THE RISE OF TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY

A Thesis Submitted to the Department
of Political Science and Public Administration

of

Bilkent University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

by
Ertan Aydin
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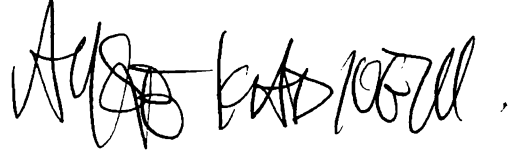
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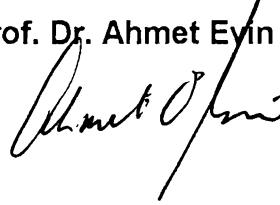
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I certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Political Science and Public Administration.

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Prof. Dr. Ali Karaosmanoğlu

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the rise of Turkish national identity and the emergence of Turkish nationalism. In doing so, it begins by providing a lieterature review and a theoretical analyses of nationalism in general and Turkish nationalism in particular. This study argues that there is no unique way of studying the rise of Turkish nationalism, because of the wide range of theories on nationalism, various interpretations about the origins of nationalist movements and different historical facts.

The thesis focuses on the historical background of Turkish nationalism at the last quarter of the 19th century. In this period, the Young Ottomans were the most important figures in the formation of national identity. They introduced the ideas of patriotism and nationalism to the Ottoman public for the first time and their influence on the thought and action of the generations that followed was extremely influential. After the Young Ottoman Era, The Young Turks and the Committee of Union and Progress had a significant role in stimulating the national sentiments. This thesis demonstrates such significance by examining in detail the ideas of Ziya Gökalp and Yusuf Akçura, the outstanding representatives of Turkish nationalist ideology.

Throughout the study, the identity problem and the attitudes of the intellectuals towards the national identity costitute the focus of this

thesis. It is indicated that the Ottoman intellectuls were in a search for alternative solutions to maintain and save their state from the existent discontents and problems. The maintenance and perpetuation of the state have led them to reach more pragmatic and immediate solutions. The conclusion that this thesis arrives at is that the adoptation of the national identity was a way of overcoming the maladies of the state. In this sense, even if Turkish nationalism appears to be contradictory, that is, both against and for the West, it perceived its mission of creating a coherent identity as consistent with its aim to restore state power.

ÖZ

Bu tez, Türk milli kimliğinin doğuşu ve Türk milliyetçiliğinin ortaya çıkışını ele almaktadır. Bu amaçla tez genel olarak milliyetçilik, özel olarak da Türk milliyetçiliği hususunda literatür taraması ve bir kuramsal çözümleme yaparak başlamaktadır. Bu tezde milliyetçilik kuramlarının çok çeşitli olması, milliyetçi hareketlerin kökenleri hususunda muhtelif yorumların yapılması ve farklı farklı tarihsel olguların bulunmasından ötürü Türk milliyetçiliğinin doğuşunu çalışmanın tek ve yegane bir yolunun bulunmadığı ileri sürülmüştür.

Bu çalışmada 19. yüzyılın son çeyreğinde Türk milliyetçiliğinin tarihsel arka planı üzerinde durulmaktadır. Bu dönemde Genç Osmanlılar milli kimliğin oluşumundaki en önemli şahsiyetler olmuştur. Osmanlıları ilk defa vatan perverlik ve milliyetçilik düşüncesiyle onlar tanıştırmışlar ve kendilerinden sonra gelecek olan nesillerin düşünce ve eylemleri üzerinde oldukça etkili olmuşlardır. Genç Osmanlılar döneminden sonra, Jön Türkler ve İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti milli hislerin uyandırılmasında önemli roller oynamışlardır. Bu tezde Türk milliyetçiliği ideolojisinin en önde gelen temsilcileri Ziya Gökalp ve Yusuf Akçura'nın düşünceleri de detaylı olarak incelenmektedir.

Tez boyunca, kimlik sorunu ve aydınların milli kimliğe karşı tutumları çalışmanın temel odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada

Osmanlı aydınlarının devleti varolan hoşnutsuzluk ve sorunlardan korumak ve kurtarmak amacıyla alternatif çözüm arayışları içerisinde olduğu vurgulanarak devleti kurtarmak ve onun bekasını sağlamak kaygısının aydınları daha ivedi ve pragmatik çözümlere sevkettiği belirtilmiştir. Bu tezin vardığı sonuç; milli kimliğin adaptasyonunun, devletin içinde bulunduğu sorunların üstesinden gelmenin bir yolu olarak gerçekleştiği şeklindedir. Bu meyanda, Türk milliyetçiliği hem Batı karşıtı hem de Batı yanlısı olarak çelişkili görünse de, devlet iktidarının gücüne kavuşmasını amaçlayarak tutarlı bir biçimde uyumlu bir kimlik oluşturmuştur.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatful to my thesis supervisor Assistant Professor Ayşe Kadıoğlu for his guidence and valuable suggestions in the development of this study.

I would like to thank to my thesis commitee members Professor Ahmet Evin and Assistant Professor Fuat Keyman for their helpful comments and corrections. I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Ergun Özbudun and Assistant Professor Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu for their encouragements and valuable points about Turkish nationalism.

I wish to express my thanks to my friends, especially Berat, for their moral support. Finally, I would like to thank also to my wife for her incredible patience.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> "... O kadar meyus olma Türkiya zannolunduğu kadar çabuk harıta-i alemden silinmez. Avrupa'da ve Afrika'da, sükuti bekası mümkünsüz gibi gözüküyor ise de Asya'da daha pek çok seneler icra-yı ahkam edebilir..."
>
> İbrahimTemo'dan İshak Sükuti'ye
>
> 25 Mayıs 1900[1]

At the end of the nineteenth century, there began in the Ottoman Empire a shift from one system of social thought to another. The change from the notion of the non-national state to the modern nation-state, in other words the emergence of nationalist ideas in the region marked a turning point in the history of the Middle East. The new system of thought entailed a drastic rupture from the old identities which stabilized the social and political life of the region for several hundred years. Instead, it offered a new identity which involved a displacement of the old identities by a rational, revolutionary programme of action based on Enlightenment, and the representatives of this new system of thought attempted to remake the social world in the light of their image of perfection.

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[1] Hanioğlu,M.Ş. *Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türklük,* Cilt.1: (1889-1902) İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1989, p.634.

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The above is a rather obvious and ordinary way of describing the change, but in fact the reality has gone deeper and more complex. This transformation can not be explained by merely arguing that the people's minds have moved from the religious idea to the nationalist rational ideology. I believe that there were divergent, as well as convergent, situations in the Ottoman Empire that are intimately related to the transformation of the region. By ignoring these various factors, we would misinterpret and overstate the case. The study of Turkish nationalism and the new identity formation should be more carefully scrutinized and coherently assessed.

The various nationalist movements in the Middle East arouse in response to different challenges. I believe, Turkish nationalism was a reaction to the continuing and growing pressure from Europe and to the breakdown of the ideal of Ottomanist elements of unity (*ittihad-i anasir*). Adittionally, the rising separatist movements of different nationalities that threatened such unity, the loss of the territorries and the decrease in legitimizing power of the state increasingly led the Turks to incline towards the estimation of a new identity that had shaken the very establishment of the integrating Ottoman State. As the various nationalities of the empire seceded one by one, "Ottomanism aquired more of an Islamic coloring, but when, under Abdulhamid, the alliance between the throne and the Turkish ruling elite broke down, the idea of a Turkish nation emerged: the idea, that is, that the empire could survive only on the basis of the solidarity of a nation united by a common language.[2]"

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[2]Hourani, Albert. (1991) *A History of the Arab Peoples*, Harvard Univ. Press, Massachusetts, p.309.

