¹ Bruce Clark expresses the trauma experienced by the Greeks and the Turkish people during the population exchange as follows:

¹⁵⁹ Lois de Bernieres, *Birds Without Wings* (Croydon, Surrey: Vintage, 2004), 665

¹⁶⁰ Derya Bademkiran “A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness as a Subject of English Language Fiction in the Novels of *The Shirt of Flame* and *Birds without Wings* (MA diss., Yaşar University, 2013), 38

¹⁶¹ Sajed & Seidel, “Introduction: Escaping the Nation?” 585.

The sad fact is that multinational empires have given away not to multinational democracies but to sharply defined nation-states; and the process of redefinition has been a violent one. Even if it does not lead to outright war, it often traumatizes the people involved by sharpening divisions which may once have been blurred. It draws lines and forces people to step to one side or the other.¹⁶²

Being uprooted from one's home and land that one feels a strong belonging to due to one's roots that go back generations after generation must indeed be traumatic. Adding to this trauma must be the trauma of one's friends and neighbors from another religion and ethnicity becoming enemies because of the atrocities committed by members of the same religion and ethnicity elsewhere.

The chapter zooms into Eskibahçe, as it does in other Mustafa Kemal chapters, which set the historical context and flow more like pages from a history book than a novel. It is narrated that the Christians of Eskibahçe do not take the committee seriously and the relationship between the Christian and Muslim populations of the town are mostly back to normal.¹⁶³ This is probably because of their decades old co-existence that they take to be the norm and naturally turn to. The end of the war and the declaration of the republic has not made much of a difference in the lives of the people who "still think that they are Ottomans, and that Mustafa Kemal is a good servant of the Sultan. Many of them still wear turbans, which were banned years ago."¹⁶⁴ It is no surprise to the reader that this was the case at a time when there was no means of mass communication and resources to reach every corner of Anatolia. Life, naturally, must have resembled life under the Ottoman rule in those early days of the young nation-state in rural areas such as Eskibahçe. The return of the soldiers, some crippled, some with no family left in general, and of İbrahim, who is now mentally disturbed, in particular is elaborated. The reality of the population exchange, however, hits the people of the town with news from İzmir that "all the Armenians and Greeks have gone."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Bruce Clark, *Twice a Strange* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2006), 5

¹⁶³ 664-665

¹⁶⁴ 666

¹⁶⁵ 667

The detailed narration of the population exchange in a fictitious form comes in the 88th chapter, Exodus, which starts with an irony around one very important character in the story of how this historical event unfolds specifically in the setting created by the author, Eskibahçe. This character is the priest of the town, Father Kristoforos, who has yet another version of the recurring nightmare in which he witnesses “the funeral of God” in which the Angel Azrael is “the gravedigger.”¹⁶⁶ This rather distressing nightmare, which leaves him sleepless, restless and with “dark rings under [his] eyes”¹⁶⁷ seems to be a sign for the catastrophe approaching. As he wakes up from his nightmare at dawn, Sergeant Osman and his men enter the town to carry out their duty to instruct the Greek population to get ready for their journey out of their homes to Greece. As one nightmare ends, a real one starts, which is felt by the holy man. Later in the story, Father Kristoforos will take on the role of leadership and lead the crowd with the Holy Virgin’s icon in his hand, reciting prayers all through. His flickering faith in God manifested in his nightmare is expressed yet again in the final sentence of the chapter:

Chief captains of the heavenly armies, we the unworthy implore you to protect us by your supplications, with the shelter of the wings of your immaterial glory, as you guard us who fall down and insistently cry out; deliver us from dangers...” he sang, acutely pained by the irrepressible suspicion that his prayers were winging up to an empty sky.¹⁶⁸

It is obvious that, as he sees in his nightmare, Father Kristoforos does not feel the presence of an omnipresent Creator watching over them with His Mercy and Compassion under those hellish circumstances: being forced to leave their homes and homeland without any transportation and provisions to make it less unbearable. It is also possible to read this nightmare as a metaphor for the end of an era. According to the author, what is behind the peoples of Eskibahçe living in peace and harmony is the

¹⁶⁶ 673

¹⁶⁷ 673

¹⁶⁸ 693

uniting force of God and this nightmare seems to symbolize that the co-existence of the Christians and Muslims is no longer God's will.¹⁶⁹

Sergeant Osman, the person in authority behind this human drama, appears in the plot before to recruit first Muslims as soldiers and then Christians to help in battalions during the war. This time he is older and not in the best shape in terms of his health: his limp has got worse and he "experienced difficulty in breathing."¹⁷⁰ This makes the reader understand how life under a war takes a toll on every one of the population. Living through a war means a lack of food and nutrition for all, even those who are not on the battlefield. It also means witnessing or experiencing loss, illness, and compromised health. Sergeant Osman aging and losing his health in such a short time seems to symbolize this aspect of life at a time of war.

When the Greek people hear of the news, they find it hard to perceive the reality of the situation awaiting them. There is total puzzlement and a million questions directed at the Sergeant. It is like a choir of cacophony:

"What about my house?"

"What about my animals?"

"What about my son? He's away for three days. What will become of him when he returns?"

"What about my mother? She's sick. What will become of her?"

It is like their brains are firing up, creating questions that are of major to little importance about countless things that make up one's life such as one's home, one's animals and mother, and one's samovar. Of all these questions, the ones about Greece and their connection to it are very striking: "Where is Greece?" and "Are the Greeks Ottomans like us?"¹⁷¹ Obviously, they are trying to make sense of what is happening, which is not only taking away their homes and lives but also has something to do with collective identity. Sergeant Osman's response to this question is quite ironic:

¹⁶⁹ Mesut Tekşan, "Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı ve Louis De Bernieres'in Kanatsız Kuşlar Romanı Üzerine Bir İnceleme The New Theory of Historicism and A Study of Louis De Bernieres Novel of Birds Without Wings," *Turkish Studies-Language and Literature*, vol: 15, issue: 4. (2020): 20

¹⁷⁰ 673

¹⁷¹ 675

‘No, from now on you are Greeks, not Ottomans. And we are not Ottomans anymore either, we are Turks...And tomorrow, who knows? We might be something else, and you might be Negros, and rabbits will become cats.’¹⁷²

These words communicate the arbitrary nature of the concept of nationality and how man made, in other words, how constructed it is. It is impossible for a reader well read in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, not to see the humor in the arbitrary nature of assigning a new identity to a group of people as imagined by those in authority. As Anderson says, national identities and nations are imagined constructs and require a collective imagining.¹⁷³ Most of the time this takes violence.¹⁷⁴ As the person in authority in that specific locality of a greater reality, he seems to have not a grain of this ideology in his blood. He sees the idiocy behind it and the human drama it creates.

What follows this order is a preparation for the journey in “haste and uncertainty” with “extreme states of emotion”: shock, silence, hysteria, and weeping.¹⁷⁵ Trying to decide what to take and what to leave in such a short time in that state of shock is a daunting task. The only people exempt from “all considerations of race and religion”¹⁷⁶ are the mad man of the village, the Dog, and the prostitutes in the brothel. It seems only those in the margins of society, in other words, those who are not active agents in their society, thus have no substantial contribution, have been left out of the population exchange protocols.

In this crowd of traumatized people, one stands out in his greater misery: the devout Greek nationalist, the teacher of the village who has been disowned by his family and friends due to his extreme commitment to the Greek nationalist cause: Daskalos Leonidas. He climbs up to a high place and makes a passionate speech calling his people to not surrender and not leave the land that has always been Greece. He, quite rightly, points out that Turks came to this land much later in history. What he says resonates with the crowd to a point but not enough to call them in action. He is in

¹⁷² 675

¹⁷³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 50-55

¹⁷⁴ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 33-34

¹⁷⁵ 675

¹⁷⁶ 676

tears, shoulders shaking, a totally forlorn man: “weeping for everything that he had believed in and for which he had fought.”¹⁷⁷ His belief in Greater Greece, which had started to happen with more and more former Ottoman lands becoming Greek briefly during the war such as “Crete, the Ionian Islands, and Salonika” kindling his faith and desire for the cause until “suddenly history had changed sides and created a country called Turkey in a Greek place.”¹⁷⁸ His passionate ideas resonate with the *Megali Idea* of Greek nationalism which calls for the unification of the Greeks and reconstruction of the Byzantine Empire. This movement gained greater strength after the Greek military invasion with new members joining.¹⁷⁹ Leonidas is not only a symbol for *Megali Idea*, but also a means for the author to express his opinion about nationalism that it was a product of a specific time in history only to be outdated within a couple of generations:

Leonidas was a nationalist in the days before the erosions and landslips of time exposed the miserable stupidity of nationalism. If he had lived three generations later, an intellectual like Leonidas would have thought of nationalism and religion as the unholy spouses from whose fetid conjugal bed nothing but evil can crawl forth, but these were innocent days, when orthodoxy was the sole and obvious truth, and nationalism was still romantic, reputable, and glorious.¹⁸⁰

Clearly, de Bernieres believes nationalism and religion as an ideology will cease to exist and a more universal way of life will be established in time. He describes nationalism as evil and stupid, which escapes those who have a romantic understanding of and commitment to nationalism.

Leonidas fails to inspire in the Greek population any action against the order to leave their land for their new country, Greece, although it feels scary, unknown, and wrong. Around them is the Muslim population, equally puzzled by what is about to happen

¹⁷⁷ 679

¹⁷⁸ 679

¹⁷⁹ Reşat Kasaba, "10. İzmir 1922: A Port City Unravels" In *Modernity and Culture* edited by Leila Fawaz, C. A. Bayly and Robert Ilbert, 204-229. (New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2002): 214-215

¹⁸⁰ 679-680

and unable to fully grasp the reality of it, watching with curiosity as if they are “witness[ing] a passing procession of animals rather than the deportation of their friends and neighbors.”¹⁸¹ Added to this collective aura of confusion, puzzlement, and inability to fully comprehend what is going on and its implications, Polyxeni starts yet another chaos as the sergeant is trying to get the group moving: she calls out “Mother! Mother!” and starts running towards the cemetery. This gets the whole population in action: they run to dig the bones of their loved ones to take with them. This uncovering of the graves and people seeing bones or half decomposed bodies instills in the reader a sense of the intensity of the trauma experienced by the Greek people. The idea of leaving the graves of their deceased relatives and family members is too unbearable so they are prepared to carry the bones throughout what they know will be a difficult journey. The chaos is to the point beyond which an orderly departure seems impossible, so Sergeant Osman announces its postponement until dawn. Later in the evening, he tells his people he is too old for and cannot wait to forget about “this whore’s cunt of a job altogether.”¹⁸² The next morning, he wakes up before dawn, does his prayer and asks for forgiveness in advance and help with all the potential difficulties awaiting him. Sergeant Osman seems to symbolize something very important about how grand ideologies are put into action: not everyone who takes part in its actualization believes in them. Many find themselves in positions where they have to do a bit of the job and they have no power to change anything in the bigger picture. He makes it very clear earlier when he tells Leonidas that “[he doesn’t] care if [they] live here or in Greece or on the moon or up a tree like an ape, or up the backside of a camel.”¹⁸³ He has just found himself in a position he has not chosen and does what he has been ordered to do and is looking forward to getting it done and forgetting about it. Looking at the crowd, he realizes a better organization, better packing and people dressed in their best clothes “as if they were going to a wedding or celebrating a saint’s day”, which he guesses must have happened through “telepathic unanimity.”¹⁸⁴ At this point, in harmony with the dress code, the priest, Father Kristoforos appears with the

¹⁸¹ 682

¹⁸² 684

¹⁸³ 680

¹⁸⁴ 685

icon of the Virgin Panagia Glykophilousa in his hand, in his ceremonial robe. The sight of the icon leaves the Muslim population in a state of “despair” as they have all asked a Christian friend or neighbor many times to make a prayer for them in front of this icon at times of distress. Now, they feel “appalling[ly] helpless” and abandoned.¹⁸⁵ The priest asks for permission to lead his people rather than Sergeant Osman and his men dictating them to walk that long distance without any help.

Just as they start the walk with the priest leading them with prayers, Polyxeni falls very badly with her very old grandfather on her back. Her face has hit a stone, her nose is bleeding, and her face is cut. Sergeant Osman has to be cold and devoid of emotion. Polyxeni is crying hysterically as she is feeling terribly helpless. Nobody offers any help and there is a collective sense of guilt in the air. At this point, Ali the Snowbringer, one of the members of the Muslim witnesses, steps forward and hands the rope of his donkey to Polyxeni.¹⁸⁶ As one of the poorest people in the town and as someone who has never had any social exchange with Polyxeni, he surprises her and all the witnesses beyond words. As his only means of livelihood is his donkey, he is being unbelievably generous. He assures her that he is just lending his donkey to her, not giving it as he trusts the donkey will be able to find its back home from Telmessos. Polyxeni gets up to his hands to show her gratitude and tells him “For this one good deed [he] will rest forever in paradise.”¹⁸⁷ This scene moves everyone around, causing “a welling-up of emotion” and Ayşe, Polyxeni’s best friend since childhood, and the widow of the much-loved İmam of the town, Abdulhamid Hodja, starts wailing, “Don’t go! Don’t go! Don’t go!”¹⁸⁸ These wailing spreads to everyone. While men are “choking back tears”, women cry as if by “grief at a burial”, there is much “howling and ululation.”¹⁸⁹ Sergeant Osman finds this collective sound even more disturbing than “when men are dying between the lines after a battle.”¹⁹⁰ This vivid scene of collective mourning for the shattering of a community that has been living side by side for centuries makes the

¹⁸⁵ 686

¹⁸⁶ 689

¹⁸⁷ 691

¹⁸⁸ 691

¹⁸⁹ 692

¹⁹⁰ 692

reader reflect once more on how arbitrary this decision was. They were given labels of nationalities that separated them after generations and generations of coexistence. This was happening on both sides of the Aegean. It is interesting to note that the peasants in the area would not know what to say if asked about their nationality only twenty years before the Lausanne Treaty.¹⁹¹ The narrative recurrently emphasizes that national identity is something imagined and fictive.

What happens the morning after the departure of the Greeks is narrated by Ayşe, the wife of the town's Imam in the form of a memory. Many of the Muslim members of the town leave behind feeling "bewildered and ... very sorry"¹⁹² and worry about the safety of their Christian friends through their journey to Telmessos. They remember how when the Armenians were taken away, they could not survive the journey on foot. Ayşe is one of them. She finds herself reflecting on how she was then carried away by the collective hatred towards all Armenians and the hatred she felt.¹⁹³ She realizes how pointless that was because the Armenians of the town had done nothing and should not have been held accountable for the pain caused by other Armenians far away from Eskibahçe who attacked the Ottoman army when it was fighting the Russians.¹⁹⁴ A simple, illiterate woman sees through the idiocy of putting people in boxes according to their ethnic origins and treating each member as a representative of the whole. This is a subtle but strong critique of nationalism by the author through one of his characters. The reason why it is in the form of a memory seems to be to bring in the viewpoint of an elderly, yet experienced and wise person who has had years to reflect on the experience and has reached mature opinions regarding the event. In other words, it is not a young person going through a difficult experience and responding to it in a haste. Another reason this point is made reflecting on a memory is the author's choice to make the whole book as a collection of memories. All the narrators of the novel share their memories of either their childhood, or the way of life before the war, the little conflicts and the many joys at times of relative harmony and co-existence, or the war, or some other experience they either lived through or

¹⁹¹ Ağıl, "On the Possibility of Multiculturalism," 87

¹⁹² 712

¹⁹³ 13

¹⁹⁴ 714

witnessed. So many chapter titles of the novel include the verb “remember” such as “Exiled in Cephalonia, Drosoula Remembers Philothei”, or “Ayşe Remembers Tamara”, or “Karatavuk at Gallipoli: Karatavuk Remembers”. One reason the author chooses to draw so heavily on memories is to emphasize the traumatic aspect of these experiences that are still very much alive in the characters’ minds and feelings. After all Louis Bernieres dedicates the novel to “the unhappy memory of the millions of civilians on all sides during the times portrayed who became victims of the numerous death marches, movements of refugees, campaigns of persecution and extermination, and exchanges of population”.

Remembering the Armenians leaving the town, Ayşe also reflects on how pointless it was to send the Greeks of the town to Greece and have Cretens come in their place. This is because the Greeks of the town could speak Turkish to Crete and have Creten Muslims exchanged with them who are so much alike in so many ways such as the songs they sang and the dances they did but who could not speak Turkish so they could communicate with the other members of the community.¹⁹⁵ Clearly, Ayşe thinks one’s attachment to a land makes that person belong to that land and that people should never be separated from the land they belong to. Another feature of a community in Ayşe’s mind seems to be a shared language spoken by all its members. Naturally, as a woman of the pre-nation state era, she values one’s attachment to a geography more than one’s nationality in determining where one should live. She narrates how so many members of the town went to escort their Christian friends the next day so those in authority treated them well, taking them food and water and promising them they would look after their possessions and keep them safe.¹⁹⁶ They escort their friends all the way to Telmessos where they board ships and witness them kissing the earth of home, taking a leaf or a flower as a symbol of home with them, and holding mirror to the sun so the “the sunlight of their native land” followed them and stayed with them just a bit longer.¹⁹⁷ This human suffering and tragedy are responded to even by inanimate objects and nature. Ayşe narrates how the bell of the church “fell off...and broke into

¹⁹⁵ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 716

¹⁹⁶ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 716

¹⁹⁷ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 716

two pieces” and how the cats of the town were everywhere and mourning by crying and wailing.

