

# Empire to Republic: The Rise of Hysterical Nationalism in Turkey

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## ABSTRACT

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By Serhun Al

The rise of nation-states along with the international political system with hundreds of 'national' territories paved the way for a new ideological movement, nationalism, all over the world. One of the most accepted classifications of nationalism is the Western vs. Eastern dichotomy. While Western nationalism is mostly associated with the liberal democracies of Western Europe where different ethnicities form a community of laws under a common constitutional citizenship, Eastern nationalism characterizes the nation mostly in ethnic and cultural surroundings. This thesis will offer a third way under 'hysterical nationalism' through analyzing the nationalist formation of the Ottoman/Turkish case. Hysterical nationalism is a combination of Eastern and Western nationalism in which the state-centric notions of Western nationalism develop alongside Eastern ideas of exclusivity and a fear of 'the other'. Within that analysis, the Kurdish question of Turkey will be the main indicator of demonstrating the 'hysterical' structure of Turkish nationalism.

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## Introduction

Especially after the French Revolution in 1789, the rise of nation-states along with the international political system with hundreds of 'national' territories paved the way for a new ideological movement all over the world. This ideological mobilization, nationalism, has been widely influential through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and today. It is possible to say that nationalist mobilizations have been powerful enough to shape the world political system of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Calls for self-determination expressed in Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points after World War I, anti-colonial struggles after World War II, and post-communist transitions after the fall of the USSR started new waves of nationalist movements and stimulated the formations of new nation-states all over the world. In some cases, nationalism has been successful in terms of creating new stable nation-states where people became peacefully unified and in other cases, the world has witnessed the most horrific examples of political violence in civil wars and ethnic conflicts. Thus, the force of nationalism has resulted in both peaceful unifications and bloody secessions or civil wars. Such an important phenomenon of the world political system could not be neglected by the academia of social sciences. Today, nationalism is one of the most debated topics in the social sciences, with a wide range of studies including politics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and economics. Its vast range of research makes it harder to define, classify, and conceptualize nationalism. Although there is not a universally agreed upon definition of nationalism, there are many systematic theories of it. Different perspectives on its origins, on its birth place, and on its evolution throughout the history are reflected by various theoreticians. However, this paper focuses on different theories of nationalism rather than focusing on the phenomenon's origins. In turn, I will apply these theories to the Ottoman/Turkish case of nationalism.

The most accepted classifications of nationalism are the West-East and civic-ethnic dichotomy. Those dualisms are used to analyze different structures of nationalism in various regions of the world. Briefly, Western and civic nationalism is associated with the liberal democracies of Western Europe and the US where modern industrial societies are present. On the other hand, Eastern and ethnic nationalism includes pre-industrial societies characterizing the nation mostly based on ethnicity and blood descent. The inclusiveness of constitutional citizenship regardless of race and ethnicity tends to lack in ethnic nationalism, where as civic nationalism identifies the nation as a community of laws under a common state citizenship. This dualistic formation of nationalism is helpful to analyze nationalist ideologies in different parts of the world. In that sense, this paper embraces such dichotomy taking the nationalist formation of the Republic of Turkey after succeeding the Ottoman Empire as its primary case.

I believe that the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I and the rise of the new Republic of Turkey can be a beneficial case study which includes various forms of nationalism, diverse identity politics, and an unfortunate ethnic conflict among the people of the same land in the process of developing Turkish nationalism. Although the autonomous structure of the Ottoman Imperial administration achieved protecting the multi-ethnic soul of its lands peacefully until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the administrative centralization with new bureaucratic elite paved the way for a new nation-state. The new nationalist projects of creating "one state, one nation, and one flag" under the new Republic in the 20<sup>th</sup> century stands as an insightful case for application of major theories of nationalism and understanding the origins of Turkish nationalism within the context of those theories and approaches. This case is interesting due to the fact that Turkey exists as a bridge, both geographically and culturally, between East and West. The Westernization ideals of the Republic and its bureaucratic elite, which, to some extent, clash with

Eastern cultural identity of the mass public, form an interesting case for the study of nationalism. That paradoxical development where a Western path goes along with the Eastern and Islamic identity of the Ottoman legacy put Turkish nationalism in an interesting position within the dichotomous generalizations of nationalist theories. In that sense, this study will provide a more nuanced understanding of nationalism that offers greater insight than the prevalent dualistic understanding.

The aim of this study is not to develop a new theory on the origins of nationalism, but it is to demonstrate that various approaches in the theories of nationalism are more applicable to the Turkish case in particular. In other words, the goal of this study, in general, is to analyze the formation of Turkish nationalism and identify its structure by using several theoretical approaches. While analyzing the characteristics of Turkish nationalism, the Kurdish question in Turkey will be a great source to show on what kind of values and principles that Turkish nationalism was built on. The rise of Kurdish nationalism parallel to the "official nationalism" of Turkey will give a chance to observe the characteristics and the ideological infrastructure of Turkish nationalism with regards to the Eastern vs. Western dichotomy. Western nationalism is associated with liberal democracies of Europe where the constitutional citizenship embraces citizens with distinct cultures and ethnicities. On the other hand, Eastern nationalism mostly identifies a nation with ethnic and cultural resources. Moreover, although the Kurdish question in Turkey is not the main point of this research, it will be the main indicator that will demonstrate the ideological foundation of Turkish nationalism.

This case analysis is important because I believe that the Turkish nationalism has a peculiar structure in which the East/West dichotomy of nationalism seems to be insufficient in

explaining it. The gap in the literature can be filled through the analysis of this paper. In fact, it is possible to state that the argument of ‘hysterical nationalism’ in this paper can be a third way within the dualistic classification of nationalism. Briefly, hysterical nationalism is a combination of Eastern and Western nationalism in which the state-centric notions of Western nationalism develop alongside Eastern ideas of exclusivity and a fear of ‘the other’. In turn, the resulting hybrid leads to a state of mind that feeds itself through exaggerated fear and threat becoming habitual in its nature. Hysterical nationalism will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4. As the Turkish nationalism will demonstrate hysterical nationalism, further comparative analysis can also contribute to the literature in order to illuminate the common characteristics of nations which embrace hysterical nationalism.

It is important to understand Turkish nationalism because it is one of the most dominant doctrines of the Turkish state which is influential in every aspect of social, political and economic life in Turkey. Besides, Turkish nationalism has a direct relationship with the ongoing ethnic conflict between the Kurdish guerrillas and the Turkish state. Understanding the nature of Turkish nationalism can be helpful in understanding the nature of that ongoing Kurdish question in Turkey. Such understanding can have broader applications in the other Kurdish regions of the Middle East, especially in the struggle of establishing a stable Iraqi nation. In terms of theoretical matter, this study offers a third way for the widely accepted dichotomy in the studies of nationalism. The Turkish case, being neither merely Western nor solely Eastern, provides an interesting research area for learning the structure of non-Western and non-Eastern forms of nationalism. Hysterical nationalism, offered as a third way in this paper, can have broader applications to other cases where the application of the West/East dichotomy cannot be comprehensively insightful.

In the Turkish case, although the new nation-building process is assumed to be civic and Western in the sense that being a Turk is based on a constitutional citizenship rather than ethnicity, there are also several Eastern traits of nationalism such as the official denial of the Kurdish identity and the forced cultural assimilation. Thus, the rise of Turkish nationalism followed an inconsistent path in terms of its ideals clashing with practical manners. In that sense, I will try to clarify the dilemma over Turkish nationalism: whether its ideals achieved establishing Western and a civic form of nationalism, or it was solely built on ethnic and cultural norms being exclusive on its 'other' citizens. By relying on solid state policies and reforms through the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, especially on the Kurds, I assume that the foundations of Turkish nationalism are far from Western and civic norms. That disconnection eventually developed into, which I would like to call, a 'hysterical nationalism' within Turkey after the transition from Empire to Republic. In that sense, 'hysterical nationalism' developed as a reaction to the rapid development of European powers to the world power stage; such hysteria was based on delusional perceptions, which included hostile invention and exaggerated fear, considering Turkey as the eternal target of external powers. This idea of hysterical nationalism is both consistent with the dualistic way of thinking and also differs from it. First, the dualistic way of thinking will be helpful to build the idea of hysterical nationalism, which develops from a more Western form to an Eastern form of nationalism and ends with a hybrid combination. Secondly, it differs in the sense that sharp characteristic distinctions of dualistic approaches do not clearly fit to this case because Turkish nationalism, itself, developed in a paradoxical manner that makes it harder to classify in either Western or Eastern tradition.

Following the introduction, in Chapter 2, I will examine the history of the transition period from the late Ottoman era to the Republic in order to illuminate the rise of Turkish

nationalism before the establishment of modern Turkey. Although Turkey is a nation-state of the 20th century, its social, cultural, and political fabric cannot be completely analyzed without considering the Ottoman traditions. In fact, the late Ottoman political and cultural transformations shaped the structure of modern Turkey even though the goal was not the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. For that reason, such a historical narrative will help the reader to understand the roots of Turkish nationalism and its foundations, which took shape between the fall of the Empire and the rise of the Republic. The hysteria of Turkish nationalism also lies in the history of transition. Moreover, another component of Chapter 2 is the Kurds, who had been one of the main communities of the Empire and later the Republic. Observing the Kurds and their history within the shift from Empire to Republic and their contemporary conditions will be the main evidence of showing how hysterical Turkish nationalism developed. Overall, in Chapter 2, I will provide the historical background of the nation-building process of Turkey and its nationalist infrastructure in order to prepare the reader for the political and cultural underlying of Turkish nationalism and its theoretical discussion.

In Chapter 3, I will provide various scholarly definitions on nation and nationalism. Finally, the literature review of the dichotomy on nationalism within the general classification of Western and Eastern traditions will be held. Such comprehensive scholarly arguments on nationalism will help the reader to understand what nationalism is and how different forms of it can have different traits.

In the last chapter, the very central and unique argument of this thesis will be justified on the basis of 'hysterical nationalism' by using the Kurdish question as one of the central components of such hysteria. This argument will be built with regards to the debates on the

West-East dichotomy of nationalism. Overall, I will argue that Turkish nationalism is hysterical and explain why it is hysterical by relying on solid justifications with regards to its historical development and its principles as a result of such development. At this point, the Kurdish question will stand as the main angle on which this thesis will depend on to show how hysterical concerns of Turkish nationalism created one of the most important failures of the Republic.



## Chapter One: Transition From Empire to Republic

The origins of Turkish nationalism cannot be understood without observing the historical process within the decline and the fall of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the history of modern Turkey cannot be solely separated from the Ottoman legacy. In that sense, understanding the political and social conjuncture of contemporary Turkish nationalism entails an attention to the historical roots within the transition period from an empire to a nation-state. In this section of the paper, beginning from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historical process of the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Republic of Turkey as the successor state will be introduced in detail in order to understand the ideological and structural development of Turkish nationalism. Such historical presentation will also be helpful to understand the principles of the new Republic and its divergence from the values of the Ottoman Empire with regards to the political and social culture. At the end, those cultural transformations will provide the ideological foundations of the state and nation building process of the Turkish intelligentsia.

### **The Decline and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire**

After ruling over vast territories of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa for more than six centuries (1299-1923) with its supreme power, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by not its external or internal rivals specifically, but by the age of modernization in general. Its decline process corresponds with the rise of European modernization within the political and economic systems of administration, especially after the French Revolution in 1789. As Bernard Lewis (2002) summarizes:

The decline in alertness, in readiness to accept new techniques, is an aspect-perhaps the most dangerous-of what became a general deterioration in professional and moral

standards in the armed forces, parallel to that of the bureaucratic and religious classes (Lewis 2002, 26).

Moreover, Stanford J. Shaw (1971) evidently shortens the process in a few sentences:

The great nation states and empires of Europe were using their political unity to develop tremendous power; developments in science and technology during and after the Renaissance and Reformation were enabling them to build armies with weapons far more efficient than any known before; and the great gold and silver discoveries in the New World and the development of imperialism and international trade and commerce on a large scale were giving them the economic strength to support their new-found political and military power. In all of this activity the Ottoman Empire took no part. At best it remained stagnant, with a vast government unable to lead, hardly able to rule (Shaw 1971, 4).

The inescapable surrender of the Ottoman Empire to such revolutionary changes in European politics and military was hidden in the power competition between indirect and direct rule in which the latter was the new approach for monopolizing the ruling power under the formation of nation-state. Although the Ottoman *millet system* had been successful managing the stretched territories of the Empire by granting autonomy to the local ethnic and religious communities until the mid-19th century, the center and the supreme power of the Sultan could not be effective to legitimize its authority after the European rise of centralization and monopolization of power. While losing its internal legitimacy within the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman society, the Empire also lost its capability of robust military and political administration in the struggles against European powers. The Ottoman state was aware of the

decline of its legitimacy both internally and externally. Such awareness led to the reform movements in administrative and military traditions that generally followed the European ways of modernization in order to restore the internal legitimacy and become competitive again in its foreign affairs, especially against the rising European powers. However, every attempt of change in the ruling traditions of the Ottoman administration resulted in a new social conflict and polarization within the society in which even Islam, being a social glue of internal peace for centuries, was beginning to be questioned. Although the reforms of the 19th century could not prevent the demise of the Empire, such reforms created a new bureaucratic elite with new national consciousness that led to the formation of modern Turkey succeeding the Ottoman legacy.

### **The Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the 19th century**

Despite the fact that its rule stretched over territories from the Middle East to the Balkans, the population of the Ottoman Empire was around 25 million, and 85 percent of inhabitants lived in the rural areas by 1800 (Zürcher 1993). War was a daily reality in Ottoman society, and it affected the population growth negatively in which famine and diseases were also symptoms of decline in agricultural production due to the tribal kind of internal conflicts. Besides, the lack of legitimate centralized control was contributing to such disturbing occasions. In the Anatolian and Middle Eastern territories, the majority of the population was Muslim dominated by Turks, Kurds, and Arabs with significant Christian and Jewish minorities. On the other hand, the Balkans had the majority of Christian communities such as Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians with noticeable Muslim minorities such as Bosnians, most Albanians, and Bulgarian Turks. Although the Empire was officially an Islamic state, the Christian communities were

granted semi-autonomous rights that led to the *millet system* (*millet: nation, community*) in the Ottoman administration. The *millet system* was the underlying structure of indirect rule in which the *millets* (Christian communities, Kurds, etc.) were free to govern their internal issues with loyalty to the Sultan providing troops and paying taxes to the center. The representatives of the *millets* were generally religious authorities of their communities (*ibid*).

The Ottoman ruling elite consisted of all servants of the Sultan who were exempted from taxes and allowed to carry arms. Although they enjoyed such privileges, they were officially slaves of the Sultan in which their positions were highly vulnerable including arbitrary executions and exiles. This slavery type bureaucratic system was one of the crucial issues of the reform movements in the 19th century in which a European-style system of autonomous salaried bureaucrats was adopted. However, the prestige of the ruling elite was based on their difference from the mass public in the sense that the people of the Palace were the representatives of the civilization *vis-à-vis* the dominantly rural population. Zürcher (1993) states that the Ottoman government system was still characterized as patrimonial being an extension of the Sultan's household by 1800. He separates the Ottoman state from modern nation-states in four points: First, the Ottoman government was very small employing, between 1000 and 1500 clerks in the central governmental apparatus in Istanbul (Sublime Porte). In his second point, it is stated that the tax collection of the center was very little due to the highly decentralized administrative system. Most of the taxes collected were spent by provincial governments. Moreover, modern duties of the modern governments such as education, health care, welfare and housing were not main concerns of the government compared to the law and order and the territorial defense. Finally, Zürcher (1993) maintains that the main communication contact of the state apparatus was the representatives of the communities rather than the ordinary individuals. This fact is

related to the subordination of the individual to the group in pre-modern societies. Most specifically, there was no concept of citizenship where all the subjects of the Sultan would be equal before the law.

War was the backbone of the Ottoman economy. After the decline in military power as the European armies gradually became technologically and strategically superior, the Empire lost its most profitable revenue source. Moreover, the European overseas expeditions after the 16th century decreased the importance of the Ottoman lands for transit trades. In terms of tax collection, the central government was incapable of extracting the revenues from its provinces. Such aspects put the Empire in a weak financial position. In other words, the weakness of the military and the financial constraints negatively affected each other. The lack of capability for tax collection was the main point of declining legitimacy of the Palace in the eyes of Ottoman society. According to Zürcher (1993), the *ayan* (notables), who were influential families with financial and regional power based in the provinces, gradually came into a position challenging to the authority of the Sultan. On the other side, the Palace became dependent on provinces for the tax revenue and troops by the mid-18th century. One of the reasons of the rise of the *ayan* was the tax-farming system. Designed in private ownership of small landholdings mainly in the Balkans and the Western Anatolia, the central government promoted public sales of small farms to the individuals with the right of collecting taxes in a given area during a certain period of time (Zürcher 1993). The government was paid in advance. The tax-farming system contributed to the rise of the strength of the *ayan* and later to the *millets*. Lewis (2002) highlights the tax-farming as one of the vital causes in the decline of agriculture:

... the squeezing out of the feudal *sipahis*, the mainstay of the early Ottoman agrarian system, and their replacement by tax-farmers and others with no long-term interest in peasant welfare or land conservation, but only an immediate and short-term interest in taxes. Harsh, exorbitant, and improvident taxation led to a decline in cultivation which was sometimes permanent (Lewis 2002, 33).

Overall, by 1800, the legitimacy of the Empire was bleeding both in external affairs after serious military defeats and internal administration with the lack of a central authority on its provinces. The demise was looming for the Empire and the only way to survive from a blatant decline was to make revolutionary changes in the traditional structure of the Ottoman military and the government system.

### **Early Reforms**

The military had always been the pride of the Ottoman state as its ultimate protector and the unbreakable backbone. The 'almighty' Ottoman military conquered many lands all over the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe in the name of its Sultan and also conquered the great ancient city of Constantinople (1453) bringing the Ottoman supreme to the heart of Eurasia. In other words, the military was the engine of Ottoman growth and the major player behind the six centuries existence of the Empire. However, its traditional structure, up until the early 19th century, entailed serious reforms in order to preserve its strength against modernizing European armies. For that reason, following Sultan Selim III's unfortunate attempts, Sultan Mahmud II started the modernization process of the army in 1826 by adopting European ways of education, training, and equipment (Jung and Piccoli 2001). However, Mahmud II's attempt of dissolving the traditional structure of the army disappointed the Janissaries, who were the elite troops of the

army with privileged positions at the state apparatus. This group of intact military officers, being loyal to the Sultan, gradually rose to a powerful position within the state after the decentralized administration was decreasing the legitimacy of the center in the late 17th and 18th centuries (*ibid*). Therefore, any attempt of deconstructing the traditional army led them to a fear of losing their privileged positions within the state and such fear led them to a mobilization against the authority of the Sultan. The previous military reform attempt by Sultan Selim III in 1807 was suppressed by the Janissaries with the support of the religious establishment of *ulema* (*clergy*) ending with Selim's deposition (*ibid*). Selim III expressed his interest in the "New Order" in France after his communication with the King of France via letters (Lewis 2002). However, Sultan Mahmud II achieved suppressing the opposition of Janissaries and abolished their elite position within the state. Such internal struggle over preserving traditions and abolishing the traditions shows the difficulty of change in which each reform attempt was capable to create a new conflict between the pro-reform state authorities and traditional forces.