The emegence of Turkish nationalism has been described and explained in quite a number of ways. There exists various interpretations of the origins of Turkism. The variety of these descriptions mainly stem from the difficulty of finding accurate historical facts pertinent for the Turkish case. Moreover, the methodology in history determines the way of studying a historical period or subject. There are different categories and historical methods that point to various ways of studying the subject. As Şerif Mardin puts it, until 1950s, studies on Turkish nationalism were mainly based on "praise-blame" (övme-yerme) approaches and they could not develop analytical methods in Turkish history[3]. With the beginning of the 1950s, there were several attempts to study Turkism with a different methodology based on explanatory and systematic research. Studies of Hilmi Ziya Ülken[4], Niyazi Berkes[5] and Uriel Heyd[6] on the 19th and 20th century Ottoman-Turkish socio-cultural and intellectual history can be included in this category. From 1960 onwards, new broader approaches have been put that attempted to revise the methodological understandings of the previous studies. Researches of Şerif Mardin, Bernard Lewis[7], Roderic Davison[8], Kemal Karpat[9], David Kushner[10] and François Georgeon[11] provided

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[3]Mardin, S. (1992) *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri: 1895-1908*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, p.19.

[4]Ülken, Hilmi Ziya. (1992)*Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, Ülken Yay., İstanbul, 3rd edition.

[5]Berkes, Niyazi. (1959) (ed. and trans.) *Ziya Gökalp; Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, New York.

[6]Heyd, Uriel. (1950) *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The life and teachings of Ziya Gökalp*, The Harville Press, London.

[7]Lewis, Bernard. (1961) *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford Univ. Press, London.

[8] Davison, R. (1963) Reform in the Ottoman Empire: 1850-1876, Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey.

considerable contributions to the study of Turkish nationalism and the period of transformation in the Ottoman empire. In the introduction of *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, for instance, Mardin proposed a radical change in the methodology and he attempted to reach a critical and objective evaluation of the subject[12]. Nevertheless, studies on Turkish nationalism are still not sufficient enough to reach a wide range of analyses. In recent years, though several works were published on the subject, none of them are as remarkable as the studies of Mardin and Kushner or as that of the analysis of Partha Chatterjee on Indian post-colonial nationalism. This situation, I believe, stem from the persisting difficulty to find definite analytical tools that would explain Turkish nationalism. Moreover, there is the difficulty of defining certain concepts such as, nation, nationalism,national identity etc. That is, the central problematic in the study of nations and nationalism has been the problem of finding "definitions" of the key concepts, nation and nationalism.

Several definitions on nation and nationalism have been made by various scholars. One of the first definition of the nation in the history of ideas was made by Ernest Renan. He defines the nation as a form of morality and a spiritual principle. For him "a nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again[13]" Weber examines nation as a

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[9]Karpat, K. (1967) *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi: Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Değerler*, İstanbul.

[10] Kushner, D. (1977) *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908*, London, Frank Cass.

[11] Georgeon, F. (1980) *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri, Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935)* , Yurt Yay. Ankara, tr. by Alev Er.

[12]Mardin, S. (1992) *Jön Türklerin...*, pp.7-19.

"prestige community" endowed with a sense of cultural mission[14]. K.Deutsch argues that "nationality means an alignment of large numbers of individuals from the middle and lower classes linked to regional centers and leading social groups by channel of social communication and economic intercourse, both indirectly from link to link and directly with the center[15] C.Geertz indicates that there are two competing but complementary components --ethnic (primordial loyalties) and civic (desire for citizenship) -- in the nationalism of post-colonial states[16]. Anthony Giddens proposes a "statist" definition of the nation, he defines it as a "bordered power-container"[17]. Walker Connor, on the other hand, defines the nation as a community of descent and reject the tendencies to equate nation with state, and nationalism with state patriotism[18]. H.Seton-Watson defines nation as a community of people whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common place and a national consciousness[19]. It is obvious that there are several definitions that are different from each other. Each definition would lead us to different results while studying one country's nationalism.

[13]Renan, E. (1994) "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" in A.D Smith . and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p.17.

[14]Weber, M. (1994) "The Nation" in A.D Smith and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p. 21.

[15]Deutsch, K. (1994) "Nationalism and Social Communication" in A.D Smith and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p. 28.

[16]Geertz, C. (1994) "Primordial and Civic Ties" in A.D Smith and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, pp.29-34.

[17]Giddens, A. (1994) "The Nation as Power-Container" in A.D Smith and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p. 34.

[18]Connor, W. (1994) "A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a..." in A.D Smith and J. Hutchinson (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, pp. 36-46.

[19]Seton-Watson, H. (1977) *Nations and States*, Boulder;Westview Press., p.1 .

The other reason that drive the scholars to analyse one nation's nationalism differently is mainly related with the "theories" of nationalism. Most of the theories accept that nationalism is particularly a modern phenomenon and it was not fully developed until late in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century. However, they differ over such things as the causes of nationalism, its relationship to modernization and to political power, and whether it is a weak or a strong agent of change.[20]

> The study of the process by which ethnic groups and nations are formed has been beset by a persistent and fundamental conceptual difference among scholars concerning the very natue of the groups involved, namely, whether they are natural, 'primordial', 'given' communities or whether they are 'creation' of interest leaders, of elite groups, or of the political system in which they are included.[21]

Theories that refer to nationalism and nation as a "creation" or an "invention" is most popular and widespread among the social scientists. Most of the pre-eminent thinkers in social sciences have general assumptions about the poverty (artificiality) of nationalism, that is, nations are artificial communities with largely fabricated ties. In other words, there exists an attempt to deconstruct the views that the perception of nationalism is a natural and inevitable aspect of humankind. For Anderson nation is an imagined political community, it is an abstraction, a construct of the imagination.

> The nation imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, no nation imagines itself coterminous

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[20] Smith A.D. and Hutchinson J. (1994) (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p.47.

[21] Brass, Paul.R. "Elite Competition and Nation-Formation" in *Nationalism*, A.D.Smith and J.Hutchinson (ed) Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, 1994, p.83.

with mankind... It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm.[22]

Gellner gives a similar assessments on nationalism: "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self consciousness, it invents nations where they do not exist."[23] Hobsbawm makes a comparable point when he argues that the nation is the most important of the lasting "invented tradition".[24]

A quite different school of theorists (Primordialists) holds that ethnic identity is primordial and perennial and that nations are not created or invented but they are the natural unit of history and an integral part of the human equipment. Moreover, language, religion, race and territory provide the basic organizing principles of human existence throughout history, and that these primordial ties of humanity have always divided the species into culture-communities, as naturally as have sex or geograpy:

> The primordialist argues that every person carries with him through life 'attachments' derived from place of birth, kinship relationships, religion, language, and social practices that are natural for him.[25]

It is quite visible that there is a persistent difficulty in defining, theorizing and interpreting nationalism, nation and so on. These

[22]Anderson,B. (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London: Verso Editions and New Left Books.

[23]Gellner,E. "Nationalism and Modernization" in *Nationalism,* A.D.Smith and J.Hutchinson (ed) Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, 1994, p.62.

[24]Cited in Smith,A.D. (ed) (1992) *Ethnicity and Nationalism,* Leiden: E.J.Brill p.72.

