

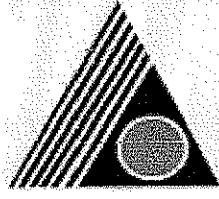
**T.C
YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**A MODERNIST APPROACH TOWARDS TURKISH NATIONALISM:
THE CASE OF LANGUAGE POLICIES IN EARLY REPUBLICAN
TURKEY 1928-1938**

by

Andre ZAKARI

**Submitted to the Graduate Institute of Social Sciences
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of
Political Science and International Relations
ISTANBUL, 2012**



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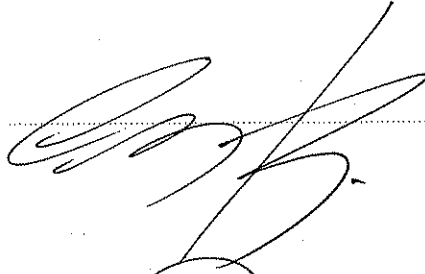
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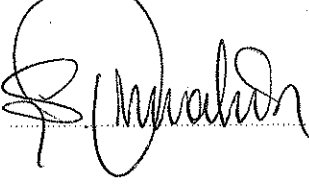
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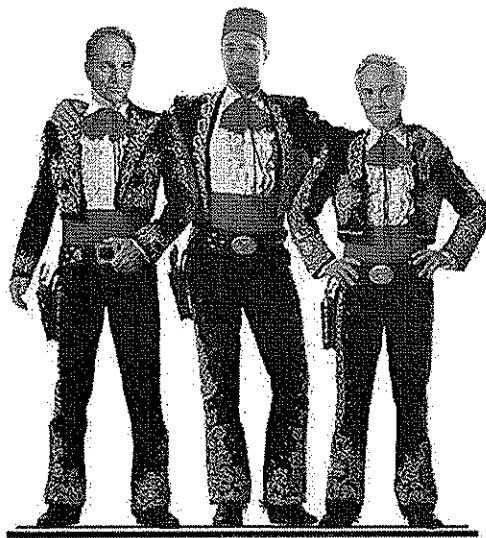
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This thesis could not exist,

*without the shared love of my wife, Mine Zakari
without the continuous support of my mother, Ketty Zakari
without the patient guidance of my aunt Lilian Epik
without the strong advising of my adviser Dr.Sakir Dingyahin
without the tolerance of my close friends and family
and without the enlightened spirit of my father, Jean Zakari.*

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Özet

Türk Milliyetçiliğine Modernist bir bakış açısı; Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi dil politikaları (1928-1938) örneği

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Dil reformları, millî kimliklerin inşası sürecinde her zaman önemli bir araç olarak kullanılmıştır. Akademik literatürde, milliyetçiliğin modernist yaklaşımına göre, dilin zamansız tarihsel varlığı eski çağlardan beri bir toplumun sürekli bir kültür olarak ortaya çıkmasının kanıtı olmuş ve bu etmen milliyetçi ideolojiler tarafından modern ulus-devletlerin inşası için kullanılmıştır. 19. ve 20. yüzyıllarda Türkiye’de yapılan dil reformları, öncelikle toplumun hangi kültürel kimliğe bağlı olduğunu tanımlamada, daha sonra da modern Türk Milletinin inşa sürecine bağlantılı olarak dayatılmıştır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’ndemilliyetçilik, inşa edilmiş bir sosyal-politik kimlik olarak, içinde pek çok etnik çeşitliliği barındıran toplumu bir arada tutmanın bir yolu olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bununla birlikte, bu inşa edilmiş kimliğin geleneksel İslam kültürü veya Modern Batı medeniyetinin parçası olma konusu, kendi gündemlerine göre toplumu şekillendirmeyi amaçlayan politik gruplar arasında önemli bir rekabet alanı oluşturmuştur.

Bu çalışmada, 1928 ve 1938 yılları arasında meydana gelen Türk Dili Reformu ile Türk Milliyetçiliğinin inşası arasındaki ilişki Ernest Gellner ve Benedict Anderson’ın modernist yaklaşımlarının rehberliği altında incelenmiştir. Çalışmamızda, Türk kimliğinin oluşumu sırasında kullanılan Türk Dili Reformlarının, hayal edilmiş bir proje ile inşaa edilmiş uygulamaların bir bileşimi sonucunda ortaya çıktığının yargısına ulaşılabacaktır.

Abstract

A Modernist Approach towards Turkish Nationalism: The Case of Language Policies in Early Republican Turkey (1928-1938)

Andre ZAKARI

Master Thesis

Department of Political Science and International Relations

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Yeditepe University

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The reform of language has always been an important tool employed during the construction of a national identity. According to the modernist approach in the academic literature of nationalism, the supposedly timeless historical existence of a nation's language, offered as proof of the continuous cultural evolution of a society since the ancient times, is used by nationalistic ideologies to build modern nation-states. In Turkey, during the 19th and 20th centuries, the reformation of Turkish became linked to the process of building a modern Turkish nation, and then for defining the cultural identity of the society with which it had to be associated. Nationalism appeared in the Ottoman Empire, and increased in the Republic of Turkey, as a result of the need to gather an ethnically diverse society under one commonly constructed social-political identity. Whether this constructed identity would remain linked to traditional Islamic culture or shift towards modern western civilization was an important area of competition among the various groups aiming to shape society based on their agendas.

In this thesis, the relationship between the reformation of Turkish and the construction of Turkish nationalism that occurred between 1928 and 1938 is explored from the perspective of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson's modernist approaches. This thesis will argue that the language reform in Turkey, which was used to create the modern Turkish identity, is a combination of imagined projects and invented policies.

Chapter 1

Introduction

There has been a growing interest in the study of nationalistic ideology since the end of the Cold War that ended the bipolar world system. During the Cold War, nationalism had always existed in the international scene as an ideology, but had been suppressed by the ideological competition between “the iron curtain” and “the free world”. In addition, nationalism as an ideology was blamed for causing World War II (WWII), which made public opinion suspicious about anything to do with national self-determination. This also limited the number of scholarly works on nationalism¹. The fall of the Berlin Wall put an end to the Cold War, which also caused the balance of world politics to change due to the power vacuum created after the Communist Bloc fell apart. This allowed nationalism to find more space to expand in different social-political forms, more independently than during the Cold War political agenda. This also opened up theoretical discussions and the study of nationalistic ideology, both among the public and in academia.

Despite the rising academic interest in nationalism, during this new era of relaxation in the post-Cold War period, popular discussions were mostly limited to explaining the severest ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, Africa and Asia. The popular theoretical definition of nationalism did nothing more than represent it as a binding force that unites “*certain*” people and mobilizes them against “*others*” in the name of harmony or conflict. Academically, however, nationalism is not as simple as this overview suggests.

Since the end of WWII, academic debates on nationalism have occurred mostly in the western world. With less number of tensions during the post-Cold War period, academic research on nationalism moved toward more liberal discussion, covering wider regions, complemented by deeper historical research. However, although much work has been done in the field of nationalism, academically, a grand theory of nationalism has not yet been established, as researchers disagree on the origins and the dynamics of nationalism.

¹ John. A. Hall, “Introduction,” *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John A. Hall, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1.

Disagreements over theories of nationalism center on how researchers should examine the relationship between writing modern political history and nationalism. The most problematic points on which researchers cannot agree are the issues of defining when societies transform themselves into nation-states, and how states continue to exist through a nationalistic ideology in relation to the history. The three main nationalistic approaches that have been suggested are: primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism.

In relation to this inconclusive discussion on nationalism, this thesis attempt to analyze the Turkish language reform between 1928 and 1938 in the process of establishing a new national identity during the Kemalist period of the Republic of Turkey. The sets of reforms that took place during the first ten years of the republic will be discussed from a modernist perspective toward nationalism, by applying the arguments of Ernest Gellner's "Nations and Nationalism"² and Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities"³.

The thesis will consider nationalism *as a modern political phenomenon*. Parallel to this understanding, nationalism will be defined as a *politicized homogeneous culture applied to a society living in a defined homeland provided by controlled political borders*. As a result, we will take into account that the social-political transformation of a society into a nation-state is caused by the modernization of that society. Modernity appears as a result of rapid industrialization, the establishment of a central government, urbanization, and enforced secularism over traditional agricultural society. Through these modern practices in modern societies, nationalism transforms each society into a nation-state through the establishment of sovereignty and citizenship.

The points mentioned below on defining the dynamics of nationalism and the nation-state will be employed in our study of the foundation of the modern Turkish identity through the language reform. However, the origins of the language reform cannot only be limited to the early years of the Republic, as late Ottoman political history also needs to be taken in to consideration. Language reform and other modernization efforts in Turkey actually started during the 18th century, becoming an important topic among the Turkish intellectuals by the middle of the 19th century. However, whereas these language reforms were never seriously implemented by the Ottoman State, the Turkish Republic hastily adopted the idea of creating a new Turkish language after its foundation.

² Ernest, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing , 2006).

³ Bennedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009).

While studying the language reform that took place between 1928 and 1938, the creation of the new Turkish national identity will be explained through the ideas of two leading modernist theorists: Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson. That is, we aim to reach a better understanding of the reform by applying the modernist perspective of the literature of nationalism. The study concentrate on identifying what part of the Turkish reforms were “*invented*”, as E. Gellner would suggest, and what was “*imagined*”, as B. Anderson would argue. In accordance with modernist theories, the discussion will be maintained through the idea that, as the official ideology of the Republic, Kemalism aimed to construct a new society within a new political structure that was intended to reform every aspect of Turkey’s social-political life, with language being no exception, as Soner Çağaptay⁴ and Şerif Mardin⁵ argue.

This study will focus on the language reforms of the Kemalist administration in the early Republican period, between 1928 and 1938. Following that, an historical account of the rise of nationalism in the late Ottoman Empire and the Republic will also be given. From the beginning of the 19th century, language reforms in Turkey began to be used to build a new Turkish identity, which was first “*imagined*” within intellectual communities, and then “*invented*” by the state. To this purpose, in the first part of the thesis chapter II will consist of a general discussion of the three main approaches that exist in the academic literature of nationalism. Then, chapter III will offer a detailed study of the modernist approach, as seen in Ernest Gellner’s *Nations and Nationalism*, 1983, and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, 1983. This chapter will draw a framework for explaining how nationalism is defined through the modernist approach, which will lay the ground for defining what aspects of nationalism are “*imagined*” and what are “*invented*”.

The second part of the thesis will begin with chapter IV, which will describe the appearance of Turkish nationalism both as a result of Ottoman modernization and as a reaction to the encroachment of Western powers after the Ottoman’s loss of territories in the Balkans. This was the time when the population of Anatolia was exposed to large continuous waves of migrants who significantly changed the demographic balance. This made the need for establishing a common identity more urgent, although this issue was

⁴ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009).

⁵ Şerif, Mardin, “19. Yüzyıl’da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti,” *Türk Modernleşmesi / Şerif Mardin Makaleler 4*, (eds.) Mümtaz’er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim yayınları, 2009)

raised by grass-root activities, and had not yet been adopted as an official state policy. Finally, chapter V will focus on the language reform that the Republic implemented as part of its efforts to construct the modern Turkish identity in Anatolia. During this period, a new synthetic Turkish identity was invented to replace the cosmopolitan Ottoman identity, supported by a newly constructed Turkish language.

Much has been discussed about the social-political evolution of nationalism in Turkey. However, despite numerous studies, it is felt that within academia a deeper theoretical study of the dynamics of nationalism in Turkey is absent. Late Ottoman Imperial and early Turkish Republican history present a rich variety of historical facts that may allow academic research to comment on the evolution of nationalism in Turkey using specific nationalistic theories.

The modernist theories of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson will form the strong basis of this paper. Anderson's theory of nations as 'imagined communities' has already been referred to in many Turkish academic research papers, but Gellner's theorem has been more neglected. It can be assumed that Turkish academics may have ignored Gellner as his theories are concerned with industrialism and urbanism; two phenomena that did not become influential in Turkish politics until the 1950's. However, this thesis will argue that Gellner specifically used these developments as a tool to explain the social changes that resulted in nation building in Western Europe, so the evolution of Turkish nationalism can still be analyzed through his arguments in *Nations and Nationalism*, despite the weak presence of industrialism and urbanism in Turkish politics at the turn of the 20th century. Similar to the specific changes in Europe connected with the earlier rise of nationalism there, in Anatolia many specific social changes were caused by the waves of migration from the Balkans, the Black Sea regions and Central Asia, took place in Anatolia. These created the need to standardize the newly arrived groups under one political identity during early Republican Turkey.

This thesis will discuss the role of the evolution of modern Turkish language in the formation of Turkish identity during the early Republican period. Languages have always been an imaginary ground to draw societies together, as the simplest need of communication between each individual can best be maintained by a common language. However, in addition to keeping societies together, language creates barriers between different societies. Therefore, it is a politicized tool that needs to be guarded, yet also

wielded for the interests of the society. Concerning this point, Benedict Anderson's theories will be used to trace the influence of Turkish language within the construction of the Turkish identity.

In this respect, the period between 1928 and 1938 is a unique field where the combination of the evolution of the Turkish language under the influence of both the *Turkic imagined communities* and the *Kemalist Republican Turkish State* will be discussed in terms of how this was used to form the new Turkish national identity. Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson's work will be our theoretical framework to analyze the events of this period from a new theoretical perspective.

Chapter 2

Theories of Nationalism

2.1. Introduction

Before attempting to clarify the classification of theories of nationalism, it is important to establish a solid basis about what nationalism is. The classification will surely help us in completing our efforts to define nationalism. According to the most basic and broad definition retrieved from the Encyclopedia Britannica, “nationalism is an ideology based on the premise that the individual’s loyalty and devotion on the nation-state surpass other individual or group interests”⁶. Intellectually, however, nationalism is not as simple as this definition.

First, nationalism should be accepted as a group behavior. The origins, boundaries, applications and adaptation through time of this group behavior are at the core of the discussion, which will first require us to understand how to define *Nation* and its relation with *Nationalism*. This setting of the relationship between them will emphasize what *culture* has to do with all of it.

In an attempt to define nationalism, Umut Özkırımlı refers to the etymological sources of the word ‘Nation’. The word is derived from the Latin word ‘*Natio*’, describing people who have similarities in birth. Romans used the word to distinguish especially foreigners outside Rome. In the middle ages, the word was used at universities to refer to student communities coming from the same region⁷. Anthony Smith defines nationalism as an ideological movement for the maintenance of unity and identity on behalf of an autonomous population that will proceed into being a “nation”. It is an assertion of national identity, giving a basic sense to the group’s collective mission and destiny, and tracing the origins of this collective destiny back to earlier beliefs⁸. According to John Breuilly, the word *nation* defines a historical relation between the society and the land by including all cultural elements, such as myth, common bureaucracy, law, economy, work ethics and

⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica web site, “Nationalism”, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/405644/nationalism> (accessed 15/05/2010).

⁷ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar, Eleştirel Bir Müdahale*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 13.

⁸ Smith, D. Anthony, “Ethnic Election and National Destiny: Some religious origins of nationalist ideas”, *Nations and Nationalism*, 5(3), (Jul 1999), 331.

goals. That is, the word *nationalism* comprises the set of rules to apply power over the *nation*. Without *nationalism*, the *nation* will stand as a social aspect of culture and folk⁹.

This short introduction to definitions for nation and nationalism leads us on to the theoretical boundaries concerning the relationship between both concepts. At this stage it becomes difficult to establish a grand theory of nationalism concerning the use of the theory of nationalism, or how and where the theory should be used. Should it be used to explain the historical evolution of the socio-political organization that has led to the current nation-state systems, or should it be used just to offer a better understanding to clarify the curiosity of the general public on the latest ethnic and political violence that takes place around the world? In addition, even the way historians and theorists of international relations look at nations and nationalism varies from case-to-case, with respect to geography and time. According to Benedict Anderson, nationalism can adapt itself through centuries, political regimes, economic and social structures, meaning that it takes different shapes through time and place. Therefore, nationalism is firm, resistant and also dynamic against any threat to its existence¹⁰. In spite of the evolution that the concept of nationalism has gone through, still it mainly deals with the doctrine, politics and sentiments of a social group, regardless of its given use, definition or classification¹¹.

First, nationalism is a doctrine, as the term ends with -ism. Based on the simple explanation given by John Breuilly, nationalism is a kind of theory and history, which is produced from ideas, with those who generate such ideas being above all the 'intellectuals' or a whole group defined as the 'elites'¹². This explanation leads to the following discussion on politics and sentiments. According to Ernest Gellner, *nationalism is the politicized version of the culture*¹³, with politics being the way that modern societies take in order to organize themselves in a unified way. This aspect will be dealt with later in this thesis. Meanwhile, the indoctrination of nationalism provides the source of the national sentiments that Anthony Smith attempts to describe¹⁴. Regarding theories of nationalism,

⁹ Nevzat, Altuntaş, "Yıldızı Sönmeyen bir ideoloji: Milliyetçilik", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler*3, 30, (Nov 2004), 177.

¹⁰ Ibid., 174.

¹¹ John, Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism", *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam (London, Verso, 1996), 147.

¹² Ibid., 147.

¹³ Ernest, Gellner, "The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation the Myth of Nation and Class," *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam, (London, Verso, 1996) 98.

¹⁴ Anthony, D. Smith, "Ethnic Election and National Destiny: Some religious origins of nationalist ideas, *Nations and Nationalism*", 5 (3), (Jul 1999), 332.

Smith believes that sentiments are the force that pushes the doctrine to be politicized by targeting the masses. It is important to understand that, through the three points presented above, nationalism is asserted as a set of ideas or politics that are the products of a rising sense of a national identity within the nation. It helps to represent the interest of one social group over others¹⁵. These applications of policies:

- 1- Set the existence of the nation apart from the others;
- 2- Give a political identity and a sense of loyalty to its members;
- 3- Give legitimacy through the creation of a sovereign state¹⁶.

The academic explanations of these stages are widely varying. So far, we've been trying to clearly define what nationalism is. Now, we need to consider the ways of applying nationalism.

In its quest to form a nation as an ideology, how does nationalism define the nation? Özkırımlı discusses this by looking at two points that interconnect with each other. First, nationalism as an *object* covers all matters dealing with ethnicity, language, religion, land or common history as a way of unifying a society. Second, nationalism as a *subject* deals with how the used *object* affects the members of the society and how the members are aware that they are part of a group¹⁷.

The relationship between the object and the subject, according to Özkırımlı, results in two different sorts of nationalism. Western or civic nationalism organizes society based on the rule of law. Whoever accepts the written law will be part of the society through the concept of citizenship. Needless to say, objects such as race, ethnicity and language do not set the primary agenda for this type of nationalism. The second type of nationalism that Özkırımlı presents is oriental nationalism. This sort of nationalism first defines its members based on their ethnic ties, history, blood ties and traditions, so members can only be part of the society by birth¹⁸. Ethnic nationalism certainly attempts to create a political citizenship, but in application, its policies reject other societies by putting an emphasis on a common heritage. This emphasis put on a common cultural heritage is an element that some civic nationalistic states are also trapped in. Özkırımlı claims that this effort of

¹⁵ John, Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism", *Mapping the Nation*, (eds) G. Balakrisham (London, Verso, 1996), 148.

¹⁶ Ibid., 149.

¹⁷ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar: Eleştirel Bir Müdahale*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2010), 16 – 17.

¹⁸ Ibid., 21.

balancing the emphasis put on the common heritage with the civic citizenship is the degree to which nationalism defines the geographical and political *territories* of the nation¹⁹.

Based on this discussion, we can understand that arguments about nationalism are concerned with the notion of maintaining unity under the idea of *wholeness*. This sense of wholeness comes through the maintenance of the following three elements: roots (history), identity (culture) and territory (politics). First, nationalism creates a vague reality based on laws of metaphysics. Such metaphysical perceptions are vague and, when compared with reality, they are confused, while the existence of the nation is seen as natural in a timeless chronology. This natural existence is solidified by romantic myths. Myths hold fundamental truths, and are used as vital resources to understand the mindset of the mythical ancestors to make the nation a closed unit defined as a spiritual community. Members are thus bonded by a common cultural and historical past reinforced by the existence of a strong national language²⁰.

2.2. Approaches to the theory of nationalism

The study of nationalism has become more popular and more institutionalized since the end of the Cold War. In the 1990s, as the world started to change with the collapse of the bipolar system, nationalism established itself as an independent ideology free from the two camps that had dominated the world between the end of WWII and 1991. Academically, the 1990s were a decade of a renaissance when the study of nationalism became more systematic. Previous work done between the 1950s and the 1980s suddenly became more popular as such studies were considered as providing a ready basis for developing the theory of nationalism.

Anthony Smith distinguishes three approaches concerning nationalism. These approaches differ from each other across two separate fields. The first field concerns the different ways to define the terms of “nation” and “nationalism. The second field of discussion concerns the origins of nations and when nations appeared²¹. According to Smith, the three approaches to nationalism are the primordialists (completed by

¹⁹ Ibid., 27.

²⁰ Maurice, Pearton, “Nations in Nationalism”, *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.2 (1), (Mar 1996) 1 – 5.

²¹ The Nationalism Project website, “What is nationalism” by Eric G.E. Zuelow.
<http://www.nationalismproject.org/what.htm> (accessed 15/05/2010).

perennialism), the modernists, and finally the ethno-symbolists²². A complementary way of regrouping the debates on nationalism is based on a time line. In his book *Milliyetçilik Kuramları*, (*Theories of Nationalism*) Umut Özkırımlı²³ analyzes the debates in four chronological groups: the pre-WWI period, the 1918-1945 period, the post WWII 1945-1990 period, and finally the post-Cold War era after 1989²⁴. This study will combine Anthony Smith's theoretical classification (primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism) with Özkırımlı's chronological one.

2.3. The Primordialist Approach

The primordialists, who are closely related to the perennialists, offer the earliest form of nationalism. It is an approach that accepts nations as a primordial part of humanity, assuming that nations have existed in different forms since antiquity, continuously developing through a linear evolutionary process. As this approach is heavily influenced by concerning with organic varieties of nationalism, it considers that the roots of nations lie with the kinship, ethnicity and genetic bases of human groups²⁵.

The second group the perennialists, are seen as part of the primordialist approach. Their approach also recognizes nationalism as a notion that has always existed throughout history. It differs from the primordialists in that perennialists believe that nations have not followed a linear path of historical existence. Rather, nations are a repeating form of social organizations; they come and go, they emerge as they dissolve. They appear in an interrupted historical sequences but the culture continuously exists. That is, history is a series of national (re-)alignments and conflicts which have always existed since antiquity. According to perennialists, throughout history, some nations have appeared and disappeared, such as the Hittites or the Babylonians, while others like the Greeks, French or Egyptians have always existed²⁶.

It is important to note that the intellectuals who can be considered as perennialists and the primordialists did not define themselves in this way, since this definition has been applied to them later in history, by their successors, the modernists and the ethno-symbolists. Özkırımlı places the primordialists between the 18th century and the 20th

²² Anthony D. Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nations*, (London, Oxford University press, 1999), 3.

²³ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009)

²⁴ Ibid., 29 – 68.

²⁵ Anthony D. Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nations*, (London, Oxford University press, 1999), 4.

²⁶ Ibid., 6.

century²⁷. However, it is important to note that primordialism still forms part of the most influential nationalist force in current political ideologies.

Compared to more recent forms of primordialism in the 20th and 21st century, the earliest primordialist intellectuals of the 18th century, including Romantic German and French philosophers such as Kant, Fichte, Herder and Rousseau, did not have any political agenda. They were mostly interested in trying to establish ways of defining culture, community, the state and what their relationship would be with individuals in terms of group behavior. Rousseau tried to argue for a concept of citizenship where the individual should put the interest of the state prior to his individual rights. As Özkırmılı points out, this period was heavily influenced by the French Revolution, whose efforts were oriented towards creating the modern state that we know of today on the basis of national self-determination. It was recognized that all nations should be able to found their own state, based on their own world view and traditions²⁸.

The primordialists offer us the first explanation on the *theory* of nationalism. Yet, one should also keep in mind that, not surprisingly, there is no clear agreement among theorists on the *origins* of nations and nationalism.

Disagreements about the origins of the theory of nationalism center on whether we should look for the prophets of nationalism or not. According to Gellner, the first philosophers came to their understanding of nationalism based on a false consciousness (nations and nationalism). Meanwhile, Anderson claims that, because nationalism could not create its own grand theorist, it makes no sense to look for a specific person responsible for the first appearance of nationalism. However, according to Özkırmılı, the discussion concerns the matter of who should be counted as a theorist of nationalism. There were no clear boundaries between the first theorists on nationalism and philosophy. Hans Kohn prefers locating the origins of nationalism in the German Romantic period. As philosophers of this age did not have any political agenda, the German Romantic Age can be considered as part of an aesthetic revolution. Their thought was more associated with freeing the human spirit without any connection to politically building a German nation. Elie Kedourie considers Immanuel Kant as the right person to start with²⁹. Kant worked on

²⁷ Umut, Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 32 – 33.

²⁸ Ibid., 12.

²⁹ Elie, Kedourie, *Nationalism*, (London, Hutchison, 1966), 21, quoted in U.Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 34.

the concept of moral values and epistemology: the relation between what the individual knows, what general morality from the outside world is, and how a dialogue between morality and the individual's observations can be maintained. Kant believed that experience comes from the individual's observation; therefore, this should form the basis of general morality and not the general morality applying to personal morals³⁰. For Kant, human freedom is supposed to emerge from individual existence to the society, in which the individual should be placed at the center. Politically, therefore, the best system for securing human freedom consistent with Kant's ideas is the republic, given the responsibility for protecting the individual's freedom³¹.

Kant observed this in a meaning that everything should just be constructed around the individual³². His student Johann Gottlieb Fichte adopted Kant's ideas, but believed that the individual could not act alone in liberating the spirit. The individual would need group action, so the individual should be part of an organic group sharing the same views and observations, with the state ensure the existence of this organization. However, regarding the state-individual relation, Fichte argued that the state should come before the individual in order to secure the individual's freedom. The state would protect the interests of the individual because the state also consists of the same individuals³³. Despite being German, Fichte looked up to France, as he believed that France was the only state that could protect individual freedom by imposing universal values. That continued until Napoleon's reign, which diverted the existence of the French state away from moral values. He switched to looking to Prussian dominance of culture that symbolized freedom and union. He divided the world into believers of freedom and non-believers, reflected as Germans and non-Germans. However, this distinction did not refer to the ethnic divisions between people. He argued that any believer could be accepted as a German, so his type of nationalism can be seen as a cosmopolitan nationalism. Germans should ensure their individual freedom, and from there should spread it to the rest of the world³⁴.

Fichte's thoughts were developed by Johann G. Herder, who claimed to be against universalism. Herder, opposing the enlightenment period, was part of the historicism

³⁰ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 34.

³¹ Ibid., 34-35.

³² Ibid., 34.

³³ Ibid., 36.

³⁴ Ibid., 37.

wave³⁵. We can now argue that, at this point in history, nationalism became different from a philosophy of enlightenment, by starting to take the shape of a system that differentiates human groups from each other. Herder pointed out that all human groups are different from each other, and that this difference comes primarily from language. For Herder, people using a common language form the primary ground of founding a nation, with the nation being the natural extension of the family, as the family is the smallest group that uses a common language. All humans are products of a language and society is formed accordingly. Language reflected human thought, so before the use of language it is impossible to discuss the existence of any human civilization. All societies have different ways of thinking, and this creates the differences among societies. That also applies to understanding all the traditions, laws, and moral values of societies as they are all products of different languages, and a way of society expressing itself³⁶.

This understanding of the relationship between language and the existence of human groups encouraged the study of social history. As societies distinguish themselves through language, law, traditions and values, it is correct that they all develop through an accumulation that can best be traced through the study of history. According to John Breuilly, the study of history is related to the efforts of creating an authentic society³⁷. All societies tend to differentiate themselves according to what is natural and real within their territories in contrast to what is excluded from their territories. Herder believed that societies grow naturally, and that it is natural that a society may sometimes be forced to merge with another one. Fichte agreed with Herder on this point, and supported the revival of the German language against the already dead Latin. All these ideas of German Romanticism came to form the basis of nationalism: All nations are unique, being formed through a distinct process that makes them authentic. At some point in history they may lose connection with their origins, but that doesn't mean that all is lost: they can still find a way to revive their origins. Individuals forming a nation have the right to self-determination through a union of citizens into a state. This German Romantic thought resulted a connection being defined between language, nation and state³⁸.

³⁵ Ibid., 38.

³⁶ Ibid., 39.

³⁷ Ibid., 39.

³⁸ Ibid., 40.

At the same time, it is also important to note how Jean Jacques Rousseau contributed to the theory of nationalism. He claimed that the state as a political organization should serve to protect individuals from others, but should also remind the citizens of their responsibilities toward their society. This reminding of responsibilities forces the citizens to abandon their individual wills, to be replaced by the general will of the society. This approach will give way on the development of patriotism and citizenship under a nation-state which cannot tolerate to any pluralism. Patriotism appears emotionally through an individual's heart, while citizenship is logical, learned and completed by patriotism³⁹.

During the 19th century, discussions about what a nation is and what nationalism is, moved towards heated debates between intellectuals. Özkırımlı categorizes the discussion into two: the partisan approach and the critical approach. The partisans, who consisted mostly of historians, supported the formation of nationalism. Through their study of the past, they tried to find (or create) elements, such as traditions and symbols, that could support the existence of the nation. For example, John Stuart Mill believed that forming a nation-state is part of a natural human society's evolution since human societies are formed of individuals who feel the need to be close to each other, whether through ethnic or cultural ties. Nevertheless, the existence of these organizations can only be ensured through the creation of a homogenous identity⁴⁰.

On the other hand, the critical camp, led by Marxists, argued against the partisans. Explaining the relation between Marxism and nationalism would require a separate research study. However, it is necessary to mention a few points that are helpful for understanding Gellner's theory of nationalism to be discussed here. According to Marxist theory, proletarians cannot be nationalists, as their struggle should not be limited by borders but should be able to expand internationally. However, against this general view, Marxists changed their approach across time and geography. Thus, Lenin used Marxist doctrine to argue for the notion of the self-determination of nations against others who were dominating them. His worldview was based on the matter of dominated and dominating nations. The idea of nations struggling against imperialism originated from this notion⁴¹.

³⁹ Ibid., 41.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 42 – 44.

⁴¹ Vladimir I. Lenin, *Emperyalizm Kapitalizmin en yüksek aşaması*, (İstanbul, Agora Kitaplığı, 2009), 80 & 173.

According to Marx and Engels, the modern nation is the product of a long historical process of capitalist society replacing feudalism. Capitalist society then prepared the basis for a homogenous society as regional differences disappeared due to the effects of the market economy⁴². Marxists distinguished nations with a history from those without a history, claiming that nations with a history would evolve to form states, that is, becoming nation-states, while the others would stagnate to become just nations (*Geschichtslosen Völker*). Nations without a history would fail to keep up with capitalism, condemning them to disappear because they preferred to maintain a feudal system for the continuation of their existence. Thus, to be a nation-state would require a certain level of economic development⁴³.

These forms of romantic questionings, which started to take the form of a theory in the 19th century, coincided with the start of more modern states being founded, such as the unifications of Italy and Germany. These were the times when nationalism became an important tool for unification of the newly founded states. Concerning this transformation from romanticism to theory, Anthony Smith subdivides the primordialist camp into three divisions: the naturalists, the socio-biologists and the cultural varietists. The naturalists saw the nation as existing in the state of nature. The socio-biologists argued that nations were an extension of kinship, believing that people of the same biological groups are more attracted to reproduce with others of the same biological group. Finally, the cultural varietists, believing that the nation is an extension of culture, dismissed the socio-biological approach, linking the existence of nations instead to common customs, religion, folk and territories.⁴⁴

Nationalism did not have any political agenda during the 18th and 19th centuries, but later we can observe that discussion in the 19th century became centered on the notion of establishing a definition for the new Europe that was being formed after the French Revolution. With this revolution, for the first time, a dynasty was replaced by an institution run by cadres whose power was not supposed to be inherited. Overall, the discussion moved from the individual being the center of the 18th century's ideal society to the 19th century's new Europe, where the concept of valuing the individual lost its central position against the notion of creating a political group governing the individual. This historical

⁴² Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 48.

⁴³ Ibid., 48 – 49.

⁴⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nations*, (London, Oxford University press, 1999), 6.

outline explains why current academic discussion on the origins of nationalism is Euro-centric, and why the prophets of nationalist theory are expected to originate from Europe. The study of the theory of nationalism will enter to a different phase with the appearance of the modernists and the ethno-symbolists after the end of WWII when the study of nationalism will be considered as part of an ideology used for the construction of nations both in Europe but also in the other parts of the world.

2.4. The Modernist Approach

The modernists, together with later theorists known as the ethno-symbolists, represent the era when the theory of nationalism moved into academia to become a more systematic program of research. Analysis of nationalism both by the modernists and by the ethno-symbolists includes systematic contributions of all the social sciences, including anthropology, sociology, international relations and economics. Thanks to further development in academic theories of nationalism, it became disassociated from the earlier philosophically dominated discussion of the primordialists.

The problem that both the modernists and the ethno-symbolists highlight is that the primordialists and the perennialists fail to explain why and how nations are created. They both see nations as culturally and biologically static entities, which fails to integrate with the pluralist notion that people are mobile and can mix with each other. In contrast, the modernists, and also later the ethno-symbolists, recognize that it is not possible to talk about the existence of any pure culture or genetic make-up.

The modernists therefore tried to find answers about the origins of nations and nationalism based on the modernization processes that nation-states were going through. According to Özkırımlı, the modernist approach covers the era from the end of WWII to the end of the Cold War. In particular, this includes the 1960s, when a significant part of the world outside Europe and the USA was going through a de-colonization process. France, the UK and other colonial powers were retreating from their colonies, whether as a result of peaceful agreements or military struggles, leading to the formation of newly independent states in Asia and Africa, which quickly started to modernize their societies in order to reach the levels of the West. However, it is important to remember that this is the period when the Cold War was at its zenith, and that these newly independent states were seen as a new ground for the two superpowers to compete over. Meanwhile, these newly

independent states were also busy re-constructing their nations in the search for a definition of their national identity.⁴⁵

Parallel to these global changes, modernists of the nationalist school of thought accepted the nation as a recent product of modernization efforts. Thus, in contrast to the primordialists who thought that a nation is natural and has always existed, modernists saw nationalism as being the result of a specifically constructed agenda, with the concept of sovereignty forming the core argument of the literature. Modernists see the French Revolution as the beginning of all nationalism. While Anderson traces the origins of nationalism to the Latin American independence struggle⁴⁶, Liah Greenfeld refers to the British Civil War⁴⁷. The modern states that appeared after WWII were shaped by an idea of sovereignty that merged with cultural homogeneity. This helped to merge all the individuals of a society, despite their different cultural backgrounds, into one constructed “modern” society. Given this history, modernists argue, nations as well as nationalism are constructed concepts without roots in the primordial past⁴⁸.

In particular, the modernist approach defines sovereignty as being built around industrialization, capitalism, central government, urbanization and secularism. Their literature see these as modern developments, meaning “systematically appearing” during the 19th century after the industrial revolution. In addition to these modernists in nationalism explore the core-periphery relationship, both domestically and internationally. They believe that this is what helped make nations and nationalism appear, leading modernists to conclude that, since these developments are modern, nationalism could not have existed in the terms of antiquity⁴⁹.

Apart from the above mentioned modernist claim, it is not surprising that modernist theorists cannot agree on one general theory to explain how modernization led to the appearance of nationalism. Based on theoretical differences, John Breuilly (also followed by A.Smith) divides modernism into three subfields: socio-economic, social-political and socio-cultural⁵⁰.

⁴⁵ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 62 – 68.

⁴⁶ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 63-64.

⁴⁷ Liah, Greenfeld, *Nationalism; five roads to modernity*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1993), 107.

⁴⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nations*, (London, Oxford University press, 1999), 7.

⁴⁹ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 105.

⁵⁰ John, Breuilly, “Approaches to Nationalism,” *Mapping the Nation*, (eds,) Gopal Balakrishnan, (London, Verso, 1996), 133 – 146.