Although Sultan Mahmud II repressed the traditional opposition to some extent, inner resistance was not the only obstacle in the reform movement. The Ottoman bureaucracy was also bleeding after the autonomous administrations became powerful enough, breaking the monopoly of the central power. Corruption, favoritism, and uneducated staff also prevented the efficient implementation of the reforms (Jung and Piccoli 2001). Above all, the decline in the central authority also diminished the financial resources of the state which was necessary to overcome all obstacles hindering the fulfillment of reforms. In order to create the financial resources, a centralized tax administration was crucial, which was also a challenge to the traditional indirect rule of the Ottoman *millet* system. The new understanding of bureaucracy was essential to accelerate the reform process. Such a new understanding came along with the rising

communication with the West (*ibid*). The new openings of Ottoman embassies in London, Vienna, and Paris paved the way of adopting European ideas of administration and bureaucratic practices. Moreover, foreign instructors in military schools and administrative experiences in the new embassies led to the rise of new bureaucratic elite within the Ottoman state. Although illiterate and uneducated Ottoman officers were obstacles to the new bureaucratic understanding, the formation of the Translation Office of the Sublime Porte in 1833 contributed to the first seeds of modern bureaucratic divisions within the state such as the 'Council for Public Affairs' and the 'Fiscal Council' (Jung and Piccoli 2001). In foreign relations, the imperial council in Istanbul employed Greek translators for diplomatic communication, which was dominantly in French. Nevertheless, after the nationalist Greek uprisings, the last Greek translator was dismissed in 1821 (Zürcher 1993). Thus, the Translation Office was conducive to the education of the 19th century Ottoman statesmen. Besides, military schools with European instructors and trainers (mainly German and French) indirectly injected positivist and rationalist ideas to the young students where Islam-oriented rationale was the only educational structure in *medreses* (Islamic schools).

That reform movement was the first seed of adopting Western ways of development, at least in military terms, which indirectly paved the way for a nation-building process through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century where secularization formed the base of that process. Therefore, the secular identity of the Republic of Turkey has some grounds in the beginning of Western influence starting in military education at this stage.

## **The Tanzimat Reforms (1839-1871)**

After Sultan Mahmud II's death in June 1839, his elder son Abdulmecit acceded to the throne with ambitions of deepening the 'modernization' process that his father started. According to Caroline Finkel (2005), the bureaucratic and legal reforms of the "re-ordering", which targeted the Ottoman public life, was a logical outcome and a continuation of Sultan Selim III's reforms. The reformation, to some extent, was also imposed by European powers with regards to their concerns about Christian communities within the Ottoman society. Moreover, the rise of nationalist sentiments in the Balkans and in several Arab provinces entailed an inevitable transformation from the traditional structures of government and military to a 'modernized' arrangement based on legal and rational grounds. Several reasons behind the nationalist uprisings were the trends of European political transformation into nation-states, the power rise of provincial governments under the rule of notables against the monopoly of Istanbul, and the loss of territories and inefficient military. As Jung and Piccoli present, 'defensive modernisation' began with the Tanzimat reforms as a safeguard against the elevation of Western modernization, which praised nation, homeland, and nationalism with unprecedented formation of state (Jung and Piccoli 2001, 39).

On November 3, 1839, the Noble Edict of the Rose Garden, an imperial edict written by the leading reformer and foreign minister Reşit Pasha, was publicly announced (Finkel 2005, 447). In general, this leading package of the Tanzimat reforms targeted modernization of the army, constitutional monarchy, and comprehensive legal and educational reforms (Kalaycıoğlu 2005). One of the most crucial transformations within the Tanzimat movement was in the public administration and bureaucratic system of the Ottoman state. The Ottoman bureaucrats had been

the 'official slaves' of the Sultan with fidelity and full commitment. Under the Sultan's unquestioned discretionary authority, even the most powerful bureaucrats such as the Grand Vizier would be put to the sword. In other words, the bureaucratic elite were not autonomous from the Palace. However, as Kalaycıoğlu (2005) states, the Tanzimat reforms introduced the idea of a limited government where the Sultan would be restricted by judicial arrangements.

In a general framework, the re-ordering process of the traditional Ottoman state and military addressed the topics below:

1. The professionalization and specialization of the state apparatus in Sublime Porte with legal guarantees for their life and property which would give them autonomy from the Sultan.
2. The establishment of a feasible and efficient tax collection system under the authority of the central government (including the abolishment of the tax-farming system).
3. The legal framework for conscription to the army.
4. The building of a formal education system with secular foundations.
5. The re-ordering of the provincial system of administration under the greater authority of the center.
6. Equality before the law for all the subjects of the Sultan including non-Muslim communities (Kalaycıoğlu 2005; Jung and Piccoli 2001).

The reforms before the Tanzimat were considered old wine in a new bottle, but the Tanzimat absolutely built new institutions with revolutionary perspectives with regards to the

traditional and patrimonial structure of Ottoman administration. For instance, the Council of Justice was established in the aim of practicing a supervisory and a quasi-legislative function (Lewis 2002). Moreover, the system of tax farming was abolished and in turn, a direct tax collection was adopted through centrally appointed and salaried government officials (*ibid*). In terms of military reforms, the army was given modern European equipment within the Tanzimat period (Zürcher 1993).

The *Sharia* law had been the only judicial infrastructure for the Ottoman legal system. In fact, Lewis (2002) claims the following assumption:

...the Ottoman went further than any previous Muslim regime in establishing the sole authority of the *Sharia* and its exponents, and in eliminating or reducing the operation of such other systems of law and judicature as was in existence (Lewis 2002, 109).

However, after the reform movement, Islamic law and the tradition of Islam contradicted with modernization. Commercial courts began to serve both Muslims and non-Muslims in 1847. Additionally, an updated French-oriented commercial code and the establishment of the ministry of education along with secular schools for boys aged between ten and fifteen in 1850 were conflicting with Islamic traditions (Finkel 2005). The death penalty for apostasy from Islam was also abolished in 1844 (Zürcher 1993). As such reforms were imposed from above in which mass public support was absent, the Islamic and traditional mores of the Ottoman public life were challenged by modernization and secularization; the dilemma between the 'traditional' and the 'modern' was leading to a crisis of identity within the society.

It is hard to claim that the reform process was only an internal issue. In the mid-19th century, the expansionist and imperialist ambitions of the European powers and Russia were very influential in the international affairs. In this chaotic environment of ally-seeking and intersecting national interests of the leading powers, the Ottoman Empire was highly vulnerable to external influence due to its agonizing economy and central authority. Furthermore, the struggle over the control of the Christian communities within the Ottoman territory, especially in the Balkans with the region's enticing economic affluence and its proximity to Europe, was another challenge for the sovereignty of the Ottoman state. The Russian aggression to the Empire with the claim of protecting the Ottoman Orthodox and the instability in the Balkans brought European powers and the Empire closer where the Concert of Europe accepted the Empire to the community after the recognition by the Treaty of Paris in March 1856. Certainly, such an alliance with Europe deepened the continuing influence of the West. In that sense, the reforms, to some extent, aimed to settle good relations with Europe concerning the intimacy of the reforms.

The non-Muslim population of the Empire was of intense interest to the European Powers. The Imperial Rescript of 1856 by Sultan Abdulmecit was more concrete than the Noble Edict of 1839 with regards to the conditions of the non-Muslim subjects of the Sultan. He clearly guaranteed the elimination of any discrimination based on religion, race, and language from administrative protocol that paved the way for state employment and education in military and civil schools (Finkel 2005). Moreover, the emphasis was put on a direct tax collection, legal infrastructure for better functioning of justice (such as secular *Nizamiye* courts dealing with cases involving non-Muslims were established in 1869), and economic and financial reforms through the establishment of banks (specifically the Imperial Ottoman Bank issuing treasury bonds) (*ibid*).

Although the Sultans of the "re-ordering" era in the 19th century were strong-willed behind their ambitions of becoming competitive with the West through modernization and restructuring the social, political, and economic traditions of the Ottoman system, the implementation of the reforms was not simultaneous. There were actually regional differences in the application of the Palace's orders. The central bureaucratic strove for diminishing the excess power of the provincial administrations, redefining the position of Islam within the Ottoman social and political life through the secularization attempts, strengthening the bureaucratic elite *vis-à-vis* the Sultan, and the expanded legal rights for non-Muslim subjects increased the resentment of the traditional power elites and many other segments of the society. In other words, the modernization efforts that aimed to preserve the integrity of the Empire and to increase the legitimacy of the center and the loyalty of the Ottoman society (both Muslim and non-Muslim communities) towards their Sultan was not very efficient and successful with regards to creating a sense of belonging under 'Ottomanism', a concept of common citizenship under the community of Ottoman laws.

Overall, the Tanzimat reforms in judicial, political, and educational structure of the Empire diminished the authority of the traditional ruling institutions, most specifically religion. The dilemma between losing the authority of Islam and reaching to the modernity of the West as a result of the structural adjustment polarized the society into West versus Islam, modernization versus tradition (Kalaycıoğlu 2005). However, as Kalaycıoğlu (2005) states that both sides believed in the 'preservation of the Ottoman Empire with an image of good society' where 'Ottomanism' or 'Islamism' was the goal in the absence of nationalist ambitions of 'Turkism'. In terms of the effects of the Tanzimat reforms on the nation-building process of the Republic of

Turkey, the citizenship mentality of the nation-states of Europe and the central bureaucratization, which is one of the foundations of a nation-state, found a ground.

### **The Rise of Young Ottomans**

After the Tanzimat period and its unprecedented changes in the traditional Ottoman structure, a transition to constitutional monarchy was achieved in 1876 under the reign of Abdulhamit II (1876-1909). Modeled on the 1831 Belgian Constitution, the sovereign right of the Sultan on one hand and the basic rights of the individuals on the other hand were proclaimed with the great contributions of a prominent politician, Mithat Pasha (D. Ali Arslan 2005). However, this First Constitutional period was short-lived after its suspension by Abdulhamit II in 1878. According to Sina Akşin (2004), amidst the turbulence of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, the main reason of the proclamation of the constitution was, to some extent, to repel the European intervention in the Balkan crisis of the day. He also adds that Abdulhamit II had no ambitions to settle a democracy anyway.

The key role in the establishment of constitutional monarchy was played by a few journalists and bureaucrats who spent great efforts to persuade the Sultan for transition. This group of reformist and anti-monarchist literate elite became under the umbrella of the Young Ottoman Society in 1876 in Paris. Some of its leading members were the poet and journalist Namık Kemal, Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, the poet Ziya Bey (later Pasha), and the journalists Şinasi Bey and Ali Suavi (*ibid*). The common approach of the Young Ottomans was to redefine a patriotic Ottoman identity against the emerging national consciousness in Europe, which was a threat to the integrity of the Empire. Although the Palace attempted to settle an equal citizenship under Ottomanism in order to prevent any ethnic or religious partition of the Empire, Young

Ottomans agreed that the ruling elite was ignoring Islam as the basis of the Ottoman political culture by making extensive concessions to the Ottoman Christians in order to satisfy the European Powers (Finkel 2005). Their most proposed form of government was a participatory constitutional liberalism along with Islamic components. In other words, they were opposed to the imitation of Western norms, which would undermine the Islamic roots of the society and the political culture. It is important to mention that in spite of their emphasis on Islamic values, Young Ottomans were not supporters of a traditional Sharia-based society. They actually sought a third way other than the traditionalists and the modernists (they saw them as imitators of Western norms and submissive to the European Powers).

Abdulhamit II was a controversial figure with his ambiguous despotism. After he dissolved the parliament and suspended the constitution in 1878, Abdulhamit II attempted to suppress any kind of opposition and critique against his reign. Oppression was present on press through censorship. Moreover, forced exiles were conducted for critical figures, especially for influential journalists and novelists. On the other hand, he continued educational reforms and enhanced the Empire's communication facilities. Although he attempted to suppress opposition against his power through censorship, the dissemination of newspapers, periodicals, and books also increased under his reign which makes him a controversial figure of the history (Jung and Piccoli 2001). His effort to preserve the territorial integrity of the Empire was of conservative in terms of his autocratic style as he demanded unquestioning personal loyalty from the bureaucratic elite. Such despotism meant the destruction of the Tanzimat period in which the bureaucracy was granted autonomy from the Sultan where previously the state servants were the 'official slaves of the Sultan'. The mentality behind Abdulhamit II's concentration of power was that the decentralized authority paved the way for secession movements in the Balkans.

Although intellectuals agreed with Abdulhamit's effort of preserving what remained of the Ottoman territory, they thwarted his despotism and failure to prevent the secessions. Following the intellectual movement of the Young Ottomans, opposition and resistance to the Sultan's autocratic-rule was conjugated into a new intellectual movement under the roof of the 'Committee of Union and Progress' (CUP) in 1894 with the members popularly known as 'Young Turks' (Finkel 2005). According to Sina Akşin (2004), the CUP members commonly had five characteristics (Akşin 2004, 10):

1. They were young and due to that fact, they were unable to seize the power.
2. They belonged to the civilian or military bureaucracy.
3. Their education was Western-oriented.
4. Most of them were Turkish or eventually considered themselves Turkish.
5. In the aim of establishing a modern, Western-type capitalist society, they had a bourgeois ideology.

The discourse of the CUP as the rising intelligentsia in the beginning of the 20th century involved constitutionalism, a representational system of government, modern division of power, hidden Turkish nationalism under Ottomanism, secularism, and a national language reform. Their discourse was later incorporated into the Turkish Republic (Jung and Piccoli 2001.). In the onset of the 20th century, the widespread Ottoman state expenditure on the modernization of the army and the public infrastructure increased the intensity of taxation on the society. Being economically less prosperous than the Balkans, the Anatolian people felt the burden of taxes

more heavily on them. Such grievance added to popular dissatisfaction with the government and led to violent uprisings in Anatolia between 1905 and 1907. Although the CUP had no part in those violent movements against the government, their recruitment increased within the internal turmoil, which eventually turned the organization into a revolutionary movement with constitutional ambitions (Finkel 2005). Insisting on liberalization of the government, the CUP also conducted guerrilla tactics such as assassinations of any 'dangerous' figures to their cause. The rigorous military wing of the CUP within the Ottoman military also paved the way for pressure on the Palace. As a result, the Ottoman constitution was reinstated in 1908 after the ultimatum of the CUP threatening a march on Istanbul known as the "Young Turk Revolution of 1908".

As Finkel (2005) puts, the constitution was not sufficient to depose the Sultan in which the parliament could not seize sole power to sanction Abdulhamit's removal. However, the power of the CUP was enough to encourage idiosyncratic liberalization in social and economic life of the Ottoman society, especially in the cities.

## **The Republic**

After the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, the centuries-long standing Empire lost its legitimacy. The international community called this old and tired Empire 'the sick man of Europe'. Despite the legal reforms promoting Ottomanism in terms of citizenship consciousness regardless of race and religion, this 'wounded' Empire was not successful to prevent the national uprisings in its stretched territories, especially in the Balkans and the Middle East. After a war with Italy over Yemen in 1911 and after the Balkan War of 1912 with Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria, the Empire lost its richest territories. In the midst of chaos and ally-free

situation, Enver Pasha, one of the most prominent and leading figures of the CUP and the Minister of War, chose to enter World War I on the side of central powers with Germany and Austria in order to prevent further international isolation of the Empire. However, such a decision ended with a fiasco after the defeat of central powers. The post-war Treaty of Sevres signed in 1920 was about to end the sovereignty of the Ottoman state and the chances of building a new Turkish nation. Although it was never implemented, Finkel (2005) provides some of the clauses of the Sevres:

1. Greece would gain the Thrace and Izmir would be under Greek sovereignty for five years after which the League of Nations would decide on its integration to Greece.
2. The borders of an independent Armenian state were to be determined by the US President Woodrow Wilson
3. The decision over an independent Kurdish state was left to the League of Nations in which the Kurdish areas of south-eastern Anatolia remained under Ottoman sovereignty for the present (Finkel 2005, 543).

Before the Sevres, the Allied forces had already occupied Istanbul and some other Anatolian provinces. The Palace was highly obedient to the victorious European powers and the CUP was dissolved after many arrests, exiles, and flees. A high-ranking officer, a long-time member of the CUP, and a war hero, Mustafa Kemal sought a military solution to end the occupation and humiliation as well as to stir a national liberation movement along with new national consciousness. Moreover, the Sevres gave the chance of mobilizing the new Turkish

national spirit against internal and external forces in which the conspiracies were proved with the international efforts to divide the integrity of the Ottoman lands (Jung and Piccoli 2001).

However, the determination of the national resistance under the strict command of Mustafa Kemal convinced the international nation-state system that the Turkish nation-state could be recognized, especially after the decisive battle against the Greek in the Western front. The Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 abolished the clauses of Sevres and the capitulations in which the sovereignty of the new Republic of Turkey as the successor state of the Ottoman Empire was officially recognized (*ibid*). In such an environment of conspiracies, security and integrity constituted the infrastructure of the Republic in which the post-war cultural revolution targeted a new national identity with its Turkish origins in order to prevent national uprisings, especially after the Kurdish revolts in the Eastern regions of the Republic. According to Andrew Mango (1999), although Mustafa Kemal promised for the prosperity and development of a distinct Kurdish ethnic identity, eventually any idea of the self-rule of individual ethnic communities dropped out of the political agenda of the Republic. Furthermore, Nergis Canefe (2002) highlights the conditions of the non-Muslim Ottoman *millets*:

Under the Republican regime, members of the non-Muslim Ottoman *millets* were doomed to move out, or, if they stayed, they had to go through full-fledged assimilation (Canefe 2002, 146).

Generally speaking, the cultural revolution under the Republican regime aimed to clear off the Ottoman legacy and its political and cultural traditions. In Ernest Gellner's words, the real history of a nation begins when it acquires its own state and in that sense, the history of modern Turkish nation started with the Republic in which the public symbols, the practices of everyday

life and the political culture of the Empire were replaced with the customs of Western civilization, most importantly based on secular foundations. In order to achieve such a goal, as Akman (2004) lists, the reforms of the Republic included:

In 1924, the abolition of the Caliphate along with Islamic schools and religious courts was put into effect. Moreover, the co-education of girls and boys became possible. In 1925, the traditional headgear (*fez*) which was perceived as 'uncivilized' was prohibited and replaced with the Western-style hats (new dress code). In 1926, new secular codes drafted according to Swiss, German, and Italian models were adopted. The Gregorian calendar also came into effect replacing the Ottoman lunar calendar. In 1928, the Latin alphabet and Western numerals were adopted in which the use of Arabic alphabet was prohibited. In addition, the statement of Islam as the religion of the state was removed from the constitution. In 1934, the pilgrimage to Mecca was prohibited and active and passive female suffrage was accepted. In 1935, Sunday became the official rest day instead of Muslim Friday.