Another narrator, Mehmet the Tinsman, further elaborates on the theme of mourning. He explains that after the exchange, the universal feeling across the whole country was a state of mourning: “ten years of war...thousands of widows and orphans, tens of thousands of brotherless sisters...a people bereaved and worn out beyond endurance.”¹⁹⁸ Naturally, Eskibahçe is not exempt, and it is “dying on its feet”, with a smaller population, abandoned, looted, and neglected houses, and lost human resources and practical knowledge about almost anything. The Muslim population has to live in a town with “no pharmacist, no doctor, no banker, no blacksmith, no shoemaker, no saddle-maker, no ironmonger, no paint-maker, no jeweler, no stonemason, no tiler, no merchant, no spicer.”¹⁹⁹ It is now like a town of ghosts. This is also the truth reflected in historical accounts that when the Greeks left, the country lost its merchants, professional artisans, tailors, shoemakers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, glaziers, and masons. The Muslim migrants that replaced them were not able to fill this gap. Not only was their number considerably smaller, but also, they were mostly farmers and not artisans.²⁰⁰ Rüstem Bey, the big landowner of the town, feels like a “ghost in a land of ghosts” and is Mehmet’s only customer now. He laments the loss of “the sheer exuberance and variety of the community’s former self.”²⁰¹ Evidently, after the departure of the Greeks and the Armenians, the town has lost its spirit and liveliness. Through Rüstem Aga, de Bernieres emphasizes the impoverishment of life in Asia Minor with only Turks and Muslims remaining. To make things worse, a new culture of dogmatism, religious intolerance, violence, and vandalism is born after the loss of the Greek population. The new imam is in direct contrast to the humble, tolerant, respectable, and humane former imam, Abdulhamid Hodja. He mobilizes the people of the town to break into Greek houses and destroy wine bottles and vineyards, even those cultivated specifically for raisins, the figures on the walls of the churches and ancient tombs- the Lycians ones as well-, the Christian

¹⁹⁸ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 777

¹⁹⁹ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 778

²⁰⁰ Kolluoğlu, “Excesses of nationalism,” 540-542

²⁰¹ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 782

bones in the ossuary behind one of the churches and killed all the pigs they could find.²⁰² These acts of vandalism, arrogance, and intolerance mark the beginning of the “interminably tedious years of respectability, observance and decorum that made everyone think that they had lived twice as long as they really had.”²⁰³ The sad thing is, on the other side of the Aegean, similar acts were carried out in the name of Christianity in the mosques and graveyards of Muslims.²⁰⁴ Obviously, both sides lost their multi-faith and multi-ethnic communities that cultivated tolerance to an impoverished and violent culture. Here, the author seems to be making a very clear statement about how he sees the long-term impact of the population exchange for Asia Minor. Eskibahçe is only one of the many towns that have gone through a degeneration and impoverishment, and this means an entire country that has lost its many colors and voices. Added to the human and financial toll of the series of wars before the founding of the Turkish state is the toll of the population exchange on the skilled human resource and the economy. The people who have to go through this process of pain, loss and impoverishment are like “birds without wings” for Karatavuk, now an old man reflecting on the war and how it impacted ordinary people. Karatavuk, whose real name is Abdul, is the son of Iskandar the Potter and the best friend of the Greek Nico whose nickname is Mehmetçik. The depth and strength of the friendship between these two boys is one of the main topics of the novel. Abdul’s whistle sounds like Karatavuk [blackbird] and Nico’s like a Mehmetcik [fire nightingale]. Mehmetçik is the generic name for the Turkish soldier, “which is indeed quite fitting to Nico, who volunteers to fight against the Christian armies though himself is one.”²⁰⁵ Mehmetcik’s life is threatened by the gendarme forces behind him, but he saves his life by exchanging shirts with Karatavuk.²⁰⁶ The shirts are symbolic in that “one red like a fire nightingale and one black like a blackbird had by then become their trademarks, just like the whistles.”²⁰⁷ When he hears that Mehmetcik broke his whistle, Karatavuk gives him

²⁰² 759-760

²⁰³ 766

²⁰⁴ 761

²⁰⁵ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 87

²⁰⁶ 586

²⁰⁷ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 87

his own as well.²⁰⁸ Risking one's own life for one's friend is indeed a sign of real friendship. As boys, they added to the liveliness of the town with their bird whistles. As young men, their paths separated with Karatavuk joining the army and Mehmetçik not being allowed to fight. In a letter to his childhood friend Mehmetçik, Karatavuk shares his reflections as follows:

For birds with wings nothing changes, they fly where they will and they know nothing about borders and their quarrels are very small. But we are always confined to earth, no matter how much we climb to high places and flap our arms. Because we cannot fly, we are condemned to do things that do not agree with us. Because we have no wings we are pushed into struggles and abominations that we did not seek, and then, after all that, the years go by, the mountains are leveled, the valleys rise, the rivers are blocked by sand and the cliffs fall into the sea.²⁰⁹

This is an expression of how the war and the population exchange that followed, with all their implications, gave them no room to resist or make individual decisions. They were like the natural forces and time that as human beings; they had no other choice but to submit to. This is where the novel becomes the story of millions of people who, without any say on the matter, were forced to migrate to a new land, having to follow impersonal, top-down orders that had no power to resist in the name of nation-building. “The mountains [being] leveled, the valleys [rising], the rivers [being] blocked by sand and the cliffs fall[ing] into the sea” seem to symbolize major changes taking place. The destruction symbolized by elements of nature is an allusion to the destruction in the social fabric, hence a lamentation for the loss of a multicultural community.

3.2. The Departure of the Armenians:

The Greeks were not the only minority that was forced to leave Anatolia on the way to become a Turkish nation state. Armenians of the Ottoman Empire with long roots in Anatolia also found themselves uprooted. The chapter entitled “The Removal” in *Birds Without Wings* narrates the historical context that led to the Armenian population of Anatolia being forced to migrate under harsh conditions, hence end up being

²⁰⁸ 587

²⁰⁹ 796

exterminated in large numbers in general and the deportation of the small Armenian population of Eskibahçe specifically. The narration of the big picture of the Armenian issue at the beginning and the zooming into the experience of the Armenians of Eskibahçe seems to offer two approaches to history: one that is generic and official and one that is unique and individualized.

The chapter begins with facts about what prepared the ground for the Armenian exodus. It is explained that the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire were seen as disloyal and potential threats before and during World War I. The Young Turkish government by Mehmed Talat Pasha was at war as allies with Germany against Russia, its long-term enemy. The leaders of the government “accused Christian Armenians a population of almost two million, most of whom lived in what is now east Turkey of sympathizing with Russia and thus representing a potential fifth column.”²¹⁰ Talat Pasha ordered for the entire Armenian population to be deported to the arid deserts of Syria. During the deportation more than half of the men were “killed by Turkish security forces or marauding Kurdish tribesmen.”²¹¹ The death rate for women and children was lower but they “endured appalling depredation, abductions, and rape on the long marches.”²¹²

De Bernieres explains the context of the deportation in detail and starts by saying that for decades, the East of the empire has been a troubled zone with Armenians and other tribes committing acts of violence and hatred to one another. The Kurds follow fundamental Islam and believe in their superiority over the Armenians.²¹³ The Armenians, on the other hand, also believe in their superiority as descendants of Noah. While the Kurds are loyal to the state, the Armenians have a desire for an autonomous state of their own. The foreign powers, Russia and Great Britain use the Armenians for their own interest and support them.²¹⁴ This makes them a great threat, especially because there was a considerable number of Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman army

²¹⁰ De Waal, “The G-Word: The Armenian Massacre and the Politics of Genocide,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 1 (2015):137-138

²¹¹ De Waal, “The G-Word,” 137-138

²¹² De Waal, “The G-Word,” 137-138

²¹³ 390- 391

²¹⁴ 390- 391

as the Ottomanisation policy requires members of the minorities to pay taxes and to join the army if they fail to do so. The presence of disloyal Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman army means potential treason.²¹⁵ Unfortunately, this happens when “a deputy of the assembly at Erzurum named Garo Pastermadjian leads most of the Armenian officers and men of the 3rd Army over to the Russian side, returning with them in their campaign of pillage and rapine through the Muslim villages in their path.”²¹⁶ This results in the Armenian officers and soldiers ending up in labor battalions. Most of them desert the army and engage in looting and vandalism: cutting telegraph lines, attacking villages, and caravans of wounded soldiers.²¹⁷ As a response to this, Enver Pasha proposes the removal of all Armenians and exchanging them with Muslim refugees from other parts of the empire. Although the official order is that no ill treatment takes place and that each family is to receive the equivalent of their possessions in Anatolia at their destination, it is impossible to carry out an orderly migration.²¹⁸ The circumstances are harsh and bitter facts are as follows:

there was no proper organization, no transport, no medical assistance, no food, no money, and very little pity. The straggling columns of refugees fell victim to epidemics, they died of thirst, exhaustion, and hunger, and they were easy targets for brigands and for the vengefulness and cruelty of the troops that escorted them and considered them to be traitors.²¹⁹

This means the civil Armenians, the children, the women, and the elderly are made to suffer for the actions of the Armenian soldiers and officers. The circumstances being described are terribly harsh and inhumane, leading to a human tragedy. Inflicting so much pain and suffering to an entire group of the same nationality for the wrong actions of some among them is unforgivable. One cannot help thinking how many times innocent people have been made to suffer just because a handful of elites have a desire. In this context, it is the desire of the Ottoman elite to clean Anatolia from the minorities. Among the Armenians on the roads are the fictional inhabitants of the

²¹⁵ 390- 391

²¹⁶ 390- 391

²¹⁷ 392

²¹⁸ 392

²¹⁹ 393

fictional town of Eskibahçe. The account of their misery on the roads under the brutality of the Kurdish irregulars makes history alive and relatable to the reader. What makes it even more relatable to the reader is reading about the experience of a character that has appeared many times before in the plot. This character is Levon Krikorian, the pharmacist of the town.

The exodus of the Armenians starts the same way as that of the Greeks: gendarmes arriving at the town and announcing to them the order from the Palace that all Armenians were to gather at dawn in the town square with their valuable possessions to migrate to their new homes. They were assured that they were to receive the equivalent of their possessions upon their arrival. This leaves people horrified, shocked and curious. Just like the Greeks, they have endless questions and no one to give them any answers. However, they are certain of one thing: as the Kurdish irregulars, namely Hamidiye as their escorts, they are in very cruel hands. For this reason, Levon goes up to the Tombs to make prayers for protection and Levon's wife Gaffar runs to Rüstem Ağa's wife, Leyla, to ask her to keep her daughters so they are safe. She expresses the universal wish of millions that are caught up in the bigger games for power between those in positions of and in search of positions of authority: "All we wanted," she [says], "was to live in peace and earn an honest living. Everything was very good."²²⁰ Evidently, the experience of the Greeks and the Armenians have many parallels in that people were forced to leave the land they belonged to like "birds without wings". Those in power had no interest in what these people really wanted and made top-down decisions about them, hence the order to leave their homes. This is an allusion to the impersonal aspect of nation-building.

Unfortunately, they have no power to resist the orders and the whole Armenian population finds themselves on the roads in excruciating heat with no food or water. They are in such pain because of the thirst, hunger, and exhaustion that the women are all crying out in mourning and in prayers. Rüstem Bey, on his way back from a hunting exhibition, witnesses the misery of the Armenians and is shocked by what he sees. He realizes "how abject they had become in such a short time."²²¹ His heart goes out to those people whom he, like everybody else, had also despised for the treason

²²⁰ 397

²²¹ 399

committed by the Armenian soldiers and officers in the Ottoman army. This symbolizes a universal fact about nationalism in that it motivates people to treat everyone with that nationality as one single entity. This simplistic understanding of the cause-effect relationship around a fraction of a nation results in those who are innocent being punished and made to suffer. The suffering of the innocent Armenians reaches its peak when members of the irregulars escorting the groups attempt to rape Levon's three daughters. This brings the tragedy and the facts that women and children become victims of horrendous war crimes and are made to suffer for their nationality. Fortunately, Rüstem Bey's confident presence manages to save these three sisters from the cruelty of the Kurdish irregulars. He manages to convince them that one of the girls is to become his wife and the other wives of his brothers and that they would suffer a great punishment from the mayor if they did not present the girls to him. The girls are too traumatized to speak or to walk back to the town and when they arrive hours after the suicide attempt, they "shook and clung to each other."²²² Rüstem Bey also has his share of trauma in that "he was also still upset by having found on the road corpses of the old folk who had been battered to death, and whom he had known since boyhood."²²³ The chapter leaves the reader reflecting on all the pain and suffering inflicted upon innocent people, mostly women and children, at times of war or forced migration and the trauma they experience as a result. De Bernieres approaches the exodus of both communities in a similar fashion, blending historical facts with fictional characters and events and sheds light on the violent process of homogenization of nation-state building.

In conclusion, the nationalist wave of the early 20th century not only led to the establishment of the nation states of Armenia and Greece but also affected the intelligentsia of the Ottoman Empire, who desired a Turkish and Muslim population. The perception of the Armenians and Greeks also changed, and they got to be seen as potential traitors. This led to a forced migration for both, which is explored in a style that mixes fiction with historical facts in *Birds without Wings*. Both chapters communicate the human tragedy caused by the nation-building process. Anywhere the construction of a nation necessitates such tragedies is, in Homi Bhabba's terms, "one

²²² 403

²²³ 403

of the dark corners of the earth”²²⁴ and history tells us Anatolia was one such corner of the earth then.



²²⁴ Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*,” 27

4. CHAPTER FOUR: DIVERSITY AS ONE OF THE DEFINING ASPECTS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE EXPLORED IN *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS*

The Ottoman Empire was organized around a *millet* system in which the non-Muslim subjects were granted autonomy over their social lives, education, and language. Religion was the determining factor in this way of categorization and a *millet* could easily have members from different ethnic and linguistic groups, which created a great diversity.²²⁵ Louis de Bernieres explores the topic of diversity as a defining aspect of the Ottoman Empire that was multicultural and multi faith and the loss of diversity with the nation-building project that aimed to create a homogenous society in terms of ethnicity and religion. He does this through his use of multiple narrators and creation of even more characters that interact with another in many ways, his use of multiple genres and allusions, and making references to the multicultural nature of the Ottoman Empire.

Louis de Bernieres favoring the Ottoman Empire in terms of diversity and tolerance for differences and presenting his stand through effective techniques to his considerably large circle of readers in the thirty languages his novel has been translated into since 2004 when it was first published gives him great responsibility. An inevitable question that arises when a Western author tells the story of Anatolian people through the onset of the First World War to the end of the War of Independence and reaches the speakers of thirty languages around the globe. The question is whether de Bernieres was able to keep an objective stand or was influenced by an Orientalist impulse. It is true that the depiction of life before the war, especially the 1923 Greek-Turkish Population Exchange is portrayed as this incredibly harmonious one and its greatness is emphasized through the setting, which is an Edenic place. It is important

²²⁵ Yeşim Bayar, "The trajectory of nation-building through language policies: the case of Turkey during the early Republic (1920–38)," *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume: 17, Issue: 1 (2010):120

to ask whether minorities and Turks lived in such great harmony during the Ottoman times. Another equally important question is whether Louis de Bernieres is qualified to understand the depths and intricacies of life then to be able to convey it successfully as a British man.

One important fact about Louis de Bernieres is his diverse and motivation to explore the world and his close relations with diverse cultures. Louis de Bernieres was born to a “British family of French-Protestant-Huguenot descent.”²²⁶ He traveled to other parts of the world such as Greece and Anatolia with a keen interest to explore the soul of the place, which enriched his novels with a wide scope of settings.²²⁷ In the same spirit, in 2012, Louis de Bernieres attended İstanbul International Literature Festival, which “brings together local and foreign writers and literary professionals with Turkish literature, cultural scenes in Turkey, and writers and publishers of our country, both in Istanbul and in many cities of Anatolia.”²²⁸ Evidently, de Bernieres has a genuine interest in Turkish culture and literature.

One other factor that contributed to this rich variety of settings and historical eras covered in his novels is his French background, which he says gives one a sense of entitlement that they can be anywhere. Once one starts to experience different cultures, one adopts an identity as a world citizen and feels a belonging to many places on the globe. He says, “one of the great pains of [his] life is that [he] can’t be everywhere. you have to live somewhere.” However, there are two places his mind resides in when he is writing: Greece and Anatolia. He adds that Anatolia is where his imagination resides most of the time during the creation of a new novel.²²⁹ This must be the reason why he decided to write a novel set in Anatolia. In an interview with Birnbaum, Louis de Bernieres talks about how he has traveled around Anatolia extensively and learned about its many cultures and history, which made it very attractive to him to write about a significant era experienced in Anatolia. The idea to write *Birds without Wings* came to him when he was exploring a deserted town on the Turkish Mediterranean coast

²²⁶ Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières"

²²⁷ Anita Sethi, “Louis de Bernières | Interview” *Granta*, August 4, 2009

²²⁸ “What Is Istanbul International Literature Festival?”, Istanbul International Literature Festival Accessed March 13, 2024

²²⁹ Sethi, “Louis de Bernières | Interview”

where Greeks used to live. At around the time of him writing the book, the long march Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire were ordered to make at the expense of many casualties, was a topic that attracted a lot of international attention. De Bernieres did not want to directly write about that issue but included the experiences of one Armenian family. However, his focus was to be the Greek Turkish population exchange and he was going to explore how the Greek subjects of Anatolia were made to leave, resulting in many deserted towns as the one he visited came to be. He says he made three trips to Turkey to get an idea about the atmosphere. He also read a lot of travel books and scanned Foreign Service archives.²³⁰ Evidently, he read intensively about the time from the onset of the First World War to the end of the War of Independence to be able to give an accurate account in the chapters entitled Mustafa Kemal. For all these reasons, it would be unfair to claim de Bernieres had an Orientalist impulse while writing *Birds without Wings* as he got the facts right and stayed loyal to historical truths.