The socio-economic field explores how the roots of nationalism and nations are the result of uneven capitalist economic development. It is a neo-Marxist theory dating from the 1960s and 1970s, focusing on third world states, particularly their national struggles against neo-imperialist powers. Identity movements to create national unity in these states were built around this struggle. This socio-economic approach, led by Tom Nairn⁵¹ and Michael Hechter⁵², argues that nationalism is a reaction to imperialism. For both Hechter and Nairn, world history can only be explained through dependency theory, meaning that nationalism cannot merely result from a society's internal dynamics but is rather the result of global developments⁵³. John Breuilly applies this core-periphery relation from the international to the national level, developing the term inner-colonization to explain uneven economic development among different regions of the same nation-state. National development is based on the notion that, through national industrialization, the economically less developed regions of the nation will start benefiting from modernization. Consequently, the national periphery will reach the same economic level as the national core to produce a stronger national unity. According to this model, minorities that are part of the periphery struggle to maintain their existence against the culturally dominant core, which inevitably creates a struggle by the periphery against the core, leading the way to an alternative nationalism based on the neglected minorities of the periphery⁵⁴.

The leading theorists of the second, social-political, field are John Breuilly and Eric Hobsbawm, who defines nationalism as a political movement that legitimizes the use of power⁵⁵. According to these theorists, the origins of nationalism should be determined through the study of who controls the state. The existence of the state is defined through sovereignty and a certain development of superiority as a nation. Power is important to be defined for those who compete for the state, so nationalism can be one tool for those in power to maintain control of the state. The controlling power that uses nationalism organizes all parts of labor to increase production⁵⁶. Hobsbawm also adds the notion that power is maintained through *invented traditions*. He claims that nationalism, as modern

⁵¹ Tom, Nairn, "The Three Dreams of Scottish Nationalism", *New Left Review*, no 1/49 (May-June 1968), 12.

⁵² Michael, Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975), XIX.

⁵³ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 108.

⁵⁴ John, Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism," *Mapping the Nation* (eds.) Gopal Balakrishnan, (London, Verso, 1996), 133 – 146.

⁵⁵ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 147.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 148.

social engineering, invents traditions such as repeated rituals and symbols. These repeated rituals from a national awareness through a created sense of these rituals and symbols having existed forever, thereby ‘proving’ the long continuity of the nation⁵⁷.

The third approach, social-cultural, is led by Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson. Their arguments will be discussed further in chapter II in more detail. Briefly, this literature suggests that, as a modern project, nationalism is maintained by inventing a *new national culture*. Nationalism exists to maintain group organization to increase production. The core-periphery relation is oriented towards the core colonizing the periphery by imposing a standard culture. Gellner names this new applied standard culture *high culture*, and explains that, after the 19th century, the urban zones started to receive groups of workers from the rural areas. Nationalism, through high culture, was then used to uproot people from their traditional cultures and systematically integrate them into a new culture. The primary tool that nationalism uses is a strong state to sponsor a educational system that teaches the new standard national values to all⁵⁸.

The modernists, despite their attempts of proposing the first academic explanations on the origins and on the dynamics of nationalism, they are criticized to be very materialistic and limit their theories only to a world after the industrial revolution. In this respect the ethno-symbolists appeared as a critic to the modernists.

2.5. The Ethno-Symbolist Approach

After having analyzed the modernist approach, it is now time to deal with the ethno-symbolist approach and Anthony D. Smith. The time period that Özkırımlı associates with this approach is the post-Cold War period⁵⁹. That is when the world started to re-shape itself politically and economically due to the power vacuum which the fall of the communist bloc created. During this period, new states appeared in the Balkans and Central Asia that created new fields for academicians of nationalism to study the old modernist approaches. Ethno-symbolism appeared as a result of criticisms of the modernist literature, so it is important to note that modernists and the ethno-symbolists both share common ground that they agree on, as well as arguments that they disagree on. Ethno-

⁵⁷ Eric, J. Hobsbawm, “Inventing Tradition,” *The Invention of Tradition*, (eds.) Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1 – 4.

⁵⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nations*, (London, Oxford University press, 1999), 9.

⁵⁹ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 33.

symbolists have been criticized as being a modern version of primordialists. However, this criticism is valid as the explanations offered by ethno-symbolists for the origin of how nations were created differs from those of the primordialists.

As mentioned, the ethno-symbolist approach is seen as a criticism of modernist theories, being an effort to clarify various points that the modernists failed to deal with⁶⁰. Ethno-symbolists first criticize modernism for being over-materialistic, for seeing nationalism as project of nation building driven by intellectuals and elites at the expense of popular beliefs. It sees the relationship between nation building and society as top-down⁶¹. Ethno-symbolists, on the other hand, search for arguments and evidence supporting a down-to-top relationship. Ethno-symbolists thus take into account individuals' feelings for their nation, such as the question of why so many people are willing to sacrifice their lives for their nation. Second, ethno-symbolists claim that the top-to-down analysis of the modernists causes them to neglect a nation's long history and successive accumulation of culture over generations, meaning that modernists only develop a short understanding of a nation's history, and cannot trace the *longue durée* of a culture⁶².

However, modernists and ethno-symbolists also share some common beliefs. They both observe that history and culture motivate both conflict and solidarity. They agree that nationalism is invented as a part of a social engineering project. This invention is re-enforced by myths, memories, traditions, symbols and ethnic heritage. Through these elements, a popular living past is created, which is handed down from generation to generation.⁶³ However, ethno-symbolists differ from the modernists in the way that they comment on the past. For ethno-symbolists, it is possible to trace back the origins of an ethnic group⁶⁴, which is why some critics associate ethno-symbolists with primordialists. However, although ethno-symbolists claim that tracing the past through history is possible, they argue that one must also be aware that, through history, social groups are subject to change as they are displaced or receive other migrating groups into their society as a result of their interactions⁶⁵. The point where ethno-symbolists agree with modernists is that, because the creation of the nation is an artificial process, tracing the past can also be

⁶⁰ Ibid., 208.

⁶¹ Ibid., 228.

⁶² Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism*, (New York, Routledge, 2009), 36.

⁶³ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 106.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 210.

⁶⁵ Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism*, (New York, Routledge, 2009), 37.

manipulated and symbolized for the same reasons mentioned in the modernist approach. However, according to ethno-symbolists, the modernists fail to give a clear explanation about past cultures, seeing everything as being just part of a modern invention of the 19th century.⁶⁶

At this point, for a better understanding of how the ethno-symbolist approach differs from the modernist approach, we may look at Anthony Smith, the leading theorist of the ethno-symbolist thought. In his book *National Identity* (1991), Anthony Smith defines nationalism as ‘*the doctrine that makes the nation the object of every political endeavor and national identity the measure of every human value*’.⁶⁷

Even though Smith agrees that nations are modern inventions, he is not convinced that nations do not have a history prior to the French revolution. For him the past cannot just be ignored or forgotten. There must be a genealogical tree for the origins of the state⁶⁸. Smith also rejects the idea that nationalism was purely created as a result of the modernization process since, for him, this is not enough to explain why so many people offer their lives to protect the nation because of nationalistic sentiments. Neither does it clarify which nation emerges where and why. The modernists’ explanations remain at the level of explaining how nations operate in the industrial age. Smith believes that during the Enlightenment, no interest in history developed with the growing existence of secular intellectuals. This started to challenge the religious authorities that the secular state wanted to pacify them. At this point, therefore, the state allied itself to the intellectuals in order to create a competing common identity, which took the form of nationalism against other competing forces, such as the religious authorities. At this point where ethno-symbolists agrees with the modernists, Smith admits that the modernization of the state depends on the people in the society who are assigned to specific tasks and works under the control of the state. The scientific (modern) state is full of agents who carry on the modernization process through their independent tasks⁶⁹. For instance, Gellner preferred to explain the process of the creation of the nation as the sequence of increasing rationalism leading to modernism and then nationalism and finally the nation. However, Smith’s sequence is

⁶⁶ Umut, Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 185.

⁶⁷ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (Reno, University of Nevada Press, 1991), 18.

⁶⁸ Anthony D. Smith, “Memory and Modernity: Reflections on Ernest Gellner’s theory of nationalism”, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2 (3), (Nov 1996), 371 – 373.

⁶⁹ Anthony D. Smith, “The crisis of Dual Legitimation,” *Nationalism*, (eds.) John Hutchison and Anthony D. Smith, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), 113 – 118.

increasing rationalism and secularism leading to competition followed by state intervention then nationalism and finally the nation.

A third point where Smith disagrees concerns how modernists classify nations. Modernists relate the creation of all nations to the modernization process. Their classification contrasts modernized and not modernized states. Smith, however, does not agree with this simple classification. He believes that the process of creating a nation is very complex, and therefore cannot be the same everywhere in the world. In addition, different states use different ways of explaining their past⁷⁰. Instead, he suggests two types of grouping related to the process of building national identity:

a) The Civic model: this is strictly based on spatial and territorial concepts. People make the territory their homeland. The subjects who are the citizens of the territory are then protected by common laws and one strong central political institution.

b) The Ethnic model: this puts the emphasis on the state being patrimonial, so that people are bound to each other not by shared territory but through their common ethnicity.

Smith also recognizes that the aspects of nationalism that he presents are based on Western values, such as the importance given to the presence of institutions, legal rights, a common economy, territory, and public culture.⁷¹

One final aspect of Smith's theorizing that modernists do not comment on much, concerns the role of the members of the society as *agents* during the nation building process. In his book "National Identities", Smith explains what the "self" is and how it affects the society. He notes how, during the enlightenment period, members of society started to question their own existence, and how the self is based on a socially constructed role, which leads to role identities. For Smith, the "self" has 3 collective identities: (1) - gender (2) - space or territory (local and regional identity) (3) - social class.

Smith believes that these three categories cannot collect large masses of people under one common aspect; each of them is for just a portion of the people. This is where religion comes in to complete with the state. Both can collect large masses of people under one collective identity, which is exactly how ethno-symbolists can incorporate nationalism and religion as two competing or cooperating sides. Through this understanding, ethno-symbolists can explain the existence of stateless ethnic groups that

⁷⁰ Anthony D. Smith, "Memory and Modernity: Reflections on Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism", *Nations and Nationalism*, vol 2(3), (Nov 1996), 375 – 376.

⁷¹ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (Reno, University of Nevada Press, 1991), 8 – 15.

can only identify themselves in religious terms. Examples of these groups are the Armenians or the Jews⁷².

The ethno-symbolists are known to offer a theory on nationalism based on a variety of social, cultural and economic facts. When compared to the modernists, the ethno-symbolists take in consideration a wider period of time beyond the industrial revolution. On the other hand when the ethno-symbolists are compared to the primordialists, they claim that modern nations are the continuation of ancient identities, but the nationalism that occurred around these societies is a modern phenomenon that could not exist in antiquity⁷³.

2.6. Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, academia has not yet been able to produce a grand theory of nationalism. None of the three categories of literature on nationalism find common ground on how nations appeared, how nationalism came onto the scene, and why some societies evolved to be nations. In some cases the definition given to nationalism also differs. Thus, it is difficult to talk about what nationalism is in the 21st century, and also whether understanding nationalism entails that we should analyze world history starting from antiquity.

Primordialism accepts that nations have always existed since the beginning of humanity in different forms while developing through a linear evolutionary process. This approach considers that the roots of nations lie with the kinship, ethnicity and genetic bases of human groups. On the other hand the modernists accepted the nation as a recent product of modernization efforts; precisely the result of a specifically constructed agenda, with the concept of sovereignty. Finally the ethno-symbolists, argues that it is possible to trace back the origins of an ethnic group, by arguing that nationalism is a modern fact that could not exist in antiquity.

It should be recognized that, as Özkırımlı points out, theories of nationalism have changed over time. Apart from the primordialists and perennialists, who have existed since the French Revolution and the German Romantic period, the modernists and the ethno-symbolists are clearly associated with a particular time period. Both the modernists and the

⁷²Ibid., 15 – 19.

⁷³ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 210.

ethno-symbolists have existed in connection with each other, but both represent different approaches on nationalism through the second part of the 20th century. The modernist approach, developed by Gellner in the 1960's at the zenith of the Cold War, considers the state as the strongest actor in the process of developing nationalism. Through this we see a relationship built from the entire society (including institutions) toward the individual agent (clerk): *a relation imposed from the top to the bottom*. In contrast, Smith, who deals with the period of post-communism, when the individual values became more important, sees the "self" and the "identity" making *the* agent influence society or its institutions in a relationship that is built from the bottom towards the top. This is why analyzing Smith's ethno-symbolism, which covers process and explanations that modernists could not deal with, is more complicated.

The following chapter will consist of a more detailed study of the modernists, E.Gellner and B.Anderson in particular, as it is believed that the Turkish language reform of 1928 till 1938 is closely associated with the approach.

Chapter 3

The Modernists: Gellner vs. Anderson

3.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the language reform that Turkey went through between 1928 and 1938. To this end, the modernist approach to the study of nationalism will be applied as an analytical tool. This chapter will introduce the framework of analysis with reference to the works of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, including a detailed study of Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.

The theory of nationalism is concerned with answering the following questions: what are the origins of nations, and how should we define the historical evolution of nationalism. The starting point for clarifying these questions lies in the relation that exists between society, state, and land. As outlined in Chapter II, in the nationalist literature, this relation is explained by three different approaches: the primordialists, the modernists and the ethno-symbolist. As Özkırımlı suggests, each approach's understanding of the issues is affected most by the period in which its theorists lived.

The modernist approach, which appeared in the 1960s, arose during the period when the role and the power of the state were at their zenith, in the tensest days of the Cold War when states were competing with each other on the basis of the 'zero-sum game', as it became known in international relations theory. Affected by the general political conditions of the times, modernists placed the state at the center of their efforts to explain developments in both current affairs and history. During the Cold War period, the state dominated daily intellectual and political life, leaving not much space for the development of non-state actors to be included in political sciences.

Modernist literature places great emphasis on the evolution of human societies in their efforts to explain the origins of nations and nationalism. As discussed earlier in this paper, each of the three approaches on nationalism traces its own socio-political evolution in order to define what a nation is and how nationalism appeared. Thus, the modernists emphasized the role that modern states have played in human evolution. They viewed the beginning of the evolutionary process of human societies as occurring when groups of people moved from being hunter-gatherers to establishing settled societies. These settled

societies later became more hierarchical organizations whereas the existence of the state was placed at the center of the bureaucracy. Modernists tended to trace the existence of nationalism only back to when the industrial revolution started to affect the organization of human societies, claiming that this social evolutionary process reaches its highest point when a dynastic state in a pastoral society is replaced by a state that takes its legitimacy from its nation as a modern industrial society. This makes the role of the state bureaucracy in society the core of modernist theory in the nationalist literature.

This thesis will not discuss the origins of the development of authoritarian states during the industrial age. However, one can trace the existence of the strong state back to the industrial revolution that started in England at the end of the 18th century. States then became even more powerful at the turn of the 20th century and throughout World War I (WWI). Starting from the 19th century, societies in Europe were organized under a hierarchical bureaucracy, controlled by a strong state. The expansion of national state authority during the industrial age took place at the expense of both religious and aristocratic authorities. The success of the secular modern nation state over these older authorities mainly depended on its ability to reach into the remotest area of the nation through its vast resources and network –an ability that neither the religious or monarchic authorities had been able to establish themselves. The foundation of the modern Republic of Turkey coincides with the post-WWI period in Europe when monarchies disappeared, to be replaced by strong institutions founded under the sponsorship of national states. Despite its strong central government, the Ottoman Empire had been unable to reach every remote area of its empire, and had therefore left the governing of the peripheral territories to local authorities. This allowed feudal authorities, such as Mehmet Ali Paşa (1769-1849) in Egypt, to rule independently throughout the 19th century. The consequence of this lack of central authority was that, by the end of WWI, the Ottoman Empire's existence was reduced only to Anatolia. The transition from the monarchical Ottoman Empire to the Republic was achieved through the War of Independence, fought under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The Republic of Turkey was then founded under a strong and authoritarian presence of the state because, having achieved a striking military victory in the War of Independence, the Kemalist state was considered as the only way to organize

the new society in the early days of the republic. The Kemalist state then embarked on a series of reforms in Turkey,⁷⁴ including language reform.

The language reform that took place between 1928 and 1938 perfectly fits into the modernist conceptualization of nationalist theory. In the early days of the Kemalist Republic, we clearly see the state acting at the center of all decisions and reforms which were taking place in Turkey. Although Turkey had been founded on the ruins of the multi-cultural Ottoman Empire, the Turkish state put all its efforts into constructing and maintaining a mono-culture, in which Turkishness emerged as the high-culture over all the other existing local cultures of Anatolia.

The modernist approach to nationalism will be an important instrument in analyzing the language policies developed in the early days of the Republic, although it is also possible to trace elements relating both to the primordialist and to the ethno symbolist arguments. However, in the case of the Kemalist Republic, it is, above all, the presence of the state in promoting the newly constructed identity fits with the modernist approach.

The rest of this chapter will present a detailed review of the modernist approach.

3.2. *The Modernists*

The modernist approach first emerged as a critique of the primordialists. Özkırımlı places the modernists in the post WWII era, specifically the era between the 1950s and the late 1980s. This period coincides with the darkest days of the Cold War, and was a time when many new countries outside of Europe appeared as a result of decolonization. After WWII, the great empires lost political and military power allowing smaller nations to become independent. For the first time, this led academicians to divert their attention to events outside Europe. The modernists in the nationalism literature were not an exception in this respect, so they studied the regions outside Europe. It is not very clear who can be considered the first modernist. Özkırımlı suggests that Karl Deutch, with his 1953 book *Nationalism and Social Communications*, or Elie Kedourie, with his 1960 book *Nationalism*, can be considered as first among the modernists⁷⁵.

At this time, academics working on nationalism started to look for more structured formulas to explain how nations and nationalism appeared. The modernist approach

⁷⁴ Between 1924 and 1938 the Kemalist administration implemented sweeping reforms in the political, social, legal, educational and economic fields.

⁷⁵ Umur, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 105.

appears to be more structural, criticizing the primordial approach for not offering factual explanations on the origins of nations and nationalism. It was also an era when the literature of nationalism moved beyond the field of philosophy based explanations toward models and explanations supported by empirical evidence.

Unlike the primordialists, the modernists accept that *nations and nationalism are recent developments* in history, and therefore claim that nationalism has not existed since the beginning of civilization. Rather, nationalism is a recent formation, because it is the product of modern developments, such as *Industrialization, Capitalism, Centralized Governments, Sovereignty, Urbanization and Secularism*. As these did not exist in pre-industrial societies, it is inconceivable for modernists that nationalism could have appeared prior to industrialization. Therefore, modernists challenged the primordialists in two ways: first, the modernists underlined the lack of an *institutionalist* perspective in primordialism. Second, the modernist literature sees the development of nationalism as conforming to the *interests of the elites*, while primordialists claim that it is a natural change of a group as a whole⁷⁶. Modernists also argue that nations are the sociological necessity of nationalism. This leads us to one of the main principles of the modernist literature on the origins of nationalism: the claim that *nationalism creates nations and not the other way around*⁷⁷. The meaning is simple: it suggests that nationalism appears first and then this is used to create a nation. At this point, one may ask a simple question: “Who or what is then responsible for the emergence of nationalism?” The modernists’ response to this question distinguishes them sharply from both the primordialists and ethno-symbolists. The modernists believe that the rise of nationalism through the modern dynamics mentioned above conforms to an agenda of a small group of people or institutions. Thus, according to modernists, in terms of state-society relations, nationalism is part of a “from top to down” relation, where all the dynamics are dictated to the society from the top. This understanding will be the driving force of this paper, and in later chapters, there will be in an effort to prove this relationship in the early Kemalist Turkish Republic.

Özkırımlı criticizes modernists for not accepting any other factors other than the above mentioned basics. The disagreements are mostly related to two main questions. First, when can a society be called *modern*? Second, at what point do modern

⁷⁶ John, Breuilly, “Approaches to Nationalism,” *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) Gopal Balakrishnan, (London, Verso, 1996), 157.

⁷⁷ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 106.

developments such as industrialization, capitalism, centralized government, sovereignty, urbanization and secularism become influential in society. Modernists' discussion of these two points always tends to be based on the core and periphery distinction. However, although disagreements about explaining which dynamics come first as the driving force of nationalism will continue to exist, in the end all modernists' arguments all overlap each other, despite all their arguments. As we may recall from the previous chapter, these disagreements are based on two related questions. When does a nation become a nation? From which direction is the idea of becoming a nation imposed: from a top-to-bottom relation or the other way around?⁷⁸ The study and the use of history will provide the main tool for commenting on these points. Therefore, historiography becomes an indispensable element for the use of theories of nationalism.

Many modernists' have addressed these points. According to Benedict Anderson the origins of nationalism lie with the Latin American independence movements⁷⁹, while Elie Kedourie extends it back further to the German Romantics⁸⁰. Peter Alter ascribes its origins to the French Revolution⁸¹, while Liah Greenfeld on the British Civil War in the 17th century⁸². Anthony Smith, who is not a modernist, but the leading theorist of the ethno-symbolists, prefers to summarize modernist theories around the notion of sociology and nation⁸³. He refers to the French Revolution as the starting point of the modernists, claiming that the French Revolution was the first to combine the idea of sovereignty with the notion of a homogeneous cultural understanding, which created the dynamics of self-determination⁸⁴. Although this Euro-centric explanation is used by ethno-symbolists to describe modernists, for the purpose of this study, it will be more suitable to use the French Revolution as the starting point of modernism. The revolution is considered to be modern as it represents a switch from a monarchy to a territorial based national state, leading to the modern aspects of central government, territory, capitalism, urbanism and secularism. The

⁷⁸ Umut, Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar, Eleştirel Bir Müdahale*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 43.

⁷⁹ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 63-64.

⁸⁰ Eli, Kedourie, *Nationalism*, (London, Hutchison, 1966), 11.

⁸¹ Peter Alter, *Nationalism*, (London: Hodder Arnold, 1989), quoted in Craig, Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis Press, 1997), 9.

⁸² Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism; five roads to modernity*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1993), 107.

⁸³ Anthony D. Smith, "Opening statement Nations and their past", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol2(3), (Nov1996), 360.

⁸⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, (London, Oxford University Press, 1999), 10.

French Revolution had significant effects on the appearance of Turkish nationalism during the late Ottoman Empire and the early Kemalist Republic.

Based on their disagreements, John Breuilly divided the modernist literature in to three groups: socio-economic, the social-political, and the socio-culturist. As already discussed in the first chapter, socio-economists believe that uneven capitalist development created nations and nationalism, while the socio-political field views the emergence of nations and nationalism as part of a political movement of the elites, trying to legitimize their use of power over society⁸⁵.

The third group, known as the socio-culturists, which Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner are both associated with, will be the focus of this paper. Socio-culturists believe that the origins of nations and nationalism can be found by looking at how a new culture “appears” as part of a modern agenda. Gellner and Anderson’s main point of disagreement concerns the emergence of nationalism. As a modern project, nationalism is maintained through the appearance of a new culture that is assumed to be superior to all other local cultures in a territory. This new and artificially occurring culture is the main tool for modern national elites to impose one standard on the rest of the nation. The main purpose of creating a new nation through imposing a new artificial, standard, national culture on all its members is to create a more organized society within a defined territory. According to Breuilly, the leading theorists of the socio-culturists are Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and, to a lesser extent, Miroslav Hroch. This thesis is therefore organized around Gellner and Anderson’s theorems, although Hroch’s ideas will be used as a brief introduction to the socio-culturists.

Miroslav Hroch⁸⁶, on the academic scene since the late 1960s, only achieved international recognition after the mid-80s, later than Gellner and Anderson⁸⁷. He argues that, during the early years of the industrial revolution in Europe, there were two groups of nations. The first group contained eight nations that had completed their cultural and institutional transformation to become a nation. These were England, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden and Russia. These eight nations were followed by two others, Italy and Germany, which were in the process of completing their

⁸⁵ John, Breuilly, “Approaches to Nationalism,” *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) Gopal Balakrishnan, (London, Verso, 1996), 158.

⁸⁶ Miroslav, Hroch, *Avrupa’da Milli Uyanış*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011).

⁸⁷ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 197.

transformation to a nation state. The second, larger group, from Eastern and Central Europe, included various multi-national empires governed by elites who were not part of the national majority existing on their territories⁸⁸. Hence, these multi-national empires were considered to be governed by foreigners compared to the majority population. In the late 19th century, a national “*awakening*” started, in which people living under foreign dynasties began their journey towards achieving national unity. Hroch terms these awakenings and the resulting organized efforts as a “national movement”. Nationalism is then an understanding that developed through these “awakening movements”, identified as political action that prioritizes national interests above all others. For socio-culturists, nationalism is a movement that emerges through an elite leading class of these local groups, which has sufficient means to organize such actions. Consequently, a top-down relationship develops, although the rest of the group remains unaware of this relationship or its dynamics. Crucially, it is the national awakening that creates nationalism that leads to the nation, and not the other way around⁸⁹.

The national awakening is organized in three parts: 1) developing a national culture through a local language to be used in education, government and economic life; 2) creating a complete society, including peasants, workers, traders and elites; 3) obtaining civil rights for this society in what may later turn out to be a struggle for independence⁹⁰. The common ground of all three points center on the notion of creating a common culture whose members will feel part of. Hroch sees the process occurring in three steps. In *stage A*, there is a search for a historical basis on which to build the culture. In *stage B*, cultural ideas and history are spread to the society. Finally, in *stage C*, a complete society is created based on the new national identity⁹¹.

Of these three steps, stage A is the most important one for us in terms of this paper’s focus. In *stage A*, the movement led by the elites tries to build the new culture. Therefore, a cultural tool, language, is used to highlight the historical differences from other societies. In addition, the writing of history is an important tool for maintaining the newly built culture. Based on this understanding, and on the theoretical grounds provided

⁸⁸ Miroslav, Hroch, *Avrupa’da Milli Uyanış*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 30.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 30-31.

⁹⁰ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar, Eleştirel Bir Müdahale*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 45.

⁹¹ Miroslav, Hroch, *Avrupa’da Milli Uyanış*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 53-55.

by Gellner and Anderson, this paper will aim to analyze language policies during the early Kemalist Republic in Turkey.

At this point, we will move on to discussing E.Gellner's and B.Anderson's contributions to the modernist literature on nationalism.

According to Gellner, the newly "invented" culture is used to create a newly urbanized society, distinct from its traditional local to will be formed into a single standard culture⁹². Anderson, on the other hand, argues that, while people are being reformed in the so-called urban zones claimed by Gellner, members of the society will not be aware of each other. However, within the same region, as part of an "imagined nation", they will feel close to each other through the created common culture. As a result, Anderson defines nationalism as "imagined"⁹³. These two interpretations of the "appearance" of the new high culture will further be explored below, by analyzing the arguments presented in the two thinkers' key books, both published in 1983: Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.

3.3. Modernism and Ernest Gellner (1925-1996)

3.3.a. Introduction

Ernest Gellner, one of the leading theorists in the literature of nationalism, was born in Paris, raised in Czechoslovakia and later moved to England to pursue his academic career⁹⁴.

For many, he is accepted as the first academician who really established a theory of nationalism at a time when not many people were interested in studying nationalism. He was the first to suggest a model to explain nationalism using sociology. In many of his writings, he claimed that, through his sociological model, he could explain the evolution of nationalism. The data that he collected dates from the social movements of the 19th century Europe, and led him to build generalizations on the social movements that created the nations, the first "grand theory" on nationalism. However, this attempt also led to criticism of every aspect of the ideas that he put forward in the literature of nationalism⁹⁵.

⁹² Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, (London, Oxford University Press, 1999), 6.

⁹³ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 181.

⁹⁴ E.Gellner taught in LSE between 1949 and 1984 before moving to Cambridge College where he taught until his death in 1996.

⁹⁵ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 161.

He received his doctorate on social anthropology, and his first field work was in Morocco. Anthropology then paved the way for his later studies on nationalism. As an anthropologist, he was interested in explaining social patterns and change. His explanations on the patterns that cause changes were based on his interest in how societies that form a state differ in societies that do not form a state. He compared developed societies with undeveloped societies by identifying differences in literacy,⁹⁶ believing that the degree of a society's development does not depend on its ethnicity, but specifically on its social organization. Organization and culture mobilize the society to change, which helps explain why modernity came to some societies earlier than others. These areas of interest made Gellner known as a structuralist. In the early 1960s, when most researchers worked on Cold War issues, he mainly looked at the dynamics of nationalism, which he believed were formed through social patterns combined with the needs of production⁹⁷.

Anthony Smith, who worked with him as a graduate student, summarizes Gellner's views in three general areas of discussions. First, Gellner recognizes that nationalism has a difficult and complex relationship between cause and effect, making it difficult to classify and varied across environments. Second, the nation and nationalism are sociological phenomena that can, as a result, be deconstructed just as they are also constructed. Third, modernism is the driving force of nationalism. As a result, nationalism is inevitable in the modern world⁹⁸.

3.3.b. Modernity

For Gellner, modernity is a specific form of social organization and culture. Ideas are a function of social organization; therefore, nationalism, as a modern idea, is also a function of the society. Gellner rejected any evolutionary approaches that present the current society as the surviving shape of past forms. Instead, he tried to trace changes within the society⁹⁹. Without being a dedicated Marxist, he employed various aspects of Marxism while rejecting the Marxian notion that capitalism is the fundamental driving force of modernity. For Gellner, intellect and science are the result of modernization,

⁹⁶ John, Breuilly, "Introduction", in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XIV.

⁹⁷ Ibid., XV.

⁹⁸ Anthony D. Smith, "Opening statement Nations and their past", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol2(3), (Nov1996), 365.

⁹⁹ John, Breuilly, "Introduction", in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XXI.

leading to an enlightenment that allows people to see the world in a more concrete way. The degree of a society's development can thus be understood from its social organization and its use of the means of production. However he is aware that the means of productions cause the uneven economic distribution among societies, thus nationalism becomes an answer to the uneven distribution¹⁰⁰. At this point Gellner admits that Marxism *asks* the correct questions in terms of analyzing the historical human social evolution, but nationalism provides the right *answers* to these questions in terms of dealing with industrialism¹⁰¹. The way that he classifies human history is also based on the means of production: hunter-gatherer societies, agrarian societies, industrial societies¹⁰². Regarding secularism, Gellner is skeptical that modernism leads society to a strict secularism¹⁰³.

Many believe that this way of classifying human societies comes from the strong ties Gellner had with Weber and Durkheim. This tradition in the literature of sociology tends to divide human history into different phases in order to better compare the different evolutionary phases that humankind has gone through. In his first book, *Thought and Change* published in 1964¹⁰⁴, Gellner attempted to develop a model in which he separated industrial societies from hunter-gatherers and agrarian societies¹⁰⁵. Later, he placed a stronger emphasis on this division to support his explanatory model on nationalism in his best known book "*Nations and Nationalism*"¹⁰⁶.

Nationalism, for him, is both a product and also a function of modernity. Modernity produced nationalism, and later nationalism created nations, not the other way around. The successes that nationalism achieved do not depend on its intellectual power, but rather on its function within the societies in which it developed¹⁰⁷. Nations are not only recent, but are also the result of specific modern conditions, such as social mobility to increase

¹⁰⁰ Roman, Szporluk, "Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism", *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John A. Hall, (Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1998), 26.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 27.

¹⁰² John, Breuilly, "Introduction", in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XXV-XXVI.

¹⁰³ David, Shankland, "Gellner and Islam", *Social Evolution and History*, Vol2 No2, (Sept 2003), 124.

¹⁰⁴ Ernest, Gellner, *Thought and Change*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), quoted in Roman Szporluk, "Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism", *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John A. Hall, (Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1998), 23.

¹⁰⁵ Roman, Szporluk, "Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism", *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John A. Hall, (Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1998), 24.

¹⁰⁶ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 163.

¹⁰⁷ John, Breuilly, "Introduction", in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XX.

production, mass literacy and public education. Modernity spontaneously transforms isolated “low cultures” into cultivated, literate, specialized, yet standardized “high cultures”¹⁰⁸.

3.3.c. *Nationalism*

Gellner observes that ideas and societies have changed in modern times. During the transition from pre-industrial societies to industrial societies, societies were dislocated. The reason he gives for this transition from agrarian to industrial societies and their dislocation is related to the emergence of new kinds of knowledge and values based on reason and science¹⁰⁹. In a Gellnerian point of view change and nationalism need to be considered together. Gellner’s way of understanding the 19th century European history was based on clarifying the social changes that the European society has gone through and how did the social classes took part of it¹¹⁰. His way of explaining this change was through the improvement of science, industrialism and therefore modernism causing nationalism¹¹¹.

Nations and nationalism are not natural, because they are not permanent in human history, only appearing during the transition to industrial societies. Paradoxically, however, members of such societies tend to believe that their nationalism has always existed since the beginning of their history.

As part of his observations on modern societies, Gellner differentiates the meaning of *structure* from the meaning of *culture*¹¹². He identifies structure as the distinct roles played by individuals for the functioning of the society, while culture is defined as the presentation of the people in contrast to others, based on folk customs, dance, and rituals. He states that structure furnishes an identity, while culture simply reinforces structure. Therefore, he predicts that large, multi-cultural societies will have difficulties developing any type of nationalism¹¹³.

¹⁰⁸ Anthony D. Smith, “Opening statement Nations and their past”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol2(3), (Nov1996), 366 - 367.

¹⁰⁹ Roman, Szporluk, “Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism”, *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John A. Hall, (Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press, 1998), 27.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 32.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 26.

¹¹² John, Breuilly, “Introduction”, in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XXIII.

¹¹³ John, Breuilly, “Introduction”, in Ernest Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), XXII.

The development of nationalism is purely related to the *degree of communication* that the society maintains within itself. Thus, an agrarian society cannot develop nationalism as communities are isolated from each other, and the division of labor is unclearly organized. In pastoral communities, only a few identities are offered. Industrial societies, however, are more dynamic than agrarian societies. In urban areas, people come into greater contact with each other, constantly moving from place to place or changing jobs without maintaining any fixed roles. Communication is vital if mass literacy is to be standardized¹¹⁴. Gellner considers this type of standardization to only be possible if only one language is used, meaning all other competing languages will be rejected. Gellner notices that the application of a singular language reflects a change in the forms of constructing nations and nationalism. Old languages are deliberately rejected as a result of a choice made by a central authority while the new language receives legitimacy¹¹⁵.

Currently, when the state routinely interferes in the organization of society, nationalism appears to be permanent and natural, in the sense that it becomes the driving force for unifying people. However, Gellner observes that nationalism results from conflict rather than from natural unification. As a champion of modernism, Gellner notices that the change in the society first causes a conflict between religion and science. The conflict reflects on the application of the new national language whereas the old local languages will maintain more of religious motifs as the new national language will be secular¹¹⁶. It turns out to be a clash between the political will and the national will. He claims that, since industrialization spreads unevenly, developed regions will take advantage of differences from underdeveloped regions to confirm their superiority. This will force less-developed regions to create a defense mechanism around the notion of national autonomy in order not to be assimilated by more developed regions.

Nationalism is not founded on past sentiments or nationhood. As nationalism is modern, it creates the nation in a place where it did not previously exist. However, nationalism becomes a political principle based on sentiments as well as feelings of anger, which become the unseen forces behind nationalism. However, as mentioned earlier, Gellner began his journey in the academic research of nationalism by questioning what the critical points are for a society that moves from being agrarian to industrial, as well as

¹¹⁴ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 30.

¹¹⁵ Michael, Lessnoff, *Ernest Gellner and modernity*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2002), 96.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 97.

developing nationalism at the same time. He sees nationalism as being the transformation of a folk culture into a high culture in search of a political state. This high culture is a recently invented culture that marks the difference between an agrarian society and a modern industrial society¹¹⁷.

According to John Hall, Gellner explains nationalism in terms of socio-economic arguments. For Gellner, nationalism cannot be understood without taking politics into account; Gellner's view has received much criticism of being too modernist and too instrumental in explaining human activities, as his explanations are based on functionalist arguments¹¹⁸. Gellner believes that nationalism is a function that regulates a society moving towards industrialism and urbanism¹¹⁹. However, Sami Zubaida, while recognizing that industrialism causes a major dislocation in agricultural societies, argues that the effects are not experienced in the same manner everywhere¹²⁰. In short, Gellner's theories are criticized as too general to explain the origins of nationalism in particular societies¹²¹.