Those reforms were steps for breaking the old Ottoman culture from the new Turkish nation-state identity and culture. In order to construct a new republican identity, the new Turkish state and Turkish nationalism embraced a Western-oriented path through adopting legal and cultural structures of Europe. The separation of church and state, secular education, Western numerals and alphabet and other transformations aimed the eradication of Arabic and Eastern elements of the Ottoman legacy. This step, of course, was influential in the evolution of Turkish nationalism which became more and more depended on European and anti-Ottoman adoptions, but its practices were, to some extent, contrary with the European counterparts which will be discussed later in this chapter.

After the Republican reforms, it is possible to state that the Turkish nation-state aimed to eradicate the Islamic, patrimonial, and traditional identity of the Empire in the aim of building a nation with secular and modern essentials of the West. Therefore, this new regime also created institutions for the purpose of a new nation-building. The most important institutions for that purpose were the Turkish Historical Society (1931) and the Turkish Linguistic Society (1932). The aim of the Turkish Historical Society was to write a national history for enabling people to imagine a common historical culture in which the 'Turkish Historical Thesis' assumed that the ancient Turkic civilization was the foundation of other civilizations (Jung and Piccoli 2001). On the other hand, the Turkish Linguistic Society invented the so-called 'Sun Language Theory' that assumed the pure Turkish as an ancient language which had been the building core for the development of many, if not all, other languages (*ibid*).

In conclusion, the cultural revolution was a product of modernization efforts in which the understanding of modernization was synonymous with Westernization. As Jung and Piccoli (2001) put, Ziya Gökalp, one of the most influential intellectual icon of the Republic and Turkish nationalism, also stated in his writings that the only way to escape the European imperialism is to emulate their modernization. With that regards, nationalism was one of the most important essentials in order to achieve that goal constituting one of the six principles of the new regime's single party, the Republican's People Party. Six arrows of the party included nationalism, statism, revolutionism, populism, republicanism, and secularism. However, nationalism has been one of the most enduring principles of the state which still today reflects the core ideals of the military-bureaucratic elite as well as being the dominant phenomenon of the Turkish society. Within that process, Ottoman Kurds and later the Kurds of Turkey have been the most affected group from the constructed ideology of state nationalism and its policies

which paved the way for an ethnic conflict through the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as a bleeding wound of the Republic.

The place of the Kurds in this project is important because today the Kurds are the second largest ethnic group in Turkey which put them in the target of hysterical Turkish nationalism with its exaggerated ideals of 'one state, one nation, and one flag'. The rise of the hysterical aspects of Turkish nationalism after the Republic became evident in the political and cultural relations between the Kurdish community and the Turkish state. The post-Republican denial of the Kurdish identity and the oppressive projects of the Turkish state on Kurdish culture and language throughout the 20th century, one way or another, reflect the failure of Turkish nationalism on being 'inclusive' for all the citizens of the state. Through the history of the Republic and today, the Kurdish question in Turkey is the most vivid political and cultural gridlock that is directly related to the phenomenon of Turkish nationalism and its dysfunctions with regards to its hysterical perceptions. The state-centric Turkish nationalism has been hysterical enough to deny the existence of millions of Kurds living in Turkey and assume them as 'mountain Turks', labeling the Kurdish language as an 'unknown language' in official publications and so forth. For that reason, the central argument of this thesis without analyzing the historical conjuncture of the Kurds in Turkey would be too abstract and pointless. The reciprocal influence between the Kurds and the Turkish state and nationalism constitutes the main evidence of this project. In that sense, the next section will provide a brief history of Kurds and their historical situation both during the Empire and the Republic along with contemporary conditions which will later help to analyze the structure of Turkish nationalism.

## **Who are the Kurds?**

The Kurdish people are the largest ethnic group in the world without their own state, constituting a population between 30 and 40 million people (Brenneman 2007). They are mostly populated in de facto Kurdistan region located within four major nation-states of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Moreover, Kurds generate the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East after Arabs, Persians, and Turks (Sezgin and Wall 2005). As Robert L. Brenneman (2007) observes, historically Kurdish identity has been based on religious and tribal affiliations. However, the rise of nation-states and the centralization of authority also stimulated a distinct Kurdish identity which began to exceed religious and tribal affiliations. The Kurdish language is usually considered to be within the Indo-European language group (Chaliand 1993). In terms of the cultural heritage and distinguishing themselves from Arabs, Persians, and others, the Kurds are one of many groups that have relied on an oral tradition with regards to preserving and transferring their culture to the next generations. However, Barkey and Fuller (1998) assume that Kurds delayed a nationalist movement due to the facts of mountainous regions which isolate people from each other, nomadic life, and political divisions among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

Although the Kurds themselves believe that they originated from the Medes, there is no linguistic evidence to justify it (McDowall 1992). Even though the region, Kurdistan, is not a political statement, it refers to a geography inhabited by the Kurds where the Kurdish language and culture is dominant. In other words, “since antiquity they have occupied a vast area known as Kurdistan, although this geographical term, which designates a mountainous zone reaching from south-eastern Turkey through the northernmost areas of Iraq and well into Eastern Iran only covers a part of the regions peopled by Kurds” (Chailand 1993, 4). From the existence of first

recorded text in Kurdish in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the emergence of Kurdish principalities in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the Kurdish-Ottoman alliance against the Shiite Persia in the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Kurds reigned over the territory of Kurdistan until the centralization efforts of the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid*).

In general, the basis of Kurdish society with regards to the group's self-identification is associated with tribal and religious affiliations where the loyalty is given to the sheik (local religious leader) and the agha (local tribal leader) of tribes. David McDowall (1992) clarifies the basis of Kurdish society and its declining tribalism in low-set areas:

Kurdish society is essentially tribal, and derives from the largely nomadic and semi-nomadic existence of most Kurdish tribes in previous centuries. Loyalties, first to the immediate family, thence to the tribe, are quite as strong as in the Arab world. However, unlike the Arabs, Kurdish tribal cohesion is based on mix of blood tie and territorial loyalty, and it should be remembered that a substantial number of Kurds in low-lying areas are not tribal even in a territorial sense (McDowall 1992, 17).

Overall, Kurds seem to be successful preserving their language, culture, and territory despite the region's centuries-long chaotic history of wars and invasions separating these people under different formations of modern states.

### **Kurds in Turkey**

There are approximately 15 million Kurds living in Turkey (out of 70 million people living in Turkey), constituting the second largest ethnic group after Turks (Sezgin and Wall 2005). Most of the Kurds of Turkey live in the eastern and southeastern regions. However, the

intense circulation of people due to the migration to the urban areas in the West also increased the Kurdish population in Western Turkey. Martin Von Bruinessen properly defines a Kurd in Turkey:

All native speakers of Kurmanji and Zaza, as well as those Turkish-speaking persons who claim descent from Kurmanji or Zaza speakers who still consider themselves as Kurds (Barkey and Fuller 1998, 62).

Moreover, Smits and Hogor (2003) state that there are common mixed marriages between Kurds and Turks in which it is difficult to separate a Kurd from a Turk in terms of physical appearance. The only indicator might be a person's accent when speaking Turkish. In that sense, language and Eastern accents of Turkish are the main indicators of Kurdishness. However, it is common to see that many Kurds are relatively dark-skinned compared to Turks (Brenneman 2007).

Despite the fact that all the citizens of Turkey are equal before the law, that equality excludes ethnic, linguistic, and cultural flexibility when the issue comes to Kurds, especially when they attempt to speak their language and practice their culture (Gürbey, 1996). In that sense, “the issue is political, not racial, and the Kurds are not officially second-class citizens” (Brenneman 2007, 47). Especially for the assimilated Kurds, the doors of opportunity have been wide open and those who blend into the broader Turkish population are able to hold positions in the highest offices of the government (Barkey and Fuller 1998; Sezgin and Wall 2005). In other words, for those Kurds, who do not claim and emphasize their distinct identity or criticize and question the Turkish state policies towards Kurds, it is hard to talk about a vivid inequality and discrimination in terms of an access to various social, political, and economic resources. However, there are significant differences in social and economic standards between the

southeastern region (dominantly populated by Kurds) and other parts of Turkey (Sezgin and Wall 2005). In terms of considering economic investment, the Kurdish areas are not a priority (*ibid*). “Unemployment, absence of prospects and a sense of grievance against the richer part of Turkey are major factors in nationalist feeling, quite apart from political discrimination against Kurds” (McDowall 1992, 54). On the other hand, for instance, Kurds in major Western cities vote according to their socioeconomic concerns rather than their ethnic identity (Grigoriadis 2006).

### **Kurds under the Ottoman Rule**

During the Ottoman era, there was not identity-based social structure; however, religion was the social glue in the political and economic structure of society. The only minorities were those non-Muslim communities such as Greeks and Armenians. Due to the fact that the administrative body was not centralized as in the structure of a centralized nation-state, Kurds, to some extent, enjoyed their autonomous way of life under the *millet* system. Barkey and Fuller (1998) state that the Ottoman Empire defined Kurds in religious terms rather than an ethnic classification, and the Kurdish Ottoman *millets* were autonomous in their internal affairs. They also express that in exchange for that autonomy, Kurds provided taxes and soldiers to the Sultan. This was a notion of Ottomanism. Mesut Yeğen (2007) clearly defines Ottomanism:

the belief that the unity of the Ottoman state/territory would be saved by rendering all subjects of the Ottoman state with different religious and ethnic origins of 'Ottoman citizens', tied to the Ottoman dynasty (Yeğen 2007, 122).

Through the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was already behind in terms of development and modernization compared to its Western counterparts where as the Industrial

Revolution and its ideals of non-feudal modes of production were becoming the dominant approach on the global economic structure. Craig Calhoun (1998) also mentions that industrial nations have to become homogeneous, and industrial production creates nations by promoting homogenization of national culture due to the reliance on science, technology, and mass education. In that sense, modernization through industrialization stands against 'tribalism' and 'feudalism' in which it encourages nationalist sentiments. In such a process, the Ottoman Empire had its own intelligentsia who pursued modernization ideals. As a result, through the Republic, the autonomous structure and Ottomanism began to decline and a centralized modern state was on the rise (Yeğen 2007). Thus, periphery communities lost their positions as the self-governing, autonomous regions. This trend became intense as the Young Turk intelligentsia, under the CUP, revolutionized the administrative body by centralizing the power along with secularism and constitutionalism in 1908. This new Turkish-based nationalism was opposed to the decentralized administration (*ibid*).

### **The New Republic**

Amid the devastation of World War I, the Ottoman Empire, involved in Central Powers with Germany, could not escape from its downfall. The CUP benefited from the occasion and its patronage implemented a general program planned to make the Turkish people and Turkishness as the dominant identity. Thus, the founders of the Republic were opposed and objected to the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman heritage (Yeğen 2007).

Turkey, yet to be a new-nation-state, was invaded by Allies. Such an invasion, perhaps, was a chance to promote and stimulate a movement of national liberation and a feeling of belonging to the Turkish-based nation rather than to the Ottoman identity. Solidarity among the

people was needed in order to defeat the invaders. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding father of Turkey, a soldier and an ideologist of the new Turkish nation-state, was concerned about the British support for Kurds to establish an independent Kurdistan (Mango 1999). For that reason, in the beginning of the War of Independence, Atatürk appealed the equality of Turks and Kurds, the commonality of the struggle, and the brotherhood of the two communities (Barkey and Fuller 1998). Kurdish cooperation and support to Turks was very essential to stand unified against the foreign invaders. Moreover, Mango (1999) states that Atatürk also promised for the development and prosperity of a distinct Kurdish ethnic identity. Perhaps, based on the reality of belonging to the same religion, Islam, Kurds fought alongside with Turks. Nevertheless, the new Republic of 1923 totally denied the existence of Kurds. Therefore, since the beginning of the Republic, the existence of Kurdish identity was not just denied, but such identity was attempted to be assimilated into the dominant Turkish culture (Kirişçi and Winrow 1997).

### **Nation-state, State Nationalism and Turkey**

The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 from the ashes of the Ottoman legacy with full opposition to multi-ethnicity and religiosity in the socio-political structure of this infant nation. Yeğen (2007) clearly illuminates this transformation in terms of the relationship between Kurds and Turks:

While the Kurdish question/unrest emerged as an opposition by the Ottoman modernizers, aiming to dissolve the autonomous socio-political space inhabited by Kurds, it progressed into an opposition to the transformation of an a-national political community to a national one in the first quarter of the twentieth century (Yeğen 2007, 121).

The new state ideology of Kemalism, named after the founding father Mustafa Kemal, mostly represented secularism and nationalism in which the legal and cultural reforms were implemented to promote that ideology. As Gülistan Gürbey (1996) clearly mentions, the new state ideology was based on a new concept of nation with homogeneous culture and a unified state with territorial integrity under the new Turkish nationalism. For instance, on March 3, 1924, the Caliphate was abolished; a decree banned all Kurdish schools, associations, publications, and religious training schools (Brenneman 2007). Thus, the self-aware Kurds and those who want religious rule became the target of the new Turkish state. Moreover, under the 1924 constitution, the state did not recognize any nation other than Turks within Turkey. In such an ethnic-based nationalist formation, political participation of minorities is assumed to be a threat to the sovereignty and unity of the nation-state (Grigoriadis 2006). According to Barkey and Fuller (1998), the roots of the Kurdish question were planted after the exclusion of Kurdish ethnicity within the beginning of the Republic. After the Republic, religion was abandoned and so was the union of Kurds and Turks. Although Ataturk's nationalism was anti-imperialist and Wilsonian at the first place, then it turned into an ethnic oriented structure (*ibid*).

Brenneman (2007) observes that as an example of repression, the Turkish state ideology and its nationalist ideals have always assumed that there has never been a distinct Kurdish language; rather Kurdish is a mixture of Turkish, Arabic, and Farsi. For a long time, in the official Turkish publications, Kurds were called "mountain Turks" depending on the assumption that their mountainous inhabitation isolated them from other Turkish groups and eventually diverged them linguistically and culturally from their Turkish roots (Brenneman 2007). The denial and oppression led to the rise of Kurdish ethnic consciousness.

According to David McDowall (1992), the politicization of the Kurds had several reasons which led to the rise of enduring guerilla movement of the Kurdistan Workers Party (the PKK) after the military coup of 1980. Those reasons included underdevelopment in the Kurdish regions of Turkey, the failure of the state to attract the Kurdish population to education where high drop-out rate has existed and westwards migration in the 1980s due to the state harassment or eviction. Although the PKK may draw the majority of its recruits from the harassed villages, urban-based Kurds have been central to the advancement of Kurdish political ideology (McDowall 1992, 55).

Overall, the nationalist policies of the new Turkish state and its Turkification (assimilation of 'others' into Turkishness) triggered reflexive reactions from the Kurdish periphery starting from the religious-nationalist based Sheikh Said Rebellion in the 1930s to the rise of the PKK as a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group in the beginning of the 1980s in which the ethnic conflict between the Kurdish rebels and the Turkish state has become the nature of this country. That reality will be a major indicator in this thesis which will demonstrate the values and the principles that the Turkish nationalism was built on with regards to the hysteria existing in its nature.

## Chapter Two: Nationalism and the Western vs. Eastern Debate

After presenting the historical development of the Turkish Republic and its ideological infrastructure, the origins of nationalism and its rise as a solid framework of international politics will be essential to be presented before analyzing the structure of Turkish nationalism. In that sense, this section will provide an overview of nationalism with regards to its definition and common classifications. Most importantly, the West/East dichotomy will be clarified. The literature review on nationalism will make it easier to understand the ideological structure of Turkish nationalism and its origins due to its interactions with the global trends of nationalism. Overall, various approaches to the study of nationalism which will be held in this section will be used to analyze the framework of Turkish nationalism in the next section.

### **Overview of Nationalism**

After the end of World War I, the era of dynastic empires such as the Ottoman Empire came to an end in which the establishment of League of Nations legitimized the new era of nation-states. A state was identified with the nation within its territory and a nation was identified with the sovereign state with its governing authority over that nation. This new attachment between the state and the nation in the global political structure encouraged and mobilized masses in many national liberation movements. It is reasonable to say that the 20th century became the century of national liberation movements all over the world. After the two catastrophic World Wars, self-determination trends and passions within the colonized nations gave incentive to nationalist politicization of mobilizing masses after decades of imperialist exploitation by the European colonial powers. Moreover, the rise of nationalist sentiments diminished both the communist (class-consciousness) and the imperialist threats (exploitation

and domination). Thus, sovereign territorial states and the national sentiments as the vanguard and legitimization of such sovereignty made up the contemporary political world. In the process of the state and nation-building struggles and, on the other hand, in the process of struggles in order to maintain and protect the territorial integrity and the status-quo of other states during the post-colonial and post-communist era, there had been many ethnic conflicts, civil wars, and inter-state wars where millions died for the belief that they should fight to death for their state, for their nation, and for their people. Such loyalty, of course, needs to be understood in psychological, sociological, political, and economic manners. However, the political modernization with the rise of modern nation-states in the beginning of the 20th century and its reflections on international and intra-national ideological mobilizations are highly interrelated with the concept of nationalism, either as a positive or a negative force within the territories it occupies. Overall, the 20th century became the century of the rise of the nation-states and the decline of the empires and dynasties where a nation and the state became inseparable. Such attachment and inter-dependency also reflected to the rhetoric of scholars in their use of both concepts interchangeably. Although there are specific conceptual differences between the nation and the state, some scholars still prefer to use them interchangeably.

The concept of nationalism is definitely multi-dimensional and it is very complex and vague in the discourse of academia. Social scientists pay much more attention to nationalism in recent years as the nationalist rhetoric and its ideological mobilization have become prevalent all over the world. Forces of globalization, post-communist transitions, post-colonial nation-buildings and ethnic conflicts within states have brought the phenomenon of nationalism to the center of arguments both in political and academic communities. If the modern state is assumed to be a nation-state, then the nationalist discourse and its way of thinking in the system of nation-

states is worth attention in order to analyze the political trends and phenomena of the 20th century and our contemporary era.

Although genealogical analysis of nationalism is not the scope of this study, it is essential to present different perspectives on nationalism and its power as a driving force within the nation-states. However, the central difficulty in the academia studying nationalism is that there is a lack of adequate and agreed definition of the concept and its sub-concepts such as the nation. If nationalism is a doctrine existing within nations, it might be essential to reflect various approaches on the definition of "nation". Max Weber (Hutchinson and Smith 1994) defines nation as a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own, thus the tendency of creating a state of its own turns a community into a nation. At this point, within the argument of whether nations create states or vice versa, Weber sees a nation as the catalyst of the state. Although Joseph Stalin does not mention a political roof as an essential of a nation, he emphasizes culture, language, and territory. Joseph Stalin (*ibid*) expresses nation as "a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture" (Hutchinson and Smith 1994, 20).