However, one point about Louis de Bernieres that does have a touch of Orientalist impulse is his idealization of the Ottoman Empire in terms of harmonious coexistence of different ethnicities and religions, especially in Eskibahçe. He even goes as far as saying that there are Greeks that he knows who preferred their lives under the Ottoman regime. He claims that “under the Ottoman regime tolerance was compulsory. They had no toleration of intolerance because everyone was sat on fairly and equally heavily; there wasn’t much trouble between the ethnicities and the religions.”²³¹ This is a statement that must be challenged to see whether it reflects the truth or is a romanticized version of reality. Baer et al gives the Ottoman Empire credit for having been more tolerant of groups such as Jews than the neighboring empires and for having provided them with the space to take refuge and thrive within its borders. They also point out that the Ottoman Empire is mostly praised for having provided models of tolerance and a harmonious co-existence of Christians, Jews, and Muslims. It is further argued that coexistence is not the right word as it entails equality, which did not exist with Jews, Christians, and women being below men, Muslims, and the military class. Tolerating a group’s being different does not mean the rulers will treat them as equal

²³⁰ Birnbaum "Louis De Bernières"

²³¹ Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières"

subjects.²³² Another example of minorities not being treated equally as Muslims is about Jews not being able to build synagogues or live close to mosques, which are considered as sacred places for Muslims.²³³ In addition, Jews were not allowed to wear silk, clothes in light colors, or anything that would make them look like Muslims.²³⁴ It seems de Bernieres did get the Ottoman tolerance right, while falsely extending his praise of the Ottoman Empire to equal treatment of the minorities. This makes his stance appear as one slightly influenced by an Orientalist impulse.

Another ironical point about de Bernieres is the conflict between his praise of multiculturalism and coexistence in the Ottoman Empire and the lamentation he expresses in its loss in the young Turkish Republic while supporting Brexit and the isolation of Britain from the European Union family, thus the ideals of cooperation and coexistence at a supranational level. However, he has an explanation for this seemingly contradictory situation. Although de Bernieres has always been against hardcore nationalism, which he refers to as “unmitigated evil”, and although as a young man he voted to support the membership of England of the European Union and believed in “sharing sovereignty”, democracy, and the power of the shared ideal of peace, as an older man he voted to support Brexit. Of many of his reasons behind that the EU has always been a “troubled political and economic project” because it is impossible to have one policy that would fit both the strong and the weaker economies. Another point he raises is the EU’s mission to create peace, which it claims it has realized. However, de Bernieres argues it is NATO and the monetary contributions of the US. He also points out the impending inequalities in the EU policies regarding the developing countries by imposing high tariffs on manufactured goods and low tariffs on raw material, thus keeping the developing world underdeveloped.²³⁵

Overall, Louis de Bernieres proves to have a deep appreciation for Anatolia with its culture, history, and nature. His outlook on life as a global citizen and the world, curiosity and interest in learning make him a successful writer who has a good grasp

²³² Marc Baer, Ussama Makdisi, and Andrew Shryock, “Tolerance and Conversion in the Ottoman Empire: A Conversation,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 4 (2009): 930

²³³ Nejla Doğan, “Limits of Tolerance: Legal Relations Between Early Ottoman Jews and Central Authorities (15th-18th Centuries)” *Dergi Park* 13, no. 3 (2021): 455

²³⁴ Doğan, “Limits of Tolerance,” 438

²³⁵ Doğan, “Limits of Tolerance,” 450

of the multiple dimensions of the place he is creating an intricate plot around as in *Birds without Wings*. He has mostly managed to avoid a modern Orientalist approach through his thorough research about the time and place he wrote about in the novel. However, he seems to have displayed a tendency to romanticize the Ottoman Empire's treatment of the minorities by claiming a practice of equality despite many practices that treated Muslims as superior and more important subjects.

4.1. Diverse Narrators and Characters:

In *Birds without Wings*, Louis de Bernieres tells the “unhappy memory of the millions of civilians on all sides” who witnessed a very important historical time that encompasses the Balkan Wars, the First World war, especially the Gallipoli War and the Turkish War of Independence, as well as the biography of Mustafa Kemal from his birth, detailing his military and political successes as an astonishing leader.²³⁶

He dedicates his book to these people “who became victims of the numerous death marches, movements of refugees, campaigns of persecution and extermination, and exchanges of population.”²³⁷ To be able to do so, he makes use of multiple narrators all telling their own stories from their unique perspective so the whole is somehow greater than the sum of all those stories and includes all possible viewpoints and experiences. Having the characters tell their own stories also contributes to the genuineness of their experiences and their better reception by the reader.²³⁸ In other words, “every character lives the trauma of the war and immigration in their own ways, and it would not be just to tell their unique experiences by a single authoritative narrator.”²³⁹ Although stories about some of the characters take up more space in the novel, it is “never to the degree of threatening the polyphonic structure of the book, which itself seems to aspire to turn into a [diverse] community.”²⁴⁰ This diverse

²³⁶ Tekşan, “Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı,” 2074

²³⁷ Tekşan, “Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı,” 2074

²³⁸ Tekşan, “Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı,” 2075

²³⁹ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 90

²⁴⁰ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 90

community of witnesses of a specific time in history offer “alternative voices to the nationally engineered history with their individual stories.”²⁴¹

The first chapter of the novel is entitled “The Prologue of Iskander the Potter”, in which, as the title suggests, Iskandar is the narrator. The time is the early days of the Turkish Republic and Iskandar is now an old man close to the end of his life remembering the times before and during the war. The reader is prepared for a novel of remembrances. This chapter sets the scene for the whole book, which can be read as a collection of tragedies. In other words, “De Bernieres’ narrative focuses on the diverse angles from which the war affected ordinary people and led to tragedies in their lives rather than nationalist dimension which legitimizes the war as a victory against the enemy.”²⁴² The stories of personal tragedies make that history more relatable and real. One of these tragedies is the story about the tragic love between a Greek girl and a poor Turkish boy, in which the boy ends up murdering the woman of his life due to a terrible misfortune and loses his mind. The second tragedy is Iskandar crippling his own son by shooting at his right arm by mistake. However, the greatest tragedy seems to be what has happened to the town itself:

Life was merrier when the Christians were still among us, not at least because every one of their days was the feast of some saint. Little work was done, it seemed, but at least their revelry was infectious...Perhaps it was something to do with their wine. For them it was a precious and sacred thing...Sometimes we did drink with our Christians, and caught their high spirits..., but left on our own now, there is a sadness seeping out of the stones of this half-deserted town.²⁴³

The comment on life being merrier back then should not be taken as a comment of one of the characters but also de Bernieres’ point that he makes over and over in the novel. de Bernieres says his book is an elegy for a life lost and he obviously makes the point that the nation-building project in the Turkish context meant the destruction of a multicultural society.²⁴⁴ He defines multiculturalism as “people living along each other

²⁴¹ Bademkiran, “A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness,” 56

²⁴²Bademkiran, “A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness,”57

²⁴³ 2

²⁴⁴ Birnbaum, "Louis De BernièRes"

and enjoying each other.”²⁴⁵ It is no coincidence that he named the town Eskibahçe “meaning “the ancient garden”, alluding directly to the Garden of Eden.”²⁴⁶

The first chapter also prepares the reader for a story about “the great world” and how that interacted with the lives of the people of the town:

The peculiar thing is, however, that nothing would have happened to Philothei at all, if other things had not been happening in the great world. So, it is my opinion that the blame belongs more widely, not only to İbrahim but to all of us who lived in this place, as well as to those in other parts who were bloodthirsty and ambitious.²⁴⁷

This quote is important because it corresponds with one of the themes of the novel that the people in positions of power made decisions towards their nation-building projects without considering the pain and misery that was to cause in ordinary people’s lives. In this sense, the building of a nation-state is not “an orderly process of design and negotiation” but a violent fight between “organized criminal groups”; Charles Tilly expresses the violence necessary for the birth and survival of a nation-state as follows: “War makes nations and nations make wars.”²⁴⁸

The second narrator of the novel is the omniscient narrator. The chapters detailing the biography of Mustafa Kemal, for example, are all narrated by the omniscient narrator. Obviously, de Bernieres made the right decision regarding the type of narrator for these chapters because having Mustafa Kemal narrate the story of his life would be extremely difficult and risky. Having a fictional character narrate his story fits the genre of the novel. Ağıl argues that these chapters adopt the language of official history books with an objective and detached voice, which requires an omniscient narrator.

There is a total of twenty-two chapters all numbered from 1 to 22 with Mustafa Kemal at the beginning. The fact that twenty-two chapters of a novel with a total of one hundred and two chapters are dedicated to Mustafa Kemal makes him the central character of the story of millions of people the book is dedicated to, especially the

²⁴⁵ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 82

²⁴⁶ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 83

²⁴⁷ 4

²⁴⁸ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building, “ 33-34

residents of the main setting of the novel: Eskibahçe. This connection between Mustafa Kemal and the people of Eskibahçe is alluded to in the first lines of these chapters. For example, the first chapter starts as follows:

Far away from Eskibahçe, past the Dodekanisos and across the Aegean Sea, one of Destiny's men is born. It is nineteen years before the birth of Philothei, the year being 1881 by the Gregorian calendar, a year during which (and thereby perpetrating one of the most entertaining ironies of European history) Macedonia gives the world its greatest Turk.²⁴⁹

Similarly, the chapter Mustafa Kemal 2 begins like this: "Far away from Eskibahçe, past the Dodekanissos and across the Aegean Sea, Mustafa is growing up."²⁵⁰ Another chapter that begins with a reference to Eskibahçe is the fourth one, which points to another location: "Far away from Eskibahçe, three hundred miles across the mountains, over Denizli, over Uşak, over Bursa, across the Marmara Sea, Mustafa enrolls in the War College in Harbiye, İstanbul."²⁵¹ One other way Mustafa Kemal and Eskibahçe are connected to each other is through Karatavuk fighting as one of Mustafa Kemal's soldiers in Gallipoli:

One day Mustafa Kemal stops and speaks briefly with Karatavuk. He takes Karatavuk's rifle and inspects it, easing the bolt and peering down the barrel, and then Commends Karatavuk for his attention to it. Karatavuk will remember this proudly for the rest of his life.²⁵²

This way, Mustafa Kemal's indirect presence and influence in all the characters' lives, hence his great importance is alluded to throughout the novel.²⁵³

Another reason for connecting the stories of the people from the town of Eskibahçe with Mustafa Kemal is Eskibahçe's story being an allegory of the transition from empire into the republic and Mustafa Kemal's role in this.

²⁴⁹ 20

²⁵⁰ 32

²⁵¹ 108

²⁵² 451

²⁵³ Tekşan, "Yeni Tarihsehcilik Kuramı," 280

A third narrator as the narrator of multiple chapters is the beautiful Philothei, whose tragic and mysterious death the reader is informed of by Iskandar the Potter in the first chapter. Her chapters are entitled "I am Philothei" and are numbered as well, with a total of fifteen all together. In these chapters, the reader is not only informed about her childhood, her and her family's life, but also the life of the Greek community of the town, the interfaith friendships and interactions, the love between her and İbrahim, İbrahim's absence through the war, his return with a disturbed mind and all the stress she experiences as a result, and finally the Greek exodus and her own death. The earlier chapters are shorter and clearly show she is a little girl, and they get not only longer but start to reflect her maturation as the novel unfolds. Another narrator is Philothei's best friend, Drosula. Unlike Philothei's chapters that follow a chronological order and portray Philothei at different ages, Drosula's chapters have her as an old woman exiled in Greece remembering the past. Her chapters are entitled as follows: "Exiled in Cephalonia, Drosula Remembers Philothei", "Exiled in Cephalonia, Drosula Remembers Leyla and Philothei", "Exiled in Cephalonia, Drosula Remembers the Death of Philothei", and finally "Drosula Remembers the Voyage into Exile". She accounts her share of tragedy caused by what is happening in the great world: being exiled from her home, having to make a choice between her parents and siblings and her husband and son, seeing her childhood friend falling off a cliff and dying, having to throw her childhood friend's dead body to the sea, taking a long voyage to the unknown, being a target of xenophobia in a new land, and losing her husband and son too early. She seems to symbolize the pain and suffering of the Greek people who found themselves uprooted from their home, Asia Minor and who had to start anew in a land that they found foreign.²⁵⁴

Another important narrator in the novel is Karatavuk and he narrates the Gallipoli War, Mustafa Kemal's ingenuity as a soldier and many details about the beautiful landscape, the cruelty of war, the need for myths, legends, and lies such as the war being a holy one and the promise of an Islamic heaven and forty virgins for every soldier killed. These chapters give the reader many insights about the war and complement the relevant chapters on Mustafa Kemal. There are eight chapters with Karatavuk as the

²⁵⁴ Bademkiran, "A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness," 60-61

narrator and they all begin with “Karatavuk at Gallipoli”. Karatavuk is also the narrator of the final chapter of the novel: “The Epilogue of Karatavuk the Letter-Writer”.

Additionally, İbrahim is the narrator of one chapter entitled “I am İbrahim” and this chapter gives the reader İbrahim’s perspective. The reader figures out how Drosoula’s account is faulty, making the point about the need to take all aspects and viewpoints in a matter. This seems to be a metaphor for the interpretation of historical events and the necessity to hear all perspectives to get as close as possible to an accurate picture.

As the seventh narrator, Ayşe, the wife of the Imam of Eskibahçe, is the narrator of two chapters: “Ayşe Remembers Tamara” and “I am Ayşe”. In the former, a very important social problem is explored: the mob mentality of crowds and the imminent violent behavior caused by religious motives. The wife of the landlord of the town, Tamara Hanım, is exposed to the people of the town by Rüstem Bey as an adulteress. The people in the town square are aroused by this news and start stoning Tamara, get more and more violent. Luckily, the Imam happens to pass by and manages to rescue Tamara Hanım’s life before it is too late. The responsibility to look after the much-wounded Tamara Hanım falls to his wife and daughters, and in this chapter Ayşe talks about the physical and social burden this entails. She worries about all the gossip in the town that her husband may end up marrying Tamara Hanım and she may end up having to share her husband with her. She also worries about how having an adulteress in the house may impact her daughters, as if adultery is an infectious disease one may catch. These are the bitter realities of women living in a rural feudal social structure. The chapter “I am Ayşe” is about the Armenians being forced to leave the town and Ayşe remembering that sad day as an old woman. The fact that a Turkish resident of the town is narrating the Armenian exodus gives the reader the perspective of those who stayed and who witnessed the deportation of their neighbors and friends in addition to what happened afterwards. De Bernieres presents the impact of the transition from an empire into a nation-state from multiple perspectives by having multiple characters as narrators. Each one experiences this process in their unique way. Tamara Hanım’s story has an additional function, though. It sheds light on a social problem of stoning a woman accused of adultery and shows one of the ugly aspects of Eskibahçe. In other words, de Bernieres presents a balanced picture of Eskibahçe by adding this social issue. In most of the novel, he paints a positive picture of the town and its people.