Gellner's search is for accurate explanations rather than vague commentary. He points two facts on orienting his views on nationalism; First, he is aware of the changes in social values caused by modernization, which will deeply affect the society sociologically, and will spawn social movements. He does not place intellectuals at the core of these movements, although they are responsible for playing a leading role. Second, he points out that nationalism has a functional value within the society. It helps the society's functioning in all its individual aspects in the name of modernization. Through this functioning, it promotes state sponsored education, organizes the work force and, most importantly, standardizes the culture by creating the high culture¹²².

3.4. Ernest Gellner "Nation and Nationalism"

The central claim of Gellner's book is that nationalism is an inevitable consequence of modernity, an invention to satisfy the needs of modernity. Gellner attempts to prove his

¹¹⁷ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 35.

¹¹⁸ John, A. Hall, "Introduction", *The State of the Nation*, (eds.) John, A. Hall, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.

¹¹⁹ Ernest, Gellner, "Reply to Critics", *The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner*, (eds) John A. Hall, Ian Charles Jarvie, (Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1996), 626-626.

¹²⁰ Sami, Zubaida, "Theories of Nationalism", *Power and the State*, (eds) Gary Littlejohn, Barry Smart, John Wakeford and Nira Yuval-Davis, (London, Croom Helm, 1978), 56-57.

¹²¹ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 177.

¹²² Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 50.

argument using various social science disciplines, including philosophy, anthropology, sociology, history and political science.

Gellner first tries to establish clear sets of definitions for terms dealing with nationalism. He first defines nationalism and the role of the state. He then compares the culture of the agrarian society with industrial modern societies. Having clarified the basis to understand these two societies, he then determines what caused the transition to the modern society. Finally, he offers a clear definition on what a nation is.

As discussed in previous parts of this study, the main problem that exists in the literature and in debates on nationalism is that there are no clear definitions of what the *nation* and *nationalism* are. As already discussed in previous chapters, these definitions also vary according to the three different approaches in the literature of nationalism (primordial, modern, ethno-symbolist), which also present different accounts of the origins of nations and nationalism. Gellner, introducing his own set of determinants, argues for a different historical view of the evolution of human societies.

According to Gellner, nationalism is defined as “*a political theorem which foresees the conflict between the political and national elements*”, and which has the goal of keeping one ethnicity within one territory without a difference between the ruler and the ruled. He offers two basic concepts as evidence of the existence of nationalism: emotions and territories. Emotions are defined through the conflicts, disappointments or satisfactions of a nation. Territories are the physical boundaries artificially designed to represent the nation, which help to differentiate one cultural group from others. However, in a given territory, there may be different overlapping nations that conflict with each other, with one of them becoming dominant over the others. Emotions are driven through this competition or assimilation within the given territory¹²³.

At this point Gellner defines the *state*, using Weber’s definition that *the state is the organization that maintains the right of applying force by any means*¹²⁴. That is, it alone has the legitimacy to use force in order to maintain order, through which it regulates the emotions of the society in the name of harmony. It creates a hierarchy and a class of bureaucracy that protects the interests of the nation. The existence of the state is also crucial to claims over a territory. Around these elements, the state becomes the essential

¹²³ Ibid., 71-72.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 73.

part of nationalism. However, beyond this Weberian understanding of the state, Gellner also adds the idea that the state regulates harmony within the society by organizing the division of labor because productivity is such an essential part of modern society. Thus, the state also maintains order through the division of labor and labor specialization¹²⁵.

Based on this understanding of the specific function of the state concerning labor, Gellner divides the evolution of human history into three periods: *pre-agricultural*, *agricultural* and *industrialized*. During the pre-agricultural stage, society was hunter-gatherer, so the division of labor was inappropriate for creating a permanent state. There was no permanent production, and living was organized on a daily basis. However, when societies settled as agricultural production evolved, it created a need for planning production to support larger communities. Through this need, a stable division of labor had to be organized around a hierarchy, so the permanent state appeared. Finally, industrial societies experienced the need for a greater division of labor, driven by the existence of the state. Societies became larger, more complex and more diverse, thus requiring a more complex organization of labor¹²⁶.

The determination of the *nation* in relation to the emergence of states is more complex. According to the general theoretical understanding of nationalism, both the nation and the state should appear in parallel based on the assumption that one cannot appear without the other. However, both appear independently from each other. For Gellner's the nation is built on two critical elements: culture and consent. Culture is a common system of thoughts, symbols, reflections and behaviors that are communicated among the members of a nation. Consent refers simply to the notion that members of a society must agree on keeping the culture alive by following the cultural rules imposed on them. The recognition of the culture as a way of communication is important, as culture can only exist through this will¹²⁷.

In sum, Gellner argues that five basic elements function together: nationalism, emotions, territory, the state as a labor regulator, and the voluntary will to be part of a culture. These five elements help us understand the Gellnerian modernist view that nationalism can only exist through the state within a nation, where the state regulates the use of labor within a political territory. These concrete aspects of nationalism are

¹²⁵ Ibid., 74.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 75 – 76.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 76.

complemented by on the three abstract elements, namely emotions, culture and voluntarism, which form the basis for the existence of the nation.

Gellner recognizes that the course of the evolution of human societies is affected by major changes that take place in history. In particular, nationalism is linked to one of these changes: modernism, whereby nationalism becomes the linkage of the state to a specific culture, forming a relationship between sovereignty and the existence of the culture within a defined territory. In attempting to explain what change is necessary for nationalism to appear, Gellner recognizes that not all the data needed is available to define this change in a society. However, by proposing two models of societies, agricultural versus modern, he aims to depict the changes that have occurred in between the two models¹²⁸.

Gellner defines the norms of an agricultural society as agrarian culture. In general, this society is based on food production and the ability to store it. The society is technologically stable, although various innovations take place from time to time. A strong ecological partnership exists with the surrounding natural environment, although society makes no effort to master it. Socially, there is a hierarchy that prevents members of the society from moving between the different social strata. Social mobility is impossible because challenge of inherited rankings is not possible¹²⁹.

It is in agricultural societies, that political states, functioning as a means of organization, appeared for the first time in history, and where we first come across hierarchies based on rigid social class structures and rigid division of labor. Literacy also appears for the first time, although use is limited just to religious writings, record keeping and tax collecting. Consequently, literacy was only achieved by a specific group of people, and few had the means of learning. This created a separate, privileged social group leading to a sense of superiority on the part of such literate elites. The appearance of literacy, particularly for record keeping, was also the first step towards cultural and scientific accumulation through a central hierarchy that could control all information¹³⁰. Writing is a technology which makes the recording and the expansion of all data possible to convey

¹²⁸ Ernest, Gellner, "The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation the Myth of Nation and Class," *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam, (London, Verso, 1996), 98.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 99.

¹³⁰ Ernest, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 79.

ideas. In contrast, before the popular use of writing, the expansion of ideas in illiterate agricultural societies could only be maintained through rituals and symbols¹³¹.

The social class structure, based on literacy, thus differentiated the ruling elite class from lower class agricultural producers. Social movement was not vertical between different classes, but horizontal within the same class, so interactions between the two social blocs were kept to a minimum. At the same time, the state's dynastic rulers saw no need to form a constant relation with the society's members. Rather, the religious ruling class only maintained sufficient relations with the commoners in order to keep them on their side. Through this limited interaction between the ruling dynasty, the aristocracy and the isolated commoners were established. Under these conditions, Gellner argues, there was no basis for nationalism to appear because the state does not see the need to apply a standard culture to all of its citizens; rather, it continues to exist by keeping its interactions at the minimum¹³².

Agricultural societies were also small, and mostly local, with no need to differentiate themselves from each other. Since literacy was responsible for the gap between the ruling class and the agricultural producers, there was no possibility of a common culture appearing. At this point, culture was not used to concur with politics, nor was the state in need of reaching its citizens through culture. The isolated agricultural communities had no need of forming a common culture, so culture did not have the means to expand itself nationally. That is, although a variety of cultures within a territory may have existed, they may well not have interacted or competed with each other, and political territories did not follow cultural boundaries. However, we know that, during the Middle-Ages, the religious classes (as seen during the crusades) spread a certain standard of culture and mobilized people across Europe. States also contributed to this mobilization through military participation, although this type of mobilization, as seen during the crusades, never lasted long and could not be institutionalized permanently. As a result, during this era, people's personal identification remained limited to their smaller communities¹³³.

¹³¹ Ernest, Gellner, "The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation the Myth of Nation and Class," *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam, (London, Verso, 1996), 102.

¹³² Ernest, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 81.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 83.

Stability based on isolation was the most general characteristic of agricultural societies. As the society's members were not attempting to master nature, nor hoping to become part of the higher rankings of the society, economic production remained low. Society made no special efforts to increase its food production, although food production and redistribution did become important during starvation periods, at which point the ruling elites intervened for their own interests. That is when the state had to intervene in order to settle the dispute¹³⁴. However, after the problem was resolved, everyone went back to their normal daily life.

The organization of the state in agricultural societies was limited and did not interfere with the daily life of the society, which meant that the existing multicultural society did not have to evolve toward a mono-culture. Instead, societies were based on local cultures and communities that could be part of a large multi-cultural empire. Cities and regions remained isolated from higher authority. This gap between rulers and ruled was caused by the fact that ruling was maintained through the literate class, who represented only a small part of the society. The illiterate majority maintained their networks through a face-to-face communication, while the ruling class only interconnected with itself. Labor groups were well defined with a clear separation in the division of labor, which made each labor group stay among each other in an isolated way. They were not open to newcomers from the lower classes. Thus, a warrior would stay a warrior, and would eventually be replaced by his close kin, not by an outsider.¹³⁵

While researching the dynamics of nationalism, Gellner never attempts to offer an explanation of the origins of industrialism. Whatever happened during this period, people adapted themselves unconsciously, without any specific agenda or any set targets. Gellner's priority is to trace the results of industrialization and its influence on today's societies. He argued that, as a direct result of spontaneous industrialization, social order and production within an organized society was established in the name of progress¹³⁶.

Progress brings the unknown, but also opens the way to new developments and economic improvements. Society adapts itself to these changes based on functionality and competition. Members no longer have fixed roles anymore, as job descriptions keep

¹³⁴ Ernest, Gellner, "The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation the Myth of Nation and Class," *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam, (London, Verso, 1996), 101.

¹³⁵ Ernest, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 85 - 90.

¹³⁶ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 93.

changing in the name of functionality, while in the name of efficiency, modern economies become based on production emerging from the most complex specialized societies. Therefore, a new organization and division of labor is needed. Nationalism becomes the force of this newly industrialized society with the power to maintain the necessary social harmony to permit continued economic progress¹³⁷. Such societies require the coordination of high standards for modern production, which are directed by a specialized ruling class. Thus, modern societies become politically centralized. This centralization of the society means the monopolization of legitimate violence by a political center. This centralized power dictates the mobility of labor, the organization of working areas and the living spaces, as well as the loyalty of a specific group of people for defense purposes. New notions of separation are important in contrast to agricultural societies, in which there were no division between defense, production and social life; rather, each member of the society could be responsible for all of them¹³⁸.

With its dynamism and mobility between social classes, and specialization among jobs, industrial society is a more complex society. Due to competition, people move fast in order not to fall behind the competition. Mobility crosses over cultural stereotypes and previous cultural requirements so that socially or professionally qualified positions are no longer culturally or ethnically determined¹³⁹. This speed of mobility also brings conflict as a result of vertical movement between social classes in the division of labor. The traditional moral and religious values established in the agricultural society are ignored, since these are now seen as characteristics of a stagnating society. At this point, the previously isolated state has to emerge from its isolation and directly intervene in organizing this new complexity in the name of stability¹⁴⁰.

While studying industrial societies, education and the development of the national language are crucial points that need to receive special attention. Industrial societies need a more precise organization for placing specialized personnel, while agricultural societies were organized around blocks of specialized labor, stagnating technology and unchallenged expectations¹⁴¹. As a result of this non-dynamic understanding of labor, labor education in agricultural societies started from childhood and the professional

¹³⁷ Ibid., 99.

¹³⁸ Ernest, Gellner, "Theory and Society", *Nationalism*, Vol10 No6, (Nov 1981), 754.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 765.

¹⁴⁰ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 100.

¹⁴¹ Ernest, Gellner, "Theory and Society", *Nationalism*, Vol10 No6, (Nov 1981), 757.

specialization of the individual was life-long. In contrast to agricultural society's immobile division of labor and education, industrial societies are differently organized. Due to mobility and specialization available within such societies, education had to become more flexible and implemented through a common standard. The resulting standard education had to teach the same basic necessities to every member of the society, continuing up to higher education, when members need to specialize in specific occupations. Basic learning should not be difficult, as this stage should be brief, giving all the society's members the opportunity to later restart their educational process when-ever the means of labor also changed. That is, the regular common standard education establishes the basis on which any specialization can later be built. All that is needed for specialization is extra education on top of the standard base that can later be maintained through experience at work. When individuals change occupation, they are required to receive special training on top of the already acquired basic education. For Gellner, therefore, it is not important to know *what* modern society produces but to see *how* the society reproduces itself in order to maintain its constant productivity¹⁴².

The state is responsible for maintaining the standard education that continues the reproduction of the society. In agricultural societies, this was provided by the family through daily face-to-face education. Education in the centralized modern states is more standardized, complex and expanded over a larger territory. As it will be discussed in subsequent parts, education is a tool that the nationalistic ideology will use in order to pass its messages to the masses¹⁴³. The notion of education in the family is replaced by professional education by the centralized state. Consequently, the mother tongue learned at home loses importance with respect to the national language. The standard literacy spread across the society opens the way to more participation in the labor market but also to the ruling bureaucracy. This bureaucracy uses every means to urge all the sub-societies, previously parts of the multi-cultural profile of the agricultural society, to apply the same standard education and abandon their local culture¹⁴⁴.

This standardization of education and language is crucial to enable the central state's bureaucracy force the sub-cultures to become part of the national culture. Through the modernization of the society, the nature of labor also changes from being physical to

¹⁴² Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 101 – 104.

¹⁴³ Ernest, Gellner, "Theory and Society", *Nationalism*, Vol10 No6, (Nov 1981), 760.

¹⁴⁴ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 107 – 108

more intellectual in industrial societies. That is, in modern societies, people need to use more of their skills of communication and be more practical. Language is the most concrete element used to unite people. Within all the confusion created through the new mobility of labor, language remains the main way of communication among agents that are in constant mobility. Meanwhile, through the standard language, the state is able to set clear rules on rights and duties, and on tax collection that can be understood by every member of the society. A more egalitarian society is created by providing equal conditions to each individual in terms of competing, progressing and knowing the personal limits set by the central authority¹⁴⁵. In contrast, in agricultural societies, communication maintained through a specific language was driven by a variety of groups, with all sets of communications having meanings that were only valid for specific groups of people. However, in modern states, due to social mobility, more transparency becomes available. Mobile members will not know each other on constant basis, so social context will be accidental in unknown regularity. Thus, the only shared aspect of the society that can bring everyone together on one common basis is a standard education promoting a standard language¹⁴⁶.

Creating a standard education system by establishing a standard language gives the state not only the monopoly of a practicing force, as used to be the case in agricultural societies, but also allows the state to maintain complete control of forming the society according to set norms. For Gellner, the collection of norms used to maintain social order to allow continuous economic progress is nationalism. Gellner proves that these norms, set by a central state, are not part of human nature, but rather artificially invented to function within each specific society¹⁴⁷.

Considering nationalism as a collection of invented norms, in which every member of the society will find comfort, also provides explanations for the origins of the society. These historical explanations build ties between the policies of the central state and the dominant culture. The state needs culture, because a new national society over the old agricultural norms can only be created through a standard education and a standard language. Through the standard education applied to every member of the society, members not only receive basic teaching for labor, but also receive a standard social

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 110 – 112.

¹⁴⁶ Ernest, Gellner, "Theory and Society", *Nationalism*, Vol10 No6, (Nov 1981), 762.

¹⁴⁷ Ernest, Gellner "Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 113.

identity. Individuals then feel related not to any ruler or deity as in agricultural societies, but to the identity provider; that is, the state. The dominant culture becomes shared by every member of the society. The state maintains its monopoly over forming national norms through a national system of education, since only the state has the necessary economic means to keep the system of education running on such a large scale. Previously, the church was able to sponsor a school system that could compete with the state education, but later the state overcame the church by increasing the number of its own instructors.¹⁴⁸

Gellner claims that modernism in a multi-cultural society leads to the “Age of Nationalism”. As discussed above, nationalism is a way of creating one standard for all people in the name of the efficient division of labor, so this standardization process causes significant disruption and conflict as it forces multi-cultural societies to melt together into one standard culture. This transmission must be driven by a series of state-led reforms that establish the new national culture¹⁴⁹.

Language and culture are the two most important elements that are used to form nationalism, and culture needs a language. However, not all languages or cultures can form a state. At present, Gellner counts approximately 8,000 languages in the world but only about 200 states have been formed (and some of them even share the same language)¹⁵⁰. Thus, some cultures and languages have not attempted to proceed to form a state, while others are competing in order to dominate the national culture. Gellner believes that some cultures can be transformed to be national and can create a state only as the result of accidental historical factors. In multi-cultural societies, all cultures are part of a cultural pool¹⁵¹. However, this pool in agricultural societies is smaller and narrower, based on many local languages spoken in villages and so is not seen as a “melting pot”. On the other hand, in industrial societies, these pools are larger and, most importantly, are run by a ruling elite class with a specific agenda. The national agenda driven by ruling elites then determine the dominant culture that forms the “high culture” over the other cultures of

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 115.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 117 – 118.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 123.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 125.

multi-cultural societies. According to Gellner, the ruling elites take this step of forming a national high culture after receiving a warning, such as a threat to their interest¹⁵².

High cultures are created through education and literacy, and are continuously renewed through the policies of the ruling elites. Thus, high culture always needs to be protected by the state. Agricultural societies live within their natural environment, while modern societies live in an artificially created environment produced by mixed cultures but run by a specific class. Education remains a powerful tool for these ruling elites to ensure the survival of the high culture that they have produced¹⁵³.

Finally, Gellner defines two general bases on which the nation is built: the desire or the will that individuals have to be part of a nation, and the high culture that defines the nation.

First, societies live on top of each other or side-by-side. What keeps their members together is their will, hope, loyalty or even their fear of internal or external threats. All depends on the “will” of individuals to identify themselves as part of the nation. The key point is how to keep the national “will” at the highest level, given that individuals may also feel themselves related to a minor local culture. The elements that keep this will at the highest level for all members of the nation are selected carefully and are constantly reiterated to its members. In consequence, some minor cultures may be forgotten, as no systematic recollection supports them. Selected objects are used to build an artificial history that clarifies the ‘origins’ of the nation. Therefore, one may argue, these elements are also artificially created to serve nationalism¹⁵⁴.

Second, high culture, as discussed above, is the main element that helps to identify the nation. It is difficult to define and set its borders. However, when culture merges with the “will” of the people, these difficulties of defining the culture do not matter. Through the support given by standardized education and literacy, definitions of the culture are clarified and simplified; the rest may even be put aside. The high culture is then used to show what the “common” is, which is used to define the boundaries of political power within a territory¹⁵⁵. Political power keeps “will” and “culture” together in a defined territory.

¹⁵² Ibid., 126 – 127.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 130.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 136.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 140.

Through these two elements, the nation is defined and framed by the application of political power, with all coming under the collection of values known as nationalism. As discussed earlier, nationalism is a set of values that appear through the modernization of the society during its transition from an agrarian society to an industrial society. Gellner argues that this modernism develops spontaneously. However, nationalism, as a result of modernism, appears through a carefully developed and invented procedure. That is, it is absolutely not a result of coincidence. Nationalism uses the multiculturalism inherited from history, then uses this multiculturalism the way it prefers; shaping and changing it according to its own interests, for its own use as one high culture. Through this process, it revokes the lost languages associated with the ancient (unknown) past and re-invents traditions. Finally, the high culture becomes something totally different and new that no one can recognize from its supposedly real past, adopting a shape that the nation starts worshipping through new symbols and an invented cultural system. All this is to be done with the intention of suppressing the local sub-cultures, with the high culture claimed to be the only legitimate culture. Nevertheless, the nationalists never accept that all this is done on purpose, arguing instead that it is part of a natural process based on a historical struggle, and strongly rejecting any understanding that their national set of values are invented. The creation of the national high culture surely creates conflicts between the marginalized cultures and the state. While the high culture promotes equality in theory, in reality it causes a vast inequality in favor of the ruling elite over the periphery that loses its cultural autonomy. Thus, national fusion comes at the expense of destruction. However, with the existing interdependence of groups, some type of balance can be created. Modern societies require people who can communicate in a shared medium through literacy, but exclude those not using it. High cultures claim to be not homogenous but merely a medium among all cultures, by also testing the loyalty of the members toward the national culture. Trouble develops when this homogeneity becomes imperfect and a perfect unity cannot be provided. Therefore, nationalist theory must be aware of the social conflict it will cause. Horizontal conflicts lead dictatorial rule, while vertical conflicts re-shape political structures and frontiers¹⁵⁶.

Gellner is well known for the humor he uses in presenting his arguments, giving lively examples to support his theories on modernism and nationalism. In particular, he

¹⁵⁶ Ernest, Gellner, "Theory and Society", *Nationalism*, Vol10 No6, (Nov 1981), 762 – 768.

imagines two societies: Megalomania, an industrial society; and Ruritania, an agricultural society that is part of the State of Megalomania. Ruritania is an isolated society. Outsiders are not easily welcomed, and its members speak a different dialect through which they maintain face-to-face relations. On the other hand, the Megalomanian culture has gone through rapid industrialization (except in Ruritania). Because of this industrialization of Megalomania, Ruritarians migrate to the urban zones for jobs created by the need for labor. They live on the outskirts of the cities with low standards of living. Their children have to attend the national school system, and later graduate to join the labor force of Megalomania. In this Ruritanian diaspora, some become teachers or newspaper reporters with liberal ideas. At this point, the diaspora in the city might develop in two ways¹⁵⁷. First, after all the misery of first generation has experienced, the second generation is better off. Some confusion will still exist in the second generation, but as they are more attracted by the economic possibilities offered by modern Megalomanian society, they gradually forget their Ruritanian origins, and in some cases even deny it.

However, in the second option, some members of the educated urban Ruritanian educated class, becoming even more aware of the slow progress of their social group, demand more rights. Within the urban zones, they also come into contact with other sub-cultures, which makes them remember that they are different. This leads to conflict between the Megalomanian high culture and the Ruritanian sub-culture. These educated Ruritanian elites are aware of their culture and research their past and culture. However this research is also accompanied by an effort at re-writing past historical events and the folk traditions of Ruritania. This writing of their history takes the form of a myth that is later transformed into popular books and movies. Gellner even suggests that a Ruritanian composer selects some historical elements to compose an anthem to be later adopted by the Ruritania Socialist Peoples' Republic. The anthem would commemorate the past and the forgotten struggle of 19th century Ruritanian rebels against Megalomania¹⁵⁸.

Through this story, Gellner exemplifies the conflict that occurs in an urban zone as a result of modernization and division of labor. This confusion, when driven by a group of people with an agenda, may well develop into a nationalist struggle that competes with the

¹⁵⁷ Ernest, Gellner, *Uluslar ve Ulusçuluk*, (İstanbul, Hil Yayınları, 2008), 142 – 144.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 145.

dominant high culture. In terms of his story, all that matters is how the Ruritanian culture receives the awakening call.

Nationalism appears during socio-economic transitional periods, such as the transition from agricultural to industrial society. The path of this transition is understood through five points. First, the base line of nationalism depends on societies having no knowledge of their ethnicity. Second, through the political structure and establishment of geographical boundaries, an understanding of ethnicity and culture is formed. Third, this transition is also established when multicultural empires collapse, allowing nationalism to become a driving force in the newly established modern states. Fourth, at the time of conflict, nationalism overthrows all previously existing moral values for the establishment of a homogenous society. Such a transition may even approve of the transplantation of populations or mass murder. In the final stage, nationalism is applied through the education of the population in the new national high culture¹⁵⁹.

Gellner is well aware of the conflict that nationalism creates while reorganizing society in terms of division of labor and creating a high culture to dominate sub-cultures. There is inevitably a certain disorder when the society moves from being agricultural to industrial. Sub-groups are eroded at the expense of nationalism. Conflict comes as industrial revolution is driven by economic growth. This is a new understanding of agricultural societies, but it is also a tool used by the industrialist elites to expand their influence. At this point, nationalism adopts reforms of education. The national language would be imposed over local subcultural languages by banning any education in a subcultural language. The imposition of a common national language is used to overcome communication problems between different groups. What is needed is for all the local languages to be reduced to one, under the observation of the state. Modern societies are categorized according to labor. Therefore, during the nationalization of culture, conflict comes not only from groups who lose their subculture, but also from groups who lose control over their production and labor. According to Gellner, despite nationalism being an ideology that aims to bring equality to all, its application comes through the uneven expansion of the high-culture controlled by a group of ruling elites.

¹⁵⁹ Ernest, Gellner, "The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation the Myth of Nation and Class," *Mapping the Nation*, (eds.) G.Balakrishnam, (London, Verso, 1996), 112.

3.5. Modernism and Benedict Anderson (born 1936)

3.5.a. Introduction

When Anderson is compared to Gellner's study on the evolution of the industrial societies, we see that he focuses on south-eastern Europe because he is more interested in studying the nationalist movements occurring on Europe's periphery with an emphasis on language. Anderson should also be credited for his efforts to adapt his theory of nationalism to changing times and geography. His theory of 'Imagined Communities' and his studies on the development of national languages is an important pillar for our efforts at building a complete understanding of nationalism.

Benedict Anderson was born in 1936 in China, as his family, of Irish and Scottish heritage, had settled in China as traders. The family then moved to California in 1941 and later to England, where he received his first degree in Classics at Cambridge University. He later received his PhD from Cornell, where he also got involved in Asian politics. He currently teaches at Cornell University and is the head of the Indonesian studies program.

Anderson is important for this study in terms of his theoretical contribution to the development of national languages, which are essential for nationalism. His explanations of the dynamics of nationalism support the aim of this study of adopting the modernist approach to the literature of nationalism while commenting on the language reforms that took place during the early Kemalist years of the Turkish Republic. While commenting on this reform, our aim is to use Anderson's theory, together with that of Gellner's.

3.5.b. Modernism

As part of the modernist approach, Anderson shares the same theoretical ground with Gellner, claiming that the nation and nationalism both result of modernism. However, in contrast to Gellner, Anderson proposes that the increasing role of communication among communities is what supports the development of nationalism. He argues that the increasing use of books, telephones and radios in modern times, along with an extensive deployment of a standard language, made isolated communities become part of a single dynamic nation¹⁶⁰. For Anderson, the reason why nationalism appeared during the industrial revolution is because of the increased use of communication in modern times.

¹⁶⁰ Lorenz, Khazaleh. Interview with B. Anderson "I like nationalism's utopian elements". University of Oslo during the literature festival Kapitel. <https://www.uio.no/english/research/interfaculty-research-areas/culcom/news/2005/anderson.html> (accessed 16.01.2012).

With this new understanding that includes the role of communication Anderson argues that nationalism is not a political but rather a cultural artifact. Unlike Gellner, Anderson's main argument is based on the notion that the state is not the only player that creates nationalism and the nation. Other than the state as a key player, some independent players known as "*independent clerks*" are also active in building the nation and nationalism¹⁶¹. These independent clerks, who may also be working with the state, belong to the local intellectuals. Although Gellner also recognizes their importance, it is Anderson who prefers to allocate them a more important role, arguing that such independent clerks can only exist if the means of communication between them is well established.

The second argument that Anderson is particularly known for in the modernist literature of nationalism is the idea that nations and nationalism are two "imagined" concepts, rather than two "invented" facts, as Gellner would argue. Anderson believes that nations and nationalism are two concepts that replace waning religious or monarchic authorities. He claims that nations and nationalism are both part of an imagined project that covers a sovereign territory with definite limits. It is imagined because, within a nation, most individuals who share the same nationalist ideals do not actually know each other personally, yet continue to have the same nationalist dream without actually meeting. The imagined project therefore has to find a way to create this sense of brother/sisterhood. The dream has its political limits, because each nation differs from others, based on what they have been imagining. Finally, the dream becomes sovereign because it replaces a religious or monarchic authority, together with other authorities based on enlightenment philosophy that would conduct rational reforms¹⁶².

Based on this argument, Anderson's view of the origins of nationalism also differs from many other academicians working on nationalism. He claims that nationalism is a modern invention that first appeared in Latin America during the struggle for independence against the European colonialism, making him one of the first academicians to trace the origins of nationalism back to colonized territories during the 19th century. In contrast, most academicians working on the origins of nationalism in the periphery have based their work on the independence movements of the post WWII period. Related to the importance that Anderson gives to the dynamism of the independent clerks, he highlights the existence

¹⁶¹ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 181.

¹⁶² Ibid., 181.

of the social class known as the “*creoles*” in Latin America. These creoles were the descendants of the first European colonialists in Latin America, who eventually lost an active relation with their motherland to become part of the local population. This later generation, having received an education sponsored by their colonial rulers, later became part of the ruling cadres of the local colonial authority. However they also recognized that the colonial territories they lived on were “different” from the motherland, which led to their national awakening and demands for their right to be economically independent of the colonial power¹⁶³.

Anderson’s new proposition on the origins of nationalism is important to us in two ways. First, it directly analyzes a society that was supposedly not modern, but colonized. Second, Anderson presents the creoles as independent clerks, whereas Gellner would prefer to look at the role of the state as proof of modernity.

3.5.c. *Nationalism*

Following this outline of Anderson’s contribution to the modernist literature on nationalism, we can now consider his argument in *Imagined Communities* in more detail. In an interview with Lorenz Khazaleh at the University of Oslo in 2006, Anderson proclaimed that he liked nationalism because of its utopian elements. He stated that, in contrast to his predecessors such as Gellner and Hobsbawm, nationalism is an attractive rather than ugly ideology. For Anderson, nationalism is unavoidable; it is like the air that we breathe in that we have national weather, national time, national news and national food. He feels that nationalism is an attractive ideology because it promotes good behavior and contributes to a better society¹⁶⁴.

As already mentioned above, Anderson argues that nationalism is more cultural than political. Nationalism appeared during the 18th century as a result of many interacting yet independent historical processes across many different cultures. At the point when nationalism appeared, it was adopted and copied by many other cultures for their own use. This makes him think that nationalism should not be seen as an ideology, but as an “*imagined*” feeling that creates a certain brotherhood among the members of the society.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 187.

¹⁶⁴ Lorenz, Khazaleh. Interview with B.Anderson “I like nationalism’s utopian elements”. University of Oslo during the literature festival Kapittel. <https://www.uio.no/english/research/interfaculty-research-areas/culcom/news/2005/anderson.html> (accessed 16.01.2012).

This new feeling based on an imagined nation replaces any religiously based brotherhood that may only be relevant for certain people within the society. Nationalist feeling brings about the true notion of a society that is worth dying for¹⁶⁵.

The process that eventually resulted in appearance of nationalism during the late 18th century started earlier, in the 16th century. That is, to explain how nationalism replaced religious and monarchic systems, we should look at the reasons that weakened these two systems. Anderson traces three key developments during the Renaissance. First, Europeans discovered new territories that allowed them to learn about new places, new people and new life styles. Second, Anderson argued that Latin declined as Europe's sacred language due to the extensive use of the printing industry, which revived local languages. Third, Anderson points out that, after the collapse of religious and monarchic systems, people's understanding of 'time' changed. These two systems had provided society with their own 'creation stories' that also legitimized their own worldview and time concept. After their collapse, nationalism created a new imaginary notion whereby past, present and future were maintained as a whole, without any boundaries, as a continuous time line. This new understanding of time caused faster changes in authority¹⁶⁶.

In addition to these three factors causing the medieval system to fade, Anderson also gives importance to the development of national languages essential for our study. As a cultural concept transformed into an imaginary nation, nationalism needs a national language as a cultural tool to gather everyone under its umbrella. Anderson therefore proposes three historical steps that make particular local languages part of national imaginary communities. First, during the Renaissance, European humanists became interested in studying their local past that had been dominated for so long by Christian and Latin heritages. Through their study of the past, they revived their ancient local languages by means of the printing industry. Second, as the printing industry developed as a profit making business, its agents, in order to target new markets, had to break away from Latin and start to print in vernacular languages because Latin was only spoken and written by a small elite group whereas vernacular languages appealed to a much larger market. The third step, which is most important for the development of national systems, is that European bureaucracies that wanted to break away from the authority of the church started

¹⁶⁵ Umut, Özkırımlı, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları: Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, (İstanbul, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2009), 181.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 183.

to use their own local languages to perform their bureaucratic functions. This emergence of local languages at the national level is critical to support the notion of the nation 'existing since ancient times' in order to give the society an imagined concrete past¹⁶⁷.

3.6. Benedict Anderson *"Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism"*

During the interview mentioned earlier, Anderson was asked what he would change in his book. He replied: "my relationship with that book is like a daughter who has grown up and run off with a bus driver: I see her occasionally but really, she has gone her own merry way. I can wish her good luck, but now she belongs to someone else. What should I change in the book? Well, should I try to change my daughter?"¹⁶⁸ This is how Anderson felt about the book written almost 30 years before. Since its publication, "Imagined Communities" has been among the most widely read books on nationalism. The theories that he worked on have also been adopted by many other academicians building their own foundations. Today, the book is recognized for its impact on the literature on nationalism, yet Anderson himself recognizes the many changes that have occurred since his book was published, and how nationalism is understood today. Nevertheless, one of the main achievements of his book is that it contains elements that can still be adapted to the changes of the 21st century's mentality on nationalism.

As mentioned earlier, the most important problem in the literature of nationalism is the lack of a clear definition of a nation and nationalism. In addition, no one can agree on the origins or the dynamics of nationalism. Anderson, however, is willing to directly define the specific terms that are crucial to his theories.

Anderson defines the nation as being the result of modernism, an anthropological phenomenon that is imagined politically within sovereign borders. The nation is an imagined political project because few of its members actually know each other, yet all of them imagine that they share many common characteristics with each other¹⁶⁹. Anderson, compares his notion of "*imagining a nation*" with Gellner's understanding of "*inventing a*

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 186.

¹⁶⁸ Lorenz, Khazaleh. Interview with B.Anderson "I like nationalism's utopian elements". University of Oslo during the literature festival Kapitel. <https://www.uio.no/english/research/interfaculty-research-areas/culcom/news/2005/anderson.html> (accessed 16.01.2012).

¹⁶⁹ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 19.

nation”, which will be the central topic for discussion in the final chapter of this study. To introduce this contrast briefly here, Gellner argues that nations are the result of self-conscious awakening based on an invention that never existed before. When Anderson compares his argument with Gellner’s, he highlights the critical difference between what is *imagined* and what is *invented*, arguing that Gellner’s term seems to imply something fabricated, artificial or false. It aims at the establishment of a functional system while inventing its applications. Anderson, in contrast, refers to a natural phenomenon of human existence, which is simply dreaming. It does not need any complicated structures for measurable results, but just creates a worldview based on past, present and future. That is, communities are distinguished from each other as a result of how they are imagined, not by how they are created¹⁷⁰. Anderson claims that, according to what Gellner argues on fabrication, nationalism can be a standard system that anyone can copy and use. However, that will not explain why each nation is different and unique. Yet, a nation has to be an imagined project, as each nation, based on its culture, will be imagined differently than others. That is, communities are distinguished from each other as a result of how they have been imagined and not depending on whether they were created as real or artificial.

From this point on, it follows that the imagination of each society will not be able to cover the entire humanity. The nation, that is imagined, will need to have some borders that will separate it from others’ imaginations. Therefore, political borders have been drawn throughout history based on different notions of imaginations. Through these fixed political borders, nations establish their sovereignty, which is the guarantee of the nation’s freedom. Although political borders are not something natural that have always existed, human societies have set imaginary lines, or borders, between each other, all of which are imagined. People within these borders will then create an imagined society, whose members may not know each other but among whom an imagined brotherhood binds them together¹⁷¹.