Although Craig Calhoun (1998) believes that there is no operational and empirically testable definition of nation, he is clear to say that it cannot be characterized with kinship and blood-descent. He also puts ethnicity between kinship and nationality. Therefore, the very distinctive rhetoric of nationalism is its representation of the country as a whole. Thus, Calhoun points a political formation which would only characterize a community as a nation depending on beyond culture and ethnicity. However, Walker Connor highlights ethnicity in his approach to

the definition of a nation. Walker Connor (Hutchinson and Smith 1994) states that a nation is a self-aware ethnic group. If members of the group are not aware of the group's uniqueness, it is very likely to say that such an ethnic group is not a nation. Moreover, Connor explains that the very essence of a nation is a psychological bond which brings people together and uniquely separates them from all other people through a subconsciously belonging. Therefore, self-awareness and psychological bond, which seem to be similar to Weber's community of sentiment and Stalin's psychological make-up, form the essentials and uniqueness of a nation according to Connor.

However, if Connor puts ethnicity at the center of a nation, then the nation-states must contain only one ethnic group which is very unlikely to be formed. For instance, is it possible to characterize Connor's definition with the US nation which contains many different ethnicities? Even that fact in the US is not a barrier to the state unity in which Connor sees multi-ethnicity as a barrier to the solidarity of the state. In that sense, reducing the circle of a nation into ethnicity seems to be a narrow-minded approach. Nevertheless, Elie Kedourie emphasizes the will of the individual in the pursuit of self-determination as the decisive factor for the membership in a nation which totally denies the mere importance of ethnicity (Hutchinson and Smith 1994).

According to Elie Kedourie, a nation is perceived as "any body of people associating together, and deciding on a scheme for their own government" (Sum 1996, 56). Thus, a nation has self-determination ambitions under the formation of a state of its own. This approach is definitely accommodating with Weber's community of sentiment seeking a roof of self-government. According to this mentality, for instance, if the Kurds did not have any self-determination ambitions, they wouldn't be perceived as a nation in spite of their common

culture, language, and territory. However, Stalin's approach would characterize the Kurds as a nation even if they did not have the will of self-determination. Such disconnection creates confusion in the sense that if a nation, at first, is a political or a cultural concept. It seems to be that one of the most common grounds of a nation in the literature is the psychological bond which brings people together. Benedict Anderson uses the concept of 'imagination' for the psychology unifying the people under a nation which is more a political formation. Benedict Anderson (2006) defines a nation "as an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 2006, 6). Anderson argues that the print capitalism led to the rise of vernacular type of literature editions which paved the way of ideological dissemination, ultimately inventing a national consciousness. Thus, national consciousness stimulates the aspiration of self-government. Anthony Giddens seems to be stricter in his approach to nation and its existence. His definition of a nation foresees that only sovereign states can sustain the existence of nations. Therefore, Anthony Giddens (Hutchinson and Smith 1994) maintains that a nation only exists when a state has a sovereign administrative reach over its territory.

Overall, there are various approaches to the concept of nation which do not help to reduce it to a commonly agreed definition. However, it is clear that 'nation' is an abstract and intangible concept. There are separate psychological, cultural, and political approaches to it. While some emphasize common culture (including language), common history, and common territory, some others mention the psychological bond that brings people together. Except Connor, it is not very common to see ethnicity at the center of a nation. One other common argument is the will of the individual to become a member of a nation which goes along with the aspiration of self-determination. At this point, the necessity of a state in order to identify a nation is not required in

which stateless societies can also seek self-government such as the Kurds. The absence of an existing state does not prevent Kurds from being a nation. Moreover, while scholars try to define a nation, it seems that they neglect different building blocks in different nations. In other words, common grounds of an Eastern nation might be absent in a Western nation. Therefore, one of the shortcomings in the literature is that there is a lack of classification. There are many different formations of nations in different parts of the world and the attempt to reduce its definition to a universally agreed concept tends to create a more abstract understanding rather than a concrete definition. For instance, the underlying aspects of the US nation and the Turkish nation are really different. Clearly, becoming a member of the US nation is easier than becoming a member of the Turkish nation in which the US nation is based on a constitutional citizenship rather than a more ethnic and cultural composition. Therefore, a further analysis of different nations under the Western/Eastern dichotomy later in this chapter can be more insightful for understanding the concept of nation.

Nationalism, itself, has an ambiguous structure within the academia in terms of defining it. In other words, there is not any agreed and common definition of it. Various theoreticians and scholars define it in different perspectives. According to Ernest Gellner (1983), nationalism is a political principle and a sentiment which occurs as a result of that principle. In terms of the political principle, the point is that the political unit (the state) and the national unit should be congruent. This means that a nation should hold its own political unit, which is in most case, the state. In terms of the sentiment, a violation of political principle triggers the feeling of anger turning into a nationalist movement. Gellner thinks that such anger occurs most in the case of majority population's incapability to rule the political unit. Moreover, Gellner defines 'the state' through Max Weber's approach of the monopoly of violence. Although he does not reduce the

definition to the monopoly of violence, Gellner, in a larger context, defines 'the state' as the specialized order-enforcing institution, especially meaning the police forces and courts. Linking the existence of a state to nationalism, it is stated that nationalism does not arise from the stateless societies in which they lack the sentiment of political legitimacy. Therefore, the state itself can be perceived as one of the crucial catalysts of nationalism. In a similar approach with Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm (1990) defines nationalism as a social construction from above (the state in most cases) in which the concept of nation is associated with political unity and independence. Considering the state as the major commonality within the nationalist movements, Breuilly's systematization of nationalism is again political rather than cultural. In terms of modernity of nationalism, Breuilly states that "nationalism is best understood as an especially appropriate form of political behavior in the context of the modern state and the modern state system"(Schnee 2001, 9). Thus, ethnicity remains in a secondary position within the nationalist sentiment. However, if the state stimulates the nationalist psychology, how can we define the nationalism of stateless nations such as the Kurds? Aforementioned approaches tend to be contradictory in answering that question. Nonetheless, Anthony Smith's emphasis on ethnicity and its historical development is more capable to explain the nationalism of stateless nations. Anthony Smith gives more credit to ethnicity in his approach to nationalism which is mostly referred as ethno-symbolism. According to Smith, nationalism cannot be studied without considering the theoretical understandings of ethnicity and its sentiments in history since the cultural resources for nationalist movements are provided by ethnicity, itself (Tokluoğlu 1995). Thus, nationalism is a political expression of ethnicity. As Walter Schnee (2001) quotes Anthony Smith, nationalism is "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity, and identity of a nation. Nationalism is an ideology of the nation, not the state" (Schnee

2001, 4). For Smith, ethnicity should be at the center in order to understand nationalism. With that regards, nations can be distinguished through the myths, memories, symbols, and values that characterize them (Balaghi 2008). Overall, a nation and a state can be the catalyst for nationalism. When a nation embraces the ideology of nationalism, its struggle highlights the self-determination with a state of its own. On the other hand, if a state is the major catalyst for the nationalist ideology, its struggle usually focuses on the legitimacy of the state and its protection of sovereignty.

In conclusion, the concepts of nation and nationalism seem to be elusive. In other words, it is hard to propose a universal definition for nationalism. Although the literature is diverse, there are some common themes that can be used to define nationalism. First of all, nationalism is primarily a political concept in which either stateless societies or nations with states monopolize the nationalist ideology for the sake of their sovereignty and unity. Secondly, nationalism has psychological foundations through either ethnicity or common culture. For instance, a Chinese-descent American and an Irish-descent American can have the same nationalist feelings for their state of the US. Although they might be ethnically different, they share a common culture and language in the US that constructs the psychological bond for their similar nationalist feelings. On the other hand, a Turk who is a German citizen residing in Germany and a Turk who is a Turkish citizen residing in Turkey may possibly have the same nationalist feelings for the Turkish state through the common ethnicity which enables the 'imagined community'. In that sense, nationalism is mostly associated as a political ideology with cultural foundations in which the state and its sovereignty or the aspiration of state-building is the common concern. Whether in the nationalism of stateless societies or in the nationalism of state-owned societies, culturally

and psychologically stimulated nationalist feelings desire either the survival of an existing sovereign state or the creation of a new sovereign state. Thus, ultimately there is an aspiration for political control. This simplistic perspective is corresponding with the Ottoman/Turkish case in which nationalism initially sought the survival of the Ottoman state and then both pursued the establishment and the government of the Turkish state. It is again present in the Kurdish struggle for self-determination under a sovereign Kurdish state. Hence, there is a strong political consciousness within nationalism which tends to feed itself from cultural and ethnic resources.

It is really acceptable to see difficulties in providing a 'scientific' and an 'operational' definition of nationalism, because the study of nationalism has a wide area of research from sociology to political science. However, the obsession of trying to define nationalism does not solve the problems in its nature. While scholars seem to be enthusiastic about stating what nationalism is, there is no argument in the literature on what nationalism is not. Moreover, an individual is not born as a nationalist, but she is born as a member of a nation. Thus, while defining nationalism, the underlying factors which make an individual a nationalist should be illuminated. On the other hand, even if the scholars attempt to provide a universally agreed definition of nationalism, they neglect the fact of a good and a bad nationalism. It is known that nationalism also tends to trigger political violence. In that sense, how a definition of nationalism can be uniform and universal where its practices have different reflections in different parts of the world. In that sense, this paper prefers focusing on the dualistic classification of nationalism, which is assumed to be more helpful in analyzing different cases all over the world. Therefore, the central question, here, is not what nationalism is but it is which nationalism is.

As this paper aims to analyze the structure of Turkish nationalism with regards to the Kurdish question in Turkey, the literature review on structural classification of nationalism is more essential than the origins of nationalism. One of the most commonly used differentiations with regards to the structure of nationalism is Western vs. Eastern analysis. Although West and East should not be understood solely in a geographical formation because they might contain conceptual characteristics, Western Europe is mostly taken as the birth place of Western nationalism. For instance, if French nationalism is assumed to be Western, German nationalism might be referred as Eastern in some cases even if Germany is also geographically located in Europe. Such classification will be helpful for analyzing Turkish nationalism as it aimed to follow a Western path with its Eastern structures. Therefore, that paradoxical structure is worth scholarly attention along with attention to the Western vs. Eastern debate. The next section will provide a comprehensive analysis on the debate of Western vs. Eastern nationalism.

## **WESTERN vs. EASTERN NATIONALISM**

### **Western vs. Eastern Debate**

In the study of nationalism, one of the central arguments is that there are different perspectives on identifying a nation. In fact, the features of each nation that form their structures are capable to change depending on the context. In other words, there are many different characteristics that may form the basis of nation-ness and nations. Schulman (2002) points that within the scholars of nationalism, the dichotomous conceptual framework has been developed that divides nations into ‘civic’ and ‘political’ side (Western) or ‘ethnic’ and ‘cultural’ side (Eastern). Although there is no universally agreed list of characteristics that characterize a civic or an ethnic nation, most of the definitions have common features that can be listed (Schulman

2002). Spencer and Wollman (2005, 199) provides an insightful list of features of Western and Eastern nationalism:

<b>WESTERN</b>	<b>EASTERN</b>
Political	Cultural
<i>Staatsnation</i>	<i>Kulturnation</i>
Civic	Ethnic
Liberal	Illiberal
Individualistic	Collectivist
Voluntarist	Organic
Rational	Mystical/emotional
Universalistic	Particularistic
Patriotism	(Chauvinist) Nationalism
Constitutional	Authoritarian
Historic nations	Non-historic nations
Nationalism of the oppressed	Nationalism of the oppressor
Women-Emancipation	Patriarchal

Although the list is too comprehensive to be covered one by one in this paper, the most generalized concepts that dominate others are Western-Civic-Political vs. Eastern-Ethnic-Cultural nationalism. Western nationalism is both political and civic. The very distinctive essential here is the will of the individual in the membership of a nation (Spencer and Wollman 2005). Ethnicity or culture does not constitute the basic requirements for becoming a citizen in Western nationalism. For instance, a Turk can become a French citizen with her distinct culture and language if she has a will to become a member of the French nation. Such will certainly requires the compliance with French laws. For that reason, a Western nation is sometimes referred as ‘a community of laws’ which will be mentioned later in this section. In Western

nationalism, the constitution is the guarantor of the common citizenship along with the multi-cultural make-up. This fact makes Western nationalism more liberal that tends to protect civil rights. On the other hand, as Eastern nationalism is more obsessive with cultural homogeneity and common ethnicity, the will of individual is not enough to become a citizen. Common citizenship is mostly associated with common ethnicity in Eastern nationalism in which language tends to be the key test of that citizenship (Calhoun 1998). Therefore, Eastern nationalism is more collectivist rather than individualistic in which the civil liberties are less tolerated. This, of course, reflects the authoritarian feature of Eastern nationalism. It is essential to illuminate the process behind those formations both in Western and Eastern nationalism.

Hans Kohn is one of the very first scholars who studied the West/East dualism. According to Kohn, the development of nationalism firstly began in the West (mainly in France, England, and the US) as a product of the Enlightenment and of the age of reason in which the individuals (especially the bourgeoisie) found the confidence of rationale for pursuing their legitimate interests (Spencer and Wollman 2005). On the other hand, Eastern nationalism rose as a reaction to the confidence and success of the West in a totally different atmosphere with the sentiment of inferiority complex (*ibid*). Kohn (2005) compares Western and Eastern nationalisms:

While Western nationalism was, in its origin, connected with the concepts of individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism current in the eighteenth century, the later nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia easily tended towards a contrary development. Dependent upon, and opposed to, influences from without, this new nationalism, not rooted in a political and social reality, lacked self-assurance; its

inferiority complex was often compensated by overemphasis and overconfidence, their own nationalism appearing to nationalists in Germany, Russia or India as something infinitely deeper than the nationalism of the West, and therefore richer in problems and potentialities (Kohn 2005, 330).

Thus, it is hard to say that Eastern nationalism is successful enough in terms of embracing a constitutionality based on the state citizenship regardless of a specific ethnicity or culture. To some extent, that ethnic orientation in Eastern nationalism hinders the civil liberties when the issue comes to the minority rights. This lack of liberal formation is capable to cause political violence in the nations of Eastern nationalism. In other words, ethnic-oriented sentiments are blatantly powerful enough obstructing the rationality of Western nationalism. While Kohn highlights inferiority complex in Eastern societies which is expressed in strong sentiments, John Plamenatz uses 'backwardness' for the underlying characteristic in Eastern nations. Spencer and Wollman (2005) quote John Plamenatz in his emphasis on the perception of 'backwardness' in Eastern societies:

the nationalism of peoples recently drawn into a civilization hitherto alien to them and whose ancestral cultures are not adopted to success and excellence by these cosmopolitan and increasingly dominant ( Western) standards. This is the 'nationalism' of peoples who feel the need to transform themselves, and in so doing to raise themselves; of peoples who come to be called 'backward', and who would not be nationalists of this kind unless they both recognized this backwardness and wanted to overcome it (Spencer and Wollman 2005, 200)

Thus, Eastern societies have difficulty adopting Western standards where their culture needs to be transformed. Such backwardness creates more problems and hinders the rationality. This, of course, triggers illiberal formations in Eastern nationalism. Ernest Gellner (1983) maintains that Eastern nationalism is problematic in the sense that it is capable of creating political violence where ethnic rivalries exist. Gellner classifies Western nationalism as more liberal in the sense of a unifying kind in which the crystallized and well-defined high-culture (industrial and homogenous culture) is present. On the other hand, Eastern nationalism (the Balkans is taken as the case) tends to lack diplomacy and is likely to be disruptive in which there are complex multiple loyalties to kinship, territory, and religion. In the Eastern form of nationalism where ethno-linguistic rivalries exist, there is no well-defined and established high culture. As Plamenatz pointed out, there is a process of cultural transformation in Eastern societies in order to establish Western-oriented standards. Gellner also mentions an assimilation process in Eastern societies. According to Gellner, such society is in a process of cultural engineering where assimilation projects are carried out by the state. Gellner clarifies a forceful cultural engineering in non-Western nationalism:

In many cases it was bound to population exchanges or expulsions, more or less forcible assimilation, and sometimes liquidation in order to attain state and culture together (Gellner 1983, 101).

Moreover, Western nationalism arose within the relatively homogenous cultures that had pre-existing states in which membership to a nation is established on citizenship, equal political status, and the free will of the individual (Shulman 2002). This emphasizes the voluntarist aspect of Western nationalism in order to become a citizen. However, Eastern societies have an organic

process of nation-building in which biological bond is taken as the decisive factor for defining a nation. Thus, nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe and in most of the Asian regions developed in multicultural and multinational societies, especially within dynasties, in which the formation of new states out of that heterogeneity were firstly based on ethnic and cultural traits (Shulman 2002). Within those cultural and ethnic resources, language is one of most important key factors in Eastern nationalism.

In conclusion, the West-East dichotomy helps to conceptualize different traits of various nations where commonly agreed definition of a nation is scholarly hard to be clarified. Although the West-East dichotomy tends to be the big titles of classification in the forms of nationalism, political-civic and cultural-ethnic differentiations are also used by the scholars and the students of nationalism. Although Western nationalism tends to include political and civic notions and Eastern nationalism tends to cover cultural and ethnic traits, it can be assumed that Western/Eastern dichotomy has geographical grounds. In other words, as Kohn argued, the statement of nationalism which first developed in the West is the geographical understanding in the Western/Eastern dichotomy. Does this mean that nationalism in non-Western regions can not be Western? Such confusion can be clarified through further analysis under political-civic and cultural-ethnic classification.

### **Political-Civic vs. Cultural-Ethnic**

The distinction between Western and Eastern models can be perceived in a geographical manner. The contrast between political and cultural forms of nationalism is helpful to prevent such geographical misperception. Although Western and political nationalism can be seen as synonymous concepts, it is reasonable to state that any Western nationalism is political rather

than vice versa. Any political nationalism may not be Western (geographical understanding) at the same time. Kohn states that political nationalism is a movement to limit the power of government and secure the civil rights in order to establish a rational civil society (Spencer and Wollman 2005). Argued earlier, the Tanzimat reforms of the Ottoman Empire also aimed a limited government where the idea of citizenship arose. In other words, Kohn was optimistic about a potential of establishing a liberal nationalism which can be understood as an oxymoron. American and English nationalisms are compatible with liberal ideals for Kohn. Although Calhoun (1998) states that the rhetoric of nationalism is too basic and too widespread to broaden it as either positive or negative--depending on the context--it might be possible to assume a 'goodness' of a nationalist movement. Thus, political nationalism does not fully empower the state, but it secures the citizenship along with constitutional rights. As in the Western nationalism, there is no requirement of common ethnicity to become a member of a political nation. Therefore, political nationalism tends to hinder the abuse of power of the state. On the other hand, cultural nationalism is compatible with the assumptions of Eastern nationalism where rationality and future are dominated by emotion, tradition, and the past. Such domination in cultural nationalism gives credit to the mystical/emotional aspect of Eastern nationalism. When emotions are stronger than rationality, the chance of liberalism of Western/political nationalism disappears from cultural nationalism. That illiberal foundation, then, becomes authoritarian on the citizens where civil liberties are not secured by the constitution as much as in the political nationalism. As a result, mystical/emotional dominance triggers chauvinism in cultural nationalism.