[25]Brass,P.R. op.cit. p.83.

definitions have been unable adequately to solve and to determine which conceptual framework can be best fitted to our study. I do not propose to offer a general solution to this problem. What I attempt to do instead is to analyse the formation and the establishment of Turkish nationalism from the standpoint of a certain theoretical framework that would explain the genuine characteristics of the Turkish case. The purpose of the literature review is to point to the complexity of the thories and definitions of nationalism. That is, there is no fixed and determined way of studying nationalism. Furthermore, this literature review would provide a basis for further theoretical considerations on Turkish nationalism.

This study has another difficulty, that is, no certain and definite theoretical scheme could fit to the Ottoman/Turkish case. Most of the approaches involve some oversimplified and generalizing explanations and they stem from the Western based explanations. These kind of explanations "insists... in locating nationalism and the concepts characteristic of this movement in the context of European thought and history."[26] The Western approaches to a study of nationalism exibited a serious flavor of Western ethnocentrism. It holds a view of the nation-building process as inevitable, immutable and desirable. Moreover, nation-building is viewed as progressive and liberal. On the Ottoman case, such studies have the tendency to analyze different nationalisms within the border of the Empire as more or less similar.[27]

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[26]Smith,A.D. (ed) (1992) *Ethnicity and Nationalism,* Leiden: E.J.Brill p. 59.

[27]For instance in *The Age of Nationalism* Kohn evaluates Turkish nationalism more or less the same as Persian,Russian,Indian nationalism.He does not give some characters that were only peculiar to the Turkish case. see Hans Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism,* Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1962, pp.104-110.

Furthermore, the writings of Western historians seem to imply that the intellectual ferment of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century was monolithical and the major cause of change... this was not so; there were divergent as well as convergent nationalist tendencies in the Ottoman Empire, and geographic, economic, social, and Great Power influences played a greater role in the formation of various nationalisms.[28]

Generally, the Western historians tended to analyze Turkish nationalism by resorting to the category of "cultural nationalism" or Eastern organic nationalism. Hence, Hans Kohn's dichotomy of "Western" voluntaristic and "Eastern" organic nationalism is illuminating for this study. For Kohn, Nationalism in England, France and America is rationalist, optimistic and pluralist, as well as is based on the social contract, and the aspirations for political community of the rising middle classes with their ideal of social progress. Across the Rheine, however, and eastwards into Russia and Asia, social backwardness and the weakness of the middle classes produced a much more emotional and authoritarian nationalism which was based on the lower aristocracy and intelligentsia and appealing to the folk instincts of the masses.[29] Indeed, Turkey had manifested some elements of "organic nationalism", since it was a relatively backward country and the nationalist attitudes were stimulated especially by the intelligentsia. But the Turkish case cannot be limited simply to this theory. Because it has many other

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[28]For William Haddad those different nationalist movements (namely Turkish, Arab, Greek etc.) have been viewed in the West in terms of the concept of European secular nationalism. He maintains that the conventional interpretation of nationalism is much too narrow to be applied to the sibject peoples and provinces of the Ottoman Empire. William W.Haddad "Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire" in   W.W.Haddad and W.L.Ochsenwald (ed.) (1977) *Nationalism in a Non-National State, The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire,* Colombus, p.7. In recent years, several important books on nationalism have been published which are more consistent and objective than the conventional interpretations. On the other hand, for the diverse analysis of historians on nationalism, see Anthony Smith, "Nationalism and Historians" in *Ethnicity and Nationalism,* 1992.

[29]Cited in Smith,A.D. (ed.) (1992) *Ethnicity and Nationalism.* Leiden: E.J.Brill, p.64.

characteristics, partially given above, that we should evaluate it by employing a different terminology.

The other conception of Kohn, which is more or less the same with voluntaristic-organic distinction, is based on the separation between the political and cultural nationalism. In his book *The Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, Uriel Heyd very well summarizes this theory;

> In Western Europe, particularly in England and France, the united national State preceded the emergence of the nation and to a large extent even *created* it ...nationalism...in these countries...was based on the ...philosophy of Enlightenment with its rational approach and its individualist and universalistic outlook...Political thought in England and France has on the whole emphasized the political and subjective aspect (of nationalism), connecting the nation closely with the State and finding the test of nationality in personnel feeling... In Germany and other Central and Eastern countries, on the other hand, nationalism... preceded the birth of a State... Regarding the nation primarily as a cultural and racial entity, it tried to find objective marks of nationality such as the *Volkgeist*, the spirit of the people, as expressed in its language and other cultural phenomena. It tended to be on the whole irrational, collectivist, and exclusive.[30]

From the standpoint of this distinction Heyd argues that Turkish nationalism and especially the nationalism of Gökalp are good examples of Eastern organic nationalism: "Although Gökalp borrowed most of his theories from French sociology and philosophy, his nationalism is more of the Central European and particularly German type.[31]"

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[30]Heyd, U. *The Foundations of Turkish Nationalism*, p.164. As we see, this kind of explanation implies somewhat an Eurocentric inclination.

[31]Ibid., pp. 164-165.

Another version of this theoretical distinction has been made also by Elie Kedouri. For him, political definition of nationalism as a doctrine was formulated by new secular intellectuals and it was hostile to the traditional dynastic and religious order. As its primary goal, Political nationalism is concerned with individual and collective autonomy and the integration of the people in an independent state. In this sense , "nationalism is a form of secular milleranianism that has arisen from Kantian conceptions of human beings as autonomous which has led to politics replacing religion as the key to salvation"[32]. He argues that there are two different kinds of nationalist doctrine: the first (republican) which is derived from Kant and associated with political nationalism and the second (organic), derived from Herder that conceives and considers the nation as a natural solidarity settled on unique cultural characteristics.[33]

For Partha Chatterjee, these sort of distinctions signify a liberal-rationalist dilemma. Because in its essential aspects, nationalism represents the attempt to realize in political terms the universal urge for liberty and progress. Yet, the evidence shows that it could also give rise to mindless chauvinism and xenophobia and serve as the justification of authoritarianism. For the Western thinkers like Kohn and John Plamenatz, the "Western" type manifests the good and normal side of nationalism and the Eastern (organic) type represents the evil and specific and even disturbing side of nationalism. Even so, for these thinkers, when this illiberal special type of nationalism appears in the

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[32]Cited in Smith A.D. and Hutchinson J. (1994) (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p.47

[33]Hutchinson,J. (1992) "Moral Innovators and the Politics of Regeneration: the Distinctive Role of Cultural Nationalists in Nation Building" in A.D.Smith (ed.): *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Leiden: E.J.Brill, p.102.

form of revivalist movements or oppressive regimes, it still represents an urge for progress and freedom.[34] As it is clear, this indicates that nationalism involves some contradictions and dilemmas.

Obviously, applying these theories to the Ottoman-Turkish case will not illuminate the specificity and uniqness of Turkish case due to their somehow Eurocentric approach which always looks at the non-Western world from the Western Enlightenment and rationality based paradigm. Although these theories specify some contemplations on nationalism and reflect partial truths that is also explanatory for the Turkish case, they are generalizing and they contain certain dilemmas that Chatterjee has pointed out.

However, I believe that, Chatterjee's theories can be applied to the analysis of Ottoman intellectuals. That is, the rational-liberal dilemma was influential in the minds of Ottoman intellectuals with regard to their position against the West. In this sense, Ernest Gellner clarifies the at odds position of the non-Western intellectuals against the Western modernization. For him, there is a paradoxical relationship between cultural nationalism and modernization:

> Nationalism is the creation of intellectuals in backward societies, who, threatened by the aduence of an exotic scientific-industrial culture whith which they find it difficult to compete, advocate a nostalgic return to the pristine integrated world of the folk and engage in linguistic and cultural reconstruction... For what they seek is a revived folk community, but what results is rather a modern science-based culture with native idioms.[35]

[34]Chatterjee, P. (1986) *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*, p.2.