Finally, the Greek merchant and philanthropist Georgio P. Theodorou is the narrator of two chapters: “The Humiliation of Daskalos Leonidas” and “I am Georgio P. Theodorou”. The former chapter is a detailed description of the Greek nationalist teacher of Eskibahçe, Daskalos Leonidas, who is a parody of Greek nationalism and explains how small a minority such nationalists were. The Greek population of the Ottoman Empire had three sub-groupings: the Greek nationalist who were ready to die for the cause, the wealthy merchants who were pleased with their share in the Ottoman social and economic structure, and the plain Greek peasants who identified with the land they were born into and had no desire for change.²⁵⁵ The reader learns from Georgio P. Theodorou’s narration that Daskalos’ father and his family members as well as the family friend Georgio P. Theodorou are not interested in the Greeks reclaiming the Asia Minor. On the contrary, his father is quite happy with their privileged position and challenges his son’s political motivations as follows:

Here in Smyrna ...we are all prosperous... We Greeks occupy all the important and powerful positions. We virtually make our own laws. We are in paradise, and you and your friends want to mess it up with your stupid Big Idea, for God’s sake!... look at my servants. What are they? They are all Turks.... Who digs the roads and carries away the nightsoil? Turks... Don’t tell me we are governed by Turks when the evidence to the contrary is right in front of our eyes.²⁵⁶

A wealthy Greek merchant narrating the story of the fundamentalist Greek nationalist from a disapproving perspective helps the reader understand the Greek community of the Ottoman Empire, even after the Greek invasion and at the peak of Greek nationalism, was not a homogeneous community. The second chapter is about the burning down of Smyrna and the eruption of violence after the Greek invasion. The scenes described are of terrible violence in line with the opinions of Grotehhuus who argues the building of a nation-state is not “an orderly process of design and negotiation” but a violent fight between “organized criminal groups.”²⁵⁷ This chapter

²⁵⁵ S. Akgönül, *Türkiye Rumları: Ulus-devlet çağından küreselleşme çağına bir azınlığın yokoluş süreci* (İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 41

²⁵⁶ 332

²⁵⁷ Grotenhuis, “Nation-Building,” 33-34

is narrated by this Greek merchant is. The merchant is dying in the waters of the Smyrna harbor and listing all the people responsible for the violence all around him: the Greek nationalists, the Allied forces thinking the Greek rule of the Aegean would be the best for all involved, the Greek Prime Minister and the priests declaring it a holy war. What follows is violence and incredible suffering inflicted on the Turkish population by Greek occupying forces:

gathering menfolk into mosques on the pretext of delivering a proclamation, whilst their valiant comrades raided their homes and molested the women, setting fire to the Turkish quarter at Aidin and putting machine guns in the minarets ... Oh, indeed, an infinity of errors great and small, constituting the bitter reality of the glittering redemption of Constantinople and the Asia Minor Greeks from the cruel and barbarous infidel Turk.²⁵⁸

Similar atrocities are done by the Turks against the Greeks as soon as the game changes to their advantage:

And then the triumphant and vengeful troops of Mustafa Kemal turn up, hordes of cheetah mixed up with smart regulars, and they crucify priests or garrote them with knotted cord, and they violate and defenestrate even the sweetest virgins.²⁵⁹

Georgio P. Theodorou is equally repelled by the violent acts committed by Turks and Greeks, and expresses his horror as follows:

...now it's Turkey for the Turks, and it's let's redeem Asia Minor from the cruel and barbarous infidel Greek. Well, what can I do, except doff my hat, make my salaams, and say, 'Gentlemen, fuck you all!?'²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ 658

²⁵⁹ 538

²⁶⁰ 659

In this chapter, having a Greek merchant as the narrator talking about the atrocities committed on both the Greek and the Turkish side with equal distance to both emphasizes the fact that the Greek community was not monolithic and there was a diversity degree of attachment to the Ottoman Empire or lack of, and not every one of the Greek community wanted Asia Minor to be ruled by Greeks.

To sum up, the use of diverse narrators enables the story to take on many layers by showing the same event from different angles, explore many issues such as the nature of nationalism, the way of life in the Ottoman Empire, the friendship and tolerance between Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, the pain, suffering, and trauma experienced by all sides due to wars and forced migration and include multiple perspectives.

4.2. Use of Multiple Narrative Styles and Allusions

Louis de Bernieres experiments with diverse narrative styles and alludes to important works of world literature in *Birds without Wings* which strengthens the concept of diversity, a defining quality of the Ottoman Empire, which disintegrated due to nationalism upon the establishment of the Turkish nation state which was based on one nation, one language, and one religion. The use of a variety of genres does not only serve to make a statement about diversity but probably also for de Bernieres to express who he is as a person and a writer. To start with, he is a versatile person with many talents and interests. He studied philosophy and education and holds an MA degree. His wide interest in academic disciplines also applies to his practical life skills. Before becoming a full-time writer, he worked as a “landscape gardener, cowboy, motorcycle messenger and car mechanic.”²⁶¹ He then worked for about six months as a stone mason. When he was nineteen years old, he went to Colombia and lived there for a year.²⁶² In Columbia, he immersed himself with the genre of magical realism. He developed a deep love for Gabriel García Márquez and was greatly influenced by his work to the point of “describing himself as a 'Márquez parasite’” A greater influence for him, though, was Tolstoy whose novel *War and Peace* he tried to emulate in *Birds without Wings*.²⁶³ Evidently, de Bernieres draws inspiration from great authors

²⁶¹ Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières"

²⁶² Sethi, “Louis de Bernières | Interview”

²⁶³ Sethi, “Louis de Bernières | Interview”

from all around the world thanks to his versatile personality and openness to immerse himself in a variety of experiences as a reader and a writer. He also is very skilled in “mingling the oral with the written, the fictional with the non-fictional, and the rational with the mythical.”²⁶⁴ It is no wonder that he is described as a “mixed bag” in terms of his personality. It is as if he is more than one person and more than one writer and can be “a bolshy golfer, a Wimbledon cosmopolitan, a joking tragedian. He talks about himself with irony and writes with alternating savagery and sentimentality’.”²⁶⁵ Shortly, de Bernieres’ use of multiple narrative style in *Birds without Wings* does not only contribute to him making a statement on the value of diversity, giving his readers a taste of diversity and the experience of being exposed to many genres in a single novel, but also gives him the opportunity to express the versatile person and the versatile writer he is.

It is important to recognize allusions to other works of literature that are considered to be important in world literature. For example, “the journey of Drosoula and her husband to Cephalonia is likened to the journey of Odysseus.”²⁶⁶ Gerasimos is described as follows:

Gerasimos got the nickname ‘Odysseus’ from the other fishermen, and he was very proud of that. He was more of a sailor than all of them put together. He was greatly admired for sailing such a little fishing boat all the way from Turkey.²⁶⁷

By giving Gerasimos the nickname ‘Odysseus’, de Bernieres makes his allusion very clear. Just like the journey of Odysseus, their journey requires courage and fighting against nature. This voyage is narrated by Drosoula and starts right after they witness her best friend Philothei’s fall from the cliff and die. They take the body with them but later on have to drop it into the sea, which is a painful experience for Drosoula. Watching the dead body sink creates an emptiness in her heart which she likens to saying goodbye to Anatolia. She talks about the seasickness, the sunburns, the cold

²⁶⁴ Mehmet F. Arargüç, *Latin America through Magical Realism and Louis De Bernieres* (Ankara: Ankara University Press, 2014), 958

²⁶⁵ “I Know I’m Not Tolstoy, but I Try,” *Guardian*, March 5, 2005.

²⁶⁶ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 91

²⁶⁷ 571

nights and the terror of being out there in the middle of the night when waves are big. She describes her husband through the voyage as a man with “fantastic courage and fantastic wisdom.”²⁶⁸ This journey takes many months and is filled with hardships all the way through for a sailor who is used to sailing close to the shore as a fisherman and who has never sailed in open seas.

Another allusion is to Homer’s *Iliad* in that “The plate Rustem Aga orders the tinsman of the town with animal figures carved on it is reminiscent of the shield Hepheastus makes for Achilles.”²⁶⁹

it had come out even better than he had dreamed of it. Around the rim, in Arabic text that he could not read, there was a line from the Koran. In the center, set amid swirling acanthus leaves, were five beasts. One was an eagle with two heads growing out of one body, each head looking in opposite directions.²⁷⁰

This allusion puts the novel somewhere in the continuum of important literature such as *Iliad*. It also is an appealing point for the readers who are well read. Noticing the references to other works of literature the author has spread across the book makes the experience more rewarding for a keen reader. The shield is a work of extraordinary craftsmanship fitting both Hephaestus, its maker and Achilles as they are both great heroes. This alludes to both the tinsman and Rüstem Ağa being heroes in a way. The reader already knows how bravely Rüstem Ağa led his men during the war of independence and how courageously he fought. The tinsman of the town is Mehmet who was “descended from Armenians who had arrived in the time of the Seljuks, and converted to Islam, and the family had provided the town with an unbroken line of coppersmiths for generations.”²⁷¹ Having an Armenian who converted to Islam in a story that references Greek mythology in a now purely Muslim and Turkish town seems to point to the once multicultural and multi faith society that is just underneath the surface.

²⁶⁸ 726

²⁶⁹ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 91

²⁷⁰ 786

²⁷¹ 779

Finally, the entire novel appears to be an allusion to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. He talks about Tolstoy's influence on him and says that "he was trying to emulate *War and Peace*, from which he seems to have borrowed the vast scope of his novel and the idea of the futility of all human endeavors against the chaotic unfolding of history. De

Bernières is reported to say: "I'm one of those writers who's always going to be trying to write *War and Peace*, failing, obviously, but trying."²⁷² Evidently, de Bernières aimed to appeal to lovers of literature and aimed high. There are many similarities between the two novels. Both are set during a time of war, both of them have a historical figure with considerable impact on their society, Napoleon and Mustafa Kemal, both of them interweave multiple narratives and are a mix of fiction and history.

One narrative style used in the novel is the diary. The chapters with Philothei as the narrator read like diary entries. They almost always talk about Ibrahim and Philothei's passionate love for him, hence the diary acts as a confidant and an outlet to bring out secrets and strong emotions for Philothei, as can be seen in the lines below:

Ibrahim comes creeping up and finds me every time I go out on an errand, and I say, 'What if we get caught?' and he says, 'Who cares? We're getting married one day anyway,' and I say, 'But it's not decent!' and he just shrugs, and I'm really scared about getting caught, but so far it's been all right, and it's true that our fathers have come to an agreement, and my mother is already thinking about things for the dowry box and we're going to embroider some blankets. He says, 'Now that you're twelve, you're old enough to marry,' and I say, 'But you're not,' and he says nothing, but just takes my hand and looks at me hard in the eyes, and I can see that his eyes are dark and glowing, and it makes my stomach buzz, and then he very carefully places the back of my hand first against his chest, then against his forehead, then against his lips, and finally, before he turns and leaves, back against his heart.²⁷³

The reader cannot help feeling like poking through the pages of a young woman's diary and reading secrets about her love affair. In the quote above, Philothei is

²⁷² Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières"

²⁷³ 140

remembering a passionate encounter with Ibrahim in the minutest detail and reports the lines of their dialogue and details about his body language and facial expression. All these accounts create, in the reader's mind, a picture of an extraordinary romantic love and later in the plot, helps the reader to grasp the extent of the tragedy of their death. In another such chapter with Philothei as the narrator, the author has managed to incorporate a poem in a what reads like a diary entry:

I remember once I was out gathering figs... Then Ibrahim appeared ... I said 'If we had feathers on our arms, do you think we could fly?' and he said, 'Maybe not. If that was possible, someone would have done it by now,' and I said ' Think how free we would be. We could fly to the top of a mountain and there would be no one to tell us to be ashamed, and no one would see us.'

Next time I saw him he said, 'I had a dream about flying, and when I woke up I had verses in my head.'

I said, 'Verses? Can you remember them?' and he recited:

'Don't pity the eagle

Who can climb the sky and fly

But for the little wingless bird

Cry.

Fire will be found by

Birds that fly too high

And all his feathers burn

And he'll fall down and die

What bird has two nests

Only one shall remain

And his wings burn

And he'll not fly again.

What if I make a high nest

But the branch sinks low?
They will take my little bird
And I will die of woe.
Oh my little bird
Who will chase you?
Who will put you in a cage
And tenderly embrace you?
It's not possible to light a
Candle that doesn't drip,
And it's not possible to love
And never weep.”²⁷⁴

The author seems to have good reasons for adding this poem, which İbrahim says came to him in a dream, to the lover's diary. Firstly, it strengthens the “wingless birds” motif and informs the reader that İbrahim and Philothei will end up like birds without wings and their story will be one to cry to. The question “Oh my little bird. Who will chase you?” is also interesting as Philotheie falls from a cliff and dies when İbrahim pushes her by mistake after chasing her. The final lines also point to the sad aspect of their love story and that İbrahim will weep a lot because of his love. What gave İbrahim the inspiration for this poem is Philotheie's dream to fly high up to the top of the mountain so as not to feel shame for their love and for expressing their love physically. Again, the strong yearning Philothei feels for İbrahim contributes to the reader's understanding that theirs is an exceptional romantic love.

Apparently, poetry is a genre dear to De Bernieres and his family to the extent “his father would quote passages of Shakespeare at the dinner table and wrote his own ‘old-

²⁷⁴ 609-611

fashioned but good' poetry in the style of Georgian poets," before the war broke out, and "his mother's greatest love was the work of Rupert Brooke."²⁷⁵

Another place where the author purposefully placed a poem in the novel is at the very beginning. This is a poem by Spyros Kyriazopoulos with the title "THE CAT" and it appears on the page before "The Prologue of Iskander the Potter" and is quite short but deep in meaning:

She was licking
the opened tin
for hours and hours
without realising
that she was drinking
her own blood.

This epigraph is very meaningful as it is like a summary of the novel and the First World War. The cat realizing she has been drinking her own blood for a long time refers to the self-defeating and self-damaging dreams of the Great Empires to claim more power. Great Britain, France and Russia on one hand, and Germany and Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire ended up in a bloody war in which everyone, even the winners, lost. This war changed the game in many ways and empires fell. In addition to the Ottoman Empire, the Austria-Hungarian Empire and Russia's Romanov Empire also ended.²⁷⁶ Shortly, the war had no winners because of all the casualties and the destruction.

The novel also experiments with dramatic form, specifically with its use of soliloquy. Some of the chapters with a narrator other than the omniscient narrator are more like soliloquies than prose. One such chapter is "Ayşe Remembers Tamara" in which Ayşe is talking to her audience as if she is telling a story to a friend or a relative, she has not seen for a long time. The chapter opens as follows:

Well, I wasn't pleased. You can imagine what I thought when my eldest son

²⁷⁵ Sethi, "Louis de Bernières | Interview"

²⁷⁶ Tekşan, "Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı," 2073

called me out of the house and said, ‘Look what Baba’s got us into now,’ and I went out, and there were Mohammed the Leech gatherer and Ali the Snowbringer, with Ali’s donkey, and on the donkey was what I thought was a pile of rages draped across it, and I looked a bit closer and it was a body. Just imagine!²⁷⁷

This quote flows like one side of a friendly and warm dialogue. The reader can almost see and hear Ayşe, now a dear old woman who has seen and been through a lot. Inclusion of the oral storytelling tradition in chapters that flow more like soliloquies add variety and a stronger bond between the reader and the characters. Hearing the story of a married woman stoned in line with the tradition because she has committed adultery from another woman whose life is directly affected by the stoning gives the reader an insight into this social problem. Ayşe never judges her guest too harshly, who is an adulterer and does not approve of what has been done to her. On the contrary, she is repulsed by it. She is horrified by the violent impulses that have come out in so many people she would never think could be violent. This gives the reader an insight into the mob culture that makes violent acts including wars possible. Although she grows a fondness for her guest, she knows her guest has to leave as soon as she has recovered enough and accompanies her to the brothel when that day comes. Through her story, Ayşe manages to inform the reader of the hidden rules of the society then. Both women, without having to speak about it, know Tamara’s only option in life is to become a prostitute at the town’s brothel. Similarly, the chapter “Exiled in Cephalonia, Drosoula Remembers Philothei”, flows like a grandmother telling an old story to her grandchildren and make the story of friendship between Drosoula and Philothei more endearing as can be seen below:

Philothei was my best friend, even though she was so beautiful, and I was born so hideous. We were born at about the same time, and I might as well have been born in the shade. She was like the evening star when I was like a bug. When you are old your memory plays tricks with you. Sometimes I can’t remember what I was doing five minutes ago, or where I put down the onion I

²⁷⁷ 141

was peeling, but then sometimes I can remember things that happened when I was seven years old, so clearly that it's as if I was a little girl again.²⁷⁸

This chapter is important as it incorporates the oral storytelling, tradition, and the time in which the plot unfolds. Drousoula is directly speaking to the reader as a storyteller would. Drousoula as an old woman remembering the times she and her best friend were children and the tragedy that befell on her friend helps to emphasize one feature of *Birds without Wings*: it is a story of memories narrated by different people. It is narrated after the whole story has unfolded.

Finally, another chapter that almost speaks to the reader in the form of a monologue from a play is the forty fifth chapter in which the merchant Georgio P. Theodorou is the narrator. Georgio P. Theodorou starts his monologue like narration from the first line:

Allow me to introduce myself, although you won't have heard of me unless you have approached Eskibahçe from the lower end, where the road emerges from the pine forest that has all the Muslim graves in it, and where you would have found on your left the ruins of a pump house with constantly running water... What could be better than to enter a shady, cool and dignified little building of neoclassical design in order to drink water and wash your face after a long journey? Above the door you can still read, in Greek script, 'Constructed for the Benefit of All, by Georgio P. Theodorou, 1919' That's me. I am Georgio P. Theodorou, at your service, ladies and gentlemen."²⁷⁹

This chapter also has a conversational tone and directly addresses the reader. Philanthropist Georgio P. Theodorou gives details about the location of the fountain, its design and emphasizes the fact it was constructed by him. The fact that the writing is in Greek script in a town of Turkish, Armenian, and Greek inhabitants no longer surprises the reader as it has already been well established that the people of the town all speak Turkish and those who are literate write Turkish in Greek script. The second chapter with the same narrator is also like a monologue from a play and has elements of magical realism in it. In this chapter, Georgio P. Theodorou is drowning like many Greeks all around him in the harbor of Smyrna, but he manages to tell, in detail, how

²⁷⁸ 23

²⁷⁹ 329

the beautiful city ended up on fire and the home of great atrocities on both the Greek and the Turkish side. The magical realism is quite strong in the section below from the beginning of the chapter:

You catch me at an awkward moment, my friends, and you may find my thoughts a little disconnected, but if you find me a little incoherent, if you detect that my discourse has come adrift, you will surely find me blameless, for I am at this very moment sinking slowly through the oily waters down to the harbor floor of this very lovely city that was Smyrna ... Sooner or later one has to give up the struggle, and the weight of one's sodden garments, combined with the extreme exhaustion brought about by panic and physical exertion, causes one to make peace with death at last.²⁸⁰

Clearly, the character Georgio P. Theodorou is speaking as he is dying and continues to speak after he has died and says, "I was very bitter about this death until I started to die it properly."²⁸¹ With all the historical facts about the Turkish army's victory against the Greeks correct, one of the characters witnessing this and narrating it from the depths of Smyrna harbor first as a dying then as a dead man makes the genre of this chapter magical realism.²⁸²

Another narrative style Louis de Bernieres manages to incorporate into *Birds without Wings* is the epistolary novel in the form of the letters Karatavuk sends to his mother accounting his experiences at the front.²⁸³ There is one letter his mother sends to him with the help of the Greek teacher, who not only reads her son's letter to her but also writes back to the son in the name of both his parents.