While it is stated that political nationalism is a movement to limit the power of the government and secure the civil rights, civic nationalism tends to modernize the society through

establishing a strong nation-state (Hutchinson and Smith 1994). Thus, although the goals are similar in terms of modernizing the society (modern society should settle a comprehensive civil rights), the ways followed are likely to be different. Thus, civil rights are secured through limiting the power of the government in political nationalism and they are secured through establishing a strong nation-state in civic nationalism.

The ambiguity on the definition of nation and nationalism has led the scholars to another widely accepted classification of nationalism under civic and ethnic terms (Lecours 2000). Civic nationalism is associated with a political nation and ethnic nationalism is generally associated with a cultural nation (*ibid*). Calhoun (1998) also separates nationalism into ethnic and civic types where an ethnic nationalism corresponds with Eastern nationalism and the latter is more Western type of nationalism. Calhoun states that language is the key test of the existence of a nation in ethnic nationalism (Germany is taken as an example). On the other hand, he uses France as an example of civic nationalism where being a legal citizen of France regardless of any ethnicity or race provides formal equality under the state. This is one of the aspects of Western nationalism in which the constitution secures civil liberties and obstructs the abuse of power by the state. When civil liberties are secured, individualistic aspect of Western nationalism is present rather than the collectivity of Eastern nations. Again, there is a voluntary behavior in becoming a member of civic nation regardless of common ethnicity as in the political and Western nationalism. However, Anthony Smith explains that membership to a nation is bound to blood and common descent in ethnic nationalism (Spencer and Wollman 2005). In that sense, legal citizenship or constitutional citizenship regardless of race and ethnicity is not present in ethnic nationalism where civic nationalism offers citizenship to anyone willing to abide with the legal terms of the nation-state.

Ethnic nationalism clearly uses objective criteria such as language and descent for excluding or including a member into an ethnic nation (Lecours 2000). For instance, a Chinese-descent individual may become an American citizen, but the same individual cannot become a Kurd just because she can speak Kurdish or practice Kurdish culture. Becoming a member of civic nations is easier than becoming a member of ethnic nations especially for cultural and ethnic minorities in which the criteria of the latter is more biological and blood-related (Shulman 2002). That's why the Eastern societies have organic nation-building processes rather than voluntarist as in the Western and civic nations. Moreover, in ethnic nationalism, multicultural and multinational states are seen the deviations of the world political system in which cultural homogeneity is associated with nationhood. On the other hand, civic nationalism does not insist on cultural resources for defining the nation, but it sees the nation as a community of laws (Lecours 2002). According to Lecours (2000), civic nationalism and political nation is generally correlated with the industrialized liberal democracies of the West. For that reason, Western nationalism also contains political and civic nationalism. Stephen Shulman (2002) gives an idea of what civic nationalism is with regards to its foundation:

In civic nationalism, all or most of the members of the nation are united or perceive themselves as united, by living on a common territory, by enjoying common state citizenship, by being subject to a common set of political institutions and laws, by their belief in a particular ideology or set of political principles, by their will or consent to be part of the nation, or some combination of these features (Shulman 2002, 3).

Again here, it is emphasized that the will of the individual to become a member of a nation is one of the essentials in civic, political, and Western nationalism. Although common descent is not

expected, there is a common set of political institutions and laws which should be complied with. After all, state citizenship or constitutional citizenship provides practical equality before the law to distinct cultures and in most cases, to distinct languages. For instance, as the US being one of the most blatant examples of a political, civic, and Western nation, it is not hard to find the US citizens who do not speak fluent English or who do not have a birth in the US territory.

Overall, the very common aspect of Western/civic/political nationalism is the existence of a constitutional citizenship where becoming a member of a nation does not depend on ethnicity, blood descent, or culture. On the other hand, in Eastern/cultural/ethnic nationalism, the will of the individual to become a member of a nation is not an enough criteria. Common culture and ethnicity, especially common language as a key element is essential in Eastern/cultural/ethnic nationalism.

In spite of the classifications in the forms of nationalism, it is also believed that aforementioned traits are the ideal types and in practice, there is a tendency to see a civic nationalism with ethnic traits, especially in the discourse of right-wing parties of Western Europe where cultural sentiments dominate rationality leading to xenophobic behaviors. Thus, although ideal types are used, most nationalist formations are a combination of both (Spencer and Wollman 2005). Calhoun (1998) is also very cautious to define and classify nationalism but he is confident that nationalism is not just a doctrine, but it is also a way of talking, thinking, and acting. Thus, there might be different forms and different historical progresses of nationalism in different regions of the world throughout contemporary history, but what is general and common about nationalism is its rhetoric and discourse. Such distinctive discourse of nationalism is that it can only be used for the country as a whole (Calhoun 1998). Paul Howe's (2005) approach to

define nationalism depends on the distinction between 'us' and 'them'. His definition of modern nationalism implies the age-old tendency of people sharing cultural and ethnic manners to protect their distinctive way of life against outside interference. Thus, the state with its nationalist discourse has the power of inclusion and exclusion.

In conclusion, although there are many different theoretical approaches to nationalism, the ambiguity over its stable and concrete definition still continues. However, such as the ambiguity in the definition of democracy and its well-known understanding in common wisdom, nationalism is also well-understood in the sense of how the nation and the state come first above everything else. Moreover, it is not the scope of this paper to try to propose a scientific definition of nationalism and try to dig into its historical origins through genealogical research. Nevertheless, it is necessary to say that the scope of this study aims to cover nationalism of Turkey within the transition from Empire to Republic where the state had been the main producer of nationalist sentiments and the ideals of one nation, one state, and one flag ignoring the existence of minority populations. That formation will be analyzed through the West-East dichotomy in order to place Turkish nationalism into a unique categorization.

### **A Third Way?**

It is not the scope of this thesis to analyze the origins of Turkish nationalism in particular, but the aim is to observe and point a unique perspective on its structure. Analyzing its structure through the Western vs. Eastern debate is insightful because Turkish nationalism is hard to be solely classified as either of the dichotomies. While some scholars focus on its civic and Western traits, some others like to demonstrate its ethnic and cultural traits. However, I believe that there is a gap in academic works which neglect the 'hysterical' characteristic of Turkish nationalism

which will be discussed in the next chapter. At this point, several approaches on the structure of Turkish nationalism will be helpful for a comparative understanding.

This section is separate from the general literature review because the approaches above do not analyze Turkish nationalism in particular. If the aim of this thesis is to analyze the structure of Turkish nationalism, previous studies on the same topic can be helpful to think about comparative perspectives. Besides, the argument of this thesis can be unique enough to be separated from the existing studies on Turkish nationalism. For that reason, this section is essential in addition to the general literature review in the aim of reflecting the peculiar argument of this thesis within the arguments on Turkish nationalism. Although the studies on the Turkish/Ottoman case are extensively broad, the academic works chosen here directly reflect the classifications used in the literature review. Besides their studies being published in the most accepted journals on nationalism and Turkey and representing the elite universities of Turkey, the scholars below have the approaches compatible with the organization above. Therefore, the Western-Eastern nationalism debates argued above have solid practical implications below through the perspectives on Turkish nationalism.

Furthermore, most of the scholars below have hybrid approaches to the Turkish nationalism from the Eastern/Western perspective. It is hard to find any statement which expresses Turkish nationalism merely as Eastern or Western *in the following body of literature*. The scholars are clear to both state civic and ethnic notions of Turkish nationalism. For that reason, although the perspectives of the West/East dichotomy is helpful to illuminate several aspects of the Republic, it does not clearly help to categorize Turkish nationalism or it does not help to express vividly what Turkish nationalism really is. In the next chapter, such a vivid

expression of what Turkish nationalism merely is will be the main argument of this thesis.

Nergis Canefe (2002) embraces an ethno-symbolic analysis in the rise of Turkish nationalism. Her basic argument is that the roots of Turkish nationalism cannot be analyzed without considering the myths, memories and symbols of the Muslim Turks. Thus, ethno-symbolism focuses on the continuities in cultural traditions rather than solely relying on the modernist path of contemporary nationalisms. Canefe highlights the tradition of Turkism which was present even before the fall of Constantinople to Mehmet the Conqueror in 1453. Such an existence defended the virtues of Turkish language and customs against Arabic and Persian influences. Besides, the meaning of Turkishness, the Turkish language and traditions were embroidered in several writings during the era of pre-Ottoman principalities. Therefore, Turkishness for Canefe is associated with ethnic terms where cultural resources are important for defining the Turkish nation. Culture and language are the main affluences of the Turkish nation in which the Republic also agitated that discourse throughout the cultural revolution. Overall, although Canefe emphasizes the rise of Turkism with its comprehensive indoctrination in the twentieth century, she still objects to pure modernist explanations:

In this sense, contrary to the modernist reading, its foundations were built upon indigenous, albeit once forgotten, resources that were then framed by an amalgam of liberal European, Romantic, pan-Slavic and Balkan notions of nationhood and national identity. It was not a creation *ex nihilo*, and neither did it lack a thick history (Canefe 2002, 141).

At this point, Canefe's approach has hybrid notions. Although she states that cultural and ethnic resources had been important in Turkey's nation-building process, especially the language, she maintains that liberal European notions of nationhood and national identity were also present in the rise of Turkishness. One of the key points that she expresses is the thick history of the Turkish identity. As in the list (Western/Eastern) provided in the previous chapter, historic nations tend to embrace Western nationalism. For that reason, she expresses the foundations of Turkism within the amalgam of liberal European and Balkan notions of nationhood. It is hard to say that Canefe classifies Turkish nationalism purely as Eastern or Western. The historical existence of the Ottoman Empire in European regions and the Turkish ethno-symbolic resources such as the traditions and the language demonstrate a combination of Western and Eastern notions in Turkish nationalism.

On the contrary, Ayhan Akman (2004) proposes a third branch within the dichotomy of ethnic vs. civic nationalism. He calls this third perspective 'modernist nationalism' which is applicable to non-Western and non-colonial nations. In his general argument, nationalism in the non-European world is paradoxical. The reason is that there is a simultaneous protection of the cultural authenticity and the promotion of modernization which creates dilemmas within the society due to the external imposition. However, the incapability of resisting European colonizers in colonial nations is not the case in 'modernist nationalism'. Such as in the Turkish case, Akman maintains that the capability of anti-colonial resistance provided a space for evasion from cultural authenticity by achieving a total cultural transformation based on modernization or Westernization (*ibid*).

Solidarity through the project of cultural transformation on the basis of a constructed cultural model of the West forms the core of modernist nationalism. Although modernist nationalism is similar to ethnic nationalism in the sense that both base their verification through identity-oriented claims which constitute the nation, modernist nationalism differs with regards to its circumvention from ethnic and racial values for its existence. Moreover, as Akman (2004) points, modernist nationalism restricts popular participation in order to secure the process of 'Westernization from any internal disturbances (*ibid*). The exclusion of democratic values separates modernist nationalism from civic nationalism. Thus, Akman's claim puts the case of Turkish nationalism neither solely on ethnic nor civic grounds. Akman argues that the formation of Turkish nationalism was a product of a modernist project:

...rather than aspiring to be an ethnocentric project of authenticity, Turkish nationalism was a modernist project of total cultural transformation. Turkish national identity was construed along modernist rather than ethno-racial lines because the ruling elites were first and foremost concerned with saving the state (Akman 2004, 45-46).

In that sense, the creation of a modern Turkish nation was considered as a prerequisite to save the state since both the Empire and the Republic was highly dependent on strong state tradition. In the process of transition from the Empire to the Republic, the rise of nationalist sentiments targeted modernization, and modernization was an instrument to save the state from further territorial disintegration. At this point, Akman's argument put Turkish nationalism away from its Eastern counterparts claiming that ethnocentric projects were absent. Although he does not state it as identical with Western nationalism, Akman is cautious classifying Turkish nationalism as solely Eastern nationalism. While he rejects any ethnocentric formation after the

Republic, he believes that the Republic pursued a modernist cultural transformation in the aim of full Westernization. Thus, Turkish nationalism does not have complete dependence on ethnicity, but it followed a Western path to save the state first. Akman's argument can be a third way. He separates colonial and non-colonial Eastern nations. While he suggests that the typical traits of Eastern nationalism can be found in colonial nations, he separates non-colonial Eastern nations such as Turkey into a different category under 'modernist nationalism'. Modernist nationalism tends to be authoritarian as in other Eastern nations, but it does not solely depend on ethnicity because a modernist cultural transformation aims Westernization with concessions from the existing cultural traditions.

Ayşe Kadioğlu (1996) seems to perceive Turkish nationalism as more a typical Eastern nationalism standing on the opposite side of Akman's 'modernist nationalism'. She states that both French and German models of nationalism intensely affected the structure of the newly established nation-states all over the world. As Akman also argues a dilemma between cultural authenticity and modernization, Kadioğlu sees this contradiction as the paradox of Eastern nationalism. That paradox includes the nationalist ideals of both French and German models which are contradictory. In her understanding, Kadioğlu refers to Partha Chatterjee on the characteristic of Eastern nationalism:

It is both imitative and hostile to the model it imitates. It is imitative in that it accepts the value of the standards set by an alien culture. But it also involves a rejection... of ancestral ways which are seen as obstacles to progress and yet also cherished as marks of identity (Kadioğlu 1996, 3).

Then, in the process of a cultural transformation, there occurs an identity-crisis within the framework of social, cultural, and political values. Kadioğlu states that such a contradictory attempt is the essence in Turkish nationalism as it emerged alongside Turkish modernization (*ibid*). However, Kadioğlu does not make a clear distinction between colonial and non-colonial Eastern nationalisms which was the main argument of Akman in his specific building of 'modernist nationalism'. Turkish nationalism experienced the paradox of Eastern nationalism in almost a century-long modernization process since the turn of the nineteenth century. Kadioğlu maintains that paradox:

...it is quite obvious that Turkish nationalism was not awakening of Turks to national consciousness. It was rather a project undertaken by intellectuals whose discourse was laden with the dilemma of a choice between imitation and identity stemming from the aforementioned paradox (Kadioğlu 1996, 7).

The modernization process since the Tanzimat reforms attempted to synthesize the positivist and materialist values of the West and Islamic values of the Ottoman culture along with pre-Islamic Turkic traditions. In that sense, ethno-symbolic analysis of Canefe seems to be consistent with Kadioğlu. However, Kadioğlu (1996) argues that a new Turkish identity was created after the Republic within the atmosphere of the complete denial of the Ottoman legacy. Although Kadioğlu maintains that ethnic and cultural resources were influential in the nation-building process of the Republic, she mentions that positivist and materialist values of the West after the Tanzimat reforms were also present in the modernization period of Turkey before and after the Republic. For that reason, she states that Western values with Eastern identity (ethnicity-oriented) created paradoxes in Turkish nationalism. Therefore, her approach has also a

hybrid understanding where she does not refuse to the influences of Western notions of nationalism along with the cultural authenticity.

Yılmaz and Şahin (2006) state that "Turkish nationalism has risen in the modernization process in an imperial/dynastic context, first as an elite and then as a mass phenomenon" (Yılmaz and Şahin 2006, 54). Their approach to modernity is not single-minded but rather multi-dimensional in which different cultures are apt to follow different paths to modernity. In determination of such a path, Yılmaz and Şahin emphasize the context of state-nation dialectic: whether the state or the nation comes first. According to them, the transition from the Empire to a modern state was a collision with modernity in which "the state already existed, with its bureaucracy and social organization" (Yılmaz and Şahin 2006, 54). This argument evokes the strong state tradition both within the Ottoman and Turkish elites leading their concern primarily to save and protect the state. Furthermore, there is a distinction between stateless and state elites that both existed in the multi-ethnic Ottoman society. Yılmaz and Şahin argue that state elites favor the civic notion of nationalism with strong statism where the stateless elites focus on the ethnic and racial criterion in their nationalist perception (*ibid*). The rise of Turkish nationalism depended on both the ideals of stateless elites such as Yusuf Akçura (an immigrant intellectual) and the state elites such as Ziya Gökalp (an indigenous Ottoman intellectual). Thus, it is hard to make a clear statement whether the Turkish nationalism was based on solely ethnic or civic notions. For that reason, their argument has also hybrid notions. While Ziya Gökalp, the most important ideologue of the Republic, defended that the only way to escape from European domination was the adoption of European values (a state of law, secular state etc.), Yusuf Akçura defended a political union of Turkish nation based on race (Kalaycıoğlu 2005). Those intellectuals were both influential in the formation of Turkish nationalism. Yılmaz and Şahin also

clearly state that ethnic and civic notions were present among the intellectuals which influenced the hybrid formation of Turkish nationalism after the Republic.

In Hans Kohn's aforementioned argument, Eastern nationalism tends to rise from culturally heterogeneous societies in which the formation of the new states mostly depends on ethnic and cultural traits. This is accommodating with the Ottoman/Turkish case. The Ottoman society was definitely multinational and multilingual where the rise of nationalist movements eventually led to the rise of new nation-states with emphasis on their ethnicity and culture, especially in the Balkans and in the Arab provinces. The successor state, the Republic of Turkey, also struggled to associate her nation with a new cultural transformation through the national projects such as the language revolution, new dress codes, institutionalized history and language institutions and so forth. Moreover, the scholars seem to be cautious to define Turkish nationalism as either civic or ethnic. This also complicates the identification of the Turkish case with regards to the Western and Eastern dichotomy. However, it is also clear that the rise of Turkish nationalism is not totally consistent with its Western counterparts. In spite of several Eastern notions in Turkish nationalism, I believe that they are not sufficient either for comprehensively identifying the formation of nationalism after the Republic. They are insufficient because the Turkish case is not a typical Eastern nationalism as there is a great effort for modernization and Westernization along with legal and educational reforms. In other words, there are several important Western notions of nationalism which can not be neglected at all. Besides, it is not satisfactory just stating that the Turkish nationalism is a combination of both because the paradox as a result of that combination should be examined and understood. Although the West-East dichotomy helps to identify many aspects of Turkish nationalism separately, it falls short in examining the result of a paradoxical combination. The reflection of

that paradox can be observed in the Kurdish question of Turkey which I believe it is the most important failure of the Republic. Thus, observing the nationalist reactions to the Kurdish question is capable to reveal the foundation of Turkish nationalism. The key factor in this assumption is the paranoia of Turkish nationalism in unnecessary situations which do not exist in any literature of the Eastern/Western debate. As I will argue such paranoia and their causes under 'hysterical' form of Turkish nationalism, the distinction of hysterical nationalism from Eastern and Western nationalism will be clearly presented.