[35]Cited in J.Hutchinson, "Cultural nationalism and Moral Regeneration" in *Nationalism*, A.D.Smith and J.Hutchinson (ed) Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, 1994, p.128.

I believe, Gellner is surely right to identify nationalism as a defensive response by educated elites (or intellectuals) to the impact of Western civilization. From this point of view, I will elucidate the subject or open a door to the core theme of my study by introducing the analysis of "identity" and the intellectuals' attitudes towards the identity problem. In my oppinion, the cultural/political nationalism debate ameliorated the issue of national identity which related to the intellectuals' position.

To begin with, it is necessary to define the concept "national identity". Nation has been contested as a form of identity that competes with other kind of collective identity. Clearly, national identity should not be confused with other types of identity and it cannot be explained in general terms which may explain any other type of identity. It is not a generic, but a specific notion. Generating an identity may be a psychological necessity, perhaps a given element of human nature.[36] What is often admitted is the power, even primacy, of national loyalities and identities over those of even class, gender and racial identities. Perhaps only religious attachments have challenged national loyalities in their scope and fervour.

At the same time, national identities go hand in hand with other kinds of identity or alternate with them in terms of power and salience.[37] As Mardin might have said, the power and salience of an identity depends upon its capability to provide the emotional security. Moreover, "'identity' is only partly a spontaneous feeling which people have and

[36]Greenfeld, Liah. (1992) *Nationalism; Five Rooads to Modernity*, Harvard Univ. Press, Massachussets, p.12.

[37]Smith,A.D. and J.Hutchinson (1994) (ed) *Nationalism*, Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, p.4.

which people can inspire emotion and supreme loyalities"[38] Identities function as the legitimizing power in a society.

The adoption of national identity as a legitimizing power and the position of the intellectuals is the vantage point in the formation of Turkish nationalism. In order to elaborate this, I attempt to focus my study on the theories that would clarify the different dynamics of the adoption of a national identity in the Turkish context and then provide a critical assessment of this process.

In the first place, the adoption of national identity must have been, in one way or another, in the interests of the groups which imported it. Specifically, it must have been preceded by the dissatisfaction of these groups with the identity they had previously. A change of identity presupposed or created a crisis of identity. "Anomie" is the main reflection or the structural manifestation of this identity crisis. Very often anomie took the form of status-inconsistency which could be accompanied by a profound sense of insecurity and anxiety[39] Usually, the main reason of this insecure position was the subtle shifts in legitimization. Because, in accordance with the prescriptions of the intellectuals and westenized elites, historically well-established collective representations and identities underwent modifications. However, the positions of the intellectuals were unclear. As Mary Matossian puts it:

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[38]Kellas,J.G. (1991) *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity,* Macmillan, London, p.15.

[39]Greenfeld, L. op.cit. pp.14-15.

The first problem of the 'assaulted' intellectual is to assume a satisfactory posture *vis-a-vis* the West. The position taken is frequently ambigious embracing the polar extremes of xenophobia and xenophilia. The intellectual may resent the West, but since he is already at least partly Westernized, to reject the West completely would be to deny part of himself.

The intellectual is appealed by discrepancies between the standard of living and 'culture' of his own country, and those of modern Western nations. He feels that something must be done, and done fast. He is a man on the defensive, searching for new defensive weapons.[40]

It may be argued that Turkish national sentiments emerged in the course of a search for new defensive weapons against the rising Western civilization. The Ottoman intellectual and bureaucratic elite in the second half of the nineteenth century found itself in a position which was --from a psychological point of view-- a perfect breeding ground for "ressentiment"[41] By adopting the Westen national idea as its model and by the desire to regain its past glories, the Ottoman state lacked the social conditions necessary for the implementation of this model, thereby making equality with the West impossible. The intellectuals in the empire were in a position to be personally wounded by the superiority of the West and to feel resentment generated by the relative position of the country.

The early Ottoman patriotism indeed displayed unmistakable characteristics of ressentiment. Significantly, these characteristics are more salient particularly after the latter part of the nineteenth century,

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[40]Matossian,M."Ideologies of Delayed Development" in *Nationalism*, A.D.Smith and J.Hutchinson (ed) Oxford Univ.Press, Oxford, 1994, p.218.

[41]The term "ressentiment" is conceptualized by Liah Greenfeld. For her, it refers to a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings. It has a very similar meaning with 'anomie' and resentment. See *Nationalism; Five Rooads to Modernity*, Harvard Univ. Press, Massachussets 1992, pp.15-17.

with the era of the Young Ottomans. The rejection of the Western model was expressed in the blaming of its values, but also in their emphatic appropriation. That is, on the one hand , they accept the unblemished aspect of Western civilization, but on the other hand they reject its wicked side (moral values). This has caused an anomic situation since, there was no certain criteria that would measure the good and bad sides of the Western civilization. This torn situation has been preceded for long years in the Turkish tradition. The outstanding reflection of this mood constituted what I shall call the "trinities" of the intellectuals. For instance, Ziya Gokalp tried to synthesize three policies namely, Westernism, Turkism and Islamism.

Since the late eighteenth century, nationalism has in many respects become the dominant political doctrine in the West. During this period, consciousness of national identity became a predominant force for constituting independent political structures. National loyality had a unifying and a restorative role and became a remedy for identity crises and fragmentations. In Western Europe, nationalism was necessary to provide a common identity against the anomalous situation of the transition period with the Industrial Revolution. In some ways, the growth of national identity has been influenced by religion. People were defining their identity and loyalty in terms of nationality.

On the other hand in the East, especially in Ottoman/islamic world, religion was a unique and a solitary element constituting the common identity and it was a significant source of power. The dividing lines were not drawn according to nationalities, but according to religious ideas. Within the empire, "the basic loyalty of Muslims was to Islam, to the Islamic Empire that was its political embodiment, and to the dynasty,

legitimized by time and acceptance, that ruled over it. The discontented and the rebellious might seek a change of ministers, of sovereign... they never sought to change the basis of statehood or corporate identity."[42] Religion functioned as a linking institution in the society:

> Religion was the mediating link between local social forces and the political structure. The process worked at two levels. The institution of religion was one where popular structures were linked with the Ottoman ruling institution, and religion provided the cultural fund which shaped ideals of political legitimacy among individuals. But religion was also the core of a much wider process of socialization than that connected with politics... The same is true for norm-formation: the institutional and symbolic aspects of Islam took over this function in the Middle East and in the Ottoman Empire... Because of the gap in these linking institutions and because of the relative undifferentiatedness of Ottoman society, it assumed the reference-group functions... For the population at large religion was a moral prop, something to lean on, a source of consolation, a patterning of life; for the ruling elite it was... a matter related to the legitimacy of the state.[43]

Therefore, nationalism emerged as a subsidiary identity against religion with a claim of a legitimate and autonomous *Weltanschauung* (world-view).

> A relic of times when religion was the prime loyalty, the empire had survived into the era of nationalism, which undercut both the old inter-communal synthesis and... egalitarianism.[44]

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[42]Lewis,B. (1964) *The Middle East and the West*, Indiana Univ. Press, Bloomington, p.72.

[43]Mardin, S. (1971) "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution" in *Int. Journal of Middle East Stud.*, Vol.2, pp.205-206.