Anderson first claims that nationalism is a cultural rather than political phenomenon, as previously believed. Therefore, he analyzes the cultural resources of nationalism, leading him to argue that nationalism appeared during the late 18th century when the enlightenment movement weakened the religious and monarchic authorities. As a

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 21.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 21 – 22.

political system, nationalism proposed a more secular view of the world in terms of organizing society. As a unifying symbolism, nationalism uses the motive of “the unknown soldier’s memorial” that is the result of a national imagination over the religious symbols. No one knows who this soldier is, but everyone likes to imagine that he is a national martyr. This simple example shows us how a society can be gathered around an imaginary ‘fact’. This is the key point that creates the imagined brotherhood among each member of the society so that they become willing to die for the nation as the imagined soldier did. In reality, all we have as a member of the society is the result of a coincidence, whether our genes, race or language. However, nationalism acts as a secular and timeless concept that transforms coincidence into destiny, by giving continuity to the existence of the society¹⁷².

The worldview formed through the imagination of nations is founded on the imagined concepts of space and time. First, symbols are important for a nation. Classical communities, such as religious ones, had common symbols that brought each of their members together, no matter where they were located. Symbols are the true language used by specific people who are only part of a specific group. Second, prior to the 16th century, Europe was ruled by dynastic authorities, who maintained their rule, not through sovereignty, but through sacredness. Boundaries were not fixed, as no border controls existed. Therefore, both societies and their ruling dynasties were culturally mixed, with people being attached to some higher divinity, whether religious or monarchic¹⁷³. Third, the improvements of science, technology and communication changed people’s understanding of ‘time’. Technological developments deprived the elites of control of time as it became transmitted to each individual, making time an element that could easily be consumed and changed quickly, based on individual needs. People were thus able to separate the dynamics of their own needs from a stable cosmology that had been set by the elite. However, this also created the basis of an imaginary community, in which individuals shared the same time management. This third step is important because, for the first time in history, time was not decided by a central authority¹⁷⁴. Print capitalism was also responsible for supporting this third development. According to Lucien Febvre and Henri Jean Martin in Europe, prior to the 16th century, 77% of printed books were in Latin and

¹⁷² Ibid., 24 – 26.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 35.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 38.

only 23% in local languages¹⁷⁵. However, with the development of print capitalism that allowed a larger choice of printing in different languages, the monopoly on printing in Latin disappeared, causing a rapid erosion of the traditionally religious and monarchic authorities' control over daily life.

Print capitalism caused the appearance of new ideas. Thanks to these new ideas and new living habits, communities were created, based on horizontally mobile and timelessly secular societies. Through print capitalism, these new communities gave birth to nations, whose members gathered together around shared common habits. Because print capitalism is a system based on profit-making, printing more books requires a larger market, so new markets for larger sales had to be found. Such new markets could only be acquired by printing in local languages in order to reach more individuals. The printing industry had the means of maintaining large networks of publishing and distributing, which allowed the first publishing companies to expand all around Europe. The market for publishing in Latin was quickly saturated as only a small elite community could read and write these books. Therefore, the expansion of publishing companies into local markets, using the revived local languages, brought about the first dynamics of a national consciousness in European communities¹⁷⁶.

As the use of Latin declined, local dynasties started to use local languages more and more in order to communicate with the local people, who had become more resistant against the existing system. During the 18th century, the British, Russian and French kingdoms began using their local languages extensively rather than Latin. These new state languages were also used by the state bureaucracies. Thus, an active relationship between technology, capitalism and the plurality of local languages was established. However, not all local languages could be profitable. For example, French had many dialects, but there was seen that a natural selection occurred among different dialects was conducted by the publishing industry. In most cases, to ease communication, all dialects were collected under one standard common dialect, which was the best way to find common ground linguistically. However, we should not forget the leading role that the elite bureaucracy played in picking which dialect would be the dominant one. In a later phase, the printing industry was also able to stabilize this newly created dialect as the mass printing could

¹⁷⁵ Lucien Febvre, and Henri Jean Martin, *The coming of the book*, (Seagull Books, 1976), quoted in Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 32.

¹⁷⁶ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 52 – 56.

easily reach everyone. This stabilized language, through print capitalism, helped to extend the local bureaucracy's written authority through written laws and tax data. These various developments together helped to create a national identity spontaneously.

Another important development in terms of languages is that, after the monopoly of the Latin language diminished across Europe, local languages started to be considered as equal to one other, leading to the new habit of publishing bilingual dictionaries. Languages were no longer treated hierarchically; instead, each language was treated equally by giving it its chance to exist while also allowing old languages to be revived¹⁷⁷. Through this process, as nations gained self-confidence in their local languages, they also started to become interested in their past. This led them to compare themselves with their past and prove their evolution by depicting their linear existence since antiquity.

After the decline of Latin, Europe became divided into many mini-states - each with its own local language, making language the clearest differentiator among nations in a world where clear borders were not yet physically marked. The maintenance of a nation without any physical borders could only happen by maintaining a strong cultural bourgeoisie, which is when 'imagined communities' met 'language'. Anderson gives the example of a trader in Lille who may not know a trader in Lyon, but through the use of the same language they can imagine that they are part of the same nation¹⁷⁸. This allows the nation to exist without any political borders.

Medieval societies were divided into two social groups that worked in coalition. On one side, the nobles acted as the ruling elites. On the other side, the middle class that was influenced or mobilized by language, myth, songs, poetry, ideology and newspapers became the running force of the nation¹⁷⁹. In his book *The Break-up of Britain, 1977*¹⁸⁰, Tom Nairn discussed the need of inviting the middle class to History. However, the invitation needed to be written in a language that the members of the middle class could understand. The invited class is usually made up by the marginalized people of the society¹⁸¹. In this respect, Eric Hobsbawm, in his book *the Age of Revolution, 1962*¹⁸²,

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 83 – 98.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 93.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 94.

¹⁸⁰ Tom, Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain*, (London, New Left Books, 1977), quoted in Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009).

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 96.

¹⁸² Eric, J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789 - 1848*, (London, Abacus Books, 1962), quoted in Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009).

argues that The French Revolution was not an organized act by groups or parties. The revolution was organized by the marginalized middle class. Through the mobilization of the middle class they were 'invited' to revolt without any clear leader, it was a mass social movement. At the end, apart from Napoleon, the revolution did not produce any strong leaders until the 20th century. The revolution appeared because of the imagined solidarity among the marginalized classes of people. The idea of revolting first influenced the people's minds, then it became an understanding and finally, a model that needed to be applied, no matter what the results would be¹⁸³.

After having served as the primary tool to gather the middle class on an imaginary basis, language was also used as a standard code for the national bureaucracy. During the 19th century, nationalist movements started to cause problems for large empires ruled by dynasties that did not have any national basis of legitimacy. Most empires were multi-national, but had to apply one bureaucratic language, which in most cases was a foreign language. For example, the Russian monarchy used French for their bureaucratic language. After the revival of local languages, dynasties had to work through national identities in order to make their subjects stay with them. This is known as the "naturalization" process, which did not last long as dynasties disappeared after WWI¹⁸⁴.

Language is an important cultural tool that makes people stay together, but also energizes members of the society to be emotional and if necessary to sacrifice their lives. Anderson discusses a couple of factors to clarify this notion. First, although the origins of a particular language cannot be dated, it gives sense of a long historical existence of the culture. Second, language helps to romanticize the past through anthems, poems and stories. These can be effective in exciting the middle class, and to issue the necessary invitation for them to become part of the living national history. That creates an imagined community, not only based on blood but also on a common language combined with culture¹⁸⁵.

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that nationalism, as a modern phenomenon, is based on the imagination of a national union. The events that support his theory date from the reformation period in Europe. He argues that three factors provoked the imagination of nations: first, geographical discoveries; second, the development of the

¹⁸³ Ibid., 98.

¹⁸⁴ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009), 99.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 159 – 163.

printing industry; third, the changing concept of time. Because these three points are interconnected, the authority of monarchies and religion in Europe decreased. The power vacuum that appeared due to the decline of traditional authorities was filled by nationalism, which was accepted as a secular religion. At this point, Anderson stresses the rising importance of the bourgeoisie in Europe, claiming that if the middle class unites for the good of the imagined national union then it will become the guiding force of this imagination. Consequently, members of the national middle class, despite not knowing each other personally, become willing to work together for common national goals. The major element that maintains this unity is the role that common language plays for the nation.

The importance given to the existence of a common language is the key element of this paper, which is why Anderson is discussed in this part in order to establish the theoretical basis for studying the language reforms implemented during the early Kemalist era of the Republic of Turkey. It should be understood that Anderson gives an importance to the rise of communication in a modern society sharing a common culture. Language is the most important element allowing the core to maintain its relationship with the periphery. In the later parts of his book, Anderson also analyzes the relation between the core and its colonies. He suggests that the core, through establishing its own educational system within its colonies, can create a class of people who use the same language. This allows the core to maintain an imagined relationship with the societies it has colonized¹⁸⁶. In the case of Turkey, this cannot be used in terms of a core-colony relation, but in terms of a core-periphery relation, which would be the subject for another study. In this paper, we will use Anderson to look at how national languages are used to ‘prove’ the existence of a national ancient past, but also how a modern engineered language with a designed political agenda can be imposed by a central state on an entire society in a short period of time.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented a review of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson on the dynamics of nationalism. As mentioned in the earlier parts of our paper, the literature on nationalism lacks clear terminology to define it. This lack of agreed definitions has also meant there are many variations in defining the origins of nationalism. While this paper

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 142.

does not attempt to justify the *modernist* approach on the origins and dynamics of nationalism, we feel that Gellner and Anderson's modernist approaches provide the right path to follow in order to, at least partially, explain the development of the language reforms in early 1930s in Turkey.

In this study, Ernest Gellner's arguments, and the literature mentioned in his book *Nations and Nationalism*, are used to emphasize the role of the state in terms of *creating* a new nation through the establishment of a high culture. According to Gellner's theories, nationalism creates nations as a result of modernism. He believes that nationalism emerges at the point where industrialization, and therefore urbanization, becomes more important in a territory. Although Gellner does not attempt to clarify the origins of industrialization, he analyzes the development of nationalism based on the emergence of industrializing urban zones, in which the necessary labor is provided by people who have migrated from the countryside to settle in large urban zones.

Gellner tries to trace an explanation for the origins of nationalism based on the social changes that were caused by modernism. The urban zones become cultural melting pots as people from different backgrounds are forced to work together. Society becomes more flexible and dynamic in terms of each member being mobile. At this point, the state takes the leading role of "organizing" this new urban society that is in chaos. First, the state needs to apply common values that people can agree on, which facilitate communication between members to allow better organization and productivity. This is then gathered into the new national "high culture" that Gellner argues to be invented. As a requirement of the national high culture, the state then standardizes the national language. Through state sponsored education, many local cultures and local dialects disappear as a result of this standardization.

The standardized high culture, maintained through national education, provides the basic ground for each individual in the national community. Each individual who receives this basic education is then able to specialize in higher education to be trained for his or her work. If individuals change their job, they are then eligible for higher education. Based on this development, Gellner claims that nationalism, which appeared through the modernization of the society, is a way of organizing the labor force in order to increase its productivity. This explanation of the dynamics of nationalism and its function will be further clarified in chapter four.

Compared to Gellner's materialistic arguments, Anderson's approach can be considered more philosophical. It allows society more flexibility in terms of creating nationalism by limiting the role of the state monopoly. The state is only considered as a partner to society in the process of creating nationalism. He refers to nationalism as a modern imagined project rather than Gellner's created structure. He believes that these two terms are critically different from each other, since creating refers to a project that never existed before. He claims that imagining is more natural since people may have dreams based on their common sense and their world view.

For Anderson, the origins of nationalism as a modern phenomenon date back to the decline of Latin in Europe. This monopoly of Latin was driven through the shared authority of religious and monarchic authorities that meant local languages were ignored until the Reformation, which provoked social change in Europe. Anderson highlights three basic factors that made European societies change following the decline of Latin: geographical discoveries, the improvement of print capitalism, and changing understandings of time. Through these three basic factors, societies differentiated themselves from others and began to act on their self, based on their national will.

Anderson believes that, the revival of vernacular languages played the main role in the creation of nations through imaginations. While members of each society do not know everybody else, through the use of the same language, every member can nevertheless imagine that the entire society shares the same common values. This was important in a world where borders were not yet physically drawn, and border control was only based on vague agreements. Local languages therefore became the main tool that societies used to define who was different from them.

Both Gellner and Anderson pursued the same modernist approach within the literature on nationalism. However, the means that they use to support their theories differ on many points. The most striking difference between them is the fact that Gellner's theory is criticized as too materialistic and centrally organized, while Anderson's is criticized as too dependent on the role of individuals, so more chaotic and disorganized. However, both recognize the role of a standardized language in the formation of a nation. For the purposes of this study, it will be necessary to find some common ground between both theories in order to reach a clear explanation of the language reform in early modern Turkey. This

issue will be dealt with in more detail in chapter V and VI, when the differences between both theories will be identified.

Chapter 4

THE ORIGINS of NATIONALISM in ANATOLIA DURING the LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

4.1. Introduction

Nationalism, a way of organizing a society within a political territory through a defined national culture and politics, appeared in Anatolia during the 19th century Ottoman Empire. The third and fourth chapters will not attempt to trace the complete historical evolution of nationalism in Anatolia during the late Ottoman Empire and early modern Kemalist Republic of Turkey. Instead, they will highlight the important ways in which nationalism has contributed to the reform of language in the period between 1926 and 1938.

Although the Kemalist regime represents a discontinuity in Turkish history after the Ottoman Period, it is also clear that the roots of Turkish nationalism can be traced back to the 19th century Ottoman political practices¹⁸⁷. This chapter will therefore deal with the origins of nationalism during the Ottoman period in order to reach a better understanding of 20th century Kemalist politics, when nationalism was established as an official state ideology between the 1920s and 1930s. Our reference points to understand these Ottoman origins and their influence on Kemalist nationalist ideology will be based on Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson's theories of nationalism. Therefore, this chapter will assume that Turkish nationalism is an ideology which has been invented or imagined as a result of modernism.

Much has already been said and written on the origins of Turkish nationalism. In this chapter, the development of Turkish nationalism within Anatolia will be analyzed. At the time when nationalism first appeared, the Ottoman Empire had already spread over a very wide territory, ruling many people of different cultural backgrounds, such as the Balkans, the Black Sea region, the Middle East and North Africa. Although the capital of

¹⁸⁷ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam ve Milliyetçilik*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 3.

the empire was Istanbul, the empire was affected by the many conflicts that were taking place in its peripheral territories, including the Balkans and the Black Sea region. During the 19th century the Balkan region was representing the stronghold of the Empire. The traces of these events that took place in Ottoman periphery also later influenced the philosophy of Kemalist nationalism. Therefore, in this chapter, we will attempt to clarify the contribution of the social history of the Balkans and the Black Sea region to modern Turkish nationalism from a modernist point of view.

In this study, we have tried to depict nationalism as an invention that emerged through the modernization process that the societies went through. As a historical starting point, we prefer to use Anthony Smith's reference to the French Revolution of 1789. It is important to consider the French Revolution in order to understand how monarchies were transformed into modern democracies. Although France did not evolve to a modern level of democracy for a long period of time, its transition to modernism introduced a new way of understanding the definition of a nation. For the first time, the modern system established after the French Revolution recognized a member of the society as a citizen identified within a culturally, economically and politically shaped nation. Furthermore, this newly created concept of the French nation accepted all its members as equal "citizens". This notion of citizenship also led to the understanding of imposing physical borders to separate the French nation from its neighbors.

Parallel to the creation of the French nation within a defined French territory, the image of Anatolia was an important incentive for building Turkish nationalism during the late Ottoman period and early Turkish Republic. All kinds of political structures and myths were utilized to legitimize the existence of Turkish identity in Anatolia. For example, the late 19th century Ottomans saw Anatolia as the last piece of land to be defended against all the foreign aggression, and the image of Anatolia became part of official Turkish nationalism after WWI, during the Turkish War of Independence, when Anatolia was defined as the official homeland of the Republic of Turkey. What was known as "the borders of National Pact" (*Misak-ı Milli*) was the first text in Turkish history defining the political borders of Anatolia.

Ernest Gellner defines nationalism as a way of organizing society under a fabricated high culture within a given political territory, while Benedict Anderson presents nationalism as a culturally imagined union that forms people into a group as a result of

common values, such as a common language. Both theories accept that nationalism is a modern phenomenon creating or leading to the emergence of nations. Through the eyes of Gellner and Anderson, we will try to understanding the process in Turkey.

This chapter will focus on depicting the sources of Turkish nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. The analysis will be divided into two parts. First, parallel to the Ottoman modernization efforts in the 18th century, it will consider the development of a cosmopolitan Ottoman identity. Second, it will discuss the appearance of strong Turkish nationalism sponsored by the Committee of Union and Progress, which was motivated by social movements, the loss of territories and economic crisis. Gellner's and Anderson's theories will be used in parallel to help explain the historical evolution of Turkish nationalism.

4.2. The Development of Nationalism during the Ottoman Period

The use of Turkishness as a base on which to construct Turkish nationalism appeared in the literature during the 19th century Ottoman Empire. In those days, and later during the Kemalist Republic, Turkishness referred only to the Muslim community of Anatolia¹⁸⁸. The dynamics of this religious/ethnic based construction of the Turkish identity has to be studied through the history of the late-Ottoman period.

The construction of Ottoman national identity, and later the establishment of Turkish nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, was formed through the modernization process that took place in the Ottoman Empire. The idea of *modernization*, which will accompany us throughout this study on Turkish nationalism, was the principle incentive for building Turkish nationalism, both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Turkish Republic. In this respect, Turkish nationalism was either in association with modernism, or against modernization as part of a western plot. Therefore, at this point of our study it is essential to discuss the origins of modernization in the Ottoman Empire.

The term 'Ottoman', refers to the recent creation of a cosmopolitan identity dating from the late 18th century. Prior to that time, the subjects of the Ottoman Empire were not yet described as Ottomans or identified as citizens. Ottoman, was only used to name the ruling and military elites. After the 19th century, however, efforts were made to apply Ottomanism to every individual living in the Empire as a result of the Ottoman's attempts

¹⁸⁸ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam ve Milliyetçilik*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 1.

to westernize. Only then did the term begin to be used to refer to the cosmopolitanism of the empire¹⁸⁹.

4.3. *The First Phase of Constructing an Ottoman Identity*

According to Murat Belge's book *Militarist Modernleşme*¹⁹⁰, the modernization efforts in the Ottoman Empire started during the Tulip Period (1718-1730). Belge, who recognizes this period as part of the first systematic effort of modernization in the Ottoman Empire, argues that the Ottomans aimed to westernize the institutions of the Empire. Three main reasons given for why the Ottomans realized that they had to change and modernize. The first was the continuous defeats that took place from the Treaty of Karlofcha signed in 1699 until the Treaty of Pasarofcha in 1718. Second, these repeated military defeats made the Ottoman ruling elite reconsider their military abilities in order to reverse their losses. However, Belge notes that the modernization efforts of this period were from executing strong "reforms"; representing instead only weak attempts at "restoring" the existing system¹⁹¹. That is, the Ottomans were not yet ready to accept that they had to change in many fields. Third, Belge notes that this early modernization affected only a small elite group and could not reach the entire Ottoman society. In contrast, the Russian Tsar Peter the Great, who was a contemporary of the first Ottoman modernization efforts, led his empire to an extensive reform that transformed the entire society¹⁹².

It was only during the 18th century that the Ottomans started to show more interest in the West. The Ottomans realized that military defeats were causing disorder within the empire which was threatening its unity. This created a fear of falling behind Europe and triggered disintegration in the Empire's peripheral territories¹⁹³. At this stage, however, the Ottoman elite only questioned their military failures, and not the ailing structure of Ottoman society. Discussions were therefore focused on how to restore the Ottoman army in order to bring back the past glorious days of the Ottomans. However, the modernization that started with the Tulip Period (*Lale Devri*) could not lead to a continuous evolutionary process as the modernization attempts were interrupted many times until the reign of

¹⁸⁹ İlber, Ortaylı, "Osmanlı Kimliği", *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 77.

¹⁹⁰ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011)

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 539.

¹⁹² Ibid., 540.

¹⁹³ Edhem, Eldem, "18.yy ve Değişim", *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 192.

Mahmud II (1808-1839)¹⁹⁴. The first step towards modernization ended with the revolt of 1730, the date when the Tulip Period was ended only with some small improvements. The most important result was that the Ottomans for the first time admitted that they had to reconsider their situation as well as their failures. In addition, as a result of westernization during the Tulip Period, a printing house was established in Istanbul for the first time, and the Ottoman style of architecture changed, with a western Ottoman baroque style appearing¹⁹⁵.

The early western oriented Ottoman modernization process also created a debate among the Ottoman elites on what “being civilized” meant, and where the Ottoman existence stood in this hierarchy¹⁹⁶. Murat Belge likes to trace this sequence of understanding the Ottomans’ questioning of civilization in relation to the following series: military defeats – the Tulip Period – modernization – westernization – civilization. The Tulip Period can be considered as a naïve attempt to find answers on the backwardness that the Ottomans were experiencing. After the tragic end of the Tulip Period, Belge credits Mahmud II for the beginning of more continuous efforts at modernization¹⁹⁷. That is, despite the general assumption that the *Tanzimat* period marks the beginning of Ottoman modernization, Belge argues that the era of Mahmud II’s military reforms should be accepted as the real beginning of systematic modernization, when the traditional Janissary division of the army was replaced by a modern army. Without this replacement, known as the *Vaka-i Hayriye*, one cannot imagine the appearance of the *Tanzimat* in 1839¹⁹⁸. Yet somehow this remarkable turning point in Ottoman modernization, which was so important for the history of the Empire and the Republic, has never received enough credit during the Kemalist Republic in history education¹⁹⁹.

Gellner, in his attempt at clarifying the relation between modernism and the appearance of nationalism, claims that modernism creates nationalism. During the 18th and 19th centuries, it was still too early to depict any movements that could result in developing Ottoman nationalism. Nevertheless, through the military modernization process influenced by the western science and philosophy, the Ottomans were also exposed to European

¹⁹⁴ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 540.

¹⁹⁵ Edhem, Eldem, “18.yy ve Değişim”, *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 192.

¹⁹⁶ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 539.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 540.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 541.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 543.

political practices. Europe was progressing to an era where boundaries were physically set to justify differences among “nations”. Meanwhile, the Ottoman modernization process also helped to establish a new European structural hierarchy over the old traditional static system. As just mentioned, the replacement of the Janissary division of the army by the New Order division (*Nizami Cedid*) was one important change in the empire’s administration. At this point, it is important to notice that Gellner’s understanding of modernism cannot directly be applied because the Ottoman modernization process was not the result of the emergence of capitalist production in urban zones, which would have caused major changes in Ottoman society. As stressed earlier, Ottoman modernization at this stage concerned only military reforms maintained by elites attempting to restore the glorious days of the past. From a Gellnerian point of view, what is important is that the Ottomans for the first time tried to understand what was happening in Europe, and modernize accordingly in order to cause a change that would later impose one single identity on all the inhabitants of the Empire.

The era between the Tulip Period and the reign of Mahmud II, which Murat Belge recognizes as the beginning of the Ottoman modernization process and the fabrication of the Ottoman identity, raises two important points. First, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the new identity was limited just to the Ottoman elites. Second, as will now be discussed, nationalism only began to appear among the masses as a result of the breakdown of the Ottoman “*millet*” system.

The *millet* system, which the Ottoman ruling system depended on, refers to the recognition of each religious group of the Empire as a political entity, although this system later gave the opportunity to develop ethnic identities over the religious entities. In the Ottoman Empire, religion was the only way to identify differences among the communities. Therefore, prior to the development of any type of national identities, religion preceded ethnic identity. For example, the Hellenistic identity was first built on the foundation of Orthodox Christianity, as the Armenian ethnic identity was built on top of Armenian Christianity²⁰⁰. The *millet* system, which worked well during the successful periods of the Ottoman Empire, thus became a mechanism that polarized people between their religious groups. This polarization was accelerated by successive military defeats that brought darker periods to the Empire during the 18th and 19th centuries, when every

²⁰⁰ İlber, Ortaylı, “Osmanlı Kimliği”, *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 77.

religious group that had already built its own ethnic identity, started to struggle for its own interests at the expense of the others²⁰¹. Therefore, it was no surprise to see, by the end of the 19th century, Turkishness being built on the foundation of Islam as a reaction to the West, when it became clear that the cosmopolitan Ottoman identity failed to include the different peoples of the entire Empire.

The *millet* system that the Ottomans maintained between the 18th and 19th centuries was designed to promote unification under an Ottoman identity. However, this project of Ottomanism failed as differences in religion and culture among the communities were at the center of new conflicts. Therefore, Ottoman history between the 18th and the 20th centuries became unstable and chaotic. Westernization was the main aim of the elite who attempted to maintain political order in the empire. During this period, they searched for ways of reforming the Ottoman bureaucracy in order to establish a strong central state. However, their efforts were undermined because the Ottoman “*millet system*” allowed local cultures and feudal personal figures to become stronger and more independent than the Imperial bureaucracy itself, which weakened the central authority of Istanbul²⁰². In addition, the personnel employed in the state bureaucracy consisted of mostly non-Muslims from the Empire’s periphery, which created a double identity problem as most of the cadres in the bureaucracy were using two languages: their native language and the official Ottoman language. In response, during the reign of Mahmud II, the state started to organize the higher education system better under western guidelines. The Imperial High School (*Mekteb-i Sultani*), the Medical School (*Tibbiye*) and School of Political Sciences (*Mülkiye*) were three projects realized during the 19th century. Education in these schools remained under direct Ottoman imperial control and the schools were also open to all the non-Muslims. The aim was to establish a standard Ottoman education to create a common identity among the bureaucratic staff. Ottoman Turkish and French were taught in these schools to develop a well-established Ottoman speaking elite class in the 19th century²⁰³. One should note that before this attempt of standardizing education, the Ottoman education system mostly depended on religious teaching. In the *Millet* system, teaching for Muslim children was done in madrasahs (*medrese*) which were built as an annex to the mosques. Because of their relation to Islam, the madrasahs could not be open to non-Muslim

²⁰¹ Ibid., 79.

²⁰² Edhem, Eldem, “18.yy ve Değişim”, *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 195.

²⁰³ İlber, Ortaylı, “Osmanlı Kimliği”, *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 80.

minorities, and they were not directly related to the state²⁰⁴. During the second half of the 19th century, the Ottoman state, through its limited school system, tried to establish and expand an Ottoman patriotism among the bureaucratic cadres. However, these efforts remained focused on a small elite group, and unable to reach the general masses²⁰⁵. In 1868, the state passed a law on education (*Maarif-i Ummumiye Nizamiyesi*) which re-organized the school system and obligated all Turks to attend primary school²⁰⁶. Although primary schools fell under the control of the central state, the founding of each school depended on local organizations and students' parents because the state, while in the process of establishing itself as a centralized state, did not finance any of the primary schools, preferring to develop higher schools for the practical reason of training the specialized personnel needed for the modernization of the Empire. Therefore, the system could not be successful as by the time students reached higher education, they lacked a standard basic education, which was still under control of the feudal local authorities²⁰⁷. This situation continued until the collapse of the Empire.

Clearly, the attempt to establish the Ottoman state as a centralized force in the domain of education was not done through language. Rather, the Ottoman administration wanted to train new cadres for its bureaucracy and wanted to do this outside the existing religious school system. Before establishing Turkish as the official language in the system of education, they aimed to build a school system other than the madrasahs. Therefore, the struggle to centralize the state in education during the 19th century was first fought in the domain of *secularizing* the schools²⁰⁸, with the establishment of Ottoman Turkish as the teaching language following this as the second step. At this point, Gellner would recognize the first Ottoman steps at establishing a centralized system of education, although it would still not be at the degree that he would describe as necessary for establishing national identity, as the Ottomans were still not be able to maintain a solid primary school network. In contrast to the weak primary education, the Ottoman state was able to develop higher schools that were specialized to train personnel for specific jobs other than the military.

During the rule of Mahmoud II, the Ottomans made other efforts apart from developing a centralized school system. In 1831, the first Ottoman Turkish newspaper, the

²⁰⁴ Murat, Belge, *Osmanlı'da Kurumlar ve Kültür*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005), 215.

²⁰⁵ İlber, Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 81.

²⁰⁶ İlber, Ortaylı, *İmparatorlugun en Uzun Yüzyılı*, (İstanbul, Timaş Yayınları, 2008), 214.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 215.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.

weekly *Takvim-i Vekayi*, was published, sometimes including copies in Arabic, French, Armenian and Greek²⁰⁹. The Ottoman state aimed to get closer to the general public by letting them know about the state's policies and decisions, and also to broadcast state propaganda. Therefore, it was important for the newspaper editors to use a simplified Ottoman Turkish that everyone could read and understand²¹⁰. Prior to the publishing of *Takvim-i Vekayi*, non-Muslim groups were already systematically printing religious books or small newspapers in Istanbul and Izmir.²¹¹ However, it is important to note that this was the first time that the Ottoman state had made an effort to connect with its citizens using a simple language²¹².

In Europe, the modernization process in the 18th and 19th centuries resulted in the creation of many nation-states. On the other hand, the Ottoman modernization of the 18th century resulted in forming an Ottoman identity that could maintain the cosmopolitanism of the Ottoman Empire²¹³. That is, Ottomanism did not aim to build a nation state similar to its European contemporaries. Ottoman cosmopolitanism did not have any historical past, it was artificial, but it was supported by the Ottoman elite as their interest was to maintain Ottoman integrity. This continued until the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era in 1908 (*II. Meşrutiyet*) when Ottoman cosmopolitanism was replaced by the pure Turkish nationalism, which resulted in imperial disintegration as well as in reaction against the west. As will be discussed later on, the transition from Ottoman cosmopolitanism to Turkish nationalism was implemented by a particular class within the civil and military bureaucracy²¹⁴.

In the 19th century, the Ottoman modernization process attempted to establish a central government, and a (still limited) central educational system. As Gellner would recognize, for the first time, Ottoman schools were established by the Ottoman central bureaucracy promoting the use of Ottoman Turkish. The schools were open to all members of the society, although their accessibility was still an issue as there were so few of them, and they were located only in the capital city. The peripheral zones were still isolated and

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 53

²¹⁰ Ibid., 222.

²¹¹ Ibid., 223.

²¹² Ibid., 54.

²¹³ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 544.

²¹⁴ İlber, Ortaylı, "Osmanlı Kimliği", *Cogito*, No19, (Summer 1999), 81.

far from being integrated into Ottoman “high culture” as Gellner would have expected for national identity to emerge.

The reformist movements of the 19th century resulted in two political developments, but their success was limited. Both the *Tanzimat* Reform of 1839 and the First Constitutional Era of 1876 (*Kanun-i Esasi*) were designed to transform every member of the Empire from “subject” to “citizen” of the Ottoman nation. This Ottoman citizenship would be maintained by a legal Ottoman code that everyone agreed on. However, this did not succeed as the Ottoman political union still continued to be maintained through the *millet system*, which did not allow every citizen to be part of the general Ottoman identity. Despite the state’s efforts, people did not feel attached to common Ottoman system. Although the official confirmation of Ottoman citizenship was not legalized until 1869, the *Tanzimat* created the first basis for it. The terms established in the declaration of the *Tanzimat* advantaged the non-Muslims as they allowed them to be treated as the political equals of the Turkish Muslim community. This gave the non-Muslims a secular identity and political recognition for their socially recognized religious identity. However, it is important to observe that the *Tanzimat* helped to set clear boundaries on the political “majority” and “minorities”. Ironically, the *Tanzimat* reforms, striving to create one national identity, instead raised public awareness about the differences between communities. In fact for many, the *Tanzimat* was not regarded as an effort to reform the status of the Muslims but to recognize equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. In a way, it aimed to stop the political disintegration of the empire²¹⁵.

The *Tanzimat* reforms were also a new beginning that introduced a more liberal economy in the Ottoman Empire. Due to the equal rights given by the new legal code, all Ottoman citizens were allowed to own property for the first time. Previously, the Sultans owned all property in the empire, which had been an obstacle for the growth of trade. With this new freedom, trade could be carried out without the authority of the *Sharia* courts or the Sultan’s intervention²¹⁶. This economic improvement was also legally maintained by the non-Muslim communities in economic life, which later led 20th century Turkish nationalists (in the economic policies of the CUP by 1912 and the *Milli İktisat Policies*

²¹⁵ Yılmaz, Çolak, “1990’lı Yıllar Türkiye’sinde Yeni-Osmanlılık ve Kültürel Çoğulculuk Tartışması”, *Doğu Batı; Milliyetçilik*1, No38, (Aug 2006), 128 – 129.

²¹⁶ Yavuz, Karakışla, “Osmanlı İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923,” *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye’sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (eds.), D.Quataert and E.J. Zürcher, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1998), 27.

after 1923) adopt a skeptical attitude towards non-Muslims. These 20th century Turkish nationalists blamed the *Tanzimat* reforms for preferring the non-Muslim minorities who were able to prove their commercial superiority over the Muslim majority. At the same time, since equal political rights were granted to all individuals, after the *Tanzimat* reforms, non-Muslim minorities did not have to pay the extra taxes which had been imposed on them previously because of their religion.

From a Gellnerian point of view, the *Tanzimat* Reforms were important because they were designed by the ruling elites of the Ottoman bureaucracy to assimilate all subjects of the empire into a politically and economically unified empire as active citizens. All economic and political boundaries between Muslims and the non-Muslims were abolished for faster assimilation into Ottomanism. Both groups got the right to own property and produce for their private interests. This reform also limited the authority of the Sultan by ensuring the freedom of each individual. For the first time in the political history of the Ottomans, a process of standardization was designed. The key aim of the *Tanzimat* was to remove the authority of local feudal forces that had established themselves in the peripheral zones, limiting the Empire from imposing its own authority. Through this reform, the authority of the central government got stronger and the state was able to collect more taxes from the periphery at the expense of recognized personal rights.

During the first phase of Ottoman modernization, roughly dating between the Tulip Period in 1718 and the coronation of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) in 1878, the Ottoman ruling elite were concerned that the Ottoman Empire was falling behind Europe. These worries were the result of the continuous military defeats that the Empire was experiencing, so at first the elites were concerned with restoring the Ottoman military system rather than reforming Ottoman social-political structures. Meanwhile, during the Enlightenment, Europe had advanced in science, which led to improvements in military technology. Therefore, this first phase of developing a cosmopolitan Ottoman identity was more concerned with saving the empire through reforming the army rather than establishing strong individual rights. Social reforms were seen as complementary to military reforms, and not the other way around²¹⁷.

As Gellner would have seen it, the construction of Ottoman identity during the phase was directed from the elite down to the people. This was a top-to-down relationship,

²¹⁷ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 544.

in which modernization of the army and the state lay behind the dynamics of the limited changes. For the first time, after the *Tanzimat* Reform, these changes started to affect Ottoman society when every subject of the Empire was recognized as a standard Ottoman citizen. This was designed to give equal political and economic opportunities to every member of the cosmopolitan Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, it was too early to see any of the kind of capitalist urban developments in the cities that later lead to systematic technological or economic progress. In addition, during this first phase, we cannot see the development of any type of modern nationalism, as reforms were still limited to imposing a vague identity.

4.4. The construction of Turkish National Identity

The Ottoman-Russian War of 1876-1878 and the short-lived First Constitutional Period can be seen as the transitional replacement of the Ottoman cosmopolitan identity with Turkish national integrity. This coincides with the beginning of the reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909). The First Constitution (*Kanuni Esasi*), declared in 1876 by Abdulhamid II, and the establishment of the first Ottoman parliament, were the two projects that Mithat Paşa (1822-1884), who was then the Prime Minister (*sadr-ı azam*), had planned to realize for a long time²¹⁸. Before becoming Prime Minister, Mithat Paşa had been governor of many provincial cities. He believed that the decline of the Empire could only be stopped by a major structural change in the Ottoman political tradition, which required the introduction of a parliamentary system²¹⁹. After that, Mithat Paşa became Prime Minister and Abdulhamid II became the new Sultan, he convinced Abdulhamid II to accept the founding of a parliament after many separatist revolts had taken place in the Balkans. The ruling elites of Istanbul, including Mithat Paşa, thought that they could appease all the political demands of the periphery by establishing a parliament to give all its representatives the right to participate in decision making. However, the first Ottoman parliament was short-lived, being closed down in 1878 by Abdulhamid II, who used the Russo-Ottoman War of 1876-78 as an excuse²²⁰.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 551.