Although Turkish nationalism has both civic and ethnic traits in its structure, none of the arguments above are convincing enough if the issue comes to the interaction between Turkish nationalism and the Kurdish question in Turkey. It is not enough to state Turkish nationalism as Eastern because although most of the Eastern traits exist in it, those do not characterize the unique structure of Turkish nationalism. In that sense, there needs to be a third way to characterize Turkish nationalism which should separate it from Western and Eastern nationalism. Moreover, it is too naïve to associate Turkish nationalism with political and civic nationalism. 'Backwardness', 'inferiority complex', and 'imitation of the west' might also be some of the traits of Turkish nationalism. However, I want to claim that the Kurdish question in Turkey is capable to demonstrate Turkish nationalism as hysterical in the systematic projects of denying Kurdish identity and language throughout the Republic and also in state treatment to the Kurds in the struggle against the violent Kurdish guerilla movement in the late 80s and 90s. Hysterical nationalism is both absent in the theoretical debate of the West-East dichotomy and in the approaches to the structure of Turkish nationalism. I believe that Turkish nationalism has hysterical notions in which Eastern nationalism and its aspects are not sufficient to clearly identify it. 'Hysterical nationalism' would be a third way in the Western vs. Eastern debate

where neither of them is comprehensive enough to present the psychological discourse of Turkish political and social culture.



## Chapter Three: Hysterical Turkish Nationalism

In the previous sections, historical background of modern Turkey and the literature review on nationalism, in general, are provided in order to bring the broader framework to the specific case of Turkey with regards to nationalism. That background will be helpful in understanding the arguments and the assumptions of this thesis which will be presented in this particular section. The analysis of Turkish nationalism based on the Western vs. Eastern tradition within the nationalism studies, and the focal argument of this paper over Turkish nationalism regarding it as ‘hysterical nationalism’ by using the Kurdish question of Turkey as the major indicator within that hysteria will be the general framework of this section. Briefly, hysterical nationalism is a hybrid combination of Western and Eastern nationalism in which the state-sponsored Western reforms develop alongside with ethnic-oriented ‘exclusive’ nature of Eastern nationalism. As a result, a hybrid form of nationalism develops depending on a hysterical structure, which agitates politics of fear and threat and pursues extremist actions under the state-centric policies.

### **Turkish Nationalism: Eastern or Western? Or Neither?**

Although many traits of Eastern nationalism are present in the structure of Turkish nationalism, there are several exceptions. Before getting into those exceptions, it is essential to state some Eastern characteristics of Turkish nationalism. First of all, after the establishment of the Republic, the cultural transformation with the ideals of Westernization was immediately put into effect. Those cultural projects, as mentioned in Chapter 1, included the separation of the church and state, the abolishment of the Islamic education, the adoption of the Latin alphabet and Western numerals, and female suffrage. The two basic foundations of that cultural

transformation were the secular state and the creation of a single nation with its Turkish origins. In that sense, it was also a process of assimilation, mostly a forceful one, which will be argued in detail later in this chapter. At this point, it is possible to say that Turkish nationalism after the Republic focused on cultural homogenization with Turkish origins. These ethnic and cultural constructions are vividly characteristics of Eastern nationalism. The denial of Kurdish identity and language was also part of that nationalist building. Moreover, the Republican political culture continued under the authority of a single party until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. A quasi-democratic multi-party period could only be achieved through the late 1940s. Although the regime was not totalitarian, it was absolutely authoritarian in order to achieve instant revolutionary changes from above. Authoritarian governments mostly exist in Eastern nationalism. Even the multi-party period after the 50s did not diminish the authority of military which is seen the ultimate protector of the Turkish state and the Turkish nation. Therefore, the existence of a purely civil government in Turkey since the Republic can be questioned.

In Hans Kohn's argument, it is stated that Eastern nationalism developed as a reaction to the success of the West which eventually led to the inferiority complex. As discussed in the history of transition in Chapter 1, the Ottoman modernization period started after the rise of European powers challenging the supreme of the Empire. Beginning with the Tanzimat period, the Ottoman administration and later the Republican elite followed the Western path of development and modernization in order to be competitive against the rise of Western powers. Thus, Kohn's argument is accommodating with the rise of Turkish nationalism which developed as a reaction to the nationalist uprisings in the Western front and as a defensive step against the success of Europe in economic, political, and military culture. Furthermore, as Calhoun stated earlier, the key test element is language in ethnic nationalism. This is also related with the

Turkish nationalism in which the Turkish Linguistic Society, established after the Republic, dedicated itself to promote the acceptance of Turkish language and its widely practices.

On the other hand, Turkish nationalism has also Western qualities. First of all, secular codes of the constitution were built according to Swiss and Italian models as a result of the Westernization goals. For instance, within that legal framework, technically Kurds have never been secondary citizens of Turkey. Before the law, the citizens of Turkey have equal rights. At this point, there is sense of a constitutional equality although the constitution does not recognize the Kurdish ethnicity. Therefore, this makes the Kurdish question of Turkey mostly a political problem rather than a racial problem. Those Kurds who do not emphasize their Kurdishness do not face any political discrimination and they have access to high political and economic positions. Therefore, although there is no flexibility to the Kurdish culture and language, theoretically all the citizens of Turkey are equal before the law. This, to some extent, shows some characteristics of Western nationalism in Turkey. Besides, one of the most important Western successes of Turkey has been the role of women in society. The Republican elite gave importance to women emancipation proving it through establishing female suffrage. In the discourse of the elite, the Turkish women were referred as modern and Western with self-independence. The special importance of the Republic on the social and political position of women in the society can be tied to a trait of women emancipation in Western nationalism. However, it is hard to express Turkish nationalism as Western just because it has several Western notions. As argued in the literature review, many forms of nationalism tend to be a combination of Western and Eastern notions. At the same time, this does not prevent to classify French nationalism as Western or Balkan nationalisms as Eastern. On the other hand, although Eastern notions seem to dominate Turkish nationalism, they are not enough to completely

understand what Turkish nationalism really is when the issue comes to the Kurdish question. Thus, Eastern nationalism remains insufficient to identify Turkish nationalism. At this point, that gap in the dichotomous approach can be filled with ‘hysterical nationalism’ which seems to be a hybrid of Western and Eastern nationalism. The lopsided development of Turkish nationalism including both Western and Eastern aspects led to a paradoxical structure of nationalism which I would like to call ‘hysterical nationalism’.

Hence, although the West-East dichotomy is, to some extent, helpful to uncover the structure of Turkish nationalism, it does not help to demonstrate explicitly in what form Turkish nationalism is. It is possible to say that it is not a typical Western type. Although the nationalism of Turkey has many Eastern characteristics, I believe that there is a serious gap in the literature which ignores the deeper side of ‘inferiority complex’ and ‘backwardness’ traits of Eastern nationalism. Although the scope of this paper does not include a comparative analysis of Eastern nationalism, the Ottoman/Turkish case can be a good start to make generalizations for other similar type nationalisms. Above all, I argue that Turkish nationalism is hysterical which evolved from a combination of Western and Eastern aspects of nationalism. Stating that one nationalism is hysterical, I believe that such hysteria can be an underlying catalyst which is capable to trigger all other traits of Eastern nationalism such as chauvinism, authoritarianism, patriarchy, inferiority complex, being emotional and so forth. Thus, hysteria prevents the development of a settled and substantial Western nationalism. After I discuss two phases of Turkish nationalism which tends to evolve from a more political structure (Western) to a cultural construction (Eastern) below, the underlying factors of hysteria will be well-understood. Later on, I will demonstrate the Kurdish issue in Turkey which is capable to prove the hysteria that exists in the nature of Turkish nationalism.

## **Two Phases of Turkish Nationalism: Before and After the Republic (Rational to Hysterical Nationalism)**

Although there is a continuity between the late Ottoman nationalism (Turkish-oriented) and the early Republican nationalism through the CUP-oriented tradition, there are conceptual differences in terms of ethnicity and monopoly of power. First of all, despite being originally members of Turkic tribes, the Ottomans did not capitalize on Turkish ethnicity (Canefe 2002). For that reason, in the beginning of late Ottoman nationalism, led by Young Ottomans, they did not either struggle for an independent Turkish nation-state or accumulate their intellectual capacity on spreading the Turkish-oriented nationalism. In fact, Young Ottomans aimed to secure the territorial integrity of the Empire with its multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure. The ideals of 'Ottomanism' corresponds with those sentiments in which the 19th century reforms also attempted to establish an upper-identity of Ottomanism based on citizenship regardless of ethnicity, race, and religion. However, even Young Ottomans were still uncomfortable about the declining Islamic traditions within the Ottoman society despite their efforts for securing the multinational character of the Empire. The Islamist tradition saw Islam as the social glue of the society that the non-Muslim communities would only remain as the secondary subjects. Therefore, in this phase of infant nationalism, it is not possible to state that there was a strong Turkist movement in order to establish an independent Turkish-state. Moreover, at this stage, Turkish ethnicity was not dominant within the nationalist discourse. The discourse of Young Ottomans followed a unifying ideal under the common citizenship of Ottomanism. Some of the reforms also aimed to settle that citizenship in order to prevent the nationalist uprisings. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that in the pre-Republican stage, the notions of civic and

Western nationalism were present in the rhetoric of the Ottoman intelligentsia.

Later on the movement of Young Turks under the roof of the CUP, Turkishness was becoming more concrete in the discourse of the organization. Some members considered themselves Turkish although they were not originally Turkish. Young Turks were both opposed to despotism of Sultan Abdulhamit II and the intense European influence in internal politics of the Empire. Their discourse embraced constitutionalism, secularism, and a representative system of government. Ironically, as the education of most Young Turks was Western-oriented, they preached Western ways of political and social culture to be implemented on the Ottoman society and at the same time, they were uncomfortable about European imperialism as its influences were felt in the nationalist movements of non-Muslim *millet*s, especially in the Balkans. This irony reflects the Eastern paradox argued earlier that such nationalism is both imitative and hostile to the model it imitates. However, even at this stage, an aspiration of ethnically Turkish independent-state was weak in which the CUP encouraged idiosyncratic liberalization in social and economic life of the Ottoman society after the revolution of 1908. In that sense, I argue that before the Republic, the nationalist discourse was less ethnic-oriented that the security and integrity of the Empire was the basis for the struggles to the last minute. In fact, I maintain that the pre-Republican nationalism was more Western and civic than the post-Republican nationalism or it was mostly closer to Western nationalism although there existed a strong continuation of the CUP discourse within the transition process. However, the reasons in the change of nationalist discourse were not solely internal but also had external causes which I will argue later at the end of this chapter.

Secondly, the monopoly on power was another conceptual difference within the transition from the pre-Republican nationalism to the Turkish nation-state nationalism. Albeit holding the power after the revolution of 1908 in which the constitution was reactivated, the CUP could not monopolize the power as the constitution, itself, was not sufficient to depose the Sultan. In other words, there was an internal struggle for power between royalists and liberals. This shows that Turkish nationalism and its capability to carry out nationalist projects was never dominant before the Republic which decreased the chance of performing solely ethnic-oriented policies. Jung and Piccoli (2001) explain this conjuncture as a hidden Turkish nationalism under Ottomanism. Royalists were closer to Islamic identity rather than Turkishness in which, to some extent, some non-Turkish Muslim communities supported the Sultan. On the other hand, there wasn't any serious attempt for a Turkish national liberation movement by the CUP. The struggle was mainly over monopolising the power of the Ottoman state. This shows that the internal struggle for power for an existing state diminished the aspiration of a new Turkish nation-state until the new international political conjuncture during and after World War I. After the occupation of Ottoman territories by the Allied Powers and the unconditional obedience of the Sultan to the occupiers turned the path of Turkish nationalism within the Ottoman boundaries to a new way of state and nation-building nationalism that showed its first motives in the War of Independence. The War of Independence resulted in the formation of a new sovereign Turkish nation-state with its republican and secular foundations. Although it is possible to think such kind of a nationalist path existed before WWI, it could be only realized after such an occupation which was also a catalyst to mobilize masses rather than relying on elite movement. Therefore, sole Turkish nationalism purified from Ottomanism achieved to monopolise the power under the new Turkish nation-state, which paved the way for a new nation-building under a cultural revolution that

aimed to create a modern secular and republican identity with Turkish origins. Thus, post-Republican nationalism was relatively built on ethnicity and culture rather than promoting political framework accommodating with Western counterparts despite adopting Western legal systems. Some might argue that even most Western nations followed projects of cultural homogenization. Nevertheless, their inclusiveness of 'others' have been more moderate and liberal processes than the exclusiveness of authoritarian nationalism of the Turkish Republic. I want to argue that such post-Republican nationalist sentiment was a product of 'hysteria' that occurred after the occupation of Allied Powers in order to disintegrate the Ottoman territories with respect to their national interests that became evident in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920. In other words, the combination of Western and Eastern aspects of nationalism along with the ambiguity of a settled and substantial nationalist formation led to the rise of hysterical nationalism after the Republic.

Thus the development of Turkish nationalism evolved from more civic notions to ethnic notions. The lack of an ethnic obsession (culture without Turkish origins) under Ottomanism and the lack of an absolute administrative power of the CUP-oriented nationalism protected the citizenship concept of Ottomanism regardless of race and ethnicity. However, after the Ottoman lands were occupied in WWI and the territorial integrity was threatened with nationalist uprisings, Turkish nationalism embraced ethnic and cultural resources, especially after the CUP-oriented intelligentsia monopolized the power of the state under the new Republic. The catastrophic experiences just before the Republic paved the way for an unreasonable 'hysteria' within Turkish nationalism. Along with the strong state tradition of Turks, the Turkish nationalism began to assume that the territorial integrity of the Turkish state is always under a

threat and Turkishness (through language, culture, and ethnicity) should be protected in order to keep the nation of Turkey unified.

I refer to this phenomenon as 'hysterical nationalism' which is built on fear and hostile invention- sharing many traits with the psychological concept of 'paranoid ideation'. According to the definition of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders by the American Psychiatric Association (1994), paranoid ideation is "ideation, of less than delusional proportions, involving suspiciousness or the belief that one is being harassed, persecuted, or unfairly treated" (American Psychiatric Association 1994, 770). Moreover, the American Psychological Association defines hysteria as "a lay term for any psychogenic disorder characterized by such symptoms as paralysis, blindness, loss of sensation, and hallucinations and often accompanied by suggestibility, emotional outbursts, and histrionic behavior" (APA 2007, 460). Considering it as a mental disorder, a person with hysteria "has physical complaints when no physical cause can be found" (The World Book Encyclopedia 2006, 482). Overall, hysterical nationalism is a state of mind which feeds itself through fear and threat that always keeps a nation in a belligerent atmosphere. Hysterical nationalism is obsessed with the survival of the state in which every citizen is seen as the soldier of that state. As goes in daily life expression in Turkish society, 'every Turk is born as a soldier' is the manifestation of such hysterical nationalism. Hysterical nationalism never accepts the downsides of the majority ethnic group and the state that they monopolize in their 'physical complaint' (e.g. Kurdish question). Nationality (e.g. Turkishness) is glorified with regards to other nationalities and it is seen as the center of the world. 'One Turk is worth to the whole world' is another manifestation of such psychological surrounding in Turkish society. Moreover, hysterical nationalism shows overreactions to unnecessary situations because its psychology is based on threat, fear, and hostile which need to

be attacked with prejudice rather than rationally. To sum up, hysterical nationalism agitates politics of fear, feeds itself with exaggerated threats, and depends on a strong statism where the state is the oxygen of that a nation.

In order to associate hysteria with Turkish nationalism, a state of mind which creates exaggerated fear and emotional overreactions will be the center of this paper's argument. As defined above, a hysteric individual has a physical complaint when none exists and this is consistent when it comes to the emotional complaints such as perceptions of delusional fear. In that sense, I argue that paranoid ideation and hysteria together comply with the sentiments of Turkish nationalism. Standing at the center of Turkish nationalism, the security of the state and its indivisibility with the nation leads to hysteria by complaining from some 'external' and 'internal' forces. Those forces are always perceived as threats to the security and indivisibility of Turkey. Such complaint is mostly exaggerated which makes Turkish nationalism hysterical. The perception of the Turkish state towards the Kurds of Turkey is the most vivid example in which perceiving every single Kurdish citizen of Turkey as a threat and Kurdish citizens as suspicious citizens exceeded rational grounds that became evident in the repressive policies of the state and in the 'official' suspiciousness towards Kurds in the Turkish society. As summarized under the section of Kurds, repressive policies against Kurds and any other identity conflicting with the national state identity (Turkishness) were immediately underway after the Republic. Different identities from the mainstream Turkish culture, language and identity have not been accepted and have faced strict assimilation experiences. Banning Kurdish schools, associations, and publications in 1924, denying multicultural structure of the Republic and emphasizing the citizenship equated with Turkish origins under the constitution of 1924, the Settlement Law of 1934 for strengthening territorial integrity through the comprehensive settlement of only

‘Turkish descent’ people in Turkey (Yeğen 2007), the official prohibition of importation of Kurdish publications and recordings in 1967, the official prohibition of the use of Kurdish language in 1983, and calling Kurds as the ‘mountain Turks’ in official Turkish publications are some of the Turkish state policies that labeled Kurds as the enemy of state and the enemy of the Turkish nation. They will be argued in detail through the end of this chapter. In other words, Turkish nationalism could not develop a settled civic model for peacefully integrating Kurds under the umbrella of Turkey. If it could settle dominant civic culture, the Turkish state would be flexible on the distinct identities of Turkey. I believe that formation exceeded Kurds in which Turkey has always created external enemies accompanied with hysterical emotions. The underlying factor behind that psychology is the hysterical nationalism in Turkey.

### **The Rise of Hysterical Nationalism after the Republic**

I believe that hysterical nationalism goes in a direction which starts from Western notions of nationalism and moves towards the Eastern aspects. However, within that direction, there occurs a disconnection which prevents an establishment of neither Western nor Eastern nationalism. That disconnection leads to hysterical nationalism. If the direction moves from Eastern to Western, then an establishment of a substantial Western nationalism can be more realizable. My argument is that the late Ottoman reforms and modernization process, discussed in Chapter 1, had the potential to lay the foundations of Western-style nationalism. Besides, some Republican reforms were also highly Western-oriented notions of nationalism.

Additionally, ethnically and culturally favored Turkish nationalism was underway through the Republic.. However, hysterical notions began to rise while the Republic was strictly fighting for a unified state and a unified nation. One of the most important disconnection points, discussed

earlier, was the occupation of the Ottoman lands after World War I leading to the War of Independence. Although that occupation did not prevent the Western goals of nationalism within the Republic, the hysterical extremes eventually became dominant.