[44]Findley, C.V. (1989) *Ottoman Civil Officialdom; a social history*, Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey.

This state of affairs enabled the individuals to be exposed to dual identity conflicting with each other. If explained in psychological terms, social schizophrenia and fragmented identity were the main reflections of this situation. In this sense, nationalism fragmented not only the existent legitimacy at the societal level, but also practically reduced the influence of the common element (religion), in the long run, which has been a fundamental agent as a political struggle against the West. Islamic authenticity was delinked from the corporate identity which was shared by society in general.

I believe, the intellectuals and the political elite did not grasp the inner logic of the social, economic and political developments that took place in the West and the historical role of nationalism in the Western context. They had the imagination that nationalism and westernization would have the same effects in their countries. From the standpoint of its results, not its causes, regardless from the processes that formed nationalism in the European context, the intellectuals and the state elites voluntarily played an instrumental role in the adoption of this uprooted national identity. Moreover, Turkish nationalists were not very much interested in the theoretical peculiarities of nationalism. Instead of having philosophical and ideological considerations for constituting a systematic conceptual frame for nationalism, nation-state or its prerequisites (namely citizenship rights, social-contract theory, bourgeois, etc.) , their initial concerns were ,in a pragmatic way, to overcome the problems and discontents that threatened the very establishment of the State:

> The ideas they advocated were Western liberal ideas; constutionalism and parliamentary government. But it were not these ideas in themselves that

appealed to them...but these ideas as a means to strengthen and eventually save the Ottoman state. As Tarik Zafer Tunaya has remarked, their central preoccupation was with the question: Bu devlet nasil kurtulabilir? (How can this state be saved?). In other words they were ardent Ottoman nationalists.[45].

In the course of time, this attempt increasingly led to more systematic introduction and formulation of nationalism by the intellectuals. Although Turkish nationalism consisted primarily of political aspects of nationalism, during this period, nationalism manifested itself rather culturally[46]. The cultural nationalism, gradually, turned to a political one in order to accomodate to the requirements of establishing a new nation-state.

It can be suggested that the most outstanding character of Turkish nationalism was its "foisted" nature. I would like to label the ambivalances and the paradoxes in the identity of Turkish nationalists (a situation common to the identity of all non-Western nationalists for Chatterjee and Gellner) as foisted identity. But, the reason why I use the word foisted is my disagreement with Chatterjee and Gellner in labelling nationalist identity as contradictory or inconsistent. Chatterjee and Gellner's theory of nationalism and contradictions in the thoughts of nationalist intellectuals are applicible to a certain extent to the Turkish case. I suggest that this model should be modified in applying it to the Turkish case regarding the following points:

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[45]Zurcher, E.J. *The Unionist Factor,* Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1984, p.22.

[46]This kind of explanation also made by David Kuhner, but his conception of 'cultural aspect of Turkish nationalism' is different from my usage. For him, 'cultural' signifies a doctrine whicn is equal to non-participation to a political movement. I will explain my consideration on this issue in following sections. However ,I partially agree with Kushner. See D.Kushner , *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908,* London, Frank Cass, 1977, p.98.

a) Ottoman nationalist intellectuals were different from the intellectuals in the colonial world in the sense that they were not reacting to a colonial rule. On the contrary, they were trying to increase the power of an independent political state *vis a vis* the expansion of the Western powers.

b) Ambivalences and seeming paradoxes in their thinking should not be considered as contradictory or inconsistent. We should take into consideration the fact that there was a coherent and holistic purpose that keeps different ideological elements coexisting in one system of thought without contradiction such as the coexistence of elements Turkism, Islamism and Westernism in one national identity. This I would rather call as a "foisted identity". I use especially the term "foisted" because the nationalist identity was not constructed from above deliberately by the intellectuals and the state elites. They were rather in a search for new policies that would maintain and perpetuate the existent state and provide an effectiveness. They were loyal to their state and society. Because of that the new identity was mainly foisted to the previous identities without a contradiction.

Though I believe that the foisted nature of national identity of Ottoman intellectuals is a common character of their way of thinking, I do not argue that the significance of each element was same for all intellectuals. On the contrary, I will argue that, for different intellectuals the meaning and significance of each foisted element vary accrding to their personal, political and pragmatic considerations. But, because of their intellectual fate, they could not ignore any element in their foisted identity and create a monolithic identity.

The new hypothetical "foisted identity" could not provide the emotional security in the society, since it has no historical roots. Furthermore, this invented national identity brought along secularism and westernization with itself. It simply could not fill the identity gap, due to its lack of legitimacy. Religion was also needed, but in a controlled manner. The three of them, namely religion, nationalism and westernization constituted a catastrophical balance that made itself felt for long time in Turkish history.

In the first chapter, I will present the historical background of Turkish nationalism and the several dynamics that gave rise to the national sentiments in the Ottoman Empire among the intellectuals. Especially the Young Ottoman period will be dealt with for their utmost importance in the formation of Turkish national sentiments. They were also the forefather of Turkish nationalism. They were the first men who have introduced the Western Enlightenment ideas such as liberalism and patriotism to the Ottoman public. Although, it was the Ottoman virtues and the Ottoman Empire that the Young Ottomans wanted to revive, the germs of Turkish nationalism were contained within it[47] For the first time in Turkish history, they divided the world of social institutions and practices into two domains --the material and the spiritual (or moral):

> The material is the domain of the outside, of the economy and of state-craft, of science and thecnology, a domain where the West had proved its superiority and the East had succumbed. In this domain, then, Western superiority had to be acknowledged and its accomplishments carefully studied and replicated. The spiritual, on the other hand, is the inner domain bearing the essential marks of cultural identity. The greater one's success in imitating Western skills in the

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[47]Davison, R. (1963) *Reform in the Ottoman Empire: 1856-1876*, Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, p. 221.

material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture.[48]

This formula is, I think, a fundamental feature of Young Ottoman thought and it remained as an heritage among the later nationalists.

The second chapter will mainly cope with the issues of Turkish nationalism disputed by the major representatives of Turkism, such as Ziya Gokalp and Yusuf Akcura. The Young Turk era and the Union and Progress Party will take a considerable place for their importance in articulating Turkish national sentiments. In both chapters, the identity problem, the positions of the intellectuals and the foisted nature of their nationalist ideology will constitute the chief bulwark of the study.

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[48]Chatterjee,P. (1993) *The Nation and its Fragments, Colonial and Postcolonial Histories,* Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, p.6.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH NATIONALISM

2.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TANZIMAT REFORMS

The prominent characteristics of Ottoman politics in the nineteenth century was formed by an attempt to respond or counter the growing domination of the Western powers and by a policy of Westernization. As Eric Jan Zürcher points out this policy was initiated by two motives both ultimately aiming at the same goal; the restoration of Ottoman power or the maintenance of the state. As Zürcher puts it:

1. A strong desire to increase the efficiency of the administration of the Empire by the adoption of Western methods and institutions.

2. To please the European states by effecting reforms and so to reduce the constant pressure of western countries[49]

Ottoman politicians took the reforms aiming at westernization as a compromise with Europe and to increase the power of the state. That means, the reforms were seen as opportunistic moves to please the representatives of the Western powers and as a condition for diplomatic support.