Karatavuk's letters are beautifully written and reflect his gentle and loving soul:

My dear Mother,

You are proud to have given birth to two soldiers. It was a delight to my heart to receive the letter that you caused to be written to me with a neighbor's pen. It was so full of advice. When it was given to me, I was sitting under a pear

²⁸⁰ 647-648

²⁸¹ 648

²⁸² Bademkiran, "A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness," 47

²⁸³ Ağıl, "On the Possibility of Multiculturalism," 90

tree nearby a stream in the middle of Divrin Plain, so beautiful and green. My soul was enchanted already by the sweetness of the land, and my enchantment was increased on account of your words. I read it, and whilst I read it, I learned the lessons that you wrote in it. I read it again. I was glad to do the task of reading your letter, because the task was beautiful and holy.²⁸⁴

The quote reveals some important facts: this war is so big that like Karatavuk's parents, all parents gave almost all their sons to the army and made a great sacrifice. Another fact is the low level of literacy in the rural Ottoman society. Another fact is the respect young men are expected to pay to their mothers in Ottoman culture. He also talks in great length about the psychology of warfare. The reader, through these accounts of war, is informed of what motivated these soldiers as the following lines from Karatavuk's prayer, which he is motivated to share with his mother:

'O mighty God of the Turks, creator of the singing bird, of the bleating sheep, of the worshipping wheat and grass and the mountains of majesty; You gave all these things to the Turks. Permit us to keep them. For such loveliness is proper to the Turks, we who praise You, we who believe in the mercy and truth of our God. O God, ... make sharp our bayonets and scatter the Franks.'²⁸⁵

This letter clearly shows how Turkish nationalism was born in a way that it attached itself very strongly to Islam, the implications of which are seen in the nation building process that aims to create a nation of Muslim Turks. The founders of the nation regarded Islam as a "constitutive element of the Turkish identity, and being Turkish has often been equated with being Muslim."²⁸⁶ As Benedict Anderson argues, those in power shape the nation as they imagine it.²⁸⁷ This beautiful letter challenges its reader, the Greek nationalist teacher, Leonidas, who "had spent so many years and expended so much energy on cultivating his sense of superiority to the Turks that it came as a shock to desencrypt the tender soul of Karatavuk."²⁸⁸ Leonidas' inner struggle with himself trying to avoid the humanness of the people his nationalistic ideology despises

²⁸⁴ 421

²⁸⁵ 423

²⁸⁶ İçduygu, Toktaş& Soner. "The politics of population," 359

²⁸⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 43

²⁸⁸ 424

and sees as inferior shows an important universal truth about extreme forms of nationalism, or even any other political idea: one has to invest in it to the point of seeing the others as less than human and filtering out the commonalities. Clearly, the addition of letters adds to the diversity of the novel and helps to explore points about the psychology of war and nationalism.

The novel uses the form of old travel narratives and makes a direct allusion to Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. It is not surprising that de Bernières would include this genre as he reports being a keen reader of old travel narratives.²⁸⁹ This is the journey the town's landlord and richest man, Rüstem Ağa takes via Smyrna on his way to Constantinople in search for a mistress and is accompanied by various men from the town:

In April the days are bright and gentle, and the showers sweeter, so that when Rüstem let it be known that he was traveling with an armed retinue to the famous infidel city of Smyrna, there were many who eagerly jumped at the chance to take advantage of his protection.²⁹⁰

Around twenty men join the journey among whom were Iskandar the Potter, Muhammad the Leech Gatherer, Ali the Snowbringer, Levon the Sly, Stamos the Birdman, and Daskalos Leonidas. Mohammed the Leech Gatherer comes up with an idea, which he expresses as follows: "My idea is that this is going to be a long and boring and weary journey, and each one of us should tell a story to while away the time". Rüstem finds his idea "excellent" and offers to "give a new yataghan to the man with the best story."²⁹¹ Just like in *The Canterbury Tales*, "the winner happens to be the one who tells the bawdiest tale about women's perfidy."²⁹² This story is about a very devout Muslim woman who "one night dreamed that she fornicated with every one of all the pilgrims who came to Mecca on the hajj", which shocks her and fills her with great horror. The hidden meaning of the dream is revealed towards the end by a Mullah, which is a message for her to get a well built by her house in Makkah for pilgrims to quench their thirst and for her to go to paradise. Clearly, many details such

²⁸⁹ Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières,"

²⁹⁰ 164

²⁹¹ 171

²⁹² Ağıl, "On the Possibility of Multiculturalism," 90

as the season, the number of travelers and the traveler's telling a story each are direct allusions to *The Canterbury Tales*. De Bernieres may have chosen the *Canterbury Tales* as his inspiration for this chapter because of the diversity of the people Chaucer included as pilgrims, thus story tellers. These stories also do not have one central theme unlike the travel narratives that precede them.²⁹³ *Birds without Wings* has a focus on diverse narrators all the way through and this chapter does as well.

Another narrative style used in the novel is mystery and horror writing through the madman The Dog.²⁹⁴ One day, he appears out of nowhere and fills everyone that sees him with fear, curiosity, and horror. He has very unusual looks:

He was tall and very thin, with spindly legs that were nonetheless tautly muscled from years of walking, and he was clad only in ragged scraps of gray sheet with a hole torn out for his head, and which at front and back hardly attained the level of his knees... One could clearly see the sides of his buttocks, and occasionally there were dark hints of his genitals as he walked... His full head of disordered gray hair was knotted and matted, caked with dust, and the sweat of his brow ran down from it, leaving clean tracks across the filth that had accumulated upon his shrunken and aquiline face. With every step he groaned inarticulately, as if in conquerable pain, a groan such as one hears from a madman...²⁹⁵

This is quite a powerful description of an eerie character and presents almost a creature, not a human being. To start with, he is not wearing anything near acceptable. What he has on is very short and revealing his buttocks and genitals. He looks dirty, under-nourished, and in pain. He is groaning in a way only madmen groan. All these details paint a vivid picture in the reader's mind and fill one with a sense of eeriness. Upon his settling in the area with the Lycian tombs that are believed to be haunted by ghosts, the Imam and the Priest of the town go up there to see if the madman has any needs. He responds by writing his name in Arabic script on the wall: The Dog. When asked where he came from, he responds with "Hell". This fills the holy men with horror and

²⁹³ Larry D. Benson, "The Order of the Canterbury Tales" *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 3, (1981), 80

²⁹⁴ Ağıl, "On the Possibility of Multiculturalism," 91

²⁹⁵ 43

they leave realizing there is nothing they could do to help The Dog. This consolidates the eeriness around The Dog and his having lost his humanness as a being impossible to reach by even the wisest men.

Epic is another narrative style de Bernieres explored in *Birds without Wings* as it “tells the dramas of little individuals whose fates are determined by forces beyond their power.”²⁹⁶ Iskandar explains how Philothei dies as follows:

I say this not because her death was an accident, but because there would have been no accident if it were not for the great world. It was the great world that went to war with us and attempted to divide us up, and then it was the Greeks who invaded us after the war with the great world, when we were weak and they thought it would be easy to beat us. We won that war, and Greeks lost it, but it was because of that the pashas of the great world decided to take away the Muslims from the Greek land, and deliver them to us, and to take away the Christians from this land and deliver them to the Greeks, and it was because of this decision that Philothei ran to find Ibrahim and suffered the accident that killed her.²⁹⁷

The accident Iskandar the Potter is referring to is Philothei falling off the cliff in the middle of a hard conversation she is trying to have with her fiancé, who is troubled by memories of the war. He has been in a state of near madness since he got back. This, obviously, upsets Philothei but she tries to be as patient as she can. The day all the Christians are to leave the town for İzmir, where they are going to board ships and taken to Greece as mandated by the Greek-Turkish population exchange, she cannot make up her mind about whether to stay with her fiancé or leave with her family. Ibrahim and Philotei keep shouting at each other and feel overwhelmed by the difficulty of the situation. At one point, Philotei loses her balance and falls off the cliff. In the quote above, Iskandar the Potter puts the accident in the context of the big world,

²⁹⁶ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 91

²⁹⁷ 600-601

the war taking place that will reshape boundaries and end empires to be replaced by nation-states. The dramatic love story against the backdrop of World War 1 becomes greater than itself. It becomes a symbol for all the pain, misery and violence caused by war, thus becoming legendary.

Finally, there is a non-fiction genre de Bernieres managed to fit in *Birds without Wings*, which is that of a history book. The chapters on Mustafa Kemal “adopt the language of official history books with an objective and detached voice. These parts are told in simple present tense probably to imply the ever-powerful flood of events in the bigger world.”²⁹⁸ These passages are rich and detailed, making it necessary at times to go back and read them repeatedly to grasp the content as is the case in the following section from the final chapter on Mustafa Kemal:

It takes only a month for Mustafa Kemal to outwit and outface the British. He knows that the French and the Italians are happy to give him what he wants, which is the withdrawal of foreign troops from Thrace and Istanbul, and he himself is happy to guarantee passage for all ships bound through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. His troops are now marching on the Dardanelles and in Istanbul...Lloyd George announces in Cabinet that he will stand up to Mustafa Kemal, and Winston Churchill, ever warlike, wants to send an expeditionary force...The French and the Italians withdraw ships sent to help The British, and Lord Curzon goes poste-haste to Paris...Turkish cavalry forces the British behind their defenses at Çanakkale, but no shots are fired.”²⁹⁹

Although these chapters are mostly factual and are more like from pages of a history book, there are fictional additions at times and at times de Bernieres inserts his opinions on Mustafa Kemal very abruptly. This makes the novel a perfect example of a historical metacognition, which is the mix of historical fiction with metafiction, fiction that makes a point of reminding its reader constantly that they are reading a work of fiction. The second chapter on Mustafa Kemal, which is on his education, has a surprising fictional touch to it. At the beginning of the chapter, it is narrated that, first he goes to a religious school in line with his mother’s wish, and “Here the first

²⁹⁸ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 91

²⁹⁹ 662

seeds will be planted of his lifelong aversion to religion in general and İslam in particular [and that] he thinks it stupid and pointless to learn Arabic.”³⁰⁰ After the death of his father, the family moves to the mother’s father’s household. Mustafa Kemal is first sent to the religious Greek school and then the Islamic school, both of which he hates and finds “repulsive”. Then, he makes his way to the military second school where he enjoys “wear[ing] proper modern clothes instead of the embarrassingly old-fashioned shalwar and sash.”³⁰¹ Without his mother’s knowledge, he sits the entrance exam of the military school and gets admitted. Zübeyde Hanım is reluctant to send her son to the army but one night she has the most peculiar dream:

...one night, she is visited by a marvelous veridical dream, wherein she sees Mustafa perched on a golden tray at the very summit of a minaret. She runs to Him, only to hear a voice telling her, ‘If you permit your son to go to the military school, he will remain up here on high. If you do not, he shall be cast down.’ One is tempted to imagine Mustafa whispering into the ears of the righteous matriarch as she slumbers.³⁰²

Mesut Tekşan comments on this humorous detail and concludes it is a product of the author’s imagination as his research on the topic has not led him to the same fact anywhere.³⁰³ This is a testimony to de Bernieres’ success in making the details he has imagined believable given a researcher has wondered if they are facts and investigated them.

In some of these chapters, de Bernieres not only inserts imaginary detail to historical facts but also his own opinions on Mustafa Kemal that would come across too harsh and too critical to those whose opinions have been heavily shaped by official history. At times he shows Atatürk’s weaknesses or calls him a dictator, which is unacceptable in Turkish official history, which presents him as a flawless human being. There is a myth around Mustafa Kemal which contributed to the nation state building spirit and the sustaining of the nation state, and there is no room for criticism. Below is one of

³⁰⁰ 32

³⁰¹ 34

³⁰² 35

³⁰³ Tekşan, “Yeni Tarihseçilik Kuramı,” 2077

those texts from *Birds without Wings* that has a comment official historians would never make:

On the way [Mustafa Kemal] disembarks in Sicily, and the local children bombard him with lemon peel and mock his Ottoman fez. He suddenly sees for the first time the fez epitomizes all that makes the empire ridiculous in the Eyes of foreigners, and he begins to conceive a hatred of it. One day, when he is dictator of Turkey, he will outlaw it in a fit of illiberality.³⁰⁴

The author filling in the gaps with his imagination- the children throwing lemon peels at Mustafa Kemal to make fun of his fez- does not take away from the richness of history covered in the novel. This is quite acceptable in the genre of the postmodern historical novel.³⁰⁵ The words “dictator” and “fit” make it clear that de Bernieres has a critical view of Mustafa Kemal and has made a conscious choice to add his perspective and his imagination to dry historical facts covered in chapters on Mustafa Kemal.

Clearly, de Bernieres has managed to make his novel a rich collection of multiple genres from magical realism to the play, from epistolary to horror.

4.3. References to Multiculturalism:

Another way Louis de Bernieres presents the diversity in the Ottoman Empire is through references to multiculturalism. The setting he has imagined for his novel is one of deep roots in ancient civilization, where people from multiple ethnicities live side by side. He also has his characters travel to the most cosmopolitan cities of the Ottoman Empire, namely İstanbul and İzmir, and describes the diversity of ethnicities in front of their eyes. Through exposure to all these diverse settings and characters, the reader is exposed to a living and breathing aspect of the Ottoman Empire: multiculturalism.

The setting of the novel, Eskibahçe, is situated on a land where ancient civilizations mixed, hence “is built upon some Roman and Byzantine ruins.”³⁰⁶ The description of

³⁰⁴ 47

³⁰⁵ Tekşan, “Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı,” 2077

³⁰⁶ Ağıl, “On the Possibility of Multiculturalism,” 84

its beauty makes references to three of these ancient civilizations and says, “there was probably no other place like it in all of Lydia, Caria or Lycia.”³⁰⁷ The tombs up the hill where the madman The Dog takes shelter also have encryptions of “Lycian script.”³⁰⁸ All these details establish an important fact: the land the town is built on has hosted a diversity of civilizations before the Ottoman Empire claimed it. This communicates the rich and diverse heritage Anatolia is privileged to possess.

During the Ottoman era, the town’s inhabitants include the Turks, Greeks, and Armenians. This also resulted in a multi-faith community, which is represented by the existence of two places of worship as referred to by Iskandar the Potter’s reflections of the beauty of his town from up the mountains where he was asked to go to the specific pine trees to make a wish by his Christian friend for the protection of his baby daughter, Philotei. A Christian father asking a Muslim friend to make a wish for his most precious daughter also is a symbol of respect and high regards for each other’s religions, hence a symbol of tolerance and co-existence in a multicultural and multifaith society.