²¹⁹ Gökhan, Çetinsay, "Mithat Paşa", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birkimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinçil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 62.

²²⁰ Ibid., 552.

The short lived First Constitution did not produce any memorable applications or decisions, except for that it was the first time in Ottoman history for the Sultan to accept limits to his authority by a parliament and a written constitution. The Ottoman bureaucratic elite were already aware of the social-political developments resulting in parliamentary monarchy in Europe. Since 1795, many Ottoman diplomats had already been traveling around Europe and sending constant reports back to Istanbul on the political changes affecting European countries. Ottoman statesmen were conscious of the fact that the state was losing control over society, as they could no longer readily collect taxes from the citizens²²¹. The 19th century in Europe was a period when nation-states were being formed out of multi-national empires, and all monarchical rulers were beginning to share authority with the people²²². This change also affected the Ottoman Empire in that a constructed identity, Ottomanism, came into existence to rescue the disintegrating empire through a parliamentary system. The relationship between local cultural identities and the supreme Ottoman identity was formed by negotiations between the “deprived people” and the “ruler”. Muslims stood at the top of the hierarchy, while non-Muslims remained on the second tier. When these neglected non-Muslims started to demand more rights, more polarization appeared in the society, which in turn fuelled the beginning of Turkish “Muslim” Nationalism²²³.

The French Revolution had a great impact on Turkish intellectuals, although with the motto of the French revolution, “Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood”, being adapted by Turkish intellectuals to read “Freedom, Equality, and Nationalism (Ulusçuluk)”²²⁴. Namık Kemal (1840-1888), who was part of the pioneering group of Turkish nationalists, aimed to create a new political system that would reduce the Sultan’s authority for ever. His understanding of “equality”, taken from the French Revolution, was in fact adapted according to his vision of “equality based on Islamic law”. This resulted in a confused synthesis of French Revolutionary and the Namık Kemal type Muslim-Turkish

²²¹ Şerif, Mardin, “19. Yüzyıl’da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti,” *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz’er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 84.

²²² Serdar, Kaya, *Endoktrinasyon ve Türkiye’de Toplum Mühendisliği*, (İstanbul, Nirengi Kitap, 2010), 121.

²²³ Göçek, Müge F. , “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım,” *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 65.

²²⁴ Bernard, Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (London, Oxford University Press, 1968), 54, quoted in Masami Arami, *Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları 2008), 15.

nationalism²²⁵. As mentioned before, until the reign of Abdulhamid II, the Ottoman ruling elites were concerned with modernizing the Empire, but with the coronation of Abdulhamid II, the intellectuals started to take more responsibility to carry on modernization through nationalism. At this stage of the evolution of Turkish nationalism, we see an expansion of the influence of Ottoman bureaucratic intellectuals at the expense of the influence of the Ottoman monarchy. That is, the Pashas were replaced by civil bureaucrats, who represented the intellectual class at this time.

The transformation from an Ottoman cosmopolitan identity to a constructed homogeneous Turkish nationalism was therefore not a development that had come about through the masses but through the intellectuals. The construction of a homogeneous Turkish nationalism in the 19th century was directed mostly by groups of intellectuals in Istanbul. This led to the notion of ‘cameralism’, which means “*the rule of the enlightened class over the society with no tolerance of any pluralism*”. Cameralism appeared first in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire during the rule of Franz Joseph II, and also in Prussia during the era of Friedrich the Great. Cameralism suggests that the so-called enlightened class allies itself with the ruling authority and starts to forcibly impose its values through state authority. The application of cameralist values thus involves reforms that do not have any links with traditional local society. Cameralism existed in the Ottoman Empire as opposition to all varieties of regionalism whereby the strong central state had to impose itself throughout the Ottoman social-political structure, aiming to create a strong middle class upon which the state would rely. This creation of a strong middle class would help the state to solve any social-political problems. According to the Ottoman cameralists, the state had to exist in order to provide central standardized education, facilitate trade, protect the middle class and organize economic production. A stronger state could only be possible through the better collection of taxes to help maintain a strong military. Based on the strong basis already mentioned, the state would be able to provide a better functioning and longer lasting democracy²²⁶. With the appearance of an Ottoman cameralist influence, the construction of Turkish nationalism became part of a coalition among western oriented modernists, the Ottoman bureaucratic elites and the Ottoman intellectual class. This relationship would be problematic as Turkish modernism had always suffered from not

²²⁵ Masami, Arai, *Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları 2008), 15.

²²⁶ Şerif, Mardin, “19. Yüzyıl’da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti,” *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz’er Türküne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 82 – 83.

being able to settle on a clear definition of what modernism could mean for Turkish/Ottoman society. For a long while, modernism was associated with westernization. Ottoman modernization was never able to introduce major reforms of the existing social-political system, so every aspect of Ottoman modernism stayed at the level of partial restoration of the current order. On the other hand, Ottomans tried to construct a cosmopolitan identity that did not last long. As many separatist movements started to appear in the Balkans, many intellectuals realized that the Ottoman Empire could not continue to exist with its multi-national structure, so a new homogenous identity had to be constructed. This new modern thinking, which caused the appearance of a new identity, was based on Turkishness, which was to be imposed on their supporting society by a group of intellectuals.

In order to understand the process of the development of Turkish nationalism, the replacement of the aristocratic elite by the bureaucratic intellectuals and clerks is important. First, a national consciousness was formed separately from the bureaucracy. Until then, efforts on modernization and the creation of an Ottoman identity had appeared due to some practical reasons that the Ottoman bureaucracy needed. These needs could be identified through Gellner's principles, which confirms the top-to-down relationship that the Ottoman bureaucracy had with the masses. On the other hand, with the increasing influence of intellectuals and bureaucrats on the process of creating a Turkish national identity, a bottom-to-top relation could also be traced, as Benedict Anderson would predict. The Ottoman Muslim intellectuals abandoned all the efforts of maintaining a cosmopolitan Ottoman identity and urged the state to promote a more Turkish-Muslim nationalism. Meanwhile, as discussed below, some intellectuals of this period aligned themselves with the monarchical bureaucracy while others stayed in opposition.

Şerif Mardin²²⁷, suggests that the new system proposed by the Ottoman cameralist intellectuals had some relation to Plato's ideas. According to the Ottoman cameralists, society had to be structured around the economic producers, the military and the statesmen, united under one enlightened ruler who would make fair judgments. However, as mentioned earlier, in relation to discussions on modernism and Islam, the Ottoman Turkish intellectuals could not agree on what the ruler's standards of judgments should be. As a reaction against western aggression and the failure of the Ottoman *Millet system*, Islamic

²²⁷ Ibid.

values were taken to be a key part of the standards for bureaucratic values. In the 19th century, religion and the state were considered to be inseparable. This relationship was built around the notion that the state had a priority while religion only contributed to the existence of the state²²⁸. There have been many inconclusive discussions about whether the Ottomans had any official ideology or not. No doubt, a European type of modernization had formed part of official Ottoman ideology since the *Tanzimat*. However, modernization, as part of a practical ideology, was not systematically implemented in the way it was applied during the 20th century Germany or Soviet Russia. The confusion on defining an Ottoman ideology is also specially due to the fact that the so-called official Ottoman ideology was not systematically applied or regularly maintained in such a way that would allow us to trace clear policies today. The only dependable policy that the Ottomans implemented was to sanctify the existence of the state (*Nizamı Alem or the World Order*), with this being considered superior to anything else. The Ottoman way of sanctifying the state in relation to an absolute ideology was among the most developed ideologies in the Islamic World. The functioning of this ideology appeared through the general support given by the “*ulemas*”²²⁹ and the Ottoman bureaucratic elite. Ottoman officials justified the existence of a powerful state by referring to God’s will²³⁰. For many, this was an ideology that the Ottomans had inherited from Byzantium where the state had been considered greater than the religion²³¹. In the Ottomans’ case, the Ottoman Sultans would often use the name of God in association with their own title. Their orders would start with prayers referring to God’s will. It was also a common tradition for a Sultan to build a mosque as his sign of social legitimacy through Islam. Since, from this perspective, only the Sultan could protect Islam, the Sultan and the State were considered to be holy, and religion could remain strong only through the existence of both. In contrast, no *Şeyhulislams*²³² were represented in the cabinet, but they remained at the complete mercy of the Sultan, who had sole power to appoint or dismiss *Şeyhulislam*²³³. While the continuity of the state was the primary aim of the ideology, religion only remained as a tool. Religion could only exist through the state, and not the other way round. Therefore, the origins of the state-Islam

²²⁸ Ibid., 81.

²²⁹ The educated class of Muslim

²³⁰ A. Yaşar, Ocak, “Osmanlı Resmi İdeolojisi Meselesi”, *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler2*, No29, (Aug 2004), 77.

²³¹ Ali, Bulaç, “İslam ve Modern Zamanlarda Din-Devlet İlişkisi”, *Cogito*, No1, (Summer 1994) 68.

²³² The chief religious official in the Ottoman Empire.

²³³ A. Yaşar, Ocak, “Osmanlı Resmi İdeolojisi Meselesi”, *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler2*, No29, (Aug 2004), 76 – 79.

relationship should be examined in order to understand the Ottoman application of religion through the state. When Islam appeared, it also appeared through the creation of an Islamic state in the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore Islam itself already had a strongly politicized side from its beginning that also affected the relation of Islam to the Ottoman State²³⁴.

In particular, Islam was an important obstacle to reforming Arabic scripts in the Ottoman Empire. Language has always been part of the dynamics for the creation of a new society. Hasty discussion on replacing the scripts with the Roman alphabet was a clear symbol of westernization that sealed the divergence from Islam. Debates on reforming the language had already started in the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century, when various groups, such as Islamists, liberals and conservatives were each planning to shape the Ottoman language according to their own vision. Meanwhile Arabic and Persian became more influential in the Ottoman language as the dominance of Islam increased. However, the use of language differed between the commoners and the elites, who represented the “*high culture*” and spoke a different language to the commoners, while Turkish was denigrated as the language of the lower social classes. Consequently, there was no unity in the use of language as the empire lacked any type of central education system.²³⁵. Nevertheless, some Ottoman intellectuals of the 19th century had already begun to work on developing different types of a Turkish alphabet since one of the explanations given for the Ottoman backwardness related to the lack of mass literacy. Some intellectuals were proposing to write the Arabic scripts by writing each word separately to facilitate the reading and writing²³⁶. For the first time, an Azeri intellectual, Mirza Fethali Akhundov (1812-1978), who also was an author, playwright and philosopher, prepared a Turkish Latin alphabet and presented it to Abdulaziz I (1861-1876) in 1863. However, his proposal was rejected as the rulers considered that it would have been too complicated to change the Arabic script. Meanwhile, in 1879, Albanian intellectuals established in Istanbul, designed the first Albanian alphabet, comprising 36 letters. This development not only established the basis for Albanian nationalism but also provided the first model of a Latin alphabet for Turkish intellectuals already discussing the need for a new alphabet²³⁷. However,

²³⁴ Ali, Bulaç, “İslam ve Modern Zamanlarda Din-Devlet İlişkisi”, *Cogito*, No1, (Summer 1994) 80.

²³⁵ Berk, Balçık, “Milliyetçilik ve Dil Politikaları,” *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 779.

²³⁶ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Tajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 37.

²³⁷ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, “Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları,” (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 218.

intellectuals, such as Namık Kemal, remained worried that with a complete change in the script system, Turks would lose their ties with Islam²³⁸.

The Japanese researcher on 19th century Ottoman literature, Masami Arai, recognizes two main groups of intellectuals who affected the development of Turkish nationalism in the 19th century²³⁹. The first group was made up of bureaucratic intellectuals based in Istanbul, who developed Ottoman patriotism and the notion of a nation in Anatolia. The second group, which will be discussed below, was the migrant Turkish intellectuals from abroad who wished to create a Pan-Turkic union by maintaining weak ties with the Ottoman political existence²⁴⁰.

Regarding the first group, during the second half of the 19th century, for the first time, a movement opposing the Sultan's authority was formed by dissatisfied intellectuals. The 'new Ottoman movement', as it is known today, was one of the first groups organized with a clear agenda opposing the Sultan's authority and demanding the reform of the system. Their ideas were shaped during secret meetings they organized. The group consisted of intellectuals who promoted westernization, modernization and parliamentary democracy. As Murat Belge notes, this was the first time that non-governmental political grassroots activity had been organized by Ottomans. However, it still lacked popular support as the general Muslim Ottoman public was either unaware of such demands or was not interested. The new Ottoman movement presented an agenda developed by a limited group of intellectuals, and therefore cannot be considered as a social class movement that negotiated with the state the same way as happened in Germany or other European nations. This absence of a strong bourgeoisie was replaced by the Young Turks, who would later join other intellectuals of the Ottoman diaspora²⁴¹.

The new Ottoman (*Yeni Osmanlı*) movement appeared in 1865 to oppose the *Tanzimat*, led by intellectuals such as Reşit Paşa (1800-1855), Ali Paşa (1815-1871) and Fuad Paşa (1814-1865), who had prepared and enforced the reforms. The new Ottomans believed that the *Tanzimat* was a reform that was not designed to secure personal freedom, but instead to expand the authority of the central government. The new Ottoman movement

²³⁸ Ibid., 221.

²³⁹ Arai, Masami, *Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008), quoted in Gün A. Soysal "Tatarlar arasında Türkçülük," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birkimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 196.

²⁴⁰ A. Gün, Soysal, "Tatarlar arasında Türkçülük," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birkimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 196.

²⁴¹ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 555.

at this point demanded a written constitution that would secure individual freedom. The new Ottomans also believed that the 1856 Rescript of Reform (*Islahat Ferman*), which followed the *Tanzimat*, offered too much political and economic power and opportunity to the non-Muslim minorities of the Empire, as well as to the Europeans residing in the Empire to enable them to invest in and develop new businesses. The new Ottoman group was Islam-oriented, believing that the *Tanzimat* was just a cultural imitation of the west, and that its implementation would dislocate Ottoman Muslim society. Therefore, for these thinkers, Islam was needed to orient the Empire's democratic development appropriately²⁴².

The new Ottoman movement had two basic goals. First, it aimed to democratize the nation. Although their agenda of democratizing the nation was based on Islamic values rather than French Revolution Enlightenment, it was still a way to oppose the absolute monarchy of the Sultanate. Second, the movement wished to create a nation state. During the 19th century, Italy and Germany in Europe, and Japan in Asia, had become modern nation states²⁴³. In order to achieve both goals, the new Ottomans were influenced by three groups of intellectuals. The first group, led by Şinasi (1826-1871), consisted of the defenders of personal enlightenment. They recognized that the social structure of Ottoman society was based on paternalism, and claimed that, through the use of printing and the increase of literacy, this structure could be challenged. This group argued for an absolute change that could be acquired only through absolute westernization²⁴⁴. The second group, led by Namık Kemal, was trying to create a Turkish nation. For this group, the nation had to be democratic and constitutional, but with a strictly Islamic orientation. At the same time, it should have one single language, using the Latin alphabet. This group believed that change could be acquired through the existence of a parliament²⁴⁵. The third group was led by Ali Suavi (1838-1878), who believed that a parliament was a way for the authorities to control the masses. For this group, the functioning of a parliament went against human nature. Instead, everything could be acquired through a wise ruler in direct communication with the people and listening to them. The system proposed by this group was a revival of

²⁴² Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 86 – 87.

²⁴³ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 561.

²⁴⁴ Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 85.

²⁴⁵ Masami, Arai, *Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları 2008), 15 - 16.

the ancient Greek democratic system²⁴⁶. When the new Ottoman movement agreed to proclaim the First Constitution with Abdulhamit in 1876, the second group, led by Namık Kemal, had the greatest influence. This resulted in the formation of the first Ottoman Parliament, during what became known as the First Constitutional Era.

One important civil development that took place during the political reforms of the 19th century was the creation of Ottoman “citizenship”. A notion of equality among every individual of the Empire had already been introduced with the proclamation of the *Tanzimat* reform, although its priority had been to stop the disintegration of the empire. After the *Tanzimat*, the recognition of the “individual” as a “citizen” did not become reflected in written law until 1869, and even then it had nothing to do with the protection of individual rights and freedom, being rather the result of a response to the large number of Ottomans who wanted to acquire foreign citizenship in order to benefit from the new concessions given to the Empire’s non-Muslims. It was not until the proclamation of the First Constitution that the Ottoman state recognized all individuals living within the borders of the Ottoman Empire to be citizens, albeit under the strict condition that they could speak Turkish²⁴⁷.

The stronger aim of Ottoman intellectuals to maintain a democratic political system during the First Constitution can be identified as the beginning of Ottoman nationalist movements. Until then, Ottomanism had been part of a political agenda imposed by the ruling elite of the monarchical bureaucracy as part of their efforts of modernization, in which Ottomanism was used to hold together an empire that was about to fall apart. In contrast, with the development of the new Ottoman movement, independently of the ruling elite and as a reaction against the monarchy, we can see Ottomanism evolving into a notion aiming to create a nation, rather than being a simple understanding of individual identity. That is, the intellectuals of the new Ottoman movement had never before imagined the existence of a “*vatan*” (motherland) or a nation speaking a single language. According to Gellner’s approach, the appearance of the cosmopolitan Ottoman identity was a result of the efforts of modernization in the 18th century, when it was invented by the monarchy’s cadres. On the other hand, Anderson would suggest that the movement of new Ottomanism

²⁴⁶ Şerif, Mardin, “19. Yüzyıl’da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti,” *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz’er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 89.

²⁴⁷ Füsün, Üstel, “II. Meşrutiyet ve Vatandaşın İcadı,” *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasî Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birkimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 166 - 167.

during the late 19th century sponsored an Islamic and Turkish Ottomanism under the notion of a nation, as an imagined process carried out by leading Turkish intellectuals.

As mentioned earlier, the short-lived reforms of the First Constitution ended with Abdulhamid II's decision to close down the parliament. He used the 1878 defeat of the Ottomans by the Russians as a reason because he believed that too many people were creating chaos when the Ottomans needed unity against the enemy. He believed that this chaos had been caused because the members of the parliament were not "educated" enough. Murat Belge accepts this excuse as point when Turkish intellectuals wanted to justify their superiority over the commoners, a view which coincides with the cameralist approach, and which still continues in Turkey even into the 21st century²⁴⁸. During the authoritarian rule of Abdulhamid II between 1878 and 1908, the Ottoman political system lacked democracy. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, during this period, the Ottoman monarchy invented many symbols that were later used in Turkish nationalist literature and imagery. Despite the lack of democracy, Abdulhamid II used his authoritarian regime, which was justified by many such invented social-political symbols, to maintain an Ottoman union until the proclamation of the Second Constitution. During this period, his policies were marked by severe political repression, designed to make people feel the heavy influence of the state and the use of Islam in order to unite the Empire's Muslim community. During the same period, political waves, known as the "Pan-" movements, developed in the Balkans. For example, the Pan-Slavism movement, encouraged by the Russians, called for a Slavic union that would also affect Ottoman territories in the Balkans. Then, as a reaction to Pan-Slavism, Pan-Islamism emerged in order to protect the Ottoman Empire. Pan-Islamism used the political influence of the Ottoman Sultans, who supported the *Qualifat* (Caliphate) as tool. The *Qualifat* had not been used by any of the sultans extensively until then, but to justify his legitimacy Abdulhamid II saw this as a new opportunity to maintain a union against separatist movements in the Empire²⁴⁹. In spite of its weaknesses, the *Tanzimat* was a project designed to create a new society. On the other hand, the use of Islam by Abdulhamid II, was nothing but a conservative and defensive policy meant to keep the Empire together. Meanwhile, the use of the Islamic cause in foreign policy was no more than an artificial tactic to oppose French and British interests

²⁴⁸ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 563.

²⁴⁹ Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 92 – 93.

in the Middle East. This use of Islam by the Ottomans against France and Britain was also supported by Germany²⁵⁰.

Since the reign of Nikola I (1825-1855), the Russian Empire had maintained a state policy of promoting Pan-Slavism using Russian Orthodoxy as a tool to unite all Slavs, with the Tsars seen as the leaders of the holy land of Russia. The Islamic approach that Abdulhamid II used was based on this model: he named himself the protector of all Islamic lands, which created an artificial legitimacy that helped him distance his authority and the state from any “useless” tools, such as a parliament or grassroots activities organized to demand social transformation. Parallel to the Russian model, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which was also affected by Pan-Slavism as much as the Ottomans, developed an artificial “history of the motherland”. This history was first taught at the University of Vienna for all non-Austrian citizens living in the Empire, and aimed to give all of its members a notion of belonging to the Empire²⁵¹. Subsequently, in the 1880s, the Ottomans started to develop their own thesis concerning their so-called “Turkish national history”, under the guidance of Süleyman Paşa (1838-1892), an Ottoman military commander, who for the first time claimed that Turks originated from Central Asia. In contrast to the Austrians teaching their national identity at their civil universities, Süleyman Paşa’s historical thesis was extensively taught in Ottoman military schools, as these were given more priority during the Ottoman efforts at modernization²⁵².

The period of Abdulhamid II is also important for its efforts to establish the cult of the leader through *invented* myths. This cult was based on three principles. First, the Sultan was seen as the leader of all Muslims. Second, the Sultan represented a civilized society. Third, the Sultan was the representative of supreme civilization over nomadic or rootless societies. All these inventions should not be seen as policies developed by Abdulhamid II himself, but as the result of a collective effort of the bureaucracy established around the Sultan. First, it should be kept in mind that the bureaucratic agents who developed such policies were culturally affected by Islam, and energized by the desire to save the state from disintegration. These agents were also open to all western solutions based on enlightenment, although due to their Islamic background, they only selected those

²⁵⁰ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 562.

²⁵¹ Selim, Deringil, *İktidar Sembolleri ve İdeoloji*, (İstanbul, YKY Yayınları, 2007), 34 – 35.

²⁵² Şerif, Mardin, “19. Yüzyıl’da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti,” *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz’er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 96.

solutions parallel to their interests. Therefore, the Abdulhamid II period was mostly evidenced by confusion between Islam, French Revolutionary Enlightenment, and the presence of the absolute imperial state suggested in the *Metternich* system of 1815²⁵³. The establishment of the cult of the leader was a result of this intellectual confusion. For example, some Ottoman Sultans prior to Abdulhamid II, would send their self-portraits everywhere in the Empire²⁵⁴. In contrast, Abdulhamid II banned all use of his image, although that may have been the result of Islam not allowing any use of images, or his fears for his personal security²⁵⁵. The portraits of leaders were therefore replaced by complex imperial symbols, each of which represented an invented concept justifying the Sultan's authority. The state bureaucracy also developed many imperial marches and slogans to bless the Sultan during official parades. The saluting the Sultan after Friday prayers was accompanied by Albanian and Arabic ceremonial guards. Based on the memoirs of one Armenian who witnessed these ceremonies, the ceremonial guards could not even speak Turkish²⁵⁶. All these show how the Ottoman bureaucracy was able to invent myths in order to impose a constructed political identity over a nation that was imagined to be Ottoman, as the empire was made up by different societies that didn't have any common aspect²⁵⁷.

In contrast to the imagined Ottomanism of the new Ottoman movement, the monarchical administration that existed between the First Constitution and the Second Constitution attempted to invent official state policies and myths that would identify the state as the absolute power over the Empire's political hierarchy. The way in which Abdulhamid II tried to establish himself as a mythical leader by using the Islamic values in a cosmopolitan empire closely matches Gellner's ideas of invented traditions.

We are now ready to discuss the second group, namely the thinkers that Masami Arai²⁵⁸ defines as the intellectuals of the Turkish diaspora, who contributed to the development of Turkish nationalism from outside the borders of the Empire. The 19th century was a period in Europe when every European nation was attempting to found its own nation-state. As emphasized earlier, this could not apply to the Ottoman Empire with

²⁵³ Selin, Deringil, *İktidar Sembolleri ve İdeoloji*, (İstanbul, YKY Yayınları, 2007), 36.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 38.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 39.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 42.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 43.

²⁵⁸ Masami, Arai, *Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları 2008).

its multicultural population. However, it did not prevent the development of Turkishness among Turkish intellectuals. Although this idea of Turkishness primarily developed around Namık Kemal's concept of *Vatan*, a second complementary wave of Turkishness was developed by immigrant intellectuals originating from Turkic Muslim territories conquered by the Russians in the Black Sea Region²⁵⁹. From the 18th century until 1923, Anatolia was exposed to many migration waves. Mostly Muslim communities were forced to migrate to Anatolia as the Ottomans lost territory in the Balkans. Meanwhile, the Russian Empire was expanding its influence in Central Asia as well as in the Caucasus, where Russians had started to systematically assimilate local Muslim cultures within the Russian Empire. All these efforts transformed Anatolia into a safe haven where all Turkic Muslim groups could find refuge. Here, Anderson's principles on nationalism based on his "Imagined Communities" theory become important as the intellectuals of the Turkic diaspora developed the imagination of a common language and an imaginary land. After the loss of the Balkans, the Ottomans were interested on re-establishing their prestige in Central Asia with the "*Ideology of Turan*", where all Turks could gather²⁶⁰. As this will be discussed later, such imagined ideas were spread by the development of an Anatolian printing industry that allowed more ideas and debates to be spread through newspapers and magazines.

The earliest migrations to the Ottoman Empire date back to 1783, when Muslim Turks from Crimea and the Ural-Altay region migrated to Anatolia after the Russian conquest of these regions. Until the end of the 19th century, there were successive migrations of Circassian groups from the Caucasus and Kuban, which allowed many Turkic intellectuals to move to Anatolia²⁶¹. It is also important to understand why Turkic intellectuals of Russian origin, who had developed Turkish nationalism abroad and saw Anatolia as the final home for all Turkish Muslims, ran away from the repressive foreign forces. These Turkic intellectuals from Russia formed two groups. The first group was made up of intellectuals who defended their local Turkic identity by recognizing that they were Muslim. Among these, the Tartar intellectuals were the most important as they

²⁵⁹ Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*4, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türküne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 96.

²⁶⁰ Ümit, Özdağ, "Türk Milliyetçiliği ve Jeopolitik," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 173.

²⁶¹ F. Müge, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 66.

preferred to give priority to their local Tartar identity, having no interest in promoting the union of all Turks²⁶². In contrast, the second, smaller group was led by Ahmet Ağaoğlu (1869-1939) and Ismail Gaspiralı (1851-1914), who claimed that political union was needed among all Turkic groups of Asia²⁶³. This regrouping occurred in reaction to Russian dominance in the region. Both groups were searching for ways to avoid being assimilated into Russian culture. While the first group aimed to protect its identity by engaging in dialogue with the Russians, the second group believed in revolting against the Russians by unifying all the region's Turkic groups. This second group considered the Ottomans as the most natural inspirational model for leading the Turkic and Islamic world²⁶⁴. As a result, the second group, in promoting a pan-Turkic approach, developed closer ties with the Ottoman intellectuals of the late 19th and 20th centuries. Their influence was crucial to the development of nationalism in the late periods of the Ottoman Empire and the early Turkish Republic. In our next chapter, we will discuss this issue in more detail.

4.5. The influence of "İttihat ve Terraki", the Committee of Union and Progress

Until the foundation of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the development of nationalism in Turkey was mostly based around unorganized grassroots activities in which groups were not structured under an official political union. In this respect, CUP was an important society that represented a direct challenge to the Ottoman monarchy. After its creation to safeguard the Ottoman union, it allied itself with various other political fractions. In relation to the theoretical focus of this study, the CUP period is important in two parts. First, as Anderson would suggest, the CUP was part of a loose grassroots organization that imagined a national Turkish union. Second, the CUP became part of the absolute state authority after the proclamation of the Second Constitution and the events of 31 March, 1909. The CUP then started to control a centralized state and implement its projects, as Gellner would suggest, through the use of the strong power and "invented" applications provided by the state.

²⁶² A.Gün, Soysal, "Tatarlar arasında Türkçülük," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1:Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birkimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 200.

²⁶³ Ibid., 197.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 208.

The origins of the CUP go back as far as 1826, when a discussion group named the *Beşiktaş Group*, organized a meeting to gather intellectuals and bureaucrats for informal debates on science and progress. The group and its debates were later attended by various military personnel and immigrant intellectuals who started to raise more political questions on issues such as identity, culture, and political systems. When these debates started to include strong criticism of the monarchy, such as demands for more individual freedom, they started to be organized secretly after the 1860s. It was during these secret meetings that the Young Ottomans emerged as a secret society. As discussed above, the new Ottomans' demand for a system based on parliamentary monarchy resulted in the First Constitutional Era. However, after the short lived First Constitution, members of the group had to flee to Europe²⁶⁵.

This did not, however, stop the existence of secret gatherings and discussions; and a new group, known as the Young Turks (*Jön Türk*), was formed, which stood against the monarchy, but could not base its vision on individual freedom because they believed that the individual had to be controlled by a supreme authority. By the late 19th century, the French Revolution of 1789 had turned out to be a great disappointment for many European intellectuals, as France had become a dictatorship during the Third Republic. Consequently, in May 1889, the Committee of Ottoman Union (*İttihad-i Osmaniye*) was founded in succession to the Young Turks by students of the Military Medical School. This organization, which later named itself the CUP in 1894, also included the local bourgeoisie and exiled intellectuals. During this period, the society formed groups in which members of different cultural communities gathered²⁶⁶.

It is possible to look at the ideological evolution of the CUP in two phases. The first phase covered the period between 1889 and the early 1900s. This is the period during which the organization was deeply influenced by previous efforts to maintain political union through Ottomanism and Namık Kemal type freedom. This vision was certainly influenced by the ethno-cultural variety of Ottoman society, such that members of Balkan, Caucasian, Armenian and Kurdish extraction all actively participated in the discussions. They demanded the abolition of all types of despotism, including the rule of Abdulhamid

²⁶⁵ F.Müge, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 75.

²⁶⁶ Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 98.

II, and the revival of the constitution, while inviting all Ottoman citizens to struggle, no matter what their cultural background was. Thus, the CUP was cosmopolitan, civil, Ottoman, and following the ideals of the French Revolution. As its leading cadres were exiled after the end of the First Constitutional Era, the headquarters of the society moved to Paris and Geneva. However, this liberalism did not last long, and by 1897, the two heads of the Society, Ahmet Rıza (1859-1930) and Mizancı Murat (1854-1917), disagreed on what view to take on the Greek-Ottoman War, how to respond to European aggression against the Ottomans, and how to handle the Armenian question that was already turning into a serious problem in Anatolia²⁶⁷.

As we can see, these three disagreements were primarily focused on how to handle the problems of the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslim minorities. The shrinking territories of the Empire had made Muslims the absolute majority, and most Christian communities were settled in the territories of newly independent states. This change in territorial geography affected the policies of the CUP, making it more pro-Turkish and Islamist in an attempt to hold the Empire together. The second phase of the CUP, which started during the early 1900s and ended with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, was marked by an extreme militarization within the society. More and more military officers who were discontented with Abdulhamid II started to join the society. Independently of its headquarters in Europe, these military officers established another center in Thessaloniki, which later merged with the movement in Europe. Within a short period of time, the civilian group based in Paris lost all control over the military group in Thessaloniki, which in this period was the center of conflict within the Balkan region of the Ottoman Empire. The city's Greek traders were becoming economically more powerful compared to the city's Turkish inhabitants, causing a power struggle to develop between the two groups. In addition to this social conflict, the Ottomans stationed a strong army in the city to monitor the nationalist movements emerging in provinces of Bulgaria and Macedonia. These officers were exposed to constant battles with Macedonian separatist groups, and did not approve the way Abdulhamid II was handling the situation. Ideologically speaking, these Ottoman officers based in the society's Thessaloniki headquarter had adopted the German

²⁶⁷ Suavi, Aydın, "İki İttihat-Terraki: İki ayrı Zihniyet, İki ayrı Siyaset," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyetin Birikimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinçil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 118 – 119.

philosophy of organizing the state²⁶⁸. According to Suavi Aydın²⁶⁹, this was due to two main reasons: First, the Ottoman officers were trained by German officers, who had been working in the Ottoman Empire since the early 1880s, which had naturally created an admiration towards the Germans. For example, Enver Paşa (1881-1922), who was then in charge of the military forces in Uskup, had been trained in Germany and was fluent in German²⁷⁰. Second, while French, British and Russians were discussing how to take advantage of the Ottoman collapse, the Germans chose not to align themselves with them, preferring instead to develop friendly ties with the Ottomans. This made the Ottoman officers sympathize with the Germans and their modern social-political culture, based on the prioritization of the state over personal freedom. The CUP officers adopted this German philosophy which led them to promote Turkishness at the expense of all the Empire's non-Muslim minorities. The state was now seen as the guarantor of freedom and the guarantor of the political existence of the nation²⁷¹.

The Second Constitution (*II.Meşrutiyet*) was announced quietly by Abdulhamid II on 24 July, 1908. He was forced to make such a declaration partly because of the mutiny organized by army officers like Enver Paşa stationed in the Balkans. Enver Paşa had organized resistance to the sultan in Tikves and joined a mutinous movement of other army officers. Despite the Sultan's responding militarily, the resistance did not end, so the Sultan finally had to accept their demands to stop the growing insurrection. The declaration of the Second Constitution that came as a result of this military coup was unusual in that most military coups are organized in capital cities whereas this so-called coup, sponsored by Enver Paşa, took place in the peripheral territories of the Empire²⁷². The event confirmed the dominance of the military group of the CUP over its civil counterpart, and after this development the German Kaiser was happy to see German trained Ottoman military officers take over control of Ottoman state affairs. However, the proclamation of the Second Constitution, and the wider struggle for a parliamentary monarchy did not result in

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 124.

²⁶⁹ Suavi, Aydın, "İki İttihat-Terraki: İki ayrı Zihniyet, İki ayrı Siyaset," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyetin Birikimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011).

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 125.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 126 – 127.

²⁷² Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 571.

full democracy and freedom, since authority remained under the influence of the CUP, which aimed to create a more authoritarian state under German norms²⁷³

This second, more militaristic phase of the CUP has shaped the dynamics of Turkish nationalism until the present. This militarist wave aimed to maintain a strong state at the expense of individual freedom, but society did not have any immediate plan on what to do after the Second Constitution was proclaimed. Their first priority was to organize the army against any possible war that could take place in the Balkans²⁷⁴. However, after the coup of March 31, 1909, when Abdulhamid II was overthrown, the CUP surprisingly increased its influence over the state politics for a short period of time, and started to encourage more progress over freedom. However, they soon back pedaled on this in order to promote more mobilization, social organization and national awakening²⁷⁵. As the CUP ideology was based on maintaining a strong state, they had to create a strong nation as well. Therefore, they needed to develop a stronger Turkish Muslim bourgeoisie to provide the state with a strong social basis. As Murat Belge points out, the Ottomans lacked the strong class structure that could produce social movements based on lower social classes²⁷⁶.

After the coup of 1909, the CUP started to implement its program to develop a strong bourgeoisie in order to cause the necessary social changes. This was organized in two ways. First, the CUP regime enforced economic policies to make the Muslim traders and producers stronger than non-Muslims²⁷⁷. Until the beginning of the 20th century, an ethno-cultural division of labor had existed in the Ottoman Empire, such that specific cultural groups tended to monopolize certain jobs and activities, which meant that, in most cases, Muslim Turks remained in the lower socio-economic layer of society. In addition, Turkish Ottoman labor could never have become organized as a strong political movement,

²⁷³ Suavi, Aydın, "İki İttihat-Terraki: İki ayrı Zihniyet, İki ayrı Siyaset," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyetin Birikimi*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 127 – 128.

²⁷⁴ F.Müğe, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 76.

²⁷⁵ Şerif, Mardin, "19. Yüzyıl'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti," *Türk Modernleşmesi/Şerif Mardin Makaleleri*, (eds.) Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 101.