The most outstanding period of Westernization started with the implementation of the *Tanzimat* reforms. These reforms were all aimed at greater efficiency and centralization of the state machinery. With

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[49]Eric J.Zurcher, *The Unionist Factor*, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1984, p.1.

these reforms, power was gradually concentrated in the hands of palace, imperial bureaucracy and the *Babiali*. In order to attain this greater power, the bureaucracy, the army and the education facilities had to be enlarged and modernized so that new schools and training institutions based on Western models could be founded. Nonetheless, the reforms left the Ottoman state more authoritarian and monolithic than it had ever been.[50] This period of westernization brought about with itself the modification in concepts and outlook which had eventually upset the very foundations of Ottoman social and political structure. The Western-originated concepts such as freedom, equality, nation and fatherland began to spread among some members of the Ottoman elite by means of some connections. These connections were established through Ottoman embassies in foreign countries, student missions to Europe, and foreign instructors and teachers invited to Turkey to staff new schools.[51]

> This aspect of westernization was part of the drive toward secular equality given formal expression in Tanzimat reforms —equality under law of all Ottoman subjects regardless of sect. The statesman hoped to create an "Ottomanism" which would counteract separatist nationalistic tendencies among the minorities and help to preserve the empire intact by winning stronger allegiance of all subjects to a beneficent imperial government. The official policy of Ottomanism encountered a major obstacle in Muslim objections to what they regarded as unnatural equality between true believers and subject unbelievers[52]

Resistance against the Tanzimat was great. Especially, the conservative Muslims rejected them, since the reforms were in essence imitations of

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[50]Ibid. p.3.

[51]Kushner,D. op.cit. p.3.

[52]Davison,R. (1984) *Turkey; A Short History,* The Eothen Press: Huntingdon, p.80.

the Christian West and they were the results of the European diplomatic pressure.

> There was much about the reforms to arouse "resentment" and dislike. The political, social and economic changes they involved seemed to offer some kind of threat to the interests of almost every group in Turkish society; to almost all they appeared as a triumph over Islam of the millennial Christian enemy in the West... Military defeat and political humiliation had indeed shaken the torpid and complacement trust of the Turks in their own invincible and immutable superiority, but the ancient contempt for the barbarian infidel, where it yielded, often gave place to rancor rather than emulation.[53]

Moreover, these reforms necessitated almost a total equality among the subjects of the Empire whether they were Christian or Muslim. The Turks had been mostly disturbed by this situation, since it dissappeared their privileged position in the Empire and it also had challenged their way of life, religious beliefs and the integrity and cohesiveness of the Ottoman society:

> The psychological block to change in the Tanzimat period came not only from the natural aversion to change, plus the natural reluctance to admit defects in the Turkish way of life and to copy the institutions of an alien Western society; it came also from the practical fact that this meant also copying the ways of the second-class subjects of the empire, the Christian minorities, who because of their religious and commercial affiliations with the West were sometimes ahead of Turks in their assimilation of western ideas and patterns of life... Religious belief, the simple pride in Islam, reinforced this reluctance to change. The proposed reformes of the Tanzimat period, therefore, represented a threat to the established order, to the Muslim way, and to the integrity and cohesiveness of Turkish society.[54]

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[53]Lewis,B. (1964) *The Emergence of Modern Turkey,* Oxford; London, p.127.

[54]Davison, R. (1963) *Reform in the Ottoman Empire: 1856-1876,* Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, p.79.

More challenging and more important for later developments in the Empire was the opposition to the Tanzimat within the bureaucracy itself, which eventually became known as the movement of the "Young Ottomans". Their intellectual formation was certainly entirely Westernist. But they possessed a better knowledge that led to the Young Ottomans to elaborate the first systematic political ideology of the Middle East. Heavily inspired by the Western liberal ideas, their outstanding principle was Ottoman "patriotism"[55]

These people, the foremost among whom were İbrahim Şinasi, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi inspired by liberal nationalist ideas, began to criticize the authoritarian character of the Tanzimat policies, as well as their superficiality. They compressed for more democratic forms of government and the introduction of an Ottoman Constitution and parliament.

From the standpoint of Islamic teachings namely Koran and *Sunnah*, they argued that the Islamic state had originally been a democratic, constitutional institution but it is later changed by the tyranny of later rulers. This consideration was partly inspired by a genuine pride in their religion (all Young Ottomans were ardent Muslims) and wish to defend Islam against Western criticism by showing that the Western civilization actually derived from Islam or at least that the most desirable (unblemished) aspects of Western civilization had originally existed also in Islam. They supported the compatibility between the Islamic ideas and the Western science and technology. This attempt to reconcile the Western civilization with the Islamic thought has not been accepted only

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[55]Findley,C.V. (1980) *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire; The Sublime Port, 1789-1922,* Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, pp.216-217.

by the Young Ottomans but also nineteenth and twentieth century intellectuals throughout the world of Islam.

According to Mardin, the Young Ottomans were at one and the same time the first men to make the ideas of the Enlightenment part of the intellectual equipment of the Turkish reading public. Furthermore, they were the first intellectuals who attempt to decipher a synthesis between the ideas of Enlightenment and Islam.[56] However, their task was mainly arduous, due to the existent structure of the Ottoman state and society in their times;

> Up to the middle of the nineteenth century Turkey had remained outside the main stream of Western European intellectual development. Ottoman civilization was therefore deprived of the benefit of the political ideas that had gained currency in Europe during the Enlightenment. The political theory by which the rule of the Ottoman sultans was justified, for instance identified political power with the vicarage of God. In the European political theory of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, the separation of secular and religious power was axiomatic. Thus the adaptation of Western European political ideas to suit the needs of the Ottoman Empire, which young Ottomans attempted, was bound to run into difficulties.[57]

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[56]Mardin, Ş. (1962) *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas*, Priceton Univ. Press; New Jersey, p.3.

[57]Ibid. p.4.

2.2 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUNG OTTOMAN THOUGHT TO TURKISH NATIONALISM

Western spirit of nationalism was the major political contribution of Europe to Ottoman/Turkish modernization. Such a concept was foreign to the Ottoman Empire where generally distinctions among peoples followed religious lines. Ottoman leaders traditionally served faith and state. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, for many people, the term 'Turk' had a somewhat derogatory connotation, hence certain intellectuals, particularly the Young Ottomans, opted for an Ottomanist type of nationalism. Their protonationalism and parochialism manifested itself in the formulation of the concept "watan". The use of the word watan (fatherland) in a political sense had the same meaning with the French *patrie* or the German *Vaterland*. Certainly, it was a consequence of the European influence and example. "For a long time, however, watan connoted not a true and fervent nationalism, but a spirit of patriotism... It viewed with distress the shrinking boundaries of the Ottoman Empire and promoted a desire to defend those boundaries The spirit first of patriotism and later on nationalism was nurtured also by revulsion against European attacks and pressures, and by reaction against the nationalism of the rebellious Balkan peoples. By 1873, when Namık Kemal produced his drama entitled Vatan, the fatherland concept was charged with emotional content. This Fatherland was not yet fully "Turkish", it was still Ottoman. The emotional content was Islamic as well as patriotic"[58] A song of Namik Kemal which was expressed in the play, entitled *Vatan yahut Silistre (Fatherland or Silistre)*, very well shows the Ottomanist patriotic zeal:

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[58]Davison,R. (1990) *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923, The Impact of the West*, University of Texas Press, Austin, p.88.