After carrying out his friend’s request, Iskandar watches his town from above: “...marveling at the view of the town. To see such a place from above, particularly is it has a fine mosque, and a church is to be reminded that there is something miraculous in the falling out of things.”³⁰⁹ The existence of a mosque and a church does mean tolerance and respect for each other’s faith and a cherishing of each other. It is also presented as something beautiful and “miraculous”, hence praised. This is expressed in Iskandar the Potter’s prologue in which he talks about how much merrier life was when the Christians were still around:

Life was merrier when the Christians were still among us...Perhaps it was something to do with the wine. For them it was a precious and sacred thing, because they thought it was something like the blood of God...Sometimes we did drink with our Christians and caught their high spirits in the same was that

³⁰⁷ 37

³⁰⁸ 45

³⁰⁹ 15

one catches malaria from the chill night air, but, left on our own now, there is a sadness seeping out of the stones of this half-deserted town.³¹⁰

In this quote, Muslims and Christians are contrasted in that Christianity allows, even encourages the drinking of wine, whereas Islam clearly forbids it. This creates a joyous culture for the Christians and a solemn one for the Muslims. When the Muslims would ignore the rule of their religion and drink with their Christian friends, they would feel their high spirits and be uplifted by them. This is one of the positive impacts of one culture over another in a context where they live together. The Muslims and Christians mixing and enjoying each other's company also applied to their leaders: Abdulhamid Hodja and Father Apistos:

Abdulhamid touched his right hand to his chest, to his lips, and to his forehead, saying, 'Ah, Imansız Efendi, iyi akşamlar.' The priest smiled, returned the flowers gesture, and replied, 'And good evening to you, Apistos Efendi.' The two men had for many years enjoyed the pleasantries of greeting each other as 'Infidel Efendi', the one in Turkish and the other in Greek, and had struck up a cordial relationship based upon mutual respect, somewhat tempered by an awareness that there were many of both faiths who would look askance at such a friendship.....'Well, after all, we are both peoples of the Book.'"³¹¹

Both religious leaders calling the other an infidel in their own languages and knowing the other will understand proves that the Ottoman society enjoyed the presence of other cultures and felt affinity towards them through joking with each other and understanding each other's languages. These two faiths were so inseparable that Polyxeni, a Christian, had no problem drinking "from a bowl engraved with verses from the Koran"³¹² when in labor for ease and the fact that women hung "Bibles and Korans and blue beads and cloves of garlic all over the place"³¹³ to repel the evil eyes on the most beautiful baby, Polithei. The intermixing of the two faiths does not end here: "There was a small group of people who had turned Turk because they had got fed up with exactions of Lent, and it wasn't uncommon for Turks to go to churches

³¹⁰ 2

³¹¹ 47-48

³¹² 8

³¹³ 11

and light candles.³¹⁴ To make it more interesting, “Christians lit their candles and placed them in the sandbox as you might expect, but then knelt down and prayed whilst making Muslim prostrations.”³¹⁵ Similarly, Abdulhamid Hodja’s wife, Ayşe, asks her childhood friend, Polixeni, to light a candle for her at the church when she worries that Rüstem Bey’s wife, Tamara, who is badly wounded after being stoned for adultery, will be trouble if she stays longer. Just like Ayşe, Karatavuk’s mother asks Polixeni to kiss the icon and ask Panagia to protect him at war.³¹⁶ Clearly, the Christian and Muslim populations of the town found nothing wrong with practicing a blend of the two religions. This shows that cultures that co-exist influence each other’s faith and create a tolerant culture fundamentalism of any type could not get into in any way.

The mixing of faiths leading to greater diversity also applied to ethnicities. Iskandar the Potter describes the gunsmith, Abdul Chrysostomos as follows: “... he is definitely a peculiar character. He is like a Jew crossed with a Greek, crossed with an Armenian, crossed with an Arab, crossed with a Bulgarian, crossed with a Negro...”³¹⁷ This quote communicates the fact that the Ottoman Empire created a population whose members intermixed and intermarried in cosmopolitan cities. It is almost as if the gunsmith is a metaphor for his city, Smyrna, which is the home of so many different peoples and faiths.

Similarly, Istanbul of the Ottoman Empire is a multicultural city with incredible diversity. Streets of Istanbul are described for the diversity they harbored during Rüstem Bey’s visit there. What is portrayed is an incredibly colorful city with a great diversity of ethnicities, religions, and languages. It is a portrait of multiculturalism at its highest.

Rüstem Bey witnesses this incredible diversity standing outside a mosque and watching the people going past:

A group of Mevlevi derwishes walked past together... A Jewess was borne past... A mixed party of Muslims and Christians took their first steps towards

³¹⁴ 265

³¹⁵ 266

³¹⁶ 302

³¹⁷ 183

Ephesus, making pilgrimage together to the house of Virgin Mary... A portly Orthodox priest sweated behind a party of bedouins draped in white cloaks, and after them a golden-vested Greek merchant rode side by side with a merchant from Italy, discussing prices in French...Clutching a pink silk parasol, the dainty wife of one of the European ambassadors tripped along, flanked by four black servants and a grotesque eunuch from Ethiopia. A small group of Maltese nuns, whispering and giggling together, pattered along with parcels of medicines in their hands, whilst a group of Persians jostled with a band of Armenians.³¹⁸

The diversity of nationalities Rüstem Bey is watching in front of his eyes, a mix of Jews, Muslims, Christians, Greek, Italian, French, Ethiopian, Maltese, Persian, and Albanian, is a testimony to the multicultural aspect of the Ottoman Empire and de Bernieres does a skillful job of portraying it in his vivid depiction of a busy street. There is also a lot of action, which is adding to the vitality of the place. Although not to this degree, diversity of some sort also existed in rural communities. In the 1900s, a variety of religious and cultural groups lived together across the empire and this was insured by the empire's millet system. Reşat Kasaba explains the rural diversity as follows: "On all levels and in all occupational groups, western Anatolian society was diverse. It became even more so in the course of the nineteenth century. There were Greek and Turkish peasants, non-Muslim and Muslim merchants, Muslims who worked for foreign banks and for the Public Department Administration."³¹⁹ The community in Eskibahçe, likewise, has Greek, Turkish, and Armenian peasants, artisans, craftspeople, and merchants as a microcosm of the rural Aegean of the Ottoman Empire.

To sum up, de Bernieres uses many techniques to communicate the cultural diversity of the Ottoman Empire in contrast to the homogeneous Turkish nation that was created with the nation building process. One way he does this is through using many narrators, who all tell a part of the story in the plot from their unique perspective. This makes the plot rich and representative of most of the components of the society. The use of diverse narrative styles and allusions, on the other hand, not only enriches the overall

³¹⁸ 22-223

³¹⁹ Kasaba, "İzmir 1922: A Port City Unravels," 209

narrative but also invites the reader to make connections to important literary work from world literature. One last technique is descriptions of the multicultural aspect of the Ottoman society in the narrative, which consolidates the topic of diversity.



CHAPTER FIVE: *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS* AND ASPECTS OF NATION STATE FORMATION

5.1 History of nation state formation in the Turkish context

Nationalists argue that a nation is the continuation of an ancient community that shares a common history, blood, language, culture, and a territory. Gellner explains the contrasting opinions of these nationalists and theorists like himself and Anderson as follows: "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness. It invents nations where they do not exist."³²⁰ This was also true for the formation of the Turkish nation-state. Mustafa Kemal and the Kemalist regime used specific tools in their nation-building endeavors from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire in what remained from the territory of the empire. To be able to do this, they had to create a national identity, which had not existed for the majority of the population up until the formation of the Turkish Republic.³²¹ The need to embrace an identity of Turkishness had arisen before that though. The winds of European-style nationalism, both within and on the periphery of the empire had made it a necessity. Interestingly, while various peoples under the Ottoman Empire had embraced an identity along national lines, Turks were not that ready or willing to do so.³²²

The Young Ottomans and the Young Turks had focused on the issue of creating a national identity for the Turks during the empire's disintegration period. The Ottoman leaders of the time devised a policy named Ottomanism in the hopes of uniting their population under a national identity and introduced the idea of equality among all Ottoman citizens.³²³ This was doomed to fail at a time of rising nationalist sentiments in the Balkans, the Arab provinces, and the Kurds and the Armenians of Anatolia. The

³²⁰ Gellner, "Nationalism," 754

³²¹ Andrew Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan* (Londra: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 80

³²² Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*, 81

³²³ Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*, 82

Ottoman State tried to choose the best way forwards among “the three trends of Islamism, Turkism, and Westernism”, and of the three, Turkism was put into practice.³²⁴ The father of Turkish nationalism, Ziya Gökalp, defines nationality as follows:

Every individual belongs to a particular nation by virtue of his feelings. This nation is the society in which the individual lives or has obtained his education, for the individual has absorbed through education all the sentiments of the society in which he lives, and he is a reflection of that society.³²⁵

Gökalp’s concept of nationality became the foundation of the Kemalist nation-building efforts. Despite the earlier attempts in the effort to build a national identity, the Kemalist regime faced challenges in motivating the people to embrace a new identity, which they saw as a tool towards the nation-building process. The difficulty came from the fact that most of the population in the capital were still loyal to the idea of the Ottoman Empire and the population outside the capital identified more with their families, clans and regions than they did with the Ottoman dynasty itself” and did not “perceive themselves to be citizens of the new Turkish state, let alone as members of an imaginary Turkish nation.” Again, Gökalp played an important role in “awaken[ing] the Turks of Anatolia to their own linguistic, cultural and historical heritage.”³²⁶

In the Turkish context, nation state building can be defined as transformation of the identity of the people of Anatolia from being Ottomans to Turks. The new Turkish identity is also built by the social reform around the concept of a Turkish Renaissance and the citizens of the young nation are expected to speak a pure Turkish, dress in Western style, be well-read in the classics and appreciate European culture. It also means a focus on nationality and religion. This is very different from the case in the Ottoman Empire in which the millet system of the state ensured the coexistence of multiple nationalities and faiths with the minorities recognized as citizens who had

³²⁴ Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*, 83

³²⁵ Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*, 83

³²⁶ Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*, 80-84

autonomy in their religious practices, education, and social life and were required to pay taxes to the state.

This transformation is one of the topics explored in Louis de Bernieres' *Birds without Wings* through the story of the transformation of a fictional place- Eskibahçe. This transformation entails the exodus of the Armenian and Greek residents of the town and the Turkish residents remaining. Apart from the central plot, there are many subplots such as the tragedy of Philothei ve İbrahim, the story of the madman of the town, The Dog and King Alexander's death. The most important subplot that runs parallel to the central plot of Eskibahçe's transformation is the formation of the Turkish state.

Louis de Bernieres' *Birds without Wings* explores the formation of the nation state around the concepts of wars, the concept of "the other", religion and the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.

5.2. How Wars Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:

In his well-respected book on the theory of nation-states, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that nations are imagined communities and despite this, the concept of the nation is powerful enough for its members to be prepared to die and kill for it.³²⁷ *Birds without Wings* tells the story of how the utopian and fairy-tale-like coexistence of different peoples in the town of Eskibahçe ends because of wars and the transition to a nation state. What is necessary for this transition to a nation state is the development of a consciousness towards Turkishness. In this sense, what differentiates a Turk from an Ottoman is wars. The novel explores a series of wars and their implications: The Turco Italian War of Tripoli, the Balkan Wars, World War I, and the War of Independence. At the end of these wars, the millet system of the Ottoman State that embraces all ethnicities and faiths collapses and the notion of a Turkish nation gains momentum.

War acting as a stimulus for the strengthening of the notion of Turkishness is especially very clear with World War 1. The following inner dialogue by Iskandar the Potter provides an example to how the notion of a nation translates to individual and collective identities:

³²⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 12

‘I am a Turk,’ he thought, ...remembering the days when the word ‘Turk’ implied something almost shameful, a barbarian out of the East. Nowadays, instead of saying, ... ‘We are Ottomans,’ people were saying, ‘Yes, we are Turks’... ‘Iskandar the Turk,’ he said to himself internally scrutinizing the strange and novel sensation of possessing a deeper identity, of being something beyond himself. Some people said that the word ‘Turk’ meant ‘strength’.³²⁸

This inner dialogue shows how the concept of being a Turk is born out of and shaped by war. Iskandar the Potter’s concept of being a Turk evolves from being something “shameful” and “a barbarian out of the East” to “strength” and something he is proud to be a part of. In other words, the meanings of words and identity change through war. The Turkish identity replaces the Ottoman identity, which is consolidated by the other Muslims not joining the jihad and siding with Britain. In this way, Turkishness is placed at a special point where both religion and nationality intersect.

Wars creating a sense of nationhood lead to political changes. The change in the context of *Birds without Wings* is the ending of the Ottoman Empire and the construction of Turkey based on a national identity. Karatavuk explains this political change as follows: “Now that the years have passed by, I will say that the war was sacred for a different reason, and this reason is that it caused Turkey to be born out of the empire, which was mother of it, and gave birth to it as it lay dying.”³²⁹ İbrahim shares Karatavuk’s opinions on Turkishness. As Karatavuk is fighting in Gallipoli, İbrahim is fighting in the East. Although he is in a different battle ground, İbrahim’s sense of identity also changes and he also feels “now he is above all things a Turk.”³³⁰

Wars do not only consolidate the notion of a nation and lead to the formation of new states, but they also lead to permanent changes in identity. One of the prominent figures of Eskibahçe, the landlord Rüstem Bey provides a great example to this fact in how he introduces himself to the Lieutenant Granitola: “He pointed to himself and said, ‘Ottoman, and then changed this to ‘Turk.’”³³¹ Clearly, he no longer identifies as

³²⁸ 410

³²⁹ 426

³³⁰ 558

³³¹ 570

Ottoman and has embraced his new identity as a Turk. The changes in people's understanding of their identity reaches its peak with the Greeks being made to leave Eskibahçe with the population exchange. What the colonel in charge of taking the Greeks to the harbor in İzmir says is interesting: "From now on, you are Greeks, not Ottomans. And we are not Ottomans anymore."³³² This quote does not only show the role of wars in the evolution and consolidation of Turkish identity but also that of the other ethnicities in the Ottoman Empire. In other words, wars help nations to embrace their unique identity and distance themselves from the others.

5.3. How the Concept of The Other Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:

The concept of "the other" is a philosophical one and it basically means defining oneself in reference to another entity and constructing one's identity and existing in opposition to this other. Cevizci defines this concept as the following: "As exemplified by the East in opposition to the West, "the other" refers to an entity that stands in the polar opposite of another entity."³³³ Adding on to Cevizci's definition, Saraçoğlu points out that each society creates its other.³³⁴ In other words, nations need to see themselves in the context of a larger group with other nations to construct their identity not only "from the features that fellow nationals share in common but also from without, that is, through distinguishing and differentiating the nation from other nations or ethnic groups. National identity becomes meaningful only through the contrast with others."³³⁵ In short, one needs the other to define and clarify one's identity and nations are no exception to this fact.

The concept of "the other" in Louis de Bernieres' *Birds without Wings* is explored in cultural, ethnic, and national domains. The culture of coexistence in Eskibahçe at the beginning of the novel starts to disintegrate as differences between nations start to become more apparent. This is because the more differences there are between oneself and "the other", the more distinguished one is from the other and the more apparent

³³² 675

³³³ Ahmet Cevizci, *Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: Ekin Yayınları, 1999), 661

³³⁴ Cevizci, *Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü*, 506

³³⁵ Cevizci, *Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü*, 510

one's qualities become. This fact is portrayed in the novel through nations that coexisted for centuries discovering what makes them unique. The consciousness of "I am not one of them!" is based on a focus on differences and naturally results in a differentiation and exploring of one's identity.

The chapter in the novel explaining the realities of the time around Mustafa Kemal's birth has a part that presents a good example to the concept of "the other": Serbia for the Serbs, Bulgaria for the Bulgarians, Greece for the Greeks, Turks, and Jews out!"³³⁶ This quote illustrates a differentiation based on territory. The fact that certain territories belong to certain nations result in the other nations becoming "the others". Once an ethnicity claims to be a nation, the others feel the need to position themselves accordingly. The group claiming to be its own nation also ends up calling those outside the nation as "the others". The extent of this otherization will shape each party's concept of self and identity, hence differences will become more apparent. This also means the nations considered "the other" based on territory also construct their identities accordingly. Consequently, every time Turks were considered "the other" contributed to their construction of their nation. To sum up, an act of otherization by one enables both parties to construct their own nation building.

The act of calling another entity "the other" does not only happen in the political sphere but also in the cultural and leads to a cultural transformation. An example to a cultural otherization can be seen in the quote below:

On the way [Mustafa Kemal] disembarks in Sicily, and the local children bombard him with lemon peel and mock his Ottoman fez. He suddenly sees for the first time that the fez epitomizes all that makes the empire ridiculous in the eyes of the foreigners, and he begins to conceive a hatred of it. One day, when he is dictator of Turkey, he will outlaw it in a fit of illiberality.³³⁷

The fez is a cultural element associated with the Ottoman identity. The fact that the Turk is conceived as ridiculous in the eyes of "the other", the Italians, results in a cultural transformation of head gear and construction of an aspect of the new Turkish

³³⁶ 21

³³⁷ 191

identity. The foreshadowing that the fez will be outlawed in the Turkish nation state makes this transformation through otherization more evident.

It should not be forgotten that calling another “the other” or being called “the other” equally creates national boundaries for both parties. Especially wars make “the other” even more unwanted and inferior. Saraçoğlu defines “the other” as the one that possesses qualities the individual or society calling it “the other” deems undesirable and qualities they do not possess³³⁸. Karatavuk openly expresses his nationalist ideas when he attributes a treacherous action to other ethnicities and cannot even think of Turkish soldiers doing it and says,

We were worn out and we wouldn't go on. What upsets me now when I remember this is the dishonor we brought upon ourselves in the eyes of the Frankish soldiers who saw it. I also know that many of our men had been deserting and crawling over to the Frankish lines to give themselves up. Nobody needs that kind of man anyway, and the dishonor makes them contemptible, and I don't think of them as Turks. I expect they were Armenians, or Arabs or Bosnians, but not Turks.³³⁹

Karatavuk looks back at his memories of the war and remembers how soldiers from the Ottoman Army submitted themselves to the enemy army. Given the negative and disgraceful connotations of a soldier submitting himself to the enemy, he regards this act as unfit for a Turk but fit for “the others” such as Armenians, Arabs, or Bosnians. The conviction that one who submits himself to the enemy cannot be a Turk defines the Turkish identity and its connotations very clearly.

5.4. How Religion Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation

State:

Religion is also an important point of reference in nations creating an identity. Differences or similarities in religion push people away from each other or bring them together. In *Birds without Wings* religion stands out as a tool in nations defining and constructing themselves.