It is essential to demonstrate how the first moves of nationalism in the late Ottoman years embraced Western and civic traits of nationalism. Those motives also continued after the Republic, but I argue that there was not a successful establishment of Western nationalism. As discussed in detail in Chapter 1, let's remember some of the Western motives of the late and early Republican reforms:

#### The Late Ottoman Reforms (starting with the Tanzimat)

- The first break of monarchy
- The first seeds of constitution
- Weakening Islamic authority and Islamic law
- The first rise of secular legal system
- The first seeds of secular education
- The concept of citizenship (Ottomanism)
- Bureaucratic centralization
- The CUP-oriented liberalization

#### The Republican Reforms

- The end of monarchy
- Secular constitution
- Separation of Church and State
- Active and Passive female suffrage
- Co-education of boys and girls
- The adoption of Western numerals and Latin Alphabet

In general, I can argue that those reforms above are liberal in their nature which targeted an absolute eradication of traditional and patrimonial culture in the Turkish/Ottoman social and political life. The diminishing power of the Sultan and the clerical authority along with the Islamic law was a revolutionary step in the direction of a modern nation-state. The Caliphate and the Sultan had been the most important building blocks of the Ottoman political and social culture. State and religion always went alongside. However, after the Tanzimat reforms, that tradition was challenged. This collectivist obedience was broken with the first seeds of citizenship under the concept of 'Ottomanism'. Mesut Yeğen (2007) clarifies Ottomanism:

the belief that the unity of the Ottoman state/territory would be saved by rendering all subjects of the Ottoman state with different religious and ethnic origins of 'Ottoman citizens', tied to the Ottoman dynasty (Yeğen 2007, 122).

Thus, it is reasonable to state that 'Ottomanism' is as inclusive as the Western concept of citizenship. Moreover, despite their authoritarian strategies, the CUP embraced a discourse that included constitutionalism, a representational system of government, and a separation of powers. That discourse began to be dominant after the CUP revolution in 1908 which later led to the Republic. Thus, constitutional, universalistic, civic, and liberal notions of Western nationalism had grounds during the rise of Ottomanism and later in the discourse of the CUP.

After the Republic, those Western ideals of nationalism were implemented comprehensively with the fall of monarchy. One of the most important achievements was the secular constitution in which some of the Western legal systems were modeled. Thus, the dominant religious authority along with the supreme power of the Sultan lost their influence within the political and social culture. The new understanding was a coalition of the citizenship

and the state that brought the nation and the state together. Being one of the six principle arrows of the Republic, the intelligentsia assumed Turkish nationalism as progressive and Western. Therefore, the Republic heavily depended on the rhetoric of Westernization and modernization. The adoption of Western numerals and Latin alphabet was a step towards the ideal of a Western nation. The adoption of Western dress codes along with other Western adoptions aimed the total break off from the religious, traditional, patrimonial, and Eastern culture of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, one of the most specific Western notions of nationalism is seen in the expansion of women's rights. The rhetoric of the Republic created a model of Turkish woman who should be modern, educated, and Western both physically and mentally. For that reason, secularization and the break off from Islamic schools allowed the co-education of boys and girls. Most importantly, female suffrage was put into effect in which the Turkish woman was seen as one of the building blocks of the modern Turkish society. Thus, women had to have a place in social, economic, and political life of the Turkish society in order to achieve the ideals of Western nations.

Consequently, as Hans Kohn argued earlier, individual liberties is one of the key essentials in Western nationalism. We can see that in the beginning of the Republic with the establishment of secular constitution and expanded women's rights. As Western nationalism is assumed to be liberal rather than authoritarian, those liberal aspects of the Republic are accommodating with individualistic progresses of Western nationalism. Despite those Western aspects, the Republic had also many attachments to Eastern nationalism with ethnic and cultural foundations which eventually prevented an established Western nationalism. However, those attachments did not either end with a typical Eastern nationalism. Such hybrid development ended with hysterical nationalism. Before explaining how and why the Turkish nationalism ended in hysterical nationalism, let's state some specific Eastern attachments of Turkish nationalism.

First of all, the Tanzimat reforms and its modernization goals were, to some extent, defensive moves against the increasing European powers. After being one of the most dominant powers in the world politics for centuries, the Empire lost its authority and capability to compete with modern powers of Europe. For that reason, early reforms were initially implemented in military area in order to strengthen the Ottoman army. Those reforms eventually took place in political, economic, and social life of the Ottoman society. Depending on the defensive nature of those reforms, as Hans Kohn argued, the process of Turkish nationalism had roots in the reactive nature of the Ottoman reforms against the confidence and success of the West. This is one of the important characteristics of Eastern nationalism in which such reaction leads to an inferiority complex and overconfidence. Such psychological atmosphere had solid reflections after the Republic when ethnic and cultural resources of Turkishness were strictly implemented. The key Republican attempts in the cultural obsession of Turkishness can be seen in the establishment of the Turkish Linguistic Society and the Turkish Historical Society. The Linguistic Society worked on the so-called 'Sun Language Theory' that assumed the pure Turkish as an ancient language which had been the origins for the development of many, if not, all other languages. On the other hand, the Historical Society attempted to write a national history in order to enable the new nation imagining a common historical culture in which the 'Turkish Historical Thesis' assumed that the ancient Turkic civilization was the foundation of other civilizations (Jung and Piccoli 2001). Those attempts show that how the Turkishness of the Republic embraced ethnic resources, especially through common language and common history.

In Eastern nationalism, one of the key test elements is the language. Hence, the Turkish language has been the only and single 'official language' of the state where speaking other languages (e.g. Kurdish) were not tolerated in state institutions. Besides, the Kurdish language

was prohibited from all aspects of the Turkish society because according to the Turkish state, there was no language called Kurdish, even Kurds did not exist according to the official doctrine of the state. This 'exclusiveness' is one of the vivid examples of Eastern nationalism. As a result, in the constitution of 1924, the terms 'citizenship' and 'citizen' had been equated with Turkishness (Barkey and Fuller 1998, 10). According to the Republic, Kurds were obstacles to modern and Western Turkish nation and the state (Yeğen 2007). Needless to say, such perception contributed to the homogenization and cultural assimilation of Kurds into the dominant Turkishness. This assimilation process was, to some extent, forceful. In 1924, a decree banned all Kurdish schools, associations, and publications (Brenneman 2007), in 1967 a law officially banned the importation of Kurdish publications and recordings and in 1983 a law banned the use of any native languages (Barkey and Fuller 1998). As Ernest Gellner (1983) stated, Eastern nationalism is capable to pursue a forceful cultural engineering in order to achieve the cultural homogenization process. The aim is to prevent multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment which can be a threat to the unity of the state and the nation. That characteristic of Eastern nationalism was also present after the Republic, especially in the policies aforementioned against the Kurds. Overall, the post-Republican cultural revolution was led by the Republican intelligentsia from above was authoritarian even though the Westernization was the goal. Such illiberal notions, heavy dependence on Turkish ethnicity and culture, inferiority complex towards the success of the West, and 'exclusive' nature of citizenship when the issue comes to the Kurds are some of the main Eastern characteristics of Turkish nationalism.

Although the aim of establishing a Western nationalism was present in the late Ottoman years and the early Republican years, it could not be achieved comprehensively where many post-Republican nationalist practices embraced Eastern aspects. Thus, it is reasonable to say that

Turkish nationalism started as more Western and became more Eastern over time. At the same time, it could be neither solely Western nor Eastern. As argued earlier, one of the breaking points in the process had been the occupation after World War I in which the territorial integrity and the sovereignty were under real threat. On the other hand, despite the efforts of establishing a constitutional and state citizenship regardless of ethnicity and religion through Ottomanism, the nationalist uprisings in the Balkans and in the Arab provinces could not be prevented. The idea of settling a substantial Western nationalism in the Ottoman society could not be effective where the disintegration of the Ottoman lands were underway. Such realization eventually led to a more ethnic and cultural nationalism with Turkish origins, especially in the discourse of the CUP. Later on, the catastrophe of World War I, the occupation of sovereign Ottoman Anatolia and the ambitions of European imperialism on the Ottoman lands led to the new national consciousness which arose in the War of Independence. That outsider surrounding in social and political life of the Ottoman society also paved the way for a high distrust to both European powers and potential internal threats (e.g. Kurds) to the unity of the Turkish nation. Thus, the foundations of the Republic heavily depended on the indivisibility of the state and the nation. 'Red Lines' were drawn and the new Turkish state dedicated itself to protect the territorial integrity of the Republican borders with an absolute opposition to any decentralized or federal formation of the government. Although the threats of the time were real, Turkey could not succeed to settle a rational understanding of Western nationalism where hysterical overreactions became the nature of Turkish nationalism. Finally, this unique combination of East and West within the nature of Turkish nationalism led to a hybrid formation under hysterical nationalism. Kurds, being the second largest ethnic group in Turkey and being a potential state-seeking community, have been

one of the most visible victims of hysterical nationalism which will be demonstrated later in this chapter.

The key traits of hysterical nationalism are politics of fear, hostile invention, and strong statism. In this psychological surrounding, the foundation of nationalism is the security of the state and its territorial integrity. The assumption of the state is that the territorial integrity is always under a threat by both 'external' and 'internal' (supported by the outsiders) forces. Through that fear, hostiles are invented which, to some extent, changes according to the international conjuncture. Thus, the state justifies its authoritarian attitudes through the politics of fear and assumes that the both external and internal enemies never stop struggling to diminish the power of the state. In that environment, nationalism forms the basis of the state and the society which eventually evolves into a hysterical structure. For that reason, strong statism exists in hysterical nationalism in which the state is held in a higher esteem than the nation. A perception occurs in which a citizen should sacrifice her everything (ultimately life) for the survival of the state. Overall, hysterical nationalism is a hybrid form of Western and Eastern nationalism in which the mere inexistence of either leads to a paradoxical formation. Although I argued before that Turkish nationalism has several Western notions of nationalism, it does not mean that Turkish nationalism is merely Western-oriented. If it was, civil liberties and state citizenship would embrace everyone in Turkey regardless of ethnicity and language and that fact could protect the cultural and political rights of Kurds too. Then, Turkish nationalism is not Western or civic or political at all. Moreover, I argue that Turkish nationalism is not solely Eastern because it achieved several Western aspects of nation-building, especially visible in women emancipation and secular constitution. Thus, Turkish nationalism is not a typical Eastern

nationalism either. In that sense, hysterical nationalism offers a third way within the Eastern/Western dichotomy.

I believe that the Ottoman/Turkish nationalism is accommodating with hysterical nationalism. First of all, as it is discussed in Chapter 1, there is a strong state tradition both in the Empire and the Republic. Moreover, although going back and forth between Eastern and Western notions of nationalism, the Republic could not be successful in building a strong Western tradition of nationalism. First, by heavily practicing the aspects of Eastern nationalism under the obsession with Turkish cultural and ethnic origins, the Republic seeded the origins of hysterical nationalism. Secondly while struggling to form a culturally homogenous nation with Turkish origins through authoritarian strategies and forced assimilation, the Republic not just failed to either settling an established Western nationalism or a typical Eastern nationalism but it also paved the way for the rise of hysterical nationalism which is more problematic than Eastern nationalism. That's why the Kurdish question since the establishment of the Republic is one of the strong indicators of hysterical nationalism in Turkey. While Turkish nationalism of the Republic paved the way for an ethnic Kurdish consciousness, the rise of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey mutually provoked hysterical Turkish nationalism. Although there was not any strongly established Kurdish consciousness during the Empire, the Republic indirectly stimulated such awareness. That awareness has absolutely become one of the targets of hysterical Turkish nationalism. The incapacity of the Turkish state and its official nationalism to settle a substantial constitutional citizenship along with cultural rights given to non-Turkish groups solidified its hysterical nature and has never stopped to perceive Kurds as a threat to the security and the unity of Turkey

## **Why Is It Hysterical?**

Nationalism through the homogeneous culture that the industrial societies entail in order to bring a nation under a political roof is, to some extent, accommodating with the rise of Turkish nationalism. Turkey, as a successor state of the Ottoman Empire rejected the multiethnic soul of the Ottoman society and pursued nationalist policies to create a single nation under the authority of the modern Turkish state. Moreover, the state-oriented nationalism also sought to prevent any peripheral nationalist uprisings as occurred in the late Ottoman years. This was also one of the essentials of Turkish nationalism in which the state, especially after the Republic, monopolized nationalism in its hands. One of those peripheries was the Kurds. In fact, the Kurds were the major concern within the process of nation-building along with cultural homogenization with Turkish origins. This process can be anticipated in the era of rising nation-states with the ideals of one nation and one state in the beginning of the 20th century. It would be too naive to expect the Republic building a multi-cultural structure in an environment of full rejection of the Ottoman legacy. For that reason, forced assimilation of the Republic discussed earlier was one of the strategies that the Republic implemented in order to create a homogeneous Turkish identity. Then some questions can be asked:

Why did Turkish nationalism fail to create a melting pot in which the Turks and other ethnicities would come together under an agreed and an accepted identity under Turkish citizenship?

Why did the process not unfold as it did in France, where different ethnicities eventually adopted French identity and language, leading to a constitutional French citizenship?

My argument is that although Turkey had a chance to establish a typical Western nationalism like in France, the Eastern aspects of nationalism became dominant over time in which a typical Eastern or Western nationalism could not be realized. In addition, Turkish nationalism became hysterical especially after the traumatic transition from the Empire to the Republic. The hysterical Turkish nationalism began to feed itself with fear and hostile invention. For that reason, security and indivisibility has been the capital of Turkish nationalism and the state has been idealized as strong as the religion. Modernization and civilization do not constitute the primary fundamentals of Turkish nationalism. Thus, that formation evolved into a hysterical construction in which, to some extent, Turkey is seen as the center of the world and the political games within the larger regional arena (Europe, Middle East, and Central Asia) are perceived as the plans for destabilizing the power of Turkey.

The Kurdish question since the Republic has the same place within that hysteria. The failure of repressing the Kurdish identity which turned into a violent guerrilla movement in the 1980s and the rise of Kurdish consciousness has never been attributed to the self-struggle of the Kurds. According to the general assumption in the Turkish society, Kurds and Turks are brothers and sisters but some external 'hidden' powers want to crash these two communities into each other, but at the same time, those self-conscious political Kurds have always been recognized as the toys of those 'hidden' powers. The Turkish state stubbornly perceives that external powers have relations with the Kurds in order to diminish the flexibility of Turkish national interests within the region. That leading assumption of the state is directly reflected to the society through the media and various state organs in which the nationalist sentiments are stimulated. Threat and fear feed the emotions of Turkish society embracing nationalism either extremely or moderately. At this point, I do not totally deny the reality of international politics in which major powers

pursue different policies in different regions of the world under their national interests. Within that political structure, it is reasonable to expect that major powers have direct or indirect relations with other states or regionally powerful organizations. For instance, today, in Northern Iraq, the US has close relations with the Kurdish communities for the process of stability in the region. It would not be a surprise if the PKK has a seat in those political talks. Nevertheless, delusional attitude identifying those relations as the plans of thwarting Turkey is by far the disconnection of the Turkish state and its nationalism from rational grounds. Although I accept the regional political structures and different ally-seeking processes based on the international conjuncture, Turkish nationalism feeds itself from exaggerated fear and rivals in which the Kurdish question has never been perceived as an internal problem. It is neglected that it is the most important failure of the Republic. Repressive policies and total denial of the Kurdish identity could not be enough to conceal the fabrication of Turkish nationalism and its hysteria in which after almost eighty years of the Kurdish reality, the problem has begun to be officially recognized as the most important illness of the Republic. In addition to the measures taken just after the Republic against the Kurdish existence, let's give some further reflections of the hysteria which has continued through the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Chaliand (1993) provides a passage of a nationalist approach to the Kurds which is written in an article in June 1967 issue of the nationalist journal, *Otuken*, by Nihal Atsiz:

If they (the Kurds) want to carry on speaking a primitive language with vocabularies of only four or five thousand words, if they want to create their own state and publish what they like, let them go and do it somewhere else. We Turks have shed rivers of blood to take possession of these lands; we had to uproot Georgians, Armenians and Byzantine Greeks...Let them go off wherever they want, to Iran, to Pakistan, to India, or to join

Barzani. Let them ask the United Nations to find them a homeland in Africa. The Turkish race is very patient, but when it is really angered it is like a roaring lion and nothing can stop it. Let them ask the Armenians who we are, and let them draw the appropriate conclusions (Chaliand 1993, 77).

If a nationalist understanding can state that ‘Let them ask the Armenians who we are’, that approach has definitely pathological problems. Hysteria, here, is the fear of losing the lands which ‘Turks have shed rivers of blood to take possession’ and the threat that the Kurds pose. If this approach was not hysterical, rationality would dominate the situation and would try to understand the problem. Again, there is a sense in this passage in which every Turk is seen as a soldier of the state. There is a great prejudice towards the Kurds and Turkishness is glorified with absolute belief in the ‘just’ struggle that it gives against ‘traitors’. It is reasonable to say that such a psychological surrounding of nationalist feelings do not constitute the minority of the society. Even today, it is widely common to hear same expressions either from moderate or extreme nationalists.

A decree banned all Kurdish schools, associations, and publications in 1924 (Brenneman 2007), in 1967 a law officially banned the importation of Kurdish publications and recordings (Barkey and Fuller 1998) and in 1983 a law banned the use of any native languages (*ibid*). Despite those oppressive policies, the rise of Kurdish consciousness could not be prevented. I believe that trying to ban a language which millions speak in a nation is far from rational grounds. Although it is reasonable to see that the fact of Kurds pursuing self-government ambitions, cautions to prevent such struggle should have been taken through pursuing the ideals of Western nationalism. Each ban creates its own reactions and for some reason, the nationalist

ideology of Turkey seems to use this to justify its struggle against ‘traitors’. In other words, hysterical nationalism agitates politics of fear.

Moreover, after the rise of Kurdish consciousness through the 1970s, the overthrow of the government by the army in March 1971 paved the way for a martial law in 1979 in the Kurdish provinces along with the resurgence of repressive measures (McDowall 1992, 43). It was assumed that Kurdish fighters were controlling some areas and declaring them ‘liberated’ zones (*ibid*). As a result, the Turkish President said:

There is no room for liberated regions and activities aimed at language, racial, class or sectarian differences in our homeland. The government will defeat the disease and heads will be crushed (McDowall 1992, 43).

Hysterical nationalism does not seek ways to include and integrate the ‘others’ (those who do not belong to the majority group) into the nation. In fact, that hysteria does not just ‘exclude’ others, but it tends to desire to annihilate those others. If a president of a country can say ‘heads will be crushed’ by referring to distinct lingual and ethnic groups (either to fighters or to ordinary Kurdish citizens), there is no room for any ‘inclusiveness’ here.