Blood and sword on our flag are flying,

On our hills and plains roams no fear of dying,

A lion in each part of our land is lying,

We rejoice in the fray martyrs' lives to lay down,

We are Ottomans, giving up life for renown[59]

In his article, Namik Kemal explains what Vatan means for him:

The Vatan does not consist of imaginary lines drawn on a map by the sword of a conqueror or the pen of scribe. It is a sacred idea, sprang from the union of many lofty sentiments, such as nation , freedom, welfare, brotherhood, property, sovereignty, respect for ancestors, love of family, memory of youth.[60]

With this definition, he provides unconsciously a basis for the later emerging nationalism. Vatan freed itself from the religious and patriotic bonds and became clearly nationalist in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. During the Young Ottoman periods, it sought to promote Ottomanism among the various peoples and creeds of the imperial state. "Ottoman statesman attempted to inject affective appeal into the egalitarian policy and parry the separatist - nationalist threat by promoting a new concept of Ottomanism, no longer as the elite identity of the ruling class, but as an imperial supra nationalism.[61] The reform leaders felt it necessary to try to infuse into the Ottoman subjects a new kind of loyalty to the Ottoman fatherland, and to an "Ottoman nation" which would replace the old, narrow identity

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[59]Cited in, R.Davison (1963) *Reform in the...*, p.299.

[60]Cited in Lewis,B. (1992) "Watan" in *The Impact of Western Nationalisms,* Jehuda Reinharz and George L. Mosse (ed), Sage Publications, London.

[61]Findley,C.V. (1989) *Ottoman Civil Officialdom; a social history,* Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, p.34.

(loyalty) to the community and help prevent potential discontent and revolt. The new policy came to be known as Ottomanism.[62]

The patriotic sentiments of the Young Ottomans, especially that of Namık Kemal, closely connected with their romanticist ideas. For Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Namik Kemal was influenced by romanticism and the contemporary literature of Europe. Particularly, the French romantics, like Victor Hugo, mostly affected his ideas. In the preface to *Celaleddin Harzemşah*, he had given the manifesto of Turkish romanticism. Yet, there was a big difference between the Western romanticism and Kemal's romanticism. Western romantics did not advocate uncertain notions of liberty and *patrie*. Rather, their ideas were based on a *concret* history of a certain nationality and a definite patrie such as French fatherland or German nation. On the other hand, Turkish romanticism initiated by Namık Kemal was based on an Islamic-Ottoman history in which the idea of an indefinite nationality and a plurality of nations were dominant. Namık Kemal's *vatan* was the Ottoman state and even the Islamic world. It had indefinite borders and had no connections with the Western patrie in which the *concret* and the return to the reality constituted the main theme. Successfull or not, Namık Kemal's romanticism was quite a new phenomenon for the country and for later generations.[63]

I believe, there is a close connection between the notion of the state and fatherland. The strong state tradition generally promoted the idea of fatherland. By the mid- nineteenth century, the association of fatherland

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[62]Kushner,D. op.cit.p.3.

[63]Ülken, H.Z. (1992) *Türkiye'de Çağdaş...*, pp.99-100.

(watan) with state (devlet) as something not only to be loved but also to save and to be served has become a common theme.

An outstanding example of this connection of ideas can be seen in a letter of İbrahim Şinasi written to his mother from Paris in 1851: "I want to devote (or sacrifice) myself to the cause of my religion, state, fatherland, and nation (millet)"[64] I believe, these kind of feelings stem from the fact that there had been a strong state tradition among the Turks. There are several historical reasons of this situation that might be traced back to the early formative years of the Ottoman state. But, there are also a certain socio-cultural dynamics.

First of all, Turkish nation was seen as the prominent and inevitable constituent of the Empire, i.e. the owner of the Empire. The Turks were the only loyal element in it and constituted the chief bulwark and support of the state. This situation have led them to preserve and maintain the State. Traditionally, the notion of the "generalizing, integrating and legitimizing state"(strong state), has been an ineluctable concern for the Turks[65]. Turkish nationalist character is reminiscent of the German one in a sense that they both have strong "statist"(etatist) traditions. Although this analogy signifies an undeniable reality, I think there is an important difference between them. In German tradition, nationalism had been formed by the philosophers before the German state was established, that is, the nationality was clearly identified by the nation before the emergence of the nation-state. Germans' first national movement aimed at unifying all Germans in a single sovereign

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[64]Lewis,B. "Watan"... p.173.

[65]For the strong state tradition in Turkish history, see Metin Heper, "Güçlü Devlet ve Demokrasi".

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political state. Their primary purpose was to be unified and to establish a state. In the Turkish case, nationalism had been formed after the dissolution of the State. The consideration of the "state" enabled them to constitute a nationalist ideology. In short, Germans were the nation seeking their state, and the Turks *vice versa*[66]. Therefore, during the dissolution of the empire, while the other nations pursued the territorial self-determination and independent state belonged to their own, in the last moment, the Turks had an attempt to perpetuate this non-national state. So, the nationalist ideas became hardly approved. Instead of Turkism, until the last quarter of the 19th century, Islamism and Ottomanism prevailed among the Turks as an alternative remedy to the dissolution. During the latter part of the 19th century, for many people, the term "Turk" had a somewhat negative connotation, and thus the intellectuals searched for an "Ottomanist" type of nationalism[67]. But "the very idea of nation, as it had been developed in the nineteenth-century Europe and advocated by so many nationalists of the Ottoman minorities, cannot have been ignored entirely by Ottoman intellectuals. Though Ottomanism promoted the idea of the motherland, with all subjects, regardless of religion and race, equal before the law and loyal to the same Ottoman dynasty, the refusal of the minority nationalists to accept that equality, the success of national unity movements in Germany and Italy, and nationalist aspirations of non-Turkish Muslim groups in the empire led to an increased awareness of the Turkish identity and almost forced the germination of Turkish nationalism"[68].

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[66]For this kind of evaluations see Ayşe Kadıoğlu,"Devletini Arayan Millet".

[67]For more information see F.Georgeon, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri, Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935)* , Yurt Yay. Ankara, tr. by Alev Er, 1986 p.14.

[68]Shaw&Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*,Vol.II, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1985, p.260.

I believe, the most influential contribution of the Young Ottoman thought to the later nationalists was the formulation of the trinities i.e. three policies. Certainly, this formulation was not their original intellectual product, rather it was the outcome of the problems and discontents of the reform period. One of the consequences of the reforms was the creation of several dilemmas or dichotomies in almost every field of life. In intellectual life, in politics, in administration, in social life etc. two sets of institutions, two sets of identities, two loyalties stood side by side.[69] Ziya Pasa very well describes and reflects this dichotomy:

> To impute fanaticism to men of zeal
>
> To ascribe wisdom to men without religion is now the fashion
>
> Islam, they say, is a stumbling-block to the progress of the state
>
> This story was not known before, now it is the fashion
>
> Forgetting our religious loyalty in all our affairs
>
> Following Frankish ideas is now the fashion[70]

Namık Kemal was probably the most influential intellectual who diagnosed the psychological nature of this situation and considered it as a major obstacle to progress towards the establishment of a modern state. He attempted to synthesize the original and idealized forms of Islam, the idealized forms of the political institutions of the Ottoman tradition with the good (material) aspects of Western civilization which had given progress, prosperity, and superiority to the European nations. It is clear that there is a foisted identity in Namık Kemal's ideas which contains different elements within it. For him, there was a compatibility between the Western civilization and Islamic ideas. Moreover, he

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[69]Berkes,N. (1959) "Translator's Introduction" in Ziya Gökalp, *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, trans. and ed. by Niyazi Berkes, New York, p.17.