²⁷⁶ Murat, Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 574.

²⁷⁷ F.Müğe, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 66.

since only a few traditional guild organizations existed²⁷⁸. In the mid-19th century, in addition to this weak labor organization, the limited Ottoman labor force that was organized around social networks and family ties, started to face European competition in its traditional markets. This competition imposed by the Europeans, also led to a decline in the traditional religious and cultural values of the Anatolian Muslim society. For example, the increasing European presence in the Empire could be felt through the development of European sponsored railroads, which allowed more foreign companies to take advantage of Ottoman markets, while simultaneously exposing traditional rural Ottoman society to the outside world. This brought new ideas and ways of organizing in Ottoman culture, and then started to erode traditional Ottoman society and its relation to the state. Finally, European influences forced Ottoman economic and political institutions to adapt themselves to the new globalized world²⁷⁹. For example, imports of cheap Indian textiles and European manufactured goods caused a collapse in local Ottoman production. Due to rising costs, some producers had to leave the urban zones and move to small villages in search of cheap labor, which made women enter the work force for the first time. However, urban zones such as Thessaloniki, Beirut, Alexandria, Port Said and Izmir continued growing due to their increasing potential for sea-trade. In addition, European companies that established branches in the Empire needed a work force, although recruitment was usually from local non-Muslim communities who could speak a foreign language and were culturally closer to European businessmen. For example, during the 19th century, the railroad network established by Europeans was managed by Ottoman non-Muslim minorities, while Muslim Turks were employed only as workers or engine operators²⁸⁰. Such developments changed the hierarchy of Ottoman labor system, with Ottomans starting to use more paid labor, which weakened the guild system (*lonca*) by 1826, causing it to dissolve by 1912²⁸¹.

Prior to WWI, investment in the Empire was mostly controlled by Ottoman non-Muslim minorities and Europeans. It was estimated that Greeks controlled 50% of all

²⁷⁸ Donald, Quataert, "Labor History in the Ottoman Middle East 1700-1922", *International Labor and Working Class History*, No 61, (Fall 2001), 98 – 100.

²⁷⁹ Donald, Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolutions in 1908", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol51 No3, (Sept 1979), 1148.

²⁸⁰ Donald, Quataert, "Labor History in the Ottoman Middle East 1700-1922", *International Labor and Working Class History*, No 61, (Fall 2001), 102 – 105.

²⁸¹ Yavuz, Karakışla, "Osmanlı İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923," *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine işçiler 1839-1950*, (eds.), D.Quataert and E.J. Zürcher, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1998), 28.

investments, Armenians 20%, Turks 15%, European nations 10% and the Jewish community 5%. In addition, the Ottomans had accumulated huge amounts of foreign debt, since 1854, which resulted in bankruptcy by 1881. The Europeans then established the Council of Ottoman Revenues and Debts Administration (*Duyumu Umumiye*), where many Ottoman non-Muslim minority members were employed to coordinate Ottoman repayments. Under these circumstances, growing anger against the non-Muslims who controlled the majority of trade appeared, especially in the big cities. For example, the Turkish public boycotted Austrian goods when the Austria-Hungarian Empire conquered Bosnia in 1908. This boycott was followed by another boycott and revolt against the Greek community, when rumors circulated in Istanbul that the Greek community had collected funds to be sent to the Greek navy for the purchase of some war ships²⁸².

The Empire's economic stability was also shaken by the economic crisis which had caused food shortages by 1908. The harsh winter of 1907 in Istanbul made meat and legume prices increase by 100%, firewood prices by 250% and charcoal by 300%. Anatolia also suffered food shortages that year due to grain harvests being half of normal levels. In response, the Ottomans banned grain exportation and the administration was forced to reduce all its import taxes on imported foods. However, despite these efforts, the central government could not control increasing prices, and soon riots started in Sivas, Kayseri and Erzurum. The same year, bread prices increased two times as world wheat production was also very low. Among the traditional wheat suppliers of Istanbul, Romania produced 63% less wheat, while Bulgaria's fell by 40%. The Ottomans then had to import more expensive and of lower quality wheat from France and Italy. The public was well aware of the economic developments by 1908 as Istanbul newspapers were publishing detailed reports on the economic forecasts, which didn't seem optimistic for the coming season. The railroads that transported 94% of Istanbul's wheat, saw levels drop from 238,000 tonnes in 1902 to 93,000 tonnes in 1908. For the same period, exported cereals from Ottoman seaports dropped in Mersin from 293,000 tonnes to 193,000 tonnes, in Izmir

²⁸² F.Müge, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 67.

from 571,000 tonnes to 328,000 tonnes and in Samsun from 70,000 tonnes to 23,000 tonnes²⁸³.

The social tension that built up around this economic crisis was an important contributing factor to the growing nationalist feelings, which had already been encouraged by other internal and external factors. The main internal source concerned the non Muslim communities who controlled an important share of Ottoman trade and production, while leaving all poorly paid labor to Muslim Turks. As just outlined, the key external factors were growing global economic competition, and cheap imports that weakened Ottoman manufacturing industries²⁸⁴. Together these developments increased social tension and led a social polarization between the Empire's various social-economic groups²⁸⁵. The Turkish nationalism encouraged by the CUP at the beginning of the 20th century aimed to create a strong bourgeoisie in order to solve the social-economic crises.

As part of its program to create a strong Turkish bourgeoisie, the CUP forced the Europeans to employ Turkish labor rather than non-Muslim labor. In addition, they enforced the use of Turkish as the official language of commerce. Meanwhile, they looked for ways of abolishing the capitulations that had disadvantaged Turkish communities. These were finally brought to an end in 1914, when WWI started²⁸⁶. Before the abdication of Abdulhamit, declining living standards made more people question the monarchy, which helped the CUP to start organizing labor movements to provoke strikes against the ruling system. The degree of contact between CUP officers and laborers remains still unclear as Ottoman labor history has not yet been well researched, but it is certain that CUP officers incited some strikes to protest against the situation. For example, the wages of Istanbul dock workers and workers in the Oriental Railway and the Anatolian Railway Companies were set at the lowest level²⁸⁷. The Ottoman Workers Association (*Osmanlı Amele Cemiyeti*), founded in 1894 in Tophane, Istanbul, was the first trade union, and kept

²⁸³ Donald, Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolutions in 1908", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol51 No3, (Sept 1979), 1149 - 1157.

²⁸⁴ Donald Quataert, "Labor History in the Ottoman Middle East 1700-1922", *International Labor and Working Class History*, No 61, (Fall 2001), 93.

²⁸⁵ F.Müge, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 63.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 67.

²⁸⁷ Donald, Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolutions in 1908", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol51 No3, (Sept 1979), 1159.

contact with the Young Turks, who were soon disbanded²⁸⁸. In October 1907, the Istanbul railroad workers founded their union to protest against their deteriorating conditions²⁸⁹. Despite its limited effects, this is the first time we see Ottoman labor using western tools such as protesting and striking in order to solve their problems. The first labor meeting in Ottoman history was organized in Thessaloniki in July 1909, while the Ottoman parliament was still discussing whether to allow the right to strike. The number of Ottoman industrial workers, estimated at around 250,000 people, was still low compared to European states. Most were based in Istanbul, and 100,000 were employed in the railroad system²⁹⁰. By 1909, the CUP had helped to organize more than 110 unofficial strikes in Istanbul which created the necessary environment to organize their coup of March 31²⁹¹. However, once the CUP had established its own authoritarian regime between 1913 and 1918, it violently suppressed almost all strikes, such that only five strikes were recorded within that period²⁹².

Apart from their interference with labor movements to promote Turkish nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, the CUP also engineered demographic changes in Anatolia that helped the establishment of a Turkish Identity during the early years of the 20th century. The Balkan Wars that resulted in heavy territorial losses also caused the immigration of millions of Muslim refugees to Anatolia. In WWI, the Ottomans had lost 83% of their territories and 69% of their population in the Balkans. At this time, a third of the Anatolian population was Christian, and tension against the Christians was also rising²⁹³. After 400 years of presence in Europe, the Ottomans were expelled from the Balkans, which seriously demoralized the general Ottoman public. Now isolated in Anatolia, a new definition of Turkish identity was required, so the CUP had to try to create a homogenous Turkish population, with nationalism being the considerable force that helped engineer the subsequent demographic changes in Anatolia.

²⁸⁸ Yavuz, Karakışla, "Osmanlı İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923," *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (eds.), D.Quataert and E.J. Zürcher, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1998), 39.

²⁸⁹ Donald, Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolutions in 1908", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol51 No3, (Sept 1979), 1159.

²⁹⁰ Yavuz, Karakışla, "Osmanlı İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923," *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (eds.), D.Quataert and E.J. Zürcher, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1998), 51.

²⁹¹ Donald, Quataert, "Labor History in the Ottoman Middle East 1700-1922", *International Labor and Working Class History*, No 61, (Fall 2001), 107.

²⁹² Yavuz, Karakışla, "Osmanlı İşçi Sınıfının Doğuşu 1839-1923," *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (eds.), D.Quataert and E.J. Zürcher, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1998), 38.

²⁹³ Soneri Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam ve Milliyetçilik*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 10.

This change was achieved in two ways. First, the CUP agreed to exchanges populations with Bulgaria and Greece. In 1913, the regime agreed with Bulgaria to exchange the Bulgarian Orthodox communities of Thrace with the Muslim Turks of Bulgaria, while also agreeing to exchange the Greek population of the western Aegean region with the Turks of mainland Greece. Although neither agreement was fully applied, they established the basis for future Kemalist demographic policies after the proclamation of the Republic. Soner Çağaptay, citing Kemal Karpat, claims that, between 1854 and 1914, more than seven million Muslim immigrants arrived in Anatolia from the Balkans and the Black Sea Region, which created a significant change, as the total population grew-up to around 13 to 15million in this period²⁹⁴. As the immigrants coming from the Balkans entered Anatolia from Thrace, the central Ottoman government distributed land to them and exempted them from any tax payments and military service for six years. For immigrants located in Anatolia instead of Thrace, this exemption was raised to twelve years²⁹⁵.

The CUP carefully calculated where the settlers should be placed and evenly distributed them so that their numbers would not exceed 10% of the total local population. In addition, the CUP looked for ways of systematically assimilating the local Anatolians with the migrants, who included Bosnians, Romanians, Pomaks and Albanians. The Ottomans also accepted Kurdish migrants, and settlers from the Black Sea Region, such as Georgians, Laz, Azeris and Circassians who were fleeing from Russian repression. By the end of 1914, Albanians were established in Western Anatolia, migrating Kurds were settled in central Anatolia, while the Georgians and Circassians were located in North-West Anatolia. In order to settle the arriving groups and grant them more land, the CUP also looked for ways of clearing the Armenians, who owned most of the region's agricultural land, out of Eastern Anatolia, using war situation as justification. As a result of the systematic displacement organized by the CUP, only 100,000 Armenians remained in Anatolia by the end of WWI, while the appropriated land was given to the newcomers²⁹⁶.

²⁹⁴ Kemal, H. Karpat, "Historical Continuity and Identity Change", *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey* (ed.) Kemal, H. Karpat (Leiden, Brill, 2000), 22, quoted in Soner Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam ve Milliyetçilik*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 8.

²⁹⁵ F. Müge, Göçek, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Oluşumu: Sosyolojik bir Yaklaşım," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 66.

²⁹⁶ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam ve Milliyetçilik*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 15 – 17.

After the seizure of the absolute power in 1913, Enver Paşa was also interested on reforming the language in order to facilitate the degree of communication in the army. This effort is known to be the only attempt on reforming the language that was fully organized by the state for the first time in Ottoman political history. The proposed reform known also the “Enver Paşa script” tried to simplify the spelling and reading of the Arabic scripts. During WWI this was used by the army telegraphers in some administrative writings before the efforts were abandoned in 1917²⁹⁷.

According to Zafer Toprak²⁹⁸ the period between 1908 and 1912 should be well understood in terms of setting a strong foundation of the origins of the Turkish nationalism that eventually influenced the Kemalist Republican nationalist ideology and the language reforms after 1923. During these four years, which coincided with the final phase of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish nationalism transitioned from an emphasis on cosmopolitan Turkish identity to an ethnic based Turkish nationalism²⁹⁹.

The cosmopolitan Turkish nationalism aimed to construct a cosmopolite Turkish identity. The French third Republic was taken as a model by creating the “civic” society with the “citizen”. Thessaloniki was the center of this type of nationalism, since it was seen as the gateway to Europe by the Ottomans. Many intellectuals such as Ziya Gökalp, as well as the headquarters of CUP, were based in this city. Thessaloniki represented the perfect cosmopolitan model for the new Turkish identity in the empire. This cosmopolitan ideal was abandoned after the loss of Thessaloniki to the Greeks. After the Balkan Wars, this loss represented a turning point in the history of Turkish nationalism³⁰⁰.

The end of the Balkan Wars resulted in the switch from the “cosmopolitan” Turkish nationalism to the “ethnic” based Turkish nationalism. By rejecting any type of cosmopolitanism, this wave represented an emphasis on Turkic ethnicity and Turkish culture. The French Republican model was replaced by the German emphasis on culture. Istanbul was considered to be the center of these ideals and was led by Turkic intellectuals such as Yusuf Akçuraoglu and Ahmet Ağaoğlu who had migrated to the Ottoman Empire. These

²⁹⁷ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 38.

²⁹⁸ Zafer, Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji*, (İstanbul, Doğan Kitap, 2012).

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 416.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 417.

cadres became even more influential during the early Kemalist period in the Turkish Republic³⁰¹.

This change represents the switch in Turkish nationalism from “space” to “time”. The cosmopolitan nationalism was aimed to gather all citizens of the empire under one identity and territory. However the ethnic nationalism was based on a timeless past that could only be traced through culture, language and ethnicity; Therefore the historical past of the Turkish language became important in terms of constructing the later modern Turkish identity³⁰².

As mentioned in the introduction to this section on the CUP, the political changes that the CUP experienced represent the transition from Anderson’s principles to Gellner’s. That is, the CUP moved away from defending its originally New Ottoman project to one of an imagined Turkishness. When the CUP acquired absolute power in 1909, it started to govern the state by imposing its social-political projects that had been first *imagined* since the creation of the society, and then by *inventing* the actual policies to impose what had been imagined either by force or law. As Gellner would recognize, after 1909, the state strengthened the bonds needed for a strong Turkish middle class by introducing new economic rules and a broader educational system.

4.6. Conclusion: From the “invention” of the Ottoman Heritage to the “imagined” Turkish Identity

The historical evolution of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, which started at the end of the 18th century with efforts to modernize the Ottoman administration and the army, eventually resulted in the formation of a Turkish nationalist movement in the middle of the 19th century. The modernization process first started with the efforts of the Ottoman bureaucratic elites, who wanted the old glorious days of the Empire to come back. Many reforms were implemented to this end, but with limited effect, so that there were no significant changes within society generally. Meanwhile, European nations such as Italy and Germany, had formed their own nation-states, and Russia had promoted the Pan-Slavism movement that affected the peripheral territories of the Empire. It became clear that Ottoman society had to go through some changes during the 19th century, due to the

³⁰¹ Ibid., 418.

³⁰² Ibid., 419.

demands of Turkish Muslim intellectuals. Some intellectuals first gathered around the idea of Ottomanism and later Turkism, in which both groups were oriented around the idea of westernizing the Empire. On the other hand, some others defended Islamism as a reaction to westernization. Then, at the end of the 19th century, for the first time in Ottoman history, the CUP, which had started as a grassroots organization limited to secret meetings, emerged as a strong political organization that started to challenge the monarchial authority directly.

Over two centuries, between the 18th and the 20th centuries, the application of an Ottoman cosmopolitan identity was first promoted by the Ottoman administrative elites, before being replaced by the introduction of a stronger Turkish Muslim identity, identified with Anatolia. When we analyze this period through Ernest Gellner's principles, it is clear that the development of Turkish nationalism was caused by a western oriented modernization period causing the transition that Ottoman society went through. This transition first affected the imperial administration, by reforming the army and attempting to establish a new central political system through the *Tanzimat* Reforms, First Constitutional, and Second Constitutional Eras. Apart from the efforts to establish a centralized school system open to all residents of the Empire, Ottoman Turkish was established for the first time as part of the official curriculum, together with the already taught French and German languages. However, the most important Gellnerian development that took place during this transitional period was the centralized state's attempt to establish a high culture to be superior to all existing local sub-cultures. In this respect, both the constructed identities of Ottomanism and later Turkishness were parts of efforts at reorganizing Turkish society around some invented traditions, a struggle for the national economy, and efforts to introduce a common history and cultural norms.

Finally, in terms of analyzing the development of Turkish nationalism between the 18th and 20th centuries, we also find Benedict Anderson's principles to be important for analyzing late 19th century developments in particular. In this period, Turkish intellectuals became more active and more influential in terms of leading efforts to establish a Turkish Muslim identity. These efforts were driven by political grassroots activities and also through publishing literature independently of central monarchic state authority. Besides Istanbul based intellectuals, the movement was also joined by immigrant intellectuals from the Turkic communities of the Black Sea littoral and Central Asia. This movement

developed into an imagined brotherhood around the notion of an imagined nation-land and an imagined history, which contributed to the formation of the modern Turkish language that became one of the main driving forces of Turkish nationalism.

Chapter 5

The KEMALIST LANGUAGE REFORM in the EARLY REPUBLIC of TURKEY

5.1. Introduction

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Kemalists, under the leadership of M. Kemal, who had led the Turkish War of Independence against the western occupying forces, started to form a new Turkish nation that they planned to be home for all Muslim Turks in Anatolia. The 600-year era of the Ottoman rule had ended in a dramatic and painful collapse that triggered many social-political changes in Anatolia, as well as in the ex-peripheral Ottoman territories. Out of the debris of the Ottoman Empire, many new states were formed after WWI in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa, including the Republic of Turkey.

As the past cannot be erased at once, each of the newly founded states continued to live with the memories and concrete traces that the Ottomans had left. In particular, one should take in consideration that many of these newly founded states emerged as a result of their struggle for independence against the Ottomans, so that their national unity was sustained because of their anti-Ottoman feelings and memories. The Kemalist Turkish Republic, officially founded in 1923, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, created its modern national unity after its struggle against its Ottoman heritage. One may argue that during the establishment of the republic, the Kemalists had to fight two wars: The first was the War of Independence that was waged between 1919 and 1922 against the western occupying forces. This was clearly based on military action that resulted in the independence of Turkey. The second conflict that the Kemalists had to deal with was a cultural battle that had to be fought against the Ottoman heritage that existed in Turkey. Its aim was to establish a modern republican culture over the Ottoman past. This second battle over culture lasted longer than the first military war, and for some it has never ended. The Kemalists of the 1920s and the 1930s were trying to build the new modern Turkish Republic to replace the traditional “archaic” Ottoman past. This second battle for the

formation of a modern republican culture over the traditional Imperial past and its values was waged through a succession of political operations that in some cases were brutally enforced.

This final chapter will focus on this cultural battle that the Kemalists waged against their Ottoman heritage. The Ottoman spirit could still be felt in Anatolia after the War of Independence had been won and the Republic of Turkey had been proclaimed. The cultural struggle that the Kemalists had to carry on through the establishment of the Republic was oriented around the ambition of building a new nation unified by a common and homogenous Turkish identity. Based on the Kemalist agenda, this required the westernization of every social, political and economic element in the society and the state. The Kemalist bureaucratic elite believed that the unity of the new Turkish nation would only be possible only if a strict de-Ottomanization process took place.

During the de-Ottomanization that occurred between 1923 and the end of the 1930s, the main battle was fought over the reform of the Turkish language. The Kemalists, who actively started to reform the language in 1928 with the official replacement of Arabic scripts with the Latin alphabet, saw this reformation as an important basis for the creation of the new modern Turkish identity. This final chapter will comment on the reforms that took place between 1928 and 1938 by applying the approaches of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson discussed in the previous chapters. Both theorists will be referred to in terms of commenting on the language reform and the building of a new nation. The process of building the new Turkish nation, in relation to the Turkish language reform, will help us trace the boundary of what was first “imagined”, as Anderson would suggest, and what was later “invented”, as Gellner would observe.

5.2. The Birth of the New Turkish Republic and Kemalist Modernism

After the end of WWI, which resulted in the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the occupation of Anatolia by the victorious forces, including Greece, Mustafa Kemal organized a resistance movement in Anatolia. This resistance movement, centered in Ankara, built the basis for the future foundation of the modern Turkish Republic. During the struggle for independence, the newly formed republican government of Ankara disassociated itself from the imperial Istanbul monarchy. The military struggle ended with the defeat of the western forces, followed by the declaration of independence by the

Ankara government and the formation of the Republic of Turkey. This victory also helped to install Mustafa Kemal (1881-1938) as the leading figure of the modernization movement in Turkey.

As discussed in detail in Chapter III, the modernization and westernization processes in Turkey had already started during the Ottoman era. Researchers like Murat Belge date the beginning of the modernization process back to the 'Tulip Period' in the 18th century, although another group of researchers believe that the *Tanzimat* Reforms of 1839 should be considered as the beginning of Ottoman modernization. However, we believe that the 'first constitutional era' in the second half of the 19th century should be considered as the beginning of *continuous* efforts at Ottoman Modernization. This modernization continued until the collapse of the Empire and affected the spirit of the Republic of Turkey. Mustafa Kemal, and most of the elites that founded the Republic, were already active in social-political roles in the Ottoman Empire, as well as in the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) cadres. Therefore, it was inevitable that the early Republican governments, including M. Kemal, were influenced by the modernization and westernization movements already taking place in the empire.

Social science offers many ways to describe what modernization means for a society. Halil Inalcık³⁰³, for example, describes modernism as the process of eliminating differences among cultures, institutions, social structures and belief systems. He traces the origins of the first organized modernist movements to 19th century Europe³⁰⁴. Similar to Inalcık, Reşat Kasaba³⁰⁵ describes modernization as a mass course of changes that takes place in a society. These changes bring new developments in a market economy that end traditional thinking. They also promote the individual within society, so that personal freedom becomes an important value to protect³⁰⁶. Modernization encourages society to think in positivist and progressive linear terms. This new way of thinking, which challenges traditional static modes of thought, is supported by a centralized educational system, urbanization, economic progress and democracy³⁰⁷.

³⁰³ Halil, Inalcık, "Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük" ,*Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler* 2, No29, (Aug 2004).

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 12.

³⁰⁵ Reşat, Kasaba, "Eski ile Yeni Arasında Kemalizm ve Modernizm," *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, (eds.) Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010).

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 24.

³⁰⁷ Nilüfer, Göle, "Modernleşme Bağlamında İslami Kimlik Arayışı," *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 83.

However, the modernization efforts in Turkey, which first appeared in the Ottoman Empire and then in the Republic, did not create a civil society as they had done in Europe. Modernization in the west had occurred during consecutive eras, starting with the Renaissance, and including the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution, which had allowed the west created its own modernization with its own inner dynamics³⁰⁸. The European enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries drew a line between private life and the public system whereby the state provided freedom to the individual in exchange for the citizen fulfilling various duties toward the nation. This individual freedom provided the necessary grounds for non-governmental organizations to appear for the formation of a genuine civil society supporting the existence of the industrial state. These developments helped to create nation states with collective national identities based on national social dynamics³⁰⁹. The rest of the world then took this western evolution as the model to imitate since they equated social, political and economic progress with western values³¹⁰.

The progress seen in the west also became a model for the Ottomans and the Kemalist Republic, so Turkish modernization reflects a complex relation between Turkey and the west. The modernization that was implemented in Turkey between the 19th and 20th centuries caused more chaos and ambiguity than a linear peaceful evolution. In contrast to the limited results of Ottoman modernization, M. Kemal had a plan to change Turkish society absolutely. His notion of modernity was based on an understanding of political unity in a specific territory that was to be solidified by the creation of a republican citizenship. As pointed out in Chapter III, at the time when the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the Republic was founded, the population of Anatolia was socially varied. The religious *millet system* was the driving force among the different polarized Anatolian societies. Therefore, the entire Republican project on the modernization of Turkey was based on homogenizing Anatolia through western values³¹¹. However, this project of modernization, instead of creating its own social dynamics as had happened in Europe, remained as a complex of Turks measuring themselves against the west³¹², which may be

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 87.

³⁰⁹ Halil, Inalcık, "Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler*, No29, (Aug 2004), 115.

³¹⁰ Nilüfer, Göle, "Modernleşme Bağlamında İslami Kimlik Arayışı," *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 88.

³¹¹ Fuat, Keyman, and Tuba, Kancı, "A tale of Ambiguity: Citizenship, Nationalism and Democracy in Turkey", *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 17(2), (April 2011), 318.

³¹² Halil, Inalcık, "Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler2*, No29, (Aug 2004), 116.

responsible for the ambiguity and the confusion that the modernization process has created in Turkey.

The values based on modernity and the modernization process that Kemalism promoted was a totally revolutionary movement for the westernization of the Turkish state and society. Modernization in Turkey was seen as both westernization and an ambition to be contemporarily civilized. M. Kemal paraphrased this as “*Asrileşmek, Muasır, medeniyet, seviyesine erişmek, Garplaşmak*” (to modernize, to reach the level of contemporary civilization and westernization)³¹³. Reforms were implemented to create a secular, modern and industrial nation state. Şerif Mardin³¹⁴ highlights four points that became important during the social-political transition that the Kemalist Republic administered. First, the society had to adapt itself from the personal rule of the sultan to the impersonal rule and regulations of parliament. Second, the structure of the governing body had to move from the divine law to positivist and rational thinking based on a secular constitution. Third, the imperial bureaucracy had to change from a community based elite to a republican populist bureaucracy. Last, all the reforms had to be designed in order to mold the separate religious based communities into one secular nation state³¹⁵.

In both Ottoman and Republican eras, modernization in Turkey has always been controlled by leaders rather than the will of the masses. The secular and political reforms that were implemented during the Republican era by M. Kemal and his administration were performed under the same Jacobean tradition³¹⁶. No doubt, the establishment of M. Kemal as an authoritarian figure is an important factor in this. After M. Kemal’s dismissal by the Istanbul government in 1919, he travelled around Anatolia to organize the resistance. The movement for independence gained official legitimacy with the foundation of the first parliament of Turkey in Ankara. The parliament consisted of democratically elected delegates from Anatolian towns, so the parliamentary body was very diverse. M. Kemal became the head of the first parliament that led the resistance, but he also established himself as a national hero by leading the military struggle. He received the

³¹³ Ibid., 101.

³¹⁴ Şerif Mardin, “*Ideology and Religion in the Turkish revolution*” (in Ş. Mardin, *Religion, Society and Modernity in Turkey*. NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006) quoted in Keyman, Fuat and Kancı, Tuba, *A tale of Ambiguity: Citizenship, Nationalism and Democracy in Turkey, Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 17(2), (April 2011)

³¹⁵ Ibid., 320.

³¹⁶ Reşat, Kasaba, “Eski ile Yeni Arasında Kemalizm ve Modernizm,” *Türkiye’de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, (eds.) Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 29.

honorific religious title of “Gazi”, signifying “the Warrior of Anatolia”, a name that has been used since the 11th century. Then he proved himself by winning the war against the occupying forces, after which he was named “Halaskar”, the savior. After the proclamation of the Republic, he gave up all his military titles to become the first president of the Republic, taking the new title of “Reisi-Cumhur” (Head of the Republic). By eliminating the Sultanate in Istanbul and the functions of the caliphate, he appointed himself the absolute political leader of the new Turkish nation. All his titles and his authoritarian image were created after he had won the war against the imperial west and had secured the political existence of Turkey. After the proclamation of the Republic, he started to implement his decisive program of modernization and westernization. Thanks to his credibility, he was able to construct a new Turkish identity during this struggle against the Ottoman heritage³¹⁷.

The four points that Mardin³¹⁸ raises, provide the four main reasons for the ambiguity in modern Turkish society. First, as Inalcık³¹⁹ points out, during the first years of the Republic, the elite continued to control political participation, as they believed the general public to be too uneducated to vote. Despite the Kemalist intention to introduce populist reforms in the nation, the elite continued to monopolize the governing bodies of the state³²⁰. Therefore, the reforms were actually sponsored by a small elite group who also benefitted from the results, while the majority of the Anatolian population was left in confusion. This confusion, which had existed at social and political level since the Ottoman period, was also exacerbated by the social and ethnic tension that had resulted in the “Armenian Massacre” of 1915 and the forced population exchanges that took place between 1923 and the 1930s. Although, during the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the first decades of the Republic, the Turkish middle class, exposed to the forced westernization process, was expected to be nationalistic, the society continued instead to maintain strong Islamic feelings³²¹. In reaction to this traditionalistic Islamic spirit,

³¹⁷ Halil, Inalcık, “Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük”, *Doğu Batı, İdeolojiler*2, No29, (Aug 2004), 89-91.

³¹⁸ Şerif Mardin, “*Ideology and Religion in the Turkish revolution*” (in Ş. Mardin, *Religion, Society and Modernity in Turkey*. NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006) quoted in Keyman, Fuat and Kancı, Tuba, A tale of Ambiguity: Citizenship, Nationalism and Democracy in Turkey, *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 17(2), (April 2011)

³¹⁹ Halil, Inalcık, “Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük”, *Doğu Batı, İdeolojiler*2, No29, (Aug 2004).

³²⁰ Ibid., 112.

³²¹ Reşat, Kasaba, “Eski ile Yeni Arasında Kemalizm ve Modernizm,” *Türkiye’de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, (eds.) Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 35.

Kemalist modernism preferred to reject and ignore such an Islamic identity. Society stood between traditionalism and modernism, faith and logic, which resulted in a tension between individualism and social environment³²². The Kemalist revolution wished to remove society's Islamic identity by favoring a Turkish identity through changing the entire imperial administrative staff. That is, the revolution started from the top and expected to influence society later. In this, it totally differed from the dynamics of European modernization that had been the result of bottom-to-top social dynamics³²³. The Kemalists' modernization project preferred to adapt only those elements of the European model of modernization that would help to legitimize Kemalism. Therefore, reforms introduced during the early days of the Republic were oriented around western values of technological progress and social order, while other values, such as individual freedom, were rejected because they were seen as a threat to the new system³²⁴.

The period that starts with the proclamation of the Republic in 1923 and ends with the death of M. Kemal marks the progressive efforts of Kemalist modernization³²⁵. The main elements that were promoted by Kemalist modernism were secularism, rationalization, the nation state, industrialization, urbanization and civil rights. During this period, the regime stressed the creation of the notion of *Vatan* (Homeland) as a territorial unity. Social awareness of the geographical territory known as the *Vatan* was inculcated to the masses by creating a notion of loyalty to the homeland. The Kemalist revolution transformed every member of the society into a citizen loyal to the homeland. The loyalty of each citizen was measured by military service (for men), tax payments and hard work that would contribute to national economic progress. Loyalty was based on the notion of repaying the debt to those who had sacrificed their lives for the homeland. Those social duties were not imposed in exchange for civil rights, as in Europe. Rather, Kemalist nationalism expected every citizen to serve his or her nation with an unquestioned love for the Turkish homeland even though its social benefits were still limited. Kemalist nationalism also ensured loyalty to the homeland by systematically re-writing history,

³²² Nilüfer, Göle, "Modernleşme Bağlamında İslami Kimlik Arayışı," *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 84.

³²³ Halil, İnalçık, "Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler*2, No29, (Aug 2004), 111.

³²⁴ Nilüfer, Göle, "Modernleşme Bağlamında İslami Kimlik Arayışı," *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*, Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2010), 86.

³²⁵ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 71.

using it as an ideological tool to create a link between the homeland and the “chosen people” living in it³²⁶.

Critical to these developments was Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), who systematized the relationship between modernism, westernization and Turkish nationalism. Gökalp was part of the late CUP cadres during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Despite his philosophical influence over Kemalism, M. Kemal administration preferred to distance him from the new Republican administration. Anyway, he died in 1924, only a year after the proclamation of the Republic³²⁷. Nevertheless, in the early years of the 20th century, his ideas were influential on the point of civilizing a society through nationalism (*milletleşme*)³²⁸. Based on this philosophy, he defended Turkishness over Ottomanism in relation to Islam and westernization³²⁹.

According to Gökalp, the state of being a nation is the highest level that a society can reach in terms of its political organization. The nation is formed by a group of individuals who have received the same type of education in the same language, and share the same culture based on the same emotions. This union of society is solidified under an economic environment that the state is expected to secure. The nation depends on solidarity among its members and the existence of common cultural values that the society has accumulated through its history. These common values can only be transmitted to successive generations by writing³³⁰, with newspapers being more important than books in awakening the nationalistic spirit. According to Gökalp, newspapers offer a more common language than the language used in books because books are written in a finer, more technical language that can only be understood by a limited group of people.

Gökalp draws a distinction between civilization and culture³³¹. Societies are formed by common and culturally specific values known as cultural traditions. Cultures contain a view on the world and life. Therefore, a culture represents a nation, which makes the culture unique. Civilizations are the collection of cultures (and nations) that share common

³²⁶ Fuat, Keyman, and Tuba, Kancı “A tale of Ambiguity: Citizenship, Nationalism and Democracy in Turkey”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 17(2), (April 2011), 322-323.

³²⁷ Etienne, Copeaux, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk- İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 44.

³²⁸ Cevat, Özyurt, “Milletleşme Surecinde Ziya Gökalp’in medeniyet arayışı”, *Doğu Batı, İdeolojiler*4, No31, (Feb 2005), 180.

³²⁹ Keremî Ünüvar, “Ziya Gökalp, ”*Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 31.

³³⁰ Ibid., 31.

³³¹ Cevat, Özyurt, “Milletleşme Surecinde Ziya Gökalp’in medeniyet arayışı”, *Doğu Batı, İdeolojiler*4, No31, (Feb 2005), 184.

foundations within a civilization. That is, a civilization represents a group of nations and cultures, or a collection of cultural tools that are imitated and passed on from one group of a society to another. For example, philosophy and science are two components that make up a civilization, and which therefore cannot be considered to be part of a culture, although they can well be adapted to cultural traditions³³². Cultures are personal to societies and related to the individual's will to be part of them. On the other hand, civilizations, spread across a broader territory, share the intellectual aspects of groups of cultures based on positivism. In contrast, cultures are based on emotions and cannot be imitated. This means that nations may experience conflict, but in the end they can find common values to agree on, based on their similar cultures. However, conflicts between civilizations are more difficult to resolve since their differences are technical and scientific, making them more difficult to negotiate over³³³.

Ziya Gökalp believed that the Turkish nation could co-exist with both the Islamic and western civilizations. In terms of Turkey's relationship with the west, he felt that Turkish culture did not need to adopt all the liberal values of the west. It would be sufficient for the Turkish culture to borrow from the western civilization just the components needed for social order and technological progress³³⁴. Gökalp understood that, through the increasing innovations and communications, one dominant civilization could rise to dominate the others, and he suggested that this would be the west. In articles written in 1917, he claims that western civilization is the world's most modern civilization and that the Turkish culture should merge with it. He observed that, until the 20th century, Turkish culture, despite its close relations with Islamic civilization, had been part of a tension between eastern and western civilizations. Gökalp suggested that the only way to ease this tension would be by joining western civilization, as it would be dominant in the future. However, he also recognized that because religion is an important element of culture, this could create an obstacle for a possible coalition as the west and Turkey are part of two different religions. Therefore, Turks should never be part of western

³³² Kerem, Ünüvar, "Ziya Gökalp," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 32.

³³³ Cevat, Özyurt, "Milletleşme Surecinde Ziya Gökalp'in medeniyet arayışı", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler*4, No31, (Feb 2005), 186.

³³⁴ Kerem, Ünüvar, "Ziya Gökalp," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 33.

civilization completely as they could not renounce their Islamic heritage³³⁵. Finally, Ziya Gökalp noted that differences existed between modernism, civilizations and Europeanization. Based on these differences, Turks should be able to pick the most convenient western values without harming their own culture. For example, Gökalp argued that western civilizations have different values in the political and civil domains, so Turks should only adopt those civil western values that increase their living standards and encourage them to become more modern. On the other hand, they should not adopt political western values that allow too much liberalism, as this does not suit the Turkish culture, according to Gökalp³³⁶.