In the military coup of 1980, the ban on Kurdish language was more strictly carried out. Under the name of struggle against the PKK, common experiences of Kurds under mass arrests, beatings, and tortures took place (McDowall 1992, 45). Later on, many political elites quoted in news coverage that Kurdish was not a language in order to discredit its existence (Sezgin and Wall 2005). Human Rights Watch (1993) acknowledges that “people have been sent to prison

merely for acknowledging in public that there are Kurds in Turkey” (Human Rights Watch 1993, 1).

If acknowledging in public that there are Kurds in Turkey can be perceived as a threat to the unity of the Turkish nation and the state and if people are imprisoned for such an acknowledgement, then the overreactions in unnecessary situations and exaggerated fear of hysterical nationalism definitely exist in the nationalist understanding of Turkey.

Turkey’s response to the PKK took an indiscriminate form on the wide population of Kurds through the late 1980s. Denise Natali (2005) examines the interaction between the PKK and the Turkish state:

As Kurdish nationalist mobilization led by the PKK destabilized the border regions and terrorized civilians, the Turkish military establishment was given carte blanche in Kurdistan. After 1984 it employed scorch-and-burn tactics that destroyed villages and farmlands and programs that tortured Kurdish insurgents and massacred civilian populations (Natali 2005, 108).

The arbitrary military actions in the Kurdish regions which also targeted civilian populations show the reluctance of the Turkish state in separating the struggle against the PKK from the policies on the Kurdish civilians. This is a psychological surrounding which puts every single Kurdish citizen of Turkey into a potential fighter against Turkey. If a state can not make that separation, it might be emotional, but if a state is not willing to make that separation, then it is hysterical.

Moreover, McDowall (1992) gives an idea on the political environment of the time:

All of eastern Turkey had become a sort of concentration camp where every citizen was treated as a suspect, and where oppression, torture and insult by the military was the rule (McDowall 1992, 47).

In April 1990, Decree No 413 provided unlimited powers to the Regional Governor of the Kurdish region such as the closure of any publishing house that ‘falsely reflects the events in the region’; forcibly to resettle ‘those persons whom it is deemed necessary’. And in addition to that the people who were given this power by the decree were given immunity from prosecution (McDowall, 1992, 51). According to the Human Rights Watch Report of 2005, it is reported that the number of internally displaced Kurds are 378,335 (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Such displacement was a result of Decree No 413 in which legally immunized government officials and security forces executed arbitrary decisions. Moreover, the village guard system was put into effect in which many Kurdish villagers were armed by the state against the PKK and given small amounts of salaries. This state-sponsored policy, to some extent, aimed to divide the unity and the solidarity of Kurds which also caused violence among many Kurdish tribes (Barkey and Fuller 1998). Overall, according to the Human Rights Watch Report of 1993, it is stated that “many Kurdish cities have been brutally attacked by security forces, hundreds of their villages have been forcibly evacuated, their ethnic identity continues to be attacked, their rights to free expression denied and their political freedom placed in jeopardy” (Human Rights Watch, 1993, 1).

As defined earlier, hysterical nationalism is a state of mind which feeds itself from fear and threat. In this situation, threat was the Kurds. For that reason, the Turkish state was reluctant to spend more effort to differentiate an ordinary Kurdish citizen from a Kurdish guerrilla. Each

Kurdish-descent Turkish citizen was seen as a potential member of the PKK (which should be the real enemy of the military forces) and the state spent a great effort to suppress those ordinary citizens through martial law, mass arrests and tortures. That demonstrates the unnecessary overreaction of Turkish nationalism. In fact, this overreaction of the Turkish state was influential in the rise of recruitment to the PKK. However, even this fact contributed to the necessities of hysterical nationalism in Turkey through justifying the threat against the state itself. Moreover, as described earlier, hysterical nationalism is not willing to accept the downsides or mistakes of the dominant group of the nation. Therefore, Turks were not capable to empathize with the Kurds because Turkishness had always been glorified against other nationalities both in Turkey and outside of Turkey. That lack of empathy was also influential in authoritarian actions of the state. As hysterical nationalism is obsessed with the survival of the state, every political move of the non-violent Kurdish struggle had also been perceived as a threat to the unity of the state. Even publicly announcement of being a Kurd was a threat to the state. In other words, if I'd like to say that I was a Kurd, I would face charges in the name of attempting to divide Turkey. For that reason, aforementioned mass arrests and tortures were the common experiences in the Kurdish regions.

Such actions of the Turkish state are parts of the politics of fear argued earlier. Kurds who want to speak their language and practice their culture without any political discrimination (not necessarily guerillas) have been perceived as the enemies of the state. Through that fear and hostility, authoritarian state actions have been justified constituting the common perception of the Turkish society. Either by the fear of state oppression or by the blinding surrounding of hysterical nationalism, despotic actions of the state in the Kurdish regions could not be criticized and questioned by the media, academicians, or the Turkish society, in general. The perception

has always been that those despotic actions have been the parts of a 'just' war against the PKK and other 'external' powers behind the PKK. At this point, it is important to mention the violent tactics of the PKK which also resulted in many civilian and military deaths are also strictly criticized by the Human Rights Watch. My argument here is that the treatment of the Turkish state against the Kurds without separating the struggle against the PKK is a result of a nationalist construction after the Republic which has hysterical concerns. If the psychological surrounding of Turkish nationalism was not this hysterical, Turkey would achieve easier to settle a typical Western nationalism where the Kurds would enjoy their cultural and political rights. Within that psychological construct, the belief is that those political Kurds are the traitors and the enemy of the state in which several 'external' political powers support them to diminish the power of Turkey.

I argue that such a hysterical construction of nationalist sentiments also contain inferiority complex and backwardness that was argued earlier under the characteristics of Eastern nationalism. Perhaps, all the conspiracies that assumed the West as an ultimate enemy of the Ottoman Empire and the assumptions that the West, particularly European powers, clearly aimed to dissolve the Empire into different nation-states according their own national interests were partially factual and based on real concerns which surfaced after World War I under the Treaty of Sevres. The Ottoman Empire was 'the sick man of Europe' for Europeans and needed to be healed with respect to their national interests. Although the Empire made many concessions to eradicate the concerns over non-Muslim subjects and pursued socio-political liberalization whether they were realized or not, the Ottoman lands were in the target of European imperialism. However, needless to say, the Ottoman political culture and social structure was not compatible

with its European counterparts in which a similar path of modernization and development could not be an uncomplicated process as the development of nationalism. The French and German nationalisms influenced other nations because they were relatively original and unique in their historical development, but the others were modular nationalisms that were far away to achieve a unique form of nationalism. Therefore, inferiority complex and humiliation from the demise of 'almighty' Ottoman Empire caused several pathological disorders resulted in a paradoxical combination of Western and Eastern nationalism. That formed the hysterical nationalism. Post-Republican nationalism in Turkey was more suitable for the development of such hysteria in which the Treaty of Sevres, to some extent, triggered a 'Sevres Syndrome' that shaped the twentieth century Turkish politics both internally and externally. In terms of the Kurdish question, Mesut Yeğen (2007) looks to the situation as a "paranoia of outsider incitement" to diminish the security of Turkey which he sees as a product of a traumatic result of the Allied power's occupation of Ottoman territories. According to Yeğen, that outsider was Britain in the 1920s; USSR during the Cold War (as Turkey being a NATO member on the side of West); South after the Cold War; and today the outsider is the West again. The 'Sevres Syndrome' and 'paranoia of outsider incitement' are not as comprehensive as hysterical nationalism. First, the 'Sevres Syndrome' does not have a direct relationship with Turkish nationalism as scholars argue it. It refers to the approaches against the European powers and their national interests in the Ottoman lands. It does not state that any specific form of nationalism exists in Turkey. I would say the 'Sevres Syndrome' is one of the parts of hysterical nationalism as it assumes Europeans as the potential threat. Can it explain the psychological surrounding in Turkish nationalism which is capable to label a person, who states that there are Kurds in Turkey, as a threat to the indivisibility of the state? Thus, the Sevres Syndrome can be one of the subsets of

hysterical Turkish nationalism. On the other hand, Yeğen argues the Kurdish question by basically depending on extreme nationalism, whereas I focus on Turkish nationalism through arguing the Kurdish question. In other words, Yeğen does not have any systematic and theoretical examination on Turkish nationalism, he rather tells the story of the Kurdish question and the mistakes of the state in that problem. Thus, my argument of hysterical nationalism has broader applications which do not merely depend on the Kurdish question.

As a result, the post-Republican nationalism could not achieve to settle a Western/political nationalism based on a constitutional citizenship although its infrastructure was, to some degree, existent under Ottomanism during the Empire. Eventually, dominant Eastern/cultural notions of Turkish nationalism became evident in the policies against the Kurds and 'hysterical nationalism' eventually arose in the lopsided relations between the Kurds and the Turkish state.

In this process of polarization between the Turkish state and the Kurds, the paranoid ideation of Turkish nationalism always assumed that the Kurds are the toys of 'outsider incitement' and 'the enemies' of Turkey never stop to struggle in their aim of dividing Turkey again as occurred during the late Empire years. Thus, Turkish nationalism formed itself on the basis of a threat of divisibility. The main anxiety has been that Turkey is always under a threat of outsider and insider enemies to divide its unity and Turkish nationalism dedicated itself to do everything to stop such threats and protect the indivisibility of the state and Turkish people. Although the rhetoric of Kurdish nationalist movement included separatist statements, hysterical nationalism of Turkey led to the indiscriminate violent responses to the wide Kurdish population

regardless of being insurgent or not. That hysteria assumed every single Kurd of Turkey or those who emphasized their Kurdishness as the enemy of the state and the traitor.

In conclusion, 'hysteria' stands as the main downside of Turkish nationalism that it could not succeed to evolve into a Western form of nationalism for peacefully integrating different ethnicities under an inclusive Turkish citizenship. At this point, theoretically further comparative research on non-Western nationalisms is essential in order to understand whether hysterical nationalism has broader applications. However, the scope of this thesis points Turkish nationalism as hysterical specifically. Although major theories are essential for understanding the origins of Turkish nationalism, they are insufficient illuminating its psychological condition. On the other hand, inferiority complex and backwardness of Eastern nationalism are not comprehensively illustrative for understanding the interaction between the Turkish state and the Kurds. With that regards, dualistic approaches were useful in order to put the Turkish case in a unique position that suggests a third way of hysterical nationalism in which a hybrid form of Western and Eastern nationalism exists. Any case of nationalism is capable to be a combination of both and there is no specific line separating one from another, but Turkish nationalism is capable to offer a third way under hysterical nationalism. This thesis should be a first step for analyzing cases such as Turkey if hysteria is present broadly. On the other hand, if Turkey monopolizes nationalism and legitimizes its existence via nationalism through fear and threat, further research would contribute to the literature in understanding how different nationalisms pursue strategies in making the ideologies dominant in their societies. The analysis of Western cases in the same manner might also be insightful for either deeper classifications of Western and Eastern tradition or the illumination for new ways within that dichotomy.

## Conclusion

If it is considered that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the century of the nation-states and the nationalist movements, it is hard to assume that the same trend is unlikely to continue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in spite of ongoing discourses of nationalism. In this contemporary century, as the cliché goes on, the world is becoming more and more globalized through the high-tech communication facilities, high-density migrations, global environmental and political challenges, borderless capitalist diffusion and so forth. Although international political and economic organizations are likely to become the new branches of world decision-making mechanisms, such trend is not likely to reduce the authority of nation-states within the world political system due to the fact that globalizing world is, to some extent, perceived as a threat to nations and their sovereignty, paves the way for a new wave of nationalist jargon in national, regional, and global politics. The rise of xenophobic feelings in the era of a high-density migration is unquestionably part of that nationalist jargon which collectively includes political and cultural concerns. However, this time, Western nationalism is likely to lose its 'inclusivity'. At this point, the legal framework of a constitutional citizenship which disregards racial or cultural differences tends to lose its weight in terms of the debates on nationalism. Although many Western democracies reinforce nondiscriminatory legal guarantees of citizenship, psychological and cultural means of the dominant or majority population might create 'other citizens' leading to de facto 'exclusion' and subconscious nationalist sentiments based on ethnicity and culture. Therefore, such legality does not guarantee 'inclusivity'. Thus, it is not healthy to state that Western nationalism is inherently 'good' and Eastern nationalism is inherently 'bad'. For instance, Kurds have never legally been secondary citizens of Turkey but they have been facing many challenges that Turks have been exempted from in the process. Then can we label Turkish nationalism as Western just because of

such legal framework? No. Therefore, one thing is certain that regardless of categorizing nationalism, it has a general discourse which inevitably creates 'us' and 'them'. However, even that differentiation is not 'inherently 'exclusive' or 'discriminatory'. This puts nationalism aside from racism and discrimination. But still, the absence of a nationalist discourse and its psychological bonds is better than its existence if the aim is to have a more democratic, egalitarian, and peaceful world. Nationalism creates more problems than it solves. In such an approach, the first responsible organ in disqualifying nationalism is the state, itself. The state played a significant role in building political, sociological, and psychological foundations of nationalism within its borders and in the system of nation-states. The national public education might be the first institution where the nationalist discourse of the state can be marginalized such as in the narrative of a nation's history purified from the exaggerated and doctrinized idealizations of the state. The state should be more creative in terms of legitimizing its existence rather than lastingly exploiting the nationalist jargon.

Theoretically, this paper shows that embracing dualistic approaches in order to study specific cases are insightful in terms of critiquing and understanding specific forms of those cases. On the other hand, it is clearly stated that nationalism should also be considered as a single body in terms of its rhetoric regardless of its structure. However, the study of nationalism should also be carefully separated within social sciences which can give a chance for analysis through perspectives of different disciplines such as sociology, political science, psychology, and anthropology. Therefore, monopolizing the study of nationalism within the discipline of political science might be insufficient in terms of building a comprehensive understanding. Moreover, one of the limitations of this paper was the single case analysis which partially prevented comparative analysis in order to clarify the structural differences of nationalism, but considering

Turkey's nationalist architecture along with dual nationalism and an ethnic conflict, this case needs to be comprehensively analyzed through the political lens of the literature of nationalism. Besides, the Turkish case requires further theoretical analysis in order to deconstruct the extremist patriotic codes of nationalism from sociological and psychological perspectives.

In terms of the Turkish case, this research has firstly shown that Turkish nationalism does not solely depend on a civic model and eliminates any argument claiming Turkish nationalism as modern, civilized, inclusive, and Western. It would not be an exaggeration to place Turkish nationalism as hysterical in the literature of nationalism. However, the scope of this research does not expand to a comparative analysis of different Eastern nationalisms. In that sense, it is not reasonable to specify Turkish nationalism merely as Eastern or state that any Eastern nationalism is exclusively hysterical. A further research of comparative analysis between Eastern nationalism and Turkish nationalism might clarify the specifics of hysterical nationalism. The central implication of the result of this research which state Turkish nationalism as hysterical is that the Turkish state should question itself in the ongoing war and should renew its suspicious mentality towards the Kurds of Turkey. In that sense, it is possible to claim that the first organ to spark the fire of solution is the Turkish state, not the Kurds. Besides, Turkey does not need to create exclusive positive discrimination for Kurds or enforce laws specifically addressing the Kurdish issue. The step should be on the ways of empowering democratic institutions of the state through revisions in the constitution such as securing the transparency of the government, exclusion of the military from politics for the sake of a stable civilian government, an efficient and fair law system, civil liberties and so forth. In this process, Kurds have also major responsibilities to settle a peace, especially by considering the dissolution of the PKK.

Today, Turkish nationalism stands as strong as in its infant years and its ideological infrastructure is tried to be monopolized from various political parties of Turkey both from left-wing and right-wing parties. Daily life phrases such as “Everyone (citizens) who lives in Turkey is a Turk”, “Love or Leave”, “One Turk is worth to the whole world”, and “There is no other friend of a Turk except from another Turk” are still widely used, not just from radical right-wing nationalists but they are also owned by expanded segments of the society. Patriotism is the main framework of Turkish nationalism both within the state and the society. This tends to create delusional perceptions within the mainstream Turkish politics which surfaced in the Kurdish question. Until the recent years, there was not even any question existing in Turkish politics. It was a terror problem or it was the Southeast question. Besides, arguing the Kurdish question was a taboo and there was a self-censorship within the political and academic environment. The reason for that self-censorship was the fear from the patriotic and ‘hysterical’ Turkish nationalism which has been leaked to every single vein of Turkish social and political life. Comprehensively media, sports, arts, politics, military, and academics have always been surrounded by the hysteria of nationalism. Within that structure, it is very naïve to expect a solution to the Kurdish question of Turkey. Kurdish question is the most important exam for the Turkish democracy and the Republican ideals of Mustafa Kemal as he dreamed of a contemporary civilization for his nation. Today, things are likely to get better. In spite of an existing strong Turkish nationalism, it has counter-challenges. The current government under the rule of Justice and Development Party publicly recognizes the Kurdish question and admits that the state made many mistakes in the fight between the people of the same land. Even this is a huge step in the name of working on peaceful solutions for the coexistence of two nationalities in Turkey.

On the other hand, although self-determination of approximately 40 million Kurds living in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria is their natural right just as the Republic of Turkey depended on the same right after the demise of the Ottoman Empire, the ultimate goal of Kurds should not be an independent Kurdish state. There are already existing possible cultural differences (language, life-style, etc.) among the Kurds of different states which might create further nation-building problems. Kurds should struggle for their democratic rights in order to practice their culture, speak their language, participate in administrative power structures and in decision-making processes within the state they are citizens of, gain educational rights in their mother language, and receive economic incentives for the regions they dominate. An independent Kurdish state will foster a new wave of nationalism both internally and externally in which the Kurds have been suffering from the previous waves of similar nationalisms. Therefore, nations regardless of ethnicity and culture should learn how to live together peacefully with the initiatives of the state which will contribute to stronger democracies all over the world and reduce the political violence. With that regards, the PKK has also responsibilities for the absence of violence and the existence of a substantial democracy within Turkey which should embrace the Kurds too. The European Union candidacy of Turkey has relatively improved the situation and in some ways the Kurdish question has publicized. The Copenhagen Criteria of the EU which entails a democratic governance and human rights for eligible candidate countries indirectly forces Turkey to take steps to solve the Kurdish question. Recently, the Turkish state initiated a new Kurdish TV Channel (TRT 6) which broadcasts 24/7 in Kurdish. Moreover, Democratic Society Party (DTP), a pro-Kurdish party, is currently in the parliament which is an opportunity to establish a healthy dialogue between the Kurdish community and the Turkish state. The PKK recently declared temporary cease-fire. In other words, things are way better than the dark years in the past despite

the slow pace of change and destruction of the taboos. The future seems to be more progressive and prosperous with regards to the social, political, and economic cohesion of Turks and Kurds in Turkey.



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