³³⁸ 507

³³⁹ 517

In the early parts of the novel, religion is portrayed in the leitmotif of “the infidel”. The concept of the infidel is used with different meanings parallel to the changes in social and political circumstances. For example, in one of the initial chapters of the novel, two men of religion who are friends, the imam of the town Abdulhamid Hodja and the Priest Kristoforos greet each other as “the infidel.”³⁴⁰ In this context, religious differences are obviously not something that divide the people but rather as something to joke about. Similarly, two best friends Polyxeni and Ayşe do not see their different faiths as something to worry about but as a richness. For example, Polyxeni prays for Ayşe in the church when Ayşe is going through a trying situation as follows: Polyxeni adored the image for a short while, until the spirit of prayer came upon her. ‘Sweet Mother,’ she began, ‘intercede with Ayşe in her troubles, even though she’s an infidel, but she’s a good one, and she trusts in you, so that’s not bad, is it?’³⁴¹ As can be seen, religious differences are not a factor that divides people of the town yet and the leitmotif of “the infidel” is a natural and neutral expression. However, with Karatavuk joining the army, the Gallipoli War enters the plot and the enemy soldiers killed are referred to as ‘infidels’ and killing them is a guaranteed ticket to heaven, which is an example of how religion is a tool to differentiate nations.³⁴²

As the plot unfolds, with the impact of “otherization” and of war, religion also becomes a tool that divides people. The abolishing of the Ottoman millet system that made many ethnicities and religions one country through a culture of diversity and tolerance, also plays a role in religion becoming a tool of division: “Also ruined was the Ottoman Empire’s greatest achievement, the millet system which guaranteed religious liberty for all.”³⁴³ This quote shows that the new system to replace what has been ruined is not going to be one of religious diversity. When Mehmetçik says “Suddenly it matters that I am a Christian, where it mattered only a little before”,³⁴⁴ he expresses how an emphasis on religions is a part of the nation building process. The fact that Karatavuk is recruited to the army but his best friend Mehmetçik, who is equally committed to

³⁴⁰ 47

³⁴¹ 158

³⁴² 440

³⁴³ 370

³⁴⁴ 380

his country, is not a sign of a decisive division of the population into different national groups. Mehmetçik not being recruited clearly shows that only Muslims are fit to join the army and not the Christians. The concept of religion has taken on a more divisive nature because of the war. This clearly means the Turkish-Muslim people and the non-Muslims are now perceived as different entities by those in power. However, the Islam of the Turks can also be different from the understanding of Islam by different Muslim countries. This means religion can divide long existing multicultural and multi faith communities into smaller puritanist nations. Karatavuk's letter includes examples to this fact:

I raised my hands and looked up, and these words came out of my mouth: 'O mighty God of the Turks, creator of the singing bird, of the bleating sheep, of the worshiping wheat and grass and the mountains of majesty; You gave all these things to the Turks. Permit us to keep them. For such loveliness is proper to the Turks, we who praise You, we who believe in the mercy and strength and truth of our God.'³⁴⁵

This shows that religion has become an aspect of the national culture even among nations of the same faith. Religion does not only separate Muslims from non-Muslims but also Muslim nations from each other. "Allah" is not enough to bring all Muslims together but the "Allah of the Turks". This united the Turkish nation and made them one entity while differentiating them from the other nations. Another example to the Turkish nation uniting through religion comes from Iskandar the Potter:

It was true that this war was a jihad, and therefore he would be bound to die gladly for the love of God, but all the same it was puzzling to the faith when one learned that the Arabs had sided with the British, as had the Muslims from the other side of Persia. It seemed that only Turks took the jihad seriously.³⁴⁶

Again, the notion of Turkishness is based on differentiation from not only non-Muslims but also the other Muslim nations. That people from the same religion- the Indians and Arabs from the other side of Persia- sided with India plays an important

³⁴⁵ 423

³⁴⁶ 410

role. For this reason, Allah is now “the Allah of Turks” as Karatavuk’s letter claims. This makes the notion of Turkishness unique and clearly distinct from the others.

5.5. How Language Contributed to the Formation of the Turkish Nation State:

Mustafa Kemal considered language as a central factor in the nation-building process. He believed in the necessity of a truly national language for the young Turkish nation and the generations to come. He expressed his reasons behind his enthusiasm for a national language as follows: “We shall conquer Ottoman. The Turkish language will be free and independent, like the Turkish nation, and with it we shall enter the civilized world, at once and totally.”³⁴⁷ This was called the Language Reform, and the young state was fully committed to it. The reform started with the Alphabet Reform which meant abolishing the Arabic script and embracing the Latin script instead. The next step was purging the Arabic and Persian words that had been borrowed into Turkish and replacing them with invented Turkish synonyms. The ideal of a Turkish nation speaking pure Turkish was seen as central to the nation-building project. However, people were not willing to embrace a new speak and the enthusiasm of the people behind the reform faded in time.³⁴⁸

In *Birds without Wings*, Louis de Bernieres explores language as a factor that divides the Ottoman nation and leads to the construction of new nation states. This factor is mostly explored through Leonidas, who is a devout Greek nationalist. Leonidas always refers to his dreams and aspirations by attaching them to language. Leonidas is a teacher and constantly boasts about Greek history and the Greek nation. He is one of the few literate people in town. How interlinked language and nation is can be seen in the following opinions of Leonidas:

He hated having to speak Turkish, but in this town, nobody spoke anything else, albeit larded with odd offcuts of Persian, Arabic, and Greek. He dwelt in a state of perpetual longing for Smyrna, which his memory and his habit of dissatisfaction had embroidered into a fantasy of great civilization.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁷ Segars, *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan.*, 869.

³⁴⁸ Parla, “The Wounded Tongue,” 27-29

³⁴⁹ 103

Leonidas hates speaking Turkish because of his deeply rooted commitment to the Great Greek nation. He is an example to how language and the notion of the nation complement each other. In the Great Greece of his dreams, the young generations are going to speak a pure Greek, hence “it occurred to him how charming it would be if he could teach classes of girls...It would give him a chance, too, to teach these future mothers to speak clean Greek, and maybe that would put purer tongues in the mouths of the sons’.³⁵⁰ Leonidas sees language as an important tool for constructing the country of his dreams in which citizens who speak their language in its purest form have fully embraced their identity as the citizens of Greater Greece. Leonidas’ dream to teach the young generation a pure Greek is a lot like the early days of the Turkish Republic and the attempts to create a pure Turkish for the young generations to speak with pride. In the letter Leonidas writes to Karatavuk, he says, “I have to tell you that it sits very ill with me, having to write to you in Turkish using the Greek script.”³⁵¹ He expresses the idealized connection between a pure mother tongue and a pure nation. This notion also exists in “the other” of Greece: the Turks. The fact that Karatavuk, when fighting in Gallipoli, is forbidden to write any more letters after it is discovered that he has been sending letters in Greek letters shows the meaning Turkish officials attribute to Greek letters, hence the Greek language. His commanders accuse him of being a spy and traitor. Him being treated as such just because of the letters he uses presents an example to how people on the Turkish side also see language and the notion of a nation are interlinked.

It is no secret to anyone that the Greek nationalist Leonidas gives great importance to education in order to unite the Greek nation and construct the Great Greece that consists of only Greek people. Upon arrival in Eskibahçe, Leonidas sees language as a means to achieve his aspirations about the Greek nation:

[Leonidas] went to Eskibahçe to try and educate the Greeks back into being Greeks. He wanted to knock the Turkishness out of them. He wanted them to speak Greek instead of Turkish, and learn about the classical past. He wanted to fire them up about the War of Independence, and the struggles in Crete. He

³⁵⁰ 104

³⁵¹ 456

wanted to tell them about heroic women who hurled their children over precipices rather than yield them to the Turks.³⁵²

He wants to wake the Greek people up and make them reflect on important aspects of being Greek. This ambition, according to him, can only be realized by prioritizing language as that is the first point of action in the quote. This fact also shows how connected and interlinked language and national structure are.

5.6. The Role of Mustafa Kemal's Leadership on the Construction of the Turkish Nation State:

The most important factor that contributes to the construction of the sense of Turkishness in *Birds without Wings* is Mustafa Kemal. At the beginning of the novel, when he has not yet become the leader of the War of Independence, he stands out among the other Pashas of the time such as Enver Pasha and Liman Pasha and his image gets stronger with his most accurate decisions as a commander. Moreover, he is not only portrayed as a talented soldier and politician but also a sacred being.

To start with, the author uses powerful language with connotations of sacredness from the point of Mustafa Kemal's birth onwards. He is described as "one of the Destiny's men", "the Greatest Turk" and "the chosen one" at the point of his birth.³⁵³ All these concepts point to his destined heroism. The concept of the hero, after the literary critique Campbell's well-known book, is almost impossible to reflect on without the ideas of Joseph Campbell in his *The Hero's Journey*. According to Campbell, "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself" and if a person is destined to be a hero, he experiences a call to adventure, or action.³⁵⁴ What Mustafa Kemal gives his life to is the dream of a Turkish nation-state that is modern, Western, democratic, and secular. He actively works for this ideal all his life. The author has spread many details that can be read as signs to his destined heroism. For instance, Mustafa, as a little boy, goes to "Mount Olympus" with his family because his father's business is important. This mythical place known as "The Mountain of the

³⁵² 335

³⁵³ 20, 21

³⁵⁴ Mary R. Lefkowitz, "Mythology: The Myth of Joseph Campbell," *The American Scholar* 59, no. 3 (1990): 430

Gods” points to Mustafa’s greatness.³⁵⁵ In addition, the fact that Mustafa says, “I was born a soldier, and I shall die as one,”³⁵⁶ when trying to convince his mother to allow him to go to military school shows how early in his life the hero’s journey started. In this sense, it is possible to say Bernieres fashioned Mustafa Kemal with mythical powers. In his book *The Hero’s Journey*, Campbell points out that a hero is a symbol and someone that is admired by many. Despite his enemies in the country, Mustafa Kemal earns the admiration of not only most of his people but also foreign state leaders of the time. To this day, he is deeply respected globally. The meaning of his second name, which is “perfection,”³⁵⁷ also consolidates the admiration Mustafa Kemal invokes in people as a hero³⁵⁸. De Bernieres points out in an interview Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is practically “a mythical figure. He is almost superhuman like a god or something.”³⁵⁹

Mustafa Kemal is first sent to a Greek school and then an Islamic school where the medium of instruction is Arabic. He finds both schools repulsive and wants to go to a school delivering a modern education in Turkish language.³⁶⁰ This says so much about his mindset. Mustafa Kemal attributes utmost importance to national values. When the conflicts between Enver Paşa and Mustafa Kemal are narrated, it is mentioned that, unlike Mustafa Kemal, Enver Paşa aspires towards Ottomanism and later Turanism.³⁶¹ Mustafa Kemal finds his politics unrefined and one that is destined to fail: “The revolution is a half-baked affair. It has no real plan and no real ideology beyond the intention to restore the empire to its previous strength. The revolutionaries do not comprehend the power and seduction of the new nationalisms.”³⁶² Mustafa Kemal, though, does comprehend the power and seduction of the new nationalisms. He is seduced by this ideology. Mustafa Kemal sees liberation in the construction of a country based on the concept of nation and appoints an important mission to himself.

³⁵⁵ 38

³⁵⁶ 36

³⁵⁷ 35

³⁵⁸ 35

³⁵⁹ Birnbaum, "Louis De Bernières,"

³⁶⁰ 34

³⁶¹ 35

³⁶² 190

He believes that it is only Turks themselves that can achieve national independence for themselves.³⁶³ This shows his emphasis on Turkishness in the construction of a nation.

The Ottoman Empire is divided due to wars, differences in religion and language and the meanings attributed to them, and otherization. In other words, the Ottoman millet system has collapsed. The construction of a nation state by the Turkish nation owes a lot to Mustafa Kemal's vision and leadership. Ottoman Empire failing in all aspects prompts him to establish a nation state. The following quote expresses his opinions on the matter as follows: "A crucial point is approaching, as it is becoming more and more clear that the government in Istanbul is incapable of standing up to the Allies and defending Turkish interests. Sooner or later a new nationalist government has to be formed elsewhere."³⁶⁴ The process of becoming a nation is interlinked to the process of building a state. The most prominent force behind this is Mustafa Kemal. His attitude towards this gains an internationally recognized status when President Wilson recognizes Mustafa Kemal's opinions on "the right of nations to determine their destiny and the principles behind it."³⁶⁵ Consequently, one of the important conditions for the construction of a nation-state is met.

Mustafa Kemal, as has been stated, plays a most prominent role in the advancement of a notion of Turkishness and the nation-building process. His nationalist policies help with the Europeans recognizing the new Turkish nation as Turkey. This is a legal sign of the abandonment of Ottomanism:

An interesting thing happens; however, whereas the word 'Turkey' has been in common usage for centuries in countries outside the Ottoman Empire, it is now used for the first time in an official document in İstanbul. The use of the word signifies that the Turks are beginning to see themselves as the inhabitants of the Anatolian heartland. They are no longer thinking of themselves as Ottoman,

³⁶³ 483

³⁶⁴ 602

³⁶⁵ 503

and so they are losing affinity with their co-religionists in Arabia, or anywhere else in the former empire.³⁶⁶

The transition from being an Ottoman to being a Turk in people's sense of identity has everything to do with the power of the word and the fact that its use officially gives it a greater power as it is a sign of recognition. Such transitions take time and do not happen immediately as the word being used in other contexts seems not to have contributed to people's perception of identity to change. The power of a word also has a lot to do with its connotations. Here, the word Ottoman has connections with Islam and Muslim nations in Arabia, whereas the word Turk does not. A word may also inspire action for the future:

When 'Turkey' becomes a word used by Turks, it really means the end of the ulema, the pan-Islamic dream of Muslim idealists, a fantasy just as fantastic as the Greek dream of Greater Greece.³⁶⁷

The word 'Turkey' or the words 'Greater Greece' carry with them a dream, an ideal, and an imagination in Anderson's terms. The nation-state dreams of Turkey and Greater Greece are, indeed, imaginings and fantasies. Still, they excite people to action and make them prepared to die for the ideal.

Mustafa Kemal is not only portrayed as a mythical hero who made the construction of a nation-state possible. The way he is narrated is also special. *Birds without Wings* has multiple narrators with different characters narrating different chapters in first person point of view. However, none of the chapters on Mustafa Kemal is narrated by him. These chapters are narrated in omniscient third person point of view and flow like documentaries. This is most probably done to avoid anachronism in metafiction and to stay loyal to the historical reality. According to Lukacs in historical metafiction, having fictional characters helps to avoid anachronism.³⁶⁸ For this reason, the chapters on him are narrated in a history book style, which emphasizes his special and extraordinary role in the plot of the novel, which is basically the story of the nation-building process in the Turkish context through the transformation of life in Eskibahçe

³⁶⁶ 606

³⁶⁷ 606

³⁶⁸ 36

and through factual narration of the greater context with the chapters on Mustafa Kemal.

To sum up, de Bernieres explores five aspects of the process of nation-building in *Birds without Wings*: wars, religion, “the other”, language and Mustafa Kemal. The novel clearly shows that wars leading up to World War 1 but especially World War 1 lead to the disintegration of big empires and construction of smaller nation states through the wave of nationalism. Nations embracing their national identity creates a distinct division between different nations and this distinction comes to become one of the defining aspects of each. In other words, they start to see each other as “the other” and their own national identity gains its own uniqueness in the context of the differences they have compared to “the other”. One factor that makes another nation “the other” is religion. In the Turkish context, the fact that the Ottoman Empire allied with non-Muslim states and other Muslims fought against the Ottoman Empire makes the concept of religion as a defining factor more confusing. The solution to this confusion is by aligning religion with nationality and creating a national identity at the point they intersect. de Bernieres communicates this through the character’s inner dialogues as they are fighting as soldiers in what they take to be a holy war. Thus, they pray to the Allah of the Turks, again operating at that specific intersection. Finally, Mustafa Kemal’s biography and the special role he overtook in the building of the modern Turkish state is explored in the chapters titled his name. In addition to the history book format with facts on the history covered, these chapters have parts that portray Mustafa Kemal as a chosen hero who responded to the call of his special mission in life. In conclusion, *Birds without Wings* explores the process of nation building comprehensively and competently.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has decoded the insights and messages Louis de Bernieres gives in his novel *Birds without Wings* about the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish nation-state and the methods the writer uses to do so. Shortly, de Bernieres portrays nation-building as a homogenization process that is achieved through certain tools of authority such as imposing top-down decisions on people. He also argues that like many nation-building projects, a shared religion, a shared language, the differentiation of the population leading to the creation of many “others”, and the incredible leadership of Mustafa Kemal made the Turkish nation-building possible. A final argument that de Bernieres explores is the value of diversity, which the Ottoman Empire possessed, and it was lost in the winds of nationalism blowing everywhere around Anatolia. A discussion on whether de Bernieres operates with an Orientalist impulse and whether he overromanticizes the Ottoman Empire in his exploration of the topic of diversity concludes that Lois de Bernieres misrepresents some facts about the situation of minorities in the Ottoman Empire. Another discussion is on the author’s presentation of diversity as a great asset and that it is such a loss to prefer homogenization and how that contradicts with his strong support for Brexit. His political and economic reasons are presented to clarify this seeming contradiction.