This ambiguity over eastern and western cultures, exemplified in Ziya Gökalp's writings, was a critical factor behind the conflict and tension that existed in Turkey during the Kemalist modernization process. He suggested that the Turkish culture and nation have their own values which cannot be changed, while civilizations that are technical can be modified. He was therefore against any total replacement of Turkey's Islamic heritage by western civilization as he believed that religion and language were the main resistant elements against this complete change.

5.3. The Kemalist Language Reform

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire a more nationalistic and modern form of republican nation-state replaced the multi-cultural traditionalistic empire. The new Turkish Republic based its efforts on modernization on a rejection of its Ottoman past. Under the influence of these efforts, a new Turkish Republican identity was to be created independently of Ottoman heritage. In this process of creating a new identity, as the European modern states had already done, historical links between antiquity and modern times had to be created in order to justify the national existence³³⁷. Therefore, a Turkish historical myth had to be invented to legitimize the territorial existence of the new secular Turkish Republic that in reality was still made up of an ethnically diverse population.

³³⁵ Cevat, Özyurt, "Milletleşme Surecinde Ziya Gökalp'in medeniyet arayışı", *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler*4, No31, (Feb 2005), 190.

³³⁶ Ibid., 193.

³³⁷ Yılmaz, Çolak, "1990'lı Yıllar Türkiye'sinde Yeni Osmanlıcılık ve Kültürel Çoğulculuk Tartışmaları", *Doğu Batı; Milliyetçilik*1, No38, (Aug 2006), 130.

Soner Çağaptay³³⁸ analyzes the early Republican epoch of 1923 to 1938 in two periods. The first period, which he names ‘*early Kemalism*’, covers the period between 1923 and 1930. This is the time when the Kemalist State tried to establish a homogenous and secular nation. The second era, which includes the period between 1930 and 1938, known as ‘*late Kemalism*’ is the time when Kemalism was established as an authoritarian state ideology. This is the time when Kemalism as an ideology started to introduce its long standing political and cultural symbols that were backed by the state’s enforcement³³⁹. This study on language reform in Turkey will be analyzed using this chronological sequence.

During the two periods of Kemalism, all the policies applied by the Turkish Republic centered on the idea of maintaining the unity of the new nation. In doing this, the Kemalist administration aimed to reform the society and its institutions and to elevate them to the level of ‘civilized’ cultures. This was framed by an extensive effort at secularism and a ruthless process of de-Ottomanism, which included the destruction of all daily routines related to the Ottoman epoch³⁴⁰. In the first period of Kemalism, the regime took very quick steps to start changing society by secularizing it in order to eliminate all opposition. Until then, the wartime parliament, the most powerful political institution in the nation, was very diverse, including members who defended the existence of Islam and Ottomanism. The Republican bureaucracy, under the leadership of M. Kemal, quickly abolished the Sultanate on November 1, 1922, before proclaiming the republic on October 29, 1923 and finally abolishing the caliphate on March 3, 1924³⁴¹.

Following these hasty operations to remove the Ottoman political spirit from the bureaucratic field, the Kemalist administration proceeded to rapidly implement a second group of social reforms in the de-Ottomanism process. By November 1925, the activities of all the madrasas and other religious teaching institutions were ended. All schools were then attached to the Ministry of Education. This was followed by the abolition of the use of the *fez*, which was another strong symbol of Ottomanism. The reforms continued with the enforcement of the new civil code in February 1926 instead of Sharia law, and the replacement of the Muslim calendar by the Gregorian calendar in December 1926. Finally, in April 1928, the clause indicating that Islam was the official religion of the state was

³³⁸ Soner Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009).

³³⁹ Ibid., 71.

³⁴⁰ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 200.

³⁴¹ Halil, Inalcık, “Atatürk ve Atatürkçülük”, *Doğu Batı; İdeolojiler* 2, No29, (Aug 2004), 103.

removed from the constitution. The result of these reforms was that Islam was no longer seen as the unifying official force of the Turkish nation; instead the value of a civil Turkish citizenship was praised³⁴². The foundations were thus laid for the slower and more difficult reform of the Turkish language.

After the completion of the Italian Union in 1861, the first Prime Minister of Italy, Massimo D'Azeglio said, "*we have made Italy, now we must make the Italians*". David Rowles, in his article on Giuseppe Mazzini, suggests that D'Azeglio's statement supports the modernist argument that nationalism is created by nations³⁴³. The same is also valid for the Kemalist movement in the 20th century, when M. Kemal first created the nation and later wished to create Turks to populate it from an ethnically diverse population. In the process of establishing a new nation, language nationalism has always been used as a cultural tool to organize national public life. During this process, the national language is used to emphasize the common values of a society, while also being used to force people to unite around one common ground that facilitates communication. In all existing cases of nationalism, language has been standardized in order to become a tool for communication in education and public administration. The nationalist ideology uses "the" national language as its principle instrument of communicating with its citizens. Meanwhile, language gives a sense of a historical continuity to its society. In addition, cultural boundaries among many competing societies are set depending on the existence of the larger society using the dominant language within the same territory. As a cultural instrument, language and its historical existence provide a strong basis to legitimize a nation state, as language has always been the most important evidence of cultural existence³⁴⁴. Nationalism is a project that identifies the nation by the existence of a state and the political ties that it establishes between its citizens and its mono-culture. M. Kemal, when describing the foundations of a nation, emphasized the importance of having a rich cultural heritage. Therefore, the Turkish nation needed to protect its heritage through

³⁴² Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 23 – 24.

³⁴³ David, G. Rowley, "Giuseppe Mazzini and the democratic logic of Nationalism", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol18(1), (Jan 2012), 44.

³⁴⁴ Berk, Balçık, "Milliyetçilik ve Dil Politikaları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 777.

the will of its citizens who had to live together. The future had to be built over this cultural heritage³⁴⁵.

5.4. Language Reform during the Early Kemalist Period (1923-1930)

In the 1920s, the Turkish Republic's cultural territories were solidified following the massive waves of population movements that had changed the demography of Anatolia. The multi-cultural Ottoman Empire had collapsed, and the new Republic had started a process of homogenizing its population and its language³⁴⁶. Cultural homogenization in Anatolia had already begun during WWI and the War of Independence as, during both wars, some Anatolian Greeks had fled to Greece, while Muslim groups from the Balkans and the Black Sea Region continued to migrate to Anatolia. By 1925, Anatolia had become more homogeneous than at the turn of the century³⁴⁷. It is estimated that, at the beginning of the 20th century, one third of the Anatolian population was non-Muslim³⁴⁸, while this ratio fell to less than 3% by 1927, after all the population exchanges had ended³⁴⁹. In 1927, the total population of Turkey was estimated to be around 13.5 million. Based on the statistics for the same year, 86% of the population could speak Turkish, while the rest spoke other languages. Among these other languages, Kurdish was the largest, with almost 1.18 million speakers, followed by Arabic (134,273), Greek (119,822), Circassian (95,901), Ladino (68,900), Armenian (64,745), Albanian (21,774), Bulgarian (20,554), Tartarian (11,465), French (8,456) and Italian (7,248)³⁵⁰.

The population exchanges of Anatolia were religiously driven, as the Ottoman *Millet system* was still the reference point for categorizing different social groups. This meant that, for example, the Karaman Greeks were included in the population exchanges and forced to migrate to Greece, despite not speaking Greek, because their religion was Greek-Orthodox, while the Christian Gagauz Turks from Romania were not allowed to migrate to Turkey. After the population exchanges, Kemalist secularism was to be built on the basis of a religiously homogenized nation on the assumption that Muslims could be

³⁴⁵ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 213.

³⁴⁶ Yeşim, Bayar, "The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 114.

³⁴⁷ Soneri Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 22.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 10.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 27.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 26.

more easily 'Turkified' than the supposedly less trustworthy non-Muslims³⁵¹. This homogenization of Anatolia was accelerated by the construction of a religiously unified society, although the country was still linguistically diverse because Muslims who had migrated to Anatolia still used their native languages, while some of the local Muslim population did not speak Turkish³⁵². In addition to all, according to the Lozan Treaty 1.3 million of Anatolian Greeks were exchanged with half a million Turks living in Greece. This caused another big social instability in Anatolia, as all these newly arrived Turks could not speak Turkish³⁵³. It thus became clear to the Kemalists that a certain degree of assimilation in terms of language was needed to create a feeling of belonging to the new territorial nation³⁵⁴. This was a task that the Kemalist administrative cadres had to fulfill through policies designed to describe Turkishness in a new culture and language³⁵⁵.

The ideals of the cosmopolitan based nationalism, which had existed prior to the loss of Thessaloniki, was felt during the 1921 constitution of the Republic. The Kemalists wanted to replace the religious based Turkish identity, which once supported the independence struggle, with more civic values of the French third Republic. However that did not last long. The ethnic based nationalism returned with the Kurdish Sheikh Said's revolt in the East. Zafer Toprak stated that names of ethnic groups such as Turk, Laz, Kurd, and Caucasian had existed in school textbooks prior to 1925. Not surprisingly, after 1925 all these names disappeared from books at the expense of the use of the term "Turk"³⁵⁶.

The Kemalist Republic had started to put its language policies into action from the first days. First, Turkish was proclaimed as the official language in both the 1921³⁵⁷ and 1924³⁵⁸ constitutions. This was the first officially written clause in the constitution, setting

³⁵¹ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 200 – 211.

³⁵² Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 25.

³⁵³ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 55.

³⁵⁴ Yeşim, Bayar, "The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 115.

³⁵⁵ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 64.

³⁵⁶ Zafer, Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji*, (İstanbul, Doğan Kitap, 2012), 419.

³⁵⁷ Berk, Balçık, "Milliyetçilik ve Dil Politikaları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 783.

³⁵⁸ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 40(6), (Nov 2004), 70.

clear cultural boundaries based on the use of language. It also became the official reference for any exclusion or assimilation based in the use of the language within the Turkish nation³⁵⁹. Every Turk was obligated to speak Turkish, so being a Turk was equal to speaking Turkish³⁶⁰. The constitutional establishment of the national language was followed by forcing all schools run by non-Muslims to employ teachers with Turkish citizenship to teach history and geography in Turkish. In 1925, at least five hours per week of Turkish language classes had to be taught in all schools, before the state passed a law in 1927 that the native language of all teachers should be Turkish, also requiring all teachers to pass a Turkish language test. In the same year, teaching Greek on the Aegean islands of Gökçeada and Bozcaada, and teaching Kurdish in the eastern provinces was banned. Access to Armenian schools was also limited the ruling that only children with an Armenian mother could attend Armenian schools³⁶¹.

All these rapidly introduced new laws were followed, in the 1928 reform, with the change to the alphabet, which was the real symbol of westernization and which sealed the Republic's divergence from Ottomanism. The Language reforms aimed to break away the Turkish society from the Islamic eastern culture while reproaching it to the western world by also facilitating the degree of communication in the new nation³⁶². As discussed on the previous chapter, the replacement of Arabic scripts with the Roman alphabet had already been discussed during the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire. However, intellectuals such as Namık Kemal were worried that a complete change in the writing system, would mean Turks would lose their ties with Islam³⁶³. This was exactly what M. Kemal wished to induce by enforcing the language and alphabet reforms of 1928.

However, these changes continued to be extensively debated within the Republic, centered on two main arguments. The first was how to modernize the language in order to reach the level of civilized nations. This first argument was caused by the long standing debate on why the Turkish nation was backward compared to European nations³⁶⁴. The

³⁵⁹ Berk, Balçık, "Milliyetçilik ve Dil Politikaları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 783.

³⁶⁰ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 214.

³⁶¹ Yeşim, Bayar, "The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 116.

³⁶² Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 35.

³⁶³ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 221.

³⁶⁴ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 71.

second argument was related to a domestic issue. The Kemalist cadres wanted to reduce the communicative gap that had existed due to language differences between the commoners and the administrative elites, and between the different social classes, Anatolia was also ethnically diverse, with many different languages being spoken, creating the need to decide on a common language through which Turkish citizens from different social classes and ethnic backgrounds could communicate³⁶⁵.

Between 1923 and 1928, these discussions on reforming the language were debated between two groups. The first group consisted of those who supported a complete reform of the language in pursuit of absolute westernization, while the second group contained defenders for more moderate reforms³⁶⁶. Until 1928, M. Kemal preferred to remain silent on the matter, joining the debate only at the later stage³⁶⁷. However it is known that as an officer in the Ottoman army, M.Kemal was interested on reforming the Turkish language. He even was sending letters to his friend in Istanbul, Madam Corinne, in Turkish but using French phonetic letters³⁶⁸. The division that existed between the radicals and the moderates had already existed since the Second Constitutional Era, when debates over the need for language reform had first started. Westernizers argued that Arabic scripts were no longer sufficient to represent Turkish correctly, whereas the Latin alphabet was more adaptable to the general project of westernizing and civilizing the nation. They claimed that illiteracy and ignorance in the society was caused by the difficult orthography of Arabic, so a western alphabet would complete the Kemalist revolution, as Arabic was linked to darkness and backwardness. The moderates, however, who were more oriented toward protecting Islamic values, were worried that the Latin characters would harm the Islamic unity of Turkey. They did not want to lose their ties with traditional religion and culture. While accepting the need to reform the language on a limited scale, they were concerned that any major change would damage the historical continuity of intellectual and daily life, arguing that the society's current backwardness was not related to the use of the Arabic

³⁶⁵ Yeşim, Bayar, "The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 118.

³⁶⁶ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 40(6), (Nov 2004), 71.

³⁶⁷ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 224.

³⁶⁸ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 41.

scripts but to the lack of a truly centralized education system and declining economic conditions³⁶⁹.

The first official debate on the use of the Latin letters took place during the 1923 Izmir Economic Congress. The proposition on reforming the language was rejected by the head of the congress, Kazım Karabekir, who was a moderate. Debates continued in the parliament between 1924 and 1926, with the moderates claiming that the use of Latin letters was part of a western plot to destroy Turkish culture. They supported their claims by giving Japan as an example of a nation that had preserved its traditional script but could still modernize³⁷⁰. However, the parliament, under the Kemalists' control, started to implement reforms. In May 1928, the first commission on language (*Dil Encumeni*) was formed, and started to work on standardizing the Turkish language based on the Istanbul dialect³⁷¹. It had two tasks; first, preparing the new Turkish alphabet with Latin letters, and second to start working on a new Turkish grammar³⁷². The series of rapid reforms on language continued with the replacement of Arabic numerals with Latin ones. They were planned to be used in state institutions by June 1929, and enforced in the public sector by June 1931. On August 1, 1928, the language commission presented to M. Kemal their report known as the *Elifba Report* (the alphabet report) on the use of Latin letters in Turkish³⁷³. The first alphabet also contained the word "q" which was later dropped from the alphabet as M. Kemal did not like its script³⁷⁴. On August 9, M. Kemal, becoming more active in leading the language reform, introduced the new Turkish letters to the public in the park in Sarayburnu. He then toured Anatolia to present the new reform, while his efforts were supported by the press, radio and schools. The law on the use of the Roman alphabet was officially accepted by the parliament on November 1, 1928³⁷⁵.

After the reform was formalized by the parliament, its application under the support of the government became more extensive. Although the language commission had estimated that the reform could be successful within a decade, the Kemalist administration

³⁶⁹ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 72.

³⁷⁰ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 222 – 223.

³⁷¹ Ibid., 225.

³⁷² Geoffrey, Lewis *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 43.

³⁷³ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 73.

³⁷⁴ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 44.

³⁷⁵ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 226.

planned for the new letters to be widely used in only a year and a half³⁷⁶. A nationwide campaign on the teaching of the letters was organized with People's Schools, known as the *Millet Mektepleri*, responsible for educating adults³⁷⁷. Only the 1/5 of the Turkish population was urbanized and the reforms had to be quickly transmitted to the rest of the nation³⁷⁸. The state officially announced the formation of the People's Schools on November 11, 1928, only ten days after the reform on the letters was officially accepted. All adults between the age of sixteen and forty were obliged to attend a teaching program in order to learn the new alphabet, and then pass an adequacy test in a process that was enforced by the police or gendarmerie. The People's Schools started their teaching sessions on January 1, 1929, and on the same date 50,000 people started to study in 350 schools in Istanbul alone. By the end of 1929, more than 600,000 people had attended the language classes all over Turkey³⁷⁹. On September 1, 1929, Arabic and Persian were removed from school curriculums³⁸⁰. By November 1929, all state workers had to pass a language test for which they were given only two chances³⁸¹.

Besides the efforts organized by the People's Schools to teach 'Pure-Turkish', it is also worth mentioning the activities of the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*). The Turkish Hearths were founded in 1912, during the Balkan Wars, and were presented as an important grass-roots activity during replacement of the Ottoman Imperial cosmopolite identity by the Kemalist Republican Turkish identity. During the 19th century, Turkishness had only been a cultural movement, but after the Balkan Wars it became politicized by non-governmental organizations, such as the Turkish Hearths. The association supported complete westernization as well as the revival of a common Turkish identity in Anatolia and Central Asia³⁸². After the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, the Turkish Hearths, under the leadership of Hamdullah Suphi (Tanrıöver) (1885-1961), a diplomat and a writer, followed the official Kemalist approach by starting to work voluntarily to promote the

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 227.

³⁷⁷ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 73.

³⁷⁸ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (Istanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 53.

³⁷⁹ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (Istanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 230.

³⁸⁰ Yeşim, Bayar, "The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 118.

³⁸¹ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, "Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları," (Istanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 230.

³⁸² Füsün, Üstel, "Türk Ocakları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (Istanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 263.

revolution in Anatolia³⁸³. They intensified their activities after 1928, especially in the eastern provinces, by carrying out the mission of Turkifying newly arrived migrants. The associations also organized campaigns to force the non-Turkish speakers to learn and speak Turkish under the slogan of "Citizen! Speak Turkish!" (*Vatandaş Türkçe konuş!*). They believed that the application of a new identity could only be achieved through the enforcement of the use of the new language³⁸⁴. Their ideas were dispersed by the magazine Turkish Homeland (*Türk Yurdu*) that had begun publication in 1911, before the foundation of the Turkish Hearths³⁸⁵. The magazine was first run by immigrant intellectuals of Turkic groups from Central Asia, and heavily promoted the use of Turkish. As the magazine's management aimed to create a popular cultural magazine for all Turks, they made the effort to use an easy, simple Turkish language in their writings³⁸⁶. Because of the force that the Turkish Hearths represented, in 1931, the association was forced to officially join the Republican People's Party (RPP) (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*) and continued its activities under the party's management³⁸⁷. The magazine Turkish Homeland ceased publication the same year, although it later resumed, in 1942³⁸⁸.

The early Kemalist period, between 1923 and 1930, was the period when the Kemalist administration implemented policies to stabilize the ethnically diverse young Turkish nation. This Kemalist revolution was organized around three basic ideas: westernization, nationalism and secularism. According to the Kemalist bureaucracy, the achievement of these three ideas was only possible through the de-Ottomanization of society. Reforms were therefore applied hastily and strictly enforced. As already discussed, during this phase of early Kemalism, one of the most important tools of de-Ottomanization was the establishment of the Latin alphabet to replace the traditional Arabic script. This reform was a clear example of how the Kemalist administration intended to orient the society toward westernization by splitting it from Islam and its traditional values. For the Kemalists, the reform was also an influential tool in their efforts of eliminating the

³⁸³ Ibid., 265.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 266.

³⁸⁵ Firdevs, Gümüšoğlu, "Türk Yurdu," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 269.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 270.

³⁸⁷ Füsün, Üstel, "Türk Ocakları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 266.

³⁸⁸ Firdevs, Gümüšoğlu, "Türk Yurdu," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 269.

traditionalist opposition. However, the implementation of the switch to Latin letters only meant that the technical part of the language reform was achieved in the 1920s. Between 1930 and 1938, during the phase of the late Kemalism, the language reform was more intensively applied and enforced.

5.5. The Late Kemalist Period (1930-1938)

After the period of stabilizing the nation between 1923 and 1930, Kemalism reached a point where it needed to guarantee its existence and avoid being overturned by any competing ideology. During the transitional years of early Kemalism in the late 1920s, the Republic went through a period of chaos when the Kemalist state was occupied suppressing various rebellions that developed in Menemen, Ağrı and some other eastern provinces. In addition, for the first time, a competing political party, the Free Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyetçi Fırka*) was allowed to operate, although this was a short lived attempt as the party became such a strong center for all groups opposing Kemalism. Thus, the ruling RPP closed it down. After 1930, Kemalism inclined towards establishing itself on a stronger social-political basis, and worked to develop a truly authoritarian ideology. In particular, in 1931, M. Kemal proclaimed the six principles of the official ideology: republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism and revolutionism. The RPP then started to promote more authoritarian and nationalistic cadres. For example, Recep Peker, a statesman known for his nationalistic views, became the head of the party. In line with the authoritarian and nationalistic policies that appeared after the closure of the Free Republican Party, the RPP started to develop social programs on language and culture in order to create a new type of citizen that would be loyal to its ideology³⁸⁹.

In 1931, the RPP, which was by then the only officially existing party, reported that any individual who spoke Turkish and accepted to be part of Turkish culture could become a member of the party. Previously, the party had long criticized Ottoman policies supporting multiculturalism and the use of different languages within the Empire. Therefore, the RPP, parallel to official state policies, preferred to enforce a cultural break from the Ottoman Past³⁹⁰. Language thus became the primary condition for a citizen to be

³⁸⁹ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 70 – 72.

³⁹⁰ Yeşim, Bayar, “The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17(1) (Jan 2011), 119.

counted as Turkish. In addition to the de-Ottomanization process that had started in the 1920s, Kemalism began to look for ways to create the modern Turkish “citizen” in the 1930s³⁹¹. This led to the replacement of the Ottoman heritage by a spirit of ‘Anatolianism’, along with a new understanding of Turkish history. All this required the complete assimilation of the ethnically diverse populations of Anatolia under one standard language and national culture in order to create the “Turkish” citizen³⁹².

The Turkish state implemented its policies in two main fields: language and history. Changes in both fields were enforced by the formation of two different associations: the Turkish Language Institute (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) and the Turkish Historical Research Association (*Türk Tarihini Tetkik Cemiyeti*), which worked together to present a cultural and historical basis for the newly constructed Turkish identity. This thesis will argue that historical research was used to support the language reforms.

The forced creation of the new Turkish citizen resulted in systematic efforts to ‘purify’ the Turkish language. The 1928 reforms to the alphabet, and the extensive activities of the People’s Schools, were only the technical foundations of the de-Ottomanization of the Turkish language. In the 1930s, the Kemalist state started to engineer the language through many long term policies. This linguistic engineering was among one of the most important tools that the Kemalist regime used on its efforts to establish itself as the dominant ruling force in the Republic.

The linguistic reforms also contributed to defining cultural territories,³⁹³ with the first reform to the alphabet representing the first steps towards drawing boundary between eastern traditional cultures and modern western Turkey. The alphabet reform had to be supported by the development of a new modern Turkish grammar and vocabulary³⁹⁴. The Kemalists’ first attempts to purify the Turkish language of any Ottoman influence, was the removal of all Arabic and Persian words. Efforts were also made to conduct scientific research in state founded institutions on language and history, with the political backing of the parliament and M. Kemal’s personal involvement. In this respect, the language policies were backed in two ways. First, the policy was ‘academically’ supported through the

³⁹¹ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 72.

³⁹² Ibid., 73.

³⁹³ Yeşim, Bayar, “The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17(1) (Jan 2011), 120.

³⁹⁴ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 231.

writing of supportive historical theses and by technical linguistic guidance. Second, the policies were enforced nationwide by the political backing which it received from the parliament passing the necessary laws to enforce the changes.

After 1929, the Language Council (*Dil Encümeni*) that had first proposed the introduction of the Roman alphabet to M. Kemal, worked on finding ways to diminish the then common use of the Arabic and Persian words. The council therefore started to construct a 'Pure-Turkish' version of the language (*öz Türkçe*). To help with this, it then founded the Word Collecting Committee (*Söz Derleme Heyeti*), which was responsible for collecting and recording spoken Turkish words in Anatolia. During this period, a second committee was formed by the Language Council for academia. This Scientific Reform Committee (*İstihalatı İlmiye Komisyonu*) was responsible for collecting scientific Turkish words by working in the academic domain. After the first year however, neither committees had produced adequate work, so it was decided to end the activities of the Language Council, which was replaced by another Language Commission (*Dil Heyeti*). The new commission was directly involved with the implementation of the language reforms, keeping in direct contact with the state. It continued to collect words from Anatolia extensively, the same way the previous council had done. Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, who also took an active role in the commission's work, started to prepare the first Turkish Language Dictionary. Within a year, the language commission had collected 100,000 words that existed in oral Ottoman Turkish in Anatolia. All these words were examined and their pure-Turkish roots were either found or invented. If a Turkish meaning could not be found, then a Turkified Latin word was used. In other words, instead of keeping to a strictly scientific agenda, the commission fell under the influence of Kemalist political ambitions and continued to purify and westernize the language in order to serve the state's ideology. In 1931, due to fierce disagreements within the commission about how to Turkify foreign words, the commission's activities were terminated³⁹⁵.

The 1930s were the years when immigrant Muslim Turkish intellectuals from the Black Sea and Central Asian regions influenced the construction of the Turkish language and the shaping of the Turkish historical thesis. As mentioned in chapter III, many intellectuals from the Black Sea and Central Asia migrated to the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century following the Russian military conquests in both regions. In the 19th century,

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 232 – 233.

during Russian dominance in the region, Turkic intellectuals were divided into two groups. One group preferred to compromise with the Russians in order to be able to continue their existence, while the other group believed that the Ottoman Empire (and later the Turkish Republic) could be a better protector of Turkic Culture. They had already begun to create a modern Turkish language among Turkic groups in these regions during the 18th century, long before any systematic efforts on reforming the language took place in Anatolia. Many intellectuals from these regions were looking for a means of uniting all the existing Turkic dialects of the Caucasian and Central Asian regions into one common Turkish language. This even included work on the development of a Latin alphabet in Crimea by Gaspıralı İsmail (1851-1914). At the turn of the 20th century, intellectuals like Yusuf Akçuraoglu (1876-1935), who had been a history teacher in Kazan, migrated to Anatolia and continued to lobby for the reformation of Turkish language. For him, history was the result of national movements, and since Ottomans had not been able to develop a national identity, the Ottoman Empire had fallen behind the Europeans³⁹⁶. On the other hand, Sadri Maksudi (1878-1957), another Central Asian intellectual, migrated to Turkey later. He had served as President of the Idil-Ural Republic in 1917, before coming to Ankara to teach at the Ankara Law Department in 1925. He then became part of the immediate entourage of M. Kemal, where he could discuss the need to reform the language. He is best known for his book "For the Turkish Language" (*Türk Dili için*)³⁹⁷, published in 1930, which was among the key sources behind the language reform in Turkey. In his book, he claimed that language was the most important means of transforming a society into a nation, claiming that, during this transition, no linguistic reforms could succeed unless there was political backing³⁹⁸. Starting from the 18th and 19th centuries, some attempts at reforming the language were organized, though they always remained at a small scale. However, during the 20th century, under the patronage of the Turkish Republic, it became possible to organize language reform at a higher level³⁹⁹. Ziya Gökalp's vision on culture and civilization that influenced Turkish nationalism in the 1920s became unpopular in the 1930s. The financial crisis of 1929 pushed the M.Kemal administration to find alternative solutions than Gökalp's problematic theories. The new constructed identity had to be

³⁹⁶ Etienne, Copeaux, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk- İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 42.

³⁹⁷ Sadri, M. Arsal, *Türk Dili İçin*, (Türk Ocakları İlim ve Sanat Heyeti Neşriyatı, sayı 1.).

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 13.

strictly western oriented in which the reform on language was essential⁴⁰⁰. For example, M.Kemal demonstrated his support for Maksudi's efforts by writing a short introduction to his book. In this introduction, M.Kemal emphasized the relationship between the national identity and the national language. Given the importance of this relationship, he therefore proclaimed that Turkish had to be saved from the influence of foreign languages⁴⁰¹.

Sadri Maksudi's book received a lot of attention, and triggered the language reform of the 1930's in Turkey⁴⁰². He proclaimed that Turkish could remain strong and homogenous as long as it could produce its own words. Therefore Maksudi strongly advised that first; new Turkish words need to be invented, and second; academic institutions should be established for the study of Turkish⁴⁰³. In his book, he drew a clear line between what it meant to "change" or to "reform" a language⁴⁰⁴. He believed that Turkish was changed when Turks were converted to Islam because Islam brought the Arabic influence into Turkish language, which caused a change within the language. The Arabic influence on Turkish remained till the foundation of the Turkish Republic because, prior to the Republic, no Turkish regions had the necessary national consciousness to motivate any major effort of Turkifying their language. In contrast, 'civilized' nations, such as the Germans, were able to protect their language during the 16th century from any foreign influence, which allowed them to preserve their national language till today⁴⁰⁵. Once a strong Turkish Republic had been founded, Turkish could be reformed and considered as existing at the same level as already 'civilized' national languages⁴⁰⁶.

These arguments encouraged M. Kemal to get personally involved in the Turkish language reforms. In July 1932, he invited Afet Inan, Yusuf Akçuraoglu, Samih Rifat, Sadri Maksudi, Hamid Zübeyr, Hüseyin Namık, Ruşen Eşref to Ankara in order to discuss the organization of all the work done on reforming the language. The meeting resulted in the creation of the Turkish Language Research Society (*Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti*), in 1936, later renamed as the Turkish Language Institute (*Türk Dil Kurumu*). The association was given two main tasks. First, it had to find ways to unify vernacular oral Turkish with

⁴⁰⁰ Zafer, Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji*, (İstanbul, Doğan Kitap, 2012), 425.

⁴⁰¹ Sadri, M. Arsal, *Türk Dili için*, (Türk Ocakları İlim ve Sanat Heyeti Neçriyatı, sayı 1.), 2.

⁴⁰² Zafer, Toprak, "Antropolojik Dilbilim, Dil Devrimi ve Sadri Maksudi," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no219 (march 2012), 45.

⁴⁰³ Zafer, Toprak, *Darwin'den Dersim'e Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji*, (İstanbul, Doğan Kitap, 2012), 427.

⁴⁰⁴ Sadri, M. Arsal, *Türk Dili için*, (Türk Ocakları İlim ve Sanat Heyeti Neçriyatı, sayı 1.), 18.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 22.

the written Turkish that the Ottoman elite had been using. Second, the philology of the Turkish language had to be reshaped, and its relation to other foreign languages, had to be researched⁴⁰⁷. This second task aimed to prove that Turkish had a pre-Islamic past, which was part of the target of distancing the Republic from its imperial past by showing that Turkish had originated from Central Asia before the union of Turkish culture with Islam⁴⁰⁸. On paper at least, the Turkish Language Research Society was formed as an independent association, which should have meant that linguists and academics would be among the founders. Instead, however, the association was founded directly by M. Kemal with the participation of Kemalist elite from his entourage. The association also announced that anyone could become a member of the association, since it was a network founded to discuss matters concerning a language that would eventually be used by everyone in the nation. Accordingly, at the end of September 1932, it was decided to organize a language congress in which anyone could participate⁴⁰⁹.

The phase of late Kemalism in the 1930s was an era when institutions were established under the protection of the state⁴¹⁰. Interestingly enough, prior to the establishment of the Turkish Language Institute, M. Kemal was at the same time involved in forming the Turkish Historical Research Association (*Türk Tarihini Tetkik Cemiyeti*) in April 1931. The Historical Research Association shared a number of members with the Turkish Language Research Association, founded a year later. The Historical Association was started by Afet Inan, Yusuf Akçuraoglu, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Fuat Köprülü, Samih Rıfat and Reşit Galip. Its main task was to develop and teach the Turkish historical thesis (*Türk Tarih Tezi*) to all Turks. The Kemalist administration wanted to construct a history that all Turks would be proud of, while the historical thesis would also support the idea that Turkish represented a great civilization⁴¹¹.

History writing in the Kemalist Republic had two main objectives. First, it had to support the de-Ottomanization process in order to contribute to the construction of the

⁴⁰⁷ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 235.

⁴⁰⁸ Yeşim, Bayar, “The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 123.

⁴⁰⁹ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 235 – 237.

⁴¹⁰ Yeşim, Bayar, “The Trajectory of Nation Building Through Language Policies: The Case of Turkey during the early republic (1920-1938)”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol17 (1), (Jan 2011), 122.

⁴¹¹ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 81.

modern Turkish identity. Second, it attempted to establish a good image of Turkishness to counteract the image of “barbarian Turks” that the Europeans had developed. Both objectives provided enough material for the official writing of history for the maintenance of Turkish chauvinism: according to the thesis, Turks now belonged to a great civilization that had founded successive states and that therefore could overcome all the recent military defeats of the 19th and 20th centuries⁴¹². Kemalist ideology, as represented in the thesis, also attempted to prove that a great Turkish civilization had existed before Islam, aiming to show that Turks had occupied Anatolia before the Greeks and the Armenians⁴¹³.

These notions on reforming Turkish and writing a modern Kemalist Turkish history were both imported from abroad because the Kemalist thesis of Turkish history was significantly affected by those intellectuals who had migrated to Turkey from the Black Sea and Central Asian Regions. By the middle of the 19th century, as the Russians conquered all the regions where Turkic societies existed, a greater awareness of the Russian conquest was created in both Europe and Anatolia by Europeans and Turks fleeing to Europe and the Ottoman Empire. This awareness was associated with the development of the Pan-Turkist movement. Among these immigrants, Mustafa Celaledin (1826-1876), who migrated to the Ottoman Empire from Poland, wrote a book called “The Ancient and Modern Turks” (*Les Turcs Anciens et Modernes*) in 1870⁴¹⁴. He claimed that all Latin languages, as well as Hittite and Sumerian, had actually originated from the Turan languages of the Indus Valley. Meanwhile, in France, Leon Cahun (1841-1900), a contemporary of Celaledin, and a researcher of Turkic cultures, presented the same claims during the First Congress of the Orientalists in Paris⁴¹⁵. He went even further by suggesting similarities between French geographical names and those of the Aral-Hazar region⁴¹⁶. These ideas were quick to influence Ottoman intellectual circles. Since the Crimean War, the continued struggle with Greece and the national awakening in the Balkans, along with the use of historical writings, became the main tools used in keeping the Ottoman public’s moral high. For example, in 1896, the newspaper *İkdam* published articles supporting the

⁴¹² Etienne, Copeaux, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk - İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 29 – 30.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 50.

⁴¹⁴ Moustafa, Djelaeddin, *Les Turcs anciens et modernes*, (Paris, 1870), quoted in Copeaux, Etienne, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk - İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 31.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 33.

image of ancient Turks having carried civilization to the world⁴¹⁷. These constructed theories formed the foundations for the writing of a nationalist history during Kemalist Republic of the 1930s.

Following the foundation of the Historical Research Association and the Language Research Association, both organized their first assemblies in 1932, where they presented their theories. The Historical Research Association organized the First Turkish Historical Congress (*Birinci Tarih Kurultayı*) between July 2 and July 11, 1932, with 182 middle school and high school teachers asked to attend. During this meeting, teachers were “instructed” how to teach history in their classrooms as they were seen as the primary agents for expanding historical knowledge, and consequently Kemalist nationalism. The thesis presented by Afet Inan (1908-1985) was simple and carefully constructed. According to the thesis, Turks had originated from Central Asia, where they were well known for their courage and their abilities to found states. Later, these Turks had to migrate from Central Asia due to drought, which caused them to carry their civilization throughout in the world. In Anatolia and the wider Middle East, according to the thesis, they became the founders of various great civilizations, such as the Sumerian, the Hittite, the Greek, and the Egyptian. In particular, the Turks were the oldest nation that existed in Anatolia⁴¹⁸. Despite claiming to be a scientific meeting, in reality, the first Historical Congress of 1932 was no more than an indoctrination program for school teachers. Only a few academics were invited, and the entire thesis was dictated to teachers. Another important detail was that the new school history text books had already been published before any real discussion could take place in the assembly. In short, nothing was more significant than M. Kemal’s important statement which appeared in all history text books: “The writing of history is as important as making it” (*Tarih yazmak kadar tarih yapmak kadar önemlidir*)⁴¹⁹.