Chapter 1 presents theoretical background which consists of the history of the nation-state, theories around and criticism of the nation-state, the history of Turkish modernization from the Tanzimat period to the early decade of the Turkish Republic, and the two specific events of the Armenian exodus and the Turkish-Greek Population Exchange, which play a very important role in the nature and implications of this transition. Other novels from the two sides of the population exchange are also presented with the aim of putting *Birds without Wings* in the context of this specific literature.

Chapter 2 is a close reading of the two chapters that narrate the two very important events aiming to create an ethnically homogenous nation: the departure of the Armenians and the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange. The analysis of the chapters reaches the conclusion that the aim to create homogenous nation states is a violent and painful process. The people in positions of power make these decisions not taking the misery inflicted on the people impacted. Another aspect of these two chapters that has been found to stand out is the structure they both have: beginning in history book form and transitioning to fictional narration of the events as they unfold in the setting of the novel with the aim to show what was happening in the larger context of the Ottoman Empire. This from micro to macro narration makes the plot more than what happens in the actual setting.

Chapter 3 explores the one very important theme that has been found to stand out in the novel which is the socially and culturally enriching aspect of the multicultural and multifaith social structure of the Ottoman Empire. The writer clearly values and cherishes this aspect. Research facts challenging the writer's portrait of the Ottoman Empire where all subjects were equal are presented. What follows is a discussion on whether de Bernieres has an Orientalist approach and misrepresents the Ottoman Empire. Areas where he is being truthful to the facts and areas where he is acting out of an Orientalist approach are clarified.

Lois de Bernieres makes multiculturalism tangible to the reader through three means. One is references to multiculturalism such as descriptions of the lively and cosmopolitan streets of İstanbul and İzmir, narration of the depth of intercultural friendships, celebrations and rituals attended by the Muslim, Greek, and Armenian members of the town and descriptions of hybrid religious practices that are considered acceptable by all parties. Another method that has been detected to be used by the writer is the use of multiple characters and multiple narrators. This has been discovered to give voice to all sections of the multicultural society in the novel and enriches the plot through multiple perspectives into the events unfolding. The final method that has been found to be used by the author is the use of allusions, hence the journey of Odysseus, Homer's *Iliad*, *Tolstoy's War and Peace* and multiple genres, namely the diary, poetry, the dramatic form of the soliloquy, epistolary novel, old travel narratives, mystery and horror writing, epic, magical realism, and history book, to strengthen the concept of diversity. This diversity of genres is also linked to the diverse influences de

Bernieres has been exposed to and his colorful personality. The description of the town as a dead and lifeless place at the end of the novel with no diversity and strong religious fundamentalism also makes the appreciation of multiculturalism stronger.

Chapter 4 analyzes the factors that contributed to the Turkish nation-state building presented in the novel. One of these factors is wars. These wars lead to a further and further realization of the different peoples of the Ottoman Empire of their nationality and identifying with the concept of nationalism and the desire to establish their own nation states. This, naturally, spreads to the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and the people start to no longer identify as Ottomans but as Turks. Equally important is religion as the glue that keeps the nation together. The novel presents the role played by the creation of Turkish Islam in people's embracing their new Turkishness as defined by Turkish nationalism. This new understanding of Islam not only sets Turks apart from the West and the minorities but also the former subjects of the Ottoman Empire in Arab nations, cutting the ties from the ummah. Another important factor that consolidates the new national identity is defining oneself in opposition with "the others". Nation-states can only attain their unique identity and presence if there are other nation states to compare each other with and to define themselves against. The final factor that played a crucial role in the formation of the Turkish nation-state is Mustafa Kemal. The chapters devoted to him narrate his formative years, especially the influence of nationalism, his rising consciousness about the ideal society, his genius as a soldier, a man of great thinking, and a great statesman. He is presented as an almost mythical character with extraordinary powers.

The thesis has achieved a couple of things. Firstly, it has compiled ideas from key nation-state theorists with the aim to help the future researchers of literary work on the nation-state and potentially literary work criticizing the nation-state. It has also compiled facts and analysis of the history of the Turkish nationalist movement and the tools used in the process of Turkish nation-state building together with its critiques. This can also help future researchers to gain a coherent overview of the topic. The close reading of the quotes selected from the novel attempts to answer the research question with deep analysis and also backs it with theory or other researchers' ideas. This may provide a model of analyzing historical fiction comprehensively and decoding the insights the author is trying to offer about that historical time and event.

Potential further research can aim to compare *Birds without Wings* with other novels exploring the Greek Turkish population exchange and ideally the Armenian exodus from the point of view of the Turkish nation-state building process. The novels mentioned in the thesis such as *Benden Selam Söyle Anadolu'ya* (Farewell to Anatolia) (1962) by Dido Sotiriou, *Yitik Kentin Kırk Yılı* (A Forty Year Commemoration of a Lost Town) (1994) by Kosman Politis, *Mor Kaftanlı Selanik* (Thessaloniki in Purple Kaftan) (2012) by Yılmaz Karakoyunlu, *Bir Avuç Mazi* (A Handful of Past) (2012) by Fügen Ünal Şen, *Bir Ada Hikayesi 1*, *The Story of an Island 1* (1997) by Yaşar Kemal can provide excellent opportunities for comparative literature. Other novels such *Dikmen Yıldız* (1990) by Aka Gündüz, *Panaroma* (1922) by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, and *Ateş Gecesi* by Reşat Nuri Güntekin can also be selected for this aim. These novels all cover the Turkish-Greek population exchange. Novels exploring the Armenian Question can also be selected for comparative literary research such as *Incident in Anatolia* (2018) by Virginia Gavian Rivers and *The Bastard of İstanbul* (2006) by Elif Şafak.

Analyzing how the process of Turkish nation-state building in other literary works and comparing them would help to gain a broader perspective of how the process impacted day to day lives of the people who were directly impacted and see top down policies such as nation building from a different light and form an alternative understanding of history, which is the history of the people.

To sum up, this thesis is offering future researchers of the novel in question or other historical fiction books a deeper understanding of theoretical, historical and sociological truths in the background the plot is unfolding in. *Birds without Wings* has proven to say so much about the act and experience of nation-state building and its homogenization ideal in that they contain an element of violence and impoverishment. It also manages to portray that nationalism was the reality of the late 19th and early 20th century and impacted all of Europe, including the Ottoman Empire's territory and all that happened in Anatolia was shaped by that wind, thus impacting the lives of millions of people.

Further comparative analysis of historical fiction novels would help towards a deeper understanding of the history of the people directly impacted by these big political

events and the literary tools that authors can use to communicate these facts to their readers.



REFERENCES

- Akgönül, S. *Türkiye Rumlari: Ulus-devlet çağından küreselleşme çağına bir azınlığın yok oluş süreci*. İletişim Yayınları, 2007.
- Akşit, N. *Milli Tarih (National History)*, First Grade Junior High School, 2010
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Books, 2016.
- Arargüç, Mehmet F. *Latin America through Magical Realism and Louis De Bernieres*. Ankara: Ankara University Press, 2014.
- Arslaner, Ö. Senan. "Reviewing the Theories of Nationalism: Classifying and Inquiring the Conceptualization." *Lectio Socialis*, Vol:6, No.2 (2022): 109-134
- Bademkiran, Derya. "A Comparative Study of Turkey and Turkishness as a Subject of English Language Fiction in the Novels of *The Shirt of Flame* and *Birds without Wings*, MA diss., Yaşar University, 2013.
- Baer, Marc, Ussama Makdisi, and Andrew Shryock. "Tolerance and Conversion in the Ottoman Empire: A Conversation." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 4 (2009): 927–40.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40270367>.
- Bayar, Yeşim. "The trajectory of nation-building through language policies: the case of Turkey during the early Republic (1920–38)." *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume: 17, Issue: 1 (2010): 108-128
- Benson, Larry D. "The Order of the Canterbury Tales." *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 3 (1981): 77-120.
- Berkes, Niyazi. "Ziya Gökalp: His Contribution to Turkish Nationalism." *Middle East Journal* 8, no. 4 (1954): 375–90. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4322635>
- Bhabha, Homi (ed.). *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Birnhaum, Robert. "Louis De BernièRes." *The Morning News*, 2012

- <https://themorningnews.org/article/birnbaum-v.-louis-de-berniere>.
- Blanchard, Raoul. "The Exchange of Populations between Greece and Turkey." *Geographical Review* 15, no. 3 (1925): 449–56. <https://doi.org/10.2307/208566>.
- Campbell, Joseph. *Kahramanın Sonsuz Yolculuğu*. İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınları, 2010.
- Cevizci, Ahmet. *Paradigma Felsefe Sözlüğü*. İstanbul: Ekin Yayınları, 1999.
- Clark, Bruce. *Twice a Stranger*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Comu, Aslı Emine. "The Exchange of Populations and the Transformation of Two Mediterranean Cities, Adana, and Mersin", *Athens Journal of History*, Volume 4, Issue 4 (2018): 267-278. <https://doi.org/10.30958/ajhis.4-4-1>
- Çağatay, Soner. *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Çağatay, Soner. "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s." *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 3 (2004): 86–101. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289913>.
- Çağatay, Soner. "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey: A Study of Turkish Nationalism." *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 25/26, no. 2/1 (2001): 1–24. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43385497>.
- Çolak, Yılmaz. "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004): 67–91. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289953>.
- Bernieres, Lois De *Birds Without Wings*. Croydon, Surrey: Vintage, 2004
- Birnbaum, Robert. "L. Louis de Bernières." *The Morning News*, 2005. <http://www.themorningnews.org/article/birnbaum-v.-louis-de-berniere>
- de Waal, Thomas. "The G-Word: The Armenian Massacre and the Politics of Genocide." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 1 (2015): 136–48. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24483226>. Accessed 24 Oct. 2023.
- Doğan, Nejla. "Limits of Tolerance: Legal Relations Between Early Ottoman Jews and Central Authorities (15th-18th Centuries)." *Dergi Park* 13, no. 3 (2021): 447-463. Accessed March 14, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.47932/ortetut.936829>.

Dündar, Fuat. “İttihat ve Terakki’nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913–1918).”

İletişim Yayınları, vol: 7, no: 2 (2021):439-446

Erdoğan, Barış. “Reproduction of Post-Colonial Mental Codes in Modern Turkey.”

Dergi Park, vol. 2, no. 1 (2015): 125-141

<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/89276>.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 2004.

Gast, Zu. "Louis De Bernieres." Internationales Literaturfestival Berlin (2011)

<https://literaturfestival.com/en/authors/louis-de-bernieres/>.

Gellner, Ernest. “Nationalism.” *Theory and Society* vol. 10, no. 6 (1981): 753–76.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/657332>.

Genio, Eyal. “Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913):

Awakening from the Ottoman Dream.” *War in History* 12, no. 2 (2005): 156–77.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/26061886>.

Grotenhuis, René. “Nation-Building and State-Building and the Challenge of Fragility,” in *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, Amsterdam

University Press (2016): 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1gr7d8r.8>.

Hercules Millas. “History Textbooks in Greece and Turkey,” in *History Workshop*,

no. 31: 21–33, (2011)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289049>.

"I Know I'm Not Tolstoy, but I Try." *Guardian*, March 5, 2005.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/jun/20/fiction.louisdebernieres>

İçduygu Ahmet, Toktas Şule & Soner B. Ali. “The politics of population in a nation-building process: emigration of non-Muslims from Turkey”, *Ethnic and*

Racial Studies, 31:2 (2008): 358-389

DOI: [10.1080/01419870701491937](https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701491937)

İlker Aytürk. “Turkish Linguists against the West: The Origins of Linguistic Nationalism in Atatürk’s Turkey.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004):1–25.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289950>.

İstanbul International Literature Festival. “What Is Istanbul International Literature Festival?”, 2011

<https://www.itef.com.tr/en/> Accessed March 13, 2024.

- Kasaba, Reşat. "İzmir 1922: A Port City Unravels" In *Modernity and Culture* edited by Leila Fawaz, C. A. Bayly and Robert Ilbert, 204-229. New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2002
<https://doi.org/10.7312/fawa11426-013>
- Kaya, Ayhan. "Multiculturalism and Minorities in Turkey," *Challenging Multiculturalism: European Models of Diversity*, edited by Raymond Taras, 297–316. Edinburgh University Press, 2014
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt20q22fw.20>.
- Kirisçi, Kemal. "Disaggregating Turkish Citizenship and Immigration Practices," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 36 (3) (July 2000): 1–22.
- Kolluoğlu, Biray. "Excesses of nationalism: Greco-Turkish population exchange," *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 19, no. 3 (2013): 532-550.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/nana.12028>.
- Konuk, Kader. *East West Mimesis: Auerbach in Turkey*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2016.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1gr7d8r.8>.
- Lefkowitz, Mary R. "Mythology: The Myth of Joseph Campbell," *The American Scholar* 59, no. 3 (1990): 429–34.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41211815>.
- Levine, Robert S. *Trish Loughran, the Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- "Louis de Bernières: Why I Believe in Brexit," *Financial Times*, January 20, 2020
<https://www.ft.com/content/5e2a200e-3d2a-11ea-a01a-bae547046735>.
- Lukacs, Georg. *The Historical Novel*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1997.
- Mardin, Şerif. *Türk Modernleşmesi Makaleler*. 2nd ed. İstanbul, Çağaloğlu: İletişim Yayıncılık A.Ş., 1991
- Mardin, Şerif, *Yeni Osmanlı düşüncesinin doğuşu*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015
- Metintaş, Melike, and Mustafa Y. Metintaş. "The Economic Aspects of Turkification

- Policies in the Early Republican Period: Wealth Tax.” *DergiPark* 3, (2019): 61-70.
<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/837239>.
- Milas, Herkul. (2016) “Short Bibliography (H. Millas, 2016).”
<https://www.herkulmillas.com/en/about-hm/bibliography.html>.
- Morack, Ellinor. “Turkifying Poverty, or: the Phantom Pain of Izmir’s Lost Christian Working Class, 1924–26,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 55:4 (2019): 499-518
doi: [10.1080/00263206.2018.1559157](https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2018.1559157)
- Özkan, Metin. “Türk Hümanizmasından Mertebeler Devletine: Hilmi Ziya Ülken’in Hakimiyet’i.” *Dergi Park* 23, 3 (2022): 143-166.
- Özsu, Umut. "A thoroughly bad and vicious solution: Humanitarianism, the World Court, and the Modern Origins of Population Transfer," *London Review of International Law* 9 (2013): 9-127.
- Parla, Jale. “The Wounded Tongue: Turkey’s Language Reform and the Canonicity of the Novel,” *PMLA*, vol. 123, no. 1 (2008): 27–40,
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25501825>.
- Psomiades, Harry J. *The Eastern Question: The Last Phase*. Institute for Balkan Studies, 1968.
- Rejai, Mostafa, and Cynthia H. Enloe. “Nation-States and State-Nations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1969): 140–58,
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3013942>.
- Said, Edward. *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures*. London: Vintage, 1994.
- Sajed, Alina & Seidel, Timothy. “Introduction: Escaping the Nation? National Consciousness and the Horizons of Decolonization,” *Interventions*, 21:5 (2019): 583-591,
doi: [10.1080/1369801X.2019.1581643](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2019.1581643)
- Saraçoğlu, Ayşe Derya. “Öteki ile Beraber Yaşamının Sosyolojik Zemini,” *Abant Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 23, 1 (2023): 505-517.
- Segars, Andrew. *Nation Building in Turkey and Uzbekistan*. Londra: Routledge Curzon, 2006: 40-55.
doi: [10.1080/13698010500515241](https://doi.org/10.1080/13698010500515241)

- Sethi, Anita. "Louis de Bernières | Interview," *Granta*, August 4, 2009.
<https://granta.com/interview-louis-de-bernieres/>.
- Shields, Sarah. "The Greek-Turkish Population Exchange: Internationally Administered Ethnic Cleansing," *Middle East Report*, no. 267 (2013): 2–6.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/24426444>.
- Taylor, Brian D., and Roxana Botea. "Tilly Tally: War-Making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World," *International Studies Review* 10, no. 1 (2008): 27–56.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25481929>.
- Tekşan, Mesut. "Yeni Tarihselcilik Kuramı ve Louis De Bernieres'in Kanatsız Kuşlar Romanı Üzerine Bir İnceleme The New Theory of Historicism and A Study of Louis De Bernieres' Novel of Birds Without Wings," *Turkish Studies-Language and Literature*, vol: 15, issue: 4. (2020): 2065-2091
- Triandafyllidou, Anna, "National identity and the 'other,'" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21:4 (1998): 593-612.
doi: [10.1080/014198798329784](https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798329784)
- Turner, Michael "A. Ziya Gökalp and the Fundamental Bases of Turkish Nationalism." *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (1977): 5–12.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43383870>.
- Ülker, Erol "Assimilation of the Muslim communities in the first decade of the Turkish Republic (1923–1934)," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*. (2007)
- Wimmer, A., & Feinstein, Y. "The Rise of the Nation-State across the World, 1816 to 2001," *American Sociological Review*, 75(5), (2010): 764-790,
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122410382639>,
- Yılmaz, Hale. "Learning to Read (Again): The Social Experiences of Turkey's 1928 Alphabet Reform," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 677–97.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41308747>.
- Zürcher, Erik J. *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*. N.p.: I.B.Tauris, 2014