After the historical foundations had been established for the existence of the Turkish nation as the carrier of civilization, the Language Research Association organized its own congress in Istanbul, on September 26, 1932. In contrast to the Historical Congress, the assembly on language had more opportunities for discussions as more scientists were

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁴¹⁸ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 82 – 83.

⁴¹⁹ Etienne, Copeaux, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk- İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 69.

invited. Debates took place between the revolutionists, who suggested that languages should be subject to systematic intervention, and the evolutionists, who believed that languages should be free of any intervention so that they could evolve on their own⁴²⁰. Thanks to the previous congress on historical research, discussing the historical backing for the creation of a modern Turkish language was easier. During the Language Congress, three areas were debated. The first concerned the study of the evolution of the Turkish language. Second was the possible reforms that had to be made in order to modernize the language. Third was the study of Turkish in relation to Indo-European Languages. The congress established six fields of responsibility for the Language Research Association: Linguistics and Philology, Etymology, Grammar and Syntax, Glossary, Research and Publications. The congress ended by establishing a “language day” to be celebrated as an official holiday every year on September 26⁴²¹.

Three important conclusions were reached by both the Historical and Language Congresses. First, it was clearly established that Turks had a longer history than previously believed. Second, Turkishness was associated with the existence of the Turkish language. Third, the maintenance of religious identity had never been important to Turks. Although they had practiced many religions through history, none of these were necessary for preserving Turkish national existence from erosion⁴²². Based on these principles, actions were quickly taken to implement them in policies. In November 1932, for example, an order was issued to all governmental institutions to corporate with the Language Research Association. In every province, a local language committee was established, with the participation of leading local officials and regional RPP leaders. Teachers and officials continued to collect colloquial words from their communities. For each collected word, a separate form was completed, on which the word’s meaning, synonym, antonym and its location of origin were registered⁴²³.

The newly founded People’s Houses (*Halk Evleri*), became centers both for teaching Turkish correctly and also collecting colloquial Turkish words. The military,

⁴²⁰ Yılmaz, Çolak, “Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 75.

⁴²¹ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 239 – 241.

⁴²² Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye’de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 84.

⁴²³ Yılmaz, Çolak, “Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 80.

doctors and mayoralities also participated in the process of collecting Turkish words and teaching the correct new form of Turkish. All collected words were published in two magazines: first in the "Collected Words from People Magazine" (*Halk Ağzından Söz Derleme Dergisi*), and after 1934 in the "(Language) Survey Magazine" (*Tarama Dergisi*). Within sixteen months, the association had collected and recorded 129,792 Turkish forms and detected 1,382 words of Persian or Arabic origin. It published the latter set in the daily newspapers, asking the general public to propose any possible Turkish alternatives, receiving suggestions for 1,100. Meanwhile, the association also started to invent Turkish words that could be used as common terms, so that, by 1934, 30,000 new Turkish terms had been invented. Finally, the association enforced the use of these Turkish words and Turkish terms in middle and high schools⁴²⁴. In 1933, all newspapers were required to daily allocate some space for the use of Pure-Turkish, and in November 1934, every newspaper was ordered to publish their editorials in Pure-Turkish⁴²⁵.

The campaign and the enforcement of the use of Pure-Turkish reached its peak between 1933 and 1935. During this period, enforcement started to affect the social life of the general public, who had been encouraged (or forced) to speak Turkish. The campaign was organized extensively, starting from 1930, around the "Citizen, speak Turkish!" (*Vatandaş, Türkçe konuş!*) slogan, which first appeared in 1928 during a student demonstration at the Law Department of Istanbul University (*Darülfünun*) where students presented banners with the same slogan⁴²⁶. It was then quickly adapted, as mentioned earlier, by the Turkish Hearths in their efforts at enforcing the use of Turkish⁴²⁷. At the beginning, the campaign seemed to target all non-Muslim minorities to encourage them to adopt Turkish culture. However, the campaign later broadened its ambition to include other communities and regions. According to the census of 1935, the total population of Turkey was 16,157,450 and the 98% of the population was Muslim. In the census, 13,899,073 people had declared that they could speak Turkish, which meant there were still more than 2.2 million people who could not. Among them, were 1.4 million Kurdish speakers, who were seen as the most difficult social group to be "civilized" through the unity of high-

⁴²⁴ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 242 – 246.

⁴²⁵ Yılmaz Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol 40 (6), (Nov 2004), 81.

⁴²⁶ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 283.

⁴²⁷ Füsün, Üstel, "Türk Ocakları," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 266.

Turkish culture, especially after the Sheikh Said uprising. The campaign therefore included groups other than the non-Muslim minorities⁴²⁸.

Despite the official protection that the Turkish Jewish community had been granted by the Lausanne peace treaty, the language campaign received important support from them, which voluntarily encouraged its members to speak Turkish. However, one should keep in mind that, in the 1930s, the Jewish community, rather than wanting to contribute to the unity of the Turkish Republic, was worried about being exposed to anti-Semitic aggression, as was already happening in Germany⁴²⁹. Moiz Kohen, who was among the leading figures of the Jewish community in Turkey, encouraged his community to entirely embrace Turkish Culture. He himself changed his name to (Munis) Tekin Alp, wrote books such as "Turkification" (*Türkleştirme*, 1928) and "Kemalism" (*Kemalizm*, 1936), which became considered as the basis of modern Turkish nationalism during the early Republican years⁴³⁰. As he was a close friend of Ziya Gökalp, it is natural to find in his writings Gökalp's influence as the need for one common culture, one common language and one common mission⁴³¹. In his book "Turkification", Tekin Alp wrote that the only way of reaching the level of civilized nations was through creating a common nation (*ulusallaştırma*⁴³²), where there would be no cultural differences between any of the citizens⁴³³. In this respect, those non-Muslim minorities who had been considered as privileged during the Ottoman Empire had to be integrated into the new secular Turkish identity⁴³⁴. This Turkish identity would create a safe haven for all Muslim and non-Muslim communities where they could all work together for a more prosperous society⁴³⁵. In support of his thesis, Tekin Alp converted the biblical Ten Commandments into Ten Commandment for the guidance of the Turkish Jewish community. These were as follows: 1- Turkification of all names, 2- Speaking Turkish, 3- Praying in Turkish, 4- Turkifying schools, 5- Attendance of all Jewish children in the state school system, 6- Being involved with state affairs, 7- Solidarity with all Turks, 8- Ending the spirit of a religious

⁴²⁸ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 92.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 94.

⁴³⁰ Rifat, Bali, "Tekin Alp," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 4: Milliyetçilik*, (eds.) Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 896.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 897.

⁴³² Nationalisation.

⁴³³ Tekin, Alp, *Türkleştirme*, (T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Kültür Eserleri / 2724, 2001), 13.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 18.

community, 9- Accepting responsibility for the development of the national economy, 10- Being aware of rights⁴³⁶. Tekin Alp claimed that these Ten Commandments also applied to all existing communities in Turkey that had to be integrated into the national identity, with the Turkish Jewish community being considered as a model⁴³⁷.

In response to what Tekin Alp promoted to his community, a significant majority of Turkey's Jewish community gave their support to the leadership of M.Kemal and his administration. The Kemalist administration in turn guaranteed the Jewish community that nothing would change, as Jews had already proved their fidelity to the republic during the war⁴³⁸. The Jewish community's easily adopted the language reforms for two reasons: first, the Jewish community was also keen to adopt Kemalist reforms that aimed to modernize and westernize Turkish society⁴³⁹. Second, the Jews were already accustomed to the use of the Latin alphabet as the Judeo-Spanish language was already written using Latin letters. Many Jewish pupils attended the Universal Alliance of all Israeli Schools (*Alliance Israelite Universelle*)⁴⁴⁰ in which the teaching was done in French. These students, at the moment of the reforms, considered themselves as the avant-garde in implementing the alphabet reform. Many later recalled that they even assisted the instructors sent by the state when they struggled with their own teaching of the new Latin alphabet⁴⁴¹. However, despite the willingness of the Turkish Jewish community to support the Kemalist Reforms, they were still subject to the standard treatment of the state. First, in 1934, the Jewish community of Thrace was forced to abandon their goods and houses in their villages. 3,000 Jews had to move to Istanbul, while the rest left Turkey altogether⁴⁴². Then, in 1935, the schools of the Israeli Alliance were forced to abandon teaching in French. Under the Treaty of Lausanne, the officially recognized non-Muslim minorities could continue to exist only if they continued to teach in the language of the said community, which, in this instance, meant that Hebrew was the only permissible language of instruction in the

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 75.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 78.

⁴³⁸ Henri, Nahum, *Juifs de Smyrne*, (Paris, Aubier, 1997), 186.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 187.

⁴⁴⁰ The AIU schools were founded in 1860 in Paris by Adolphe Cremieux a French-Jewish statesman who aimed to promote the ideals of Jewish self-defense and self-sufficiency through education. The network established many schools in the Middle East and North Africa through the 19th century. (The AIU web site; History of the AIU http://www.aiu.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=54, accessed 23.07.2012).

⁴⁴¹ Henri, Nahum, *Juifs de Smyrne*, (Paris, Aubier, 1997), 188.

⁴⁴² Ayşe, Hür, "1934 Trakya Olayları", *Taraf daily*, 04.07.2010.

Alliance's schools⁴⁴³. That made many Jewish families to not send their children to learn Hebrew, as Turkish had to be learned in order to perform their daily tasks. The drop on the attendance to the school brought many financial problems as the Alliance was only depending on the tuition paid by each student⁴⁴⁴.

Other non-Muslim minorities living in urban areas did not show much resistance as they were already used to speaking Turkish with Turks for commercial purposes, so they most probably preferred to accept the campaign in order to avoid creating a chaotic environment for their businesses. The French newspaper *La Republic* (The Republic), published in Istanbul, invited all non-Muslims to speak Turkish for the maintenance of social harmony⁴⁴⁵. Many other Muslim ethnic minorities, however, refused to speak Turkish and resisted the campaign, which led to strong reactions by the state. For example, in March 1933, the city authorities in Izmir banned the use of any other language than Turkish from being spoken in the streets⁴⁴⁶ while in Mersin hundreds of people were beaten or arrested for not speaking Turkish⁴⁴⁷.

This enforced use of Turkish was framed by three other policies. First, all citizens were required to take a Turkish surname under the "surname law" (*soyadı kanunu*), passed in July 1934. This was a new tool to deepen assimilation through language because, under this law, no last names ending in -yan, -of, -ef, -viç, -is, -dis, -pulos, -zade, -mahdumu, -veled or -bin could be legally registered⁴⁴⁸. Many people who already had surnames of foreign origin were therefore forced to change their names and adopt purely Turkish names. Mustafa Kemal himself was not given exemption. For a short period of time he changed his first name from Kemal to Kamal because, in 1935, linguists persuaded him that the name Kemal had passed into Turkish from Arabic so it should be written Kamal in Pure-Turkish. According to the linguists, in pure-Turkish Kamal meant, army and castle. However that could never be proved scientifically⁴⁴⁹. It is unknown exactly how long M. Kemal used his new name with the pure Turkish spelling, although he definitely used the

⁴⁴³ Henri, Nahum, *Juifs de Smyrne*, (Paris, Aubier, 1997), 193.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 194.

⁴⁴⁵ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 96.

⁴⁴⁶ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 81.

⁴⁴⁷ Soner, Çağaptay, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 95.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 99.

⁴⁴⁹ Geoffrey, Lewis, *Trajik Başarı*, (İstanbul, Paradigma Yayıncılık, 2007), 74.

new form in a telegraph sent in February 1935. In the same year, the RPP commission also decided to replace the spelling “Kemalism” with “Kamalism”⁴⁵⁰.

In its second policy, the state embarked on a massive effort at Turkifying geographical place names because the names of many places in Anatolia had originated in ancient Greek, Roman or Byzantine times. During the Seljuk and Ottoman periods, the names of most places had remained the same, although pronounced as if Turkish⁴⁵¹. In fact, the Kemalists’ attempt to change these names was not the first such effort in Turkish history, as the same thing had happened during Abdulhamid II’s reign, when the names of a number of places were changed, and later a more significant wave of Turkifying names occurred during the CUP era, in 1913 during the Balkan Wars. Because migrant groups arriving from the Balkans were placed in Thrace, the old Greek and Bulgarian names of villages in these regions had to be changed instantly. In addition, names originating from Greek were also changed in the Aegean, Marmara and Trabzon regions. In Trabzon, for example, of 344 village names claimed to be Greek, 300 were Turkified⁴⁵². In 1915 and 1916, the wave of Turkification continued in the eastern provinces, when Armenian names were targeted. Thus the project of Turkifying names during the Kemalist period was a continuation of an older process. In the 1920s, this was done at a slower pace when Greek names were replaced after the War of Independence, but it became more systematic in the 1930s. At the time when the Kemalist state was planning the changes, almost 20 percent of places in Anatolia had foreign names. The administration of the People’s Houses therefore proposed a project to M. Kemal to change the names of many places in Anatolia, who accepted it in 1933. Between 1934 and 1936, the names of 843 places were replaced by Turkish names⁴⁵³. During the replacement of the names, many names celebrating Atatürk, such as Kemal Paşa, Mustafa Kemal Paşa or even Kemaliye were selected. In addition, Dersim was changed to Tunceli, Elaziz to Elazığ, Diyarbakır to Diyarbakır, Kırklise to Kırklareli, İzmit to Kocaeli, and Bozok to Yozgat⁴⁵⁴.

The third policy field where language reform was applied was religion. The existence of the Islam was always seen as the main obstacle to westernization in Turkey.

⁴⁵⁰ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 252.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 257.

⁴⁵² Sevan, Nişanyan, *Adını Unutan Ülke*, (İstanbul, Everest Yayınları, 2010), 15.

⁴⁵³ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, “Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları,” (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 258.

⁴⁵⁴ Sevan, Nişanyan, *Adını Unutan Ülke*, (İstanbul, Everest Yayınları, 2010), 16.

Although M. Kemal used Islam as a unifying force during the War of Independence, he looked for ways to limit its influence after the Republic was founded. He started limiting the influence of Islam by replacing Arabic with Turkish. These reforms included the language used in sermons, praying (*namaz*), the call for prayer (*ezan*), and the translation of the Quran into Turkish. The first action taken in the Turkification of sermons was in 1927, when all sermons had to be spoken in Turkish⁴⁵⁵. In 1928, the prayers were translated into Turkish although it only came into common practice in 1932⁴⁵⁶. The Turkification of the prayers was followed by translation of the Quran, which had already been translated by Russian Turks during the 19th century, before some weak trials in the Ottoman Empire had taken place in 1914⁴⁵⁷. After the official translation of the Quran, on January 24, 1932, it was read in Turkish for the first time in all the mosques in Istanbul and broadcasted by radio⁴⁵⁸. The following week, the call for prayer was also read in Turkish, although this was not enforced by law⁴⁵⁹. Despite the resistance from traditionalists, the project of Turkifying Islam was implemented extensively across the Republic until the beginning of the multi-party era in June 16, 1950, when it was all translated back into Arabic⁴⁶⁰.

5.6. Conclusion: The Death of M. Kemal and the End of the Late Kemalist Period.

The language reforms that took place between 1928 and 1938 were performed under the Kemalist agenda of building a new nation. The reforms were oriented around three the basic principles of Kemalism: westernization, nationalism and secularism. The aim, common to these three fundamental principles, was to enable the de-Ottomanization of Turkish society. Kemalism aimed to prove that Islam had deformed the true Turkish culture, which was a culture that had helped to build many civilizations prior to its alliance with Islam. In addition, the language reform was the primary tool that Kemalism used to assimilate all the ethnically diverse, although mostly Muslim, population in Anatolia.

By 1935, Pure-Turkish, the new language constructed by the intellectuals of the Kemalist State, started to cause great disturbance in the society. The invented words and

⁴⁵⁵ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, "Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları," (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 267.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 271.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 267.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 273.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 274.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 275.

grammar were insufficient, so Turkish could not be used effectively for science and literature. The Persian and Arabic languages that had heavily influenced Ottoman Turkish were once again becoming popular in daily life. On the other hand, academics tended to prefer many western words for scientific fields. This confusion represented a clear failure by the Turkish state that had promoted such an authoritarian change since 1923⁴⁶¹.

In order to overcome this chaos, the Language Research Association presented the 'sun language thesis' in accordance with the previously determined 'Turkish historical thesis', in the Third Congress of the Turkish Language Research Association, organized in 1936. Among the members of the committee that had written the thesis, Yusuf Akçura, a Russian Turk, was present. The sun language thesis suggested that, since Turks had contributed to or built all the major civilizations of antiquity, consequently Turkish must be the mother of all languages, so the western, Persian and Arabic words that were influencing modern-day Turkish language must have also derived from the old Turkish of Central Asia. Therefore, there was no need to worry about supposedly foreign words flooding Turkish since they had anyway all originated from Turkish. Nevertheless, the Language Research Association still sought to limit this tolerance to the scientific world, aiming to restrict the use of Arabic and Persian words in daily life⁴⁶².

The thesis also claimed that Turkish culture was the source of all civilizations in the world, so another reason to be proud of being Turkish⁴⁶³. In the 1930s, access to archaeological research in Central Asia, which at that time were under Soviet dominance, had been limited and difficult, which made it easier for those who prepared the Turkish historical thesis to shape the scientific information to support their political agenda⁴⁶⁴. Commenting on the historical evolution of the language was even easier as no physical data was needed. This could be seen in the way the sun language thesis was named. The primitive societies of Central Asia, who were Turkish, first worshipped the sun. Therefore, the first imagined word that could be thought of in this language developed by Turks could

⁴⁶¹ Yılmaz, Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol40 (6), (Nov 2004), 77.

⁴⁶² Ibid., 84.

⁴⁶³ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 252 – 253.

⁴⁶⁴ Etienne, Copeaux, *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk - İslam Sentezine*, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 73.

only be the word for the sun. After this invention, the Turkish language, the mother of all languages, expanded all over the world, according to the theory⁴⁶⁵.

Mustafa Kemal died on November 10, 1938, marking the end of the late Kemalist era. Kemalism in Turkey subsequently took on another shape under the management of new governments and statesmen. After Atatürk's death, İsmet İnönü was elected President of the Republic⁴⁶⁶. The language crisis that had been experienced in the mid-1930s made the administrative elite think that they may have gone too far and too fast. As a result, the engineering of the Turkish language also slowed down⁴⁶⁷.

The language reform had the ambition of liberating Turkish from the influence of Islam and Ottoman culture by restoring its place among the civilized world languages. The linguistic and historical theories that were built around this ambition aimed to prove that Turks had maintained their own culture before being submerged by Islam. This union with Islam had forced Turkish language to a lower level so that it continued to be spoken only among the commoners in Anatolia. A duality within the society was created, since the Ottoman elites were using the Ottoman language and the commoners, Turkish. Therefore, the argument went, Ottoman culture and language could not provide a populist basis for the nation building project of a populist Kemalist ideology because it needed a truly common language to be shared by all Turkish citizens, the citizens of the new Turkish Republic. Meanwhile, the creation of a common language would also provide the basis for Kemalist nationalism as it would be used to build the cultural boundaries based on language. The establishment of one standard national language was thus a way to set a political reference point that would help to judge who was part of the national culture and who was not. The language reforms that were systematically applied to the social-political domains between 1928 and 1938 aimed to cause a break from the Ottoman past by solidifying the Kemalist present and shaping the future for a modern state by redefining the Kemalist high culture that was engineered for a newly formed Turkish nation.

⁴⁶⁵ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 249.

⁴⁶⁶ Çağaptay, Soner, *Türkiye'de İslam, Laiklik ve Milliyetçilik: Türk Kimdir*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 91.

⁴⁶⁷ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye'de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), 251.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

In his introductory chapter, Hüseyin Sadoğlu⁴⁶⁸ describes the primary use of a language as a tool for communication within a society. However, besides its communicative function, language is also employed to describe the character of a collective identity. In this respect, politically and culturally, languages have always been used as the basis to create national entities⁴⁶⁹.

Since antiquity, both religion and language have always influenced the functions of the state. While being instrumentalized by nations for shaping society, they were also institutionalized and officialized by states for the sake of reforming them. Once both religion and language had been domesticated by the state through reforms, they became neutralized due to not representing any opposition against the state⁴⁷⁰. In relation to the transformations that both religion and language have gone through under strict political agendas, they are in complete accordance with the modernist approach of nationalism, as this study has tried to demonstrate in the case of the Turkish Language Reforms.

Until the beginning of the 19th century in Europe, religion was the reference point for categorizing societies. From a political stand point, however, until the French Revolution, religion was also seen as the key element that supported the existence of a state. The Ottoman Empire was not an exception to this, in that it was organized around the *millet system* both culturally and politically. However, based on the secular values that the French Revolution brought into the European political tradition, religion became disassociated from national identity. Political frontiers, which were physically enforced, were drawn based on ethno-cultural divisions. In this new political order, language replaced religion as the more important secular value⁴⁷¹. During this modern age, the elites used language as a tool to build the nation. As Anderson depicts it, during the process of building a new nation, the political elite administration and intellectuals adopted one of the local vernacular languages of their culture, and built a new national consciousness, which

⁴⁶⁸ Hüseyin, Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları*, (İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010)

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 1.

⁴⁷⁰ William Safran, “Language, Ethnicity and Religion: A Complex and Persistent Linkage”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol14 (1), (Jan 2008), 172.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 174.

caused the original language to be shaped and modernized in order to standardize its citizen speakers⁴⁷².

Prior to the Turkish Republic, the Ottoman Empire was driven by Islamic dynamics, whereby religion was employed to justify the legitimacy of the monarchy, while the Caliphate was used as an instrument to maintain all Muslims' respect towards authority. On the other hand, during the 19th century, the religious based *millet system* created the necessary conditions for social polarization within the Empire. After the Empire's collapse, the Republic of Turkey started an extensive process of social modernization, with the engineering of language being the key reform used to promote nationalism, westernization and secularism. Latin letters replaced the Arabic scripts, while the new Turkish identity was built on the everyday Turkish language spoken by the Anatolian peasant masses, who previously had been neglected by the Ottoman ruling elites.

The modernization of the Kemalist Turkish Republic is important for evaluating the modernist approach in the literature of nationalism. In this thesis, the ideas of two modernist academics, namely Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, were discussed in order to shed light on the relationship of language reforms to the development of Turkish nationalism. Although both academics belong to the modernist cultural approach, they also represent various differences clarifying the origins of nationalism and its dynamics.

As modernist scholars, Gellner and Anderson both agree that nations and nationalism are artificially created as a result of particular social, political and economic changes that a society goes through. According to Gellner, change happens when a structural transition takes place in order to re-organize the society. Through this re-organization process, the social patterns of the society are combined with the political patterns of the state to improve economic production. Newly created modern patterns then become part of a function that enables each member of the society to work together in harmony. These new functional applications, run by the central state, which help unite the society, quickly replace the traditional network based structures. Therefore, nationalism appears as the ultimate modern way to organize a society known as a nation. Thus, according to Gellner, nationalism creates nations, and not the other way around. He makes three main points when explaining the development of nationalism. First, nationalism is the result of increasing communication within society. Second, nationalism controls the chaos

⁴⁷² Ibid., 180.

that is caused by dynamism and the mobility in a society. Third, the state intervenes in this chaos by implementing new policies to re-organize the society.

Nationalism is an ideology where both the political state and the cultural nation co-exist. To construct a nation, nationalism regroups society around a common ground of emotions, territory, state, labor, and culture. This process of standardization is achieved by the enforcement of a standardized education and the use of a standard language driven by a strong central state. The standard education under one standard language gives a national basic teaching to every member of the society, leading to the continuous reproduction of the society under one national format. The creation of the national language through which to educate is thus the most important aspect for the reproduction of a national society.

Gellner believes that efforts to modernize a multi-cultural society eventually result in the appearance of nationalism. Multiculturalism brings conflict, chaos, mobilization and consequently the need for stability through standardization. This process of standardization forces the subcultures to be subsumed under one high culture in a process which is enforced by the high culture and the application of a series of reforms that maintain national harmony. Nations are therefore projects constructed around a single high culture, supported by invented cultural norms and historical past.

Language is used as an instrument to control chaos in a transitional society. It first facilitates communication among members of a society. Second, it solidifies the unification of the nation by imposing one standard national language over all the different languages and dialects spoken within that nation. Third, language is an instrument used by the state to establish standard rules that are understood by everyone. This gives equal opportunities to all, as everyone is able to receive the messages sent by the state. All this is only possible if the central state introduces a regulated national educational system. At the same time, the state's imposition of a single modern language is also a way to show its authority to the public.

Benedict Anderson discusses three important factors behind the appearance of nationalism. First, he agrees with Gellner that nationalism appears as a result of increased dynamics in communications, such as the growth in print publishing. Second, unlike Gellner, he believes that nationalism cannot only be a political phenomenon but is also a cultural one, being the result of the interaction of many independent agents other than the state. These independent agents, who may be individual people or groups in grass-root

organizations, operate and exchange ideas due to the increase of communication. This means that the state is not the only main player in the foundation of nationalism. Third, nationalism is an imagined project because each member of a society cannot know all the others, so it is based on an imaginary brotherhood.

Anderson argues that nationalism appears as a result of colliding independent historical evolutions. This collision brings many independent social-cultural and political elements together. The imagined brotherhood that is built through this process also creates an emotion that the nation is something to die for. Therefore, for Anderson, modernism is an anthropological phenomenon that is imagined politically within sovereign borders. In contrast to Gellner, Anderson believes that every society is different since it is imagined differently. This explains how nationalism is differently constructed in every society. The construction of every society involves the imagination of a common history in relation to a mythical land and language. Society is then gathered around such imagined, timeless symbols, which 'remind' its members of their long, common past.

Like Gellner, Anderson also believes that nationalism appears as a result of changes that a society goes through driven by science and technology. However unlike Gellner, Anderson believes that the social movements which change a society are driven by the people and not by the state. This bottom-to-top social movement, which appeared after the French Revolution, forced the monarchic systems to change or disappear. In this respect, the breakaway of individuals from the ruling authorities is only political or cultural. The changes establish a new understanding of "time". The individual freedom that is gained limits the authorities' ability on set "time" for all of society. Instead, individuals are able to manage their "time" based on their own visions of the world, and need not conform to how the ruling elites wish to force them to be organized. In relation to this, nationalism appears as a common ground where individuals are gathered around the same imagined understanding of "time". Parallel to this, the development of publishing, which Anderson calls "print capitalism", is an important factor that establishes a different understanding of time. Printing is not dependent on authority but is done privately so in order to make a greater profit, print capitalists aim to reach as many members of a society as possible by printing books written in local languages. This leads to the revival of the local languages against whatever language the elites are using. For example, Anderson associates this process with the decline of Latin, which was used by the European elites. The importance

of the use of Latin and the monopoly of the church over the European society disintegrated after the Reformation, when the Bible was translated into many local languages. This broke the link between Europe's multi-cultural societies and the church in terms of the monopoly of time. Societies then started to act more independently, not only politically or culturally, but also in their management of time.

In this respect, Anderson believes that language establishes clear separations in a world where no boundaries exist. Language becomes the concept under which the imagined communities are gathered. It is also a tool that is used by the ruling elites in order to invite the middle class to participate in national mobilization and solidarity through a specifically engineered language that is employed to transmit the national message through myths, songs, poetry and literature. The national language becomes a standard code that everyone can agree on, while also giving a timeless existence to the society, as language cannot be dated.

In this thesis, the language reform that took place in the Kemalist Republic of Turkey between 1928 and 1938 was discussed, based on this modernist literature of nationalism. A new Turkish language was imposed on top of many local dialects and languages. In accordance with what Gellner and Anderson would suggest, vernacular Turkish was used as an important tool to build the new Turkish nation. In this respect, Gellner would observe that, through language, the Turkish nation was politically invented, while Anderson would propose that the Turkish nation was a culturally imagined phenomenon. At the same time, it is difficult to distinguish the difference between what was imagined and what was invented during the foundation of the Turkish nation. In this paper, therefore, both stances have received equal attention.

According to Anderson, the language reforms, so the building of a new Turkish nation, are both imagined and consequently are cultural phenomena. As discussed in this thesis, the language reform that took place between 1928 and 1938 lasted only a short period of time in the transformation that the Turkish language has gone through. Efforts at reforming the language in fact started during the 18th century among Turkic Groups in Central Asia and the Black Sea region, much earlier than any systematic discussion in the Ottoman Empire itself. The Turkic Societies of Russia "imagined" unifying all the spoken Turkish dialects into one high-Turkish language to counter Russian dominance. They also developed an alphabet of Latin letters to facilitate communication. This does not mean that

the pan-Turkic movements were the main driving force behind the development of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, but it could be said that, with the migration of many Turkic groups to Anatolia, pan-Turkism found common ground with 19th century Ottoman Intellectuals. As discussed earlier, the Ottoman Muslim Intellectuals who were influenced by the French Revolution wanted to build a new Turkish Identity as the Empire's multi-cultural structure was disintegrating. The engineering of the language of the different groups in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkic intellectuals of the Russian territories were each shaped by the differently imagined visions that they had in building their own national societies.

According to Anderson's theory of "imagined communities"⁴⁷³, Turkish was shaped by the imagination of individual agents before a more stable language policies were adopted by both the imperial Ottoman and Republican states. The early period of the Committee of Union and Progress can also be accounted for by this theory because the committee was founded as a civil grassroots movement to save the disintegrating empire. At the same time, what was "imagined" during the Ottoman Empire also influenced Kemalist policies after the Republic was founded. Language reforms were therefore implemented on the foundations that both Ottoman and the Turkic intellectuals had built. In this respect, the Kemalists supported their language reforms by imagining a historical thesis about the origins of Turkish culture and, therefore, Turkish language. Language subsequently became the imaginary ground where Turkish brotherhood was created in Anatolia. The imagined thesis of Turkish history that was written under the significant influence of Central Asian-born Turkic intellectuals, traced a long chronology about the development of Turkish. This imagined thesis then became a source of pride to the newly built nation. The sun language thesis, in accordance with the Turkish historical thesis, presented the Turkish Language as the world's oldest language, from which all existing languages had been derived. Another "imagined" aspect maintained by the Kemalist Reforms was the efforts to de-Ottomanize society. In this case, language was an important instrument that the Kemalists used in order to end the Ottoman influence over "time". They wanted to set "time" based on westernization and modernization by suppressing the religious traditional and eastern understanding of Ottoman "time". First, the Arabic scripts were replaced by the Latin alphabet, which was the first attempt to break the Ottoman

⁴⁷³ Benedict, Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler*, (Istanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2009).

influence over society. Second, the Turkish that was spoken among the peasant masses became the official language, based on the Istanbul dialect, which likewise ended the dominance of the Ottoman language spoken by the elites. Turkish was then purged of Arabic and Persian words, which were replaced by Pure-Turkish and Turkified western words. Third, the state replaced Arabic with Turkish Islamic religious purposes. This represented the sharpest breakup between the modern western Republic and Ottoman Islamic dominated "time".

From a Gellnerian point of view, the language reform can be analyzed differently. As mentioned on the introductory chapter, it is felt that Gellner's theories have been neglected in the Turkish academic nationalistic literature. It is assumed that this negligence was due to Gellner's emphasis on the role of industrialization and urbanization during the transition to nationalism in Europe. However, as this thesis attempted to show, Gellner's theories on nationalism can also be applied to explain the evolution of nationalism in Turkey. Gellner was concerned on explaining the social change that took place in Europe that caused nationalism as a political force during the 19th century. The way that he explains the sources of these social changes was through the increasing level of science and technology. These two were only considered by Gellner as the tools causing modernity and nationalism.

According to what Gellner would suggest, the Turkish Republic was the final result of earlier Ottoman efforts at modernization. In this modernization process, language, through centralized education, was used as an invented tool for the construction of the Turkish nation. In his book, "Nations and Nationalism", Gellner⁴⁷⁴ describes how the need for nationalism emerges after a society has gone through a period of transition and chaos due to a high degree of social mobility. In this situation, the central state appears to be the only powerful and legitimate institution to regulate the society in chaos. According to Gellner, in Europe, mobility was the result of a rural-urban migration during the industrial revolution. Through nationalistic teaching, European urban society was organized in the interests of maximizing industrial production. The account presented by Donald Quataert^{475 476} clearly demonstrates that, when Europe was going through the major

⁴⁷⁴ Ernest, Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

⁴⁷⁵ Donald, Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolutions in 1908", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol51 No3, (Sept 1979).

industrial revolution, which caused the dislocation of European society, the Ottoman Empire, apart from a few large-scale industrial activities in Istanbul, remained largely agricultural. After the declaration of the Republic in 1923, the state started to lead most industrial investments, although Turkey did not experience major migration into urban zones until the late 1950's. Therefore, the development of Turkish nationalism cannot be explained through the history of Turkish labor and industrialization, but rather must be explained through the major migratory waves that both the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic was exposed to from the 1850s onwards.

Between 1850 and 1925, Anatolia received more than ten million Muslim immigrants, arriving from the Balkans, the Black Sea and Central Asian regions. In addition, as they were all ethnically different, they had to be subsumed into a constructed Turkish high culture. The Gellnerian approach becomes relevant at this point in that the Committee of Union and Progress systematically distributed these groups across Anatolia by forcing non-Muslim populations to leave their lands. During the Balkan Wars and WWI, Turkishness was taught to the new comers, and this continued extensively through authoritarian republican state policies, too. Turkishness was thus an invented identity that was forced on society. This newly enforced identity was based on the western and modern norms that the Republic introduced in the context of an invented common past. At this point, modern Turkish society moved on to progress towards the level of so-called civilized nations.

For Gellner, nationalism is a political factor driven by a centralized state. The efforts of the Ottomans to establish a centralized state started with the Tanzimat reforms, continuing during the First and Second Constitutional Eras, before reaching a zenith during the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress. After the collapse of the Empire, the Kemalist Republic was established as a strong central state. Using the power of the central state, the Republicans were able to introduce a centralized system of education that provided a favorable basis for the management of the radical language reform program. The reforms were supported by governmental institutions, and laws were passed by the parliament. Two similar associations, on Turkish Language and Turkish History, were

⁴⁷⁶ Donald, Quataert, "Labor History in the Ottoman Middle East 1700-1922", *International Labor and Working Class History*, No 61, (Fall 2001).

founded, with their work being accepted as part of official national doctrine to be taught in every school in Turkey.

In this respect, this thesis aimed to show that the language is indispensable in the process of building national identity. It is hoped that this study will lead to further research on the relation between language and the maintenance of cultural identities in Anatolia. As Gellner would suggest, during the Republican era, the reformed Turkish language became the driving force for establishing Turkish high culture. On the other hand, according to what Anderson might have observed concerning the same events, the many local languages that appeared in Anatolia due to the immigration of different Muslim groups also helped to create many new imaginary local communities. Some of these local communities, such as the Kurds, resisted the state's efforts to assimilate them into the high culture, although some others, such as the Jewish community, collaborated with the state. After having set a strong theoretical basis for defining the dynamics of the role of language in the evolution of Turkish nationalism, this research could be continued in order to examine which conditions allowed particular cultures, such as the Balkan communities and to some extent the Levantine community, to be successfully assimilated into Turkish high-culture between 1928 and 1938.

The Turkish language reform that took place between 1928 and 1938 covers only a small time period within the history of engineering the Turkish language. The reform did not end in 1938. Since then, it has continued relentlessly, being used as an instrument that helps the governing political parties to shape the society based on their political and cultural agendas. As this study has shown, the modernist approach on nationalism is in accordance with the process of the creation of national identity in the early Turkish Republic. The study has shown that language reform in Turkey, used for the creation of a new Turkish identity, was a combination of imagined projects and invented policies. The leading agents of Turkish society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries imagined a new political and cultural order to replace a society that was in chaotic transition. The intellectuals' imagined new order was employed to create an imagined brotherhood of Turkish nationalism before being officially adopted by the state. Finally, the state shaped an artificial new Turkish language according to its own agenda, inventing the necessary political policies to promote the existence and the use of the language to ensure the

survival of the new nation. In this way, as the Turkish case demonstrates, nationalism is first imagined, and then invents nations.

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