[70]Lewis,B. op.cit. p.139.

argued, all that is best in European civilization derived from or could be paralleled in classical Islamic civilization, and the Muslim, in adopting these things, was returning to what was deepest and most authentic in his own tradition. In his formulation, there was a combination of different elements each having its own function in the society:

> Islam, according to him, would provide the moral and legal bases of society; the Ottoman tradition of statecraft, together with its multinational and multireligious cosmopolitan policy of toleration, would be the political framework of the Ottoman (not Turkish) state; and Western civilization would furnish the material and practical methods and techniques to enable this system to survive in the contemporary world of power and economic progress.[71]

In the course of time, this attempt at reconciliation among the elements that Namık Kemal had discussed gave rise to the formulation of the three ideological movements, namely Islamism, Ottomanism and Westernism. This formula of the trinity also became a model for the further representatives of Turkish nationalism. Now, I will mention shortly the trinities which have been shaped by the famous intellectuals of Turkish nationalism after Namik Kemal.

As Westernization was making headway from the 1840 onwards, particularly among the educated, debates concerning the relative importance (and political advantages) of Pan-Islam, Ottomanism and Turkism continued for many years in various journals in Turkey (such as Türk Yurdu, İçtihad, Mecmua-i Ebuzziya, and more particularly in Turan etc.)[72] While evaluating the efficiencies of these three policies, Yusuf

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[71]Berkes,N. op.cit. p.18.

[72]Landau,J. *Pan-Turkism in Turkey; a study in Irredentism*, C.Hurst&Company, London, 1981, p.28. For the most typical example of 'Pan-Islamism, Pan-Ottomanism

Akcura, pre-eminent representative of Pan-Turkism, proposed Pan-Turkism as an alternative policy to Ottomanism and Islamism. "By basing the State on the Turkish-speaking peoples, he said, there was promise of resting the foundations of the Ottoman Empire on a faithful and cohesive nation, rather than on elements whose loyalty was questionable."[73] His primary anxiety for this formulation was related also with the question: "How can this state be saved?" The sense of uniqueness and isolation which the Turks felt in their effort to hold and save the state together doubtless provided the most solid grounds for the development of a national identity.[74]

In *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, Yusuf Akçura dealt with three types of policy namely Ottomanism, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism. Although Akçura chose one of these polices eventually, Gökalp does not accept any of these ways, but tries to combine certain basic ideas of each in his conception of Turkism. Gökalp took these concepts from the writings of Hüseyinzade Ali who had summoned the Turks to Türkleşmek, Islamlaşmak, Avrupalılaşmak.[75] By his motto Huseyinzade meant to be inspired by Turkish life, to worship God in accordance with the Muslim religion and to adopt the present-day European civilization.[76]

Gökalp took these principles as the foundation of his teachings and elaborated them. His slogan was "the first dogma of our social

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and Pan-Turkism' debate see Yusuf Akçura, *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset,* Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 2nd edition, 1987.

[73]Kushner,D. *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908,* London, Frank Cass, 1977, p.5.

[74]Ibid, p.5.

[75]Georgeon,F. op.cit. p. 154.

[76]Heyd,U. op.cit. p.149.

catechism must be: "I am a member of Turkish nation, the Islamic community and Western civilization"[77]

Akçura maintained that these three policies to some extent were contradictory with each other.[78] On the other hand, Gökalp claimed that these basic elements were not only compatible but even mutually complementary.[79] In his opinion, the Turks should accept from Western civilization only its material achievements and scientific model, and from Islam its religious beliefs without its political, legal and social traditions. All the other elements of culture, and particularly all the emotional and moral values (maneviyat), except the religious ones, should be drawn from Turkish heritage.[80]

According to Uriel Heyd, this rigid and artificial distinction lacked consistency and did not correspond to the reality of Modern Turkish life, since there is no proper place for Islam as a Third Element, it was superseded by modern European values. Gökalp's system, for Heyd, does not allow Islam any separate existence. With the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Islam gradually lost its value in Gökalp's teachings and became the junior partner in his trinity. The foundations of Kemalism were mainly Türkçülük and Garpçılık, only Islam has been excluded from the trinity.[81]

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[77]Gökalp,Z. *The Principles...*, p.48.

[78]Georgeon,F. op.cit. pp.35-45.

[79]Heyd,U. op.cit. p.150.

[80]Ibid., p.50.

[81]Ibid., p.151.

If we summarize the contibutions of the Young Ottoman thought to the formation of Turkish Nationalism, we can specify that while their activities and struggles have not preceded so long, and prevented by the central authorities, their importance as ideologues was far greater than the survey of their activities would suggest. Despite the fact that their ideas were naive and unsophisticated, they saw more and further than most other intellectuals and state elites. The prescriptions and formulas they offered have been very influential among the Ottoman-Turkish people.

> Their understanding of the problems of change in Ottoman society was deeper than that of the mechanicians of the *Tanzimat* and their ideal, if vague, was not an ignoble one. Many new and significant ideas first found Turkish expression in their writings, and their influence on the thought and action of the generations that followed was very gret indeed.[82]

They introduced the ideas of patriotism and nationalism to the Ottoman muslims for the first time and tried to reconcile them with Islam, thus making these ideas acceptable to a Muslim public. They were the first men to attempt to synthesize Westernism with Ottoman culture. In short, for me, they played a crucial role either consciously or unconsciously in the shaping of the Turkish nationalist ideas.

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[82] Lewis, B. op.cit. p.173.

CHAPTER 3

THE FORMATION OF TURKISH NATIONAL IDENTITY

3.1 THE YOUNG TURK ERA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISH NATIONALISM

By the end of the nineteenth century, the rise of nationalism in the Balkans made itself felt in other provinces of the empire. Many Muslim intellectuals began to be very sensitive to the steady decline of Islamic power and tried to find a plausible solution or practical policy to maintain and save their state against the increasing loss of the territories and the Western domination. Paradoxically, these thinkers were under the influence of European ideas, such as liberalism and nationalism and urged the adoption of these very ideas in the hope that the Ottoman state might regain its power as in the sixtieth or seventieth century. The religion which is formulated as Pan-Islamism by Abdulhamid II, for them, was inadequate to promote loyalty and unity. Instead, they offered Ottomanism and nationalism that would provide a defensive weapon against what they called as infidels.

These intellectuals, mostly inspired by the Young Ottoman ideas, in order to escape from so-called despotism of Hamidian regime, started leaving the country, for proceeding with their activities against the Ottoman government and also for further education in one of the European capitals, especially Paris, without the fear of surveillance. In Paris, these intellectuals found some small communities already formed by the liberal Ottomans. Later on, these intellectuals began to call themselves as Young Turks, after the name of a newspaper published

by Halil Ganem, called *La Jeune Turquie* (Young Turkey). One of the outstanding persons among the Young Turks was Ahmet Rıza who shortly became the leader of the young conspirators. He had been attracted by the philosophy of Auguste Comte, and he soon became a familiar figure in Positivist circles in Paris and, at the same time, the founder of a periodical *Mechveret* (Consultation). In a short time, *Mechveret* became the official organ of the Young Turks. The motto of the periodical was the famous positivist jargon "Union and Progress". In December 3, 1895 *Mechveret* declared the aims of the society for its readers:

"The program which follows explains with great clarity the line of conduct which we have traced for ourselves and the goal which we wish to attain.

We have assured ourselves of the collaboration of certain personalities whose ardent desire is to see the former bonds of harmony and good friendship with the Ottomans taken up again and renewed.

We wish to work not to overthrow the reigning dynasty, which we consider necessary to the maintenance of good order, but to propagate the notion of progress of which we desire the peaceful triumph. Our motto being "Order and Progress", we have a horror of concessions obtained by violence.

We demand reforms, not especially for this or that province, but for the entire Empire, not in favor of a single nationality, but in favor of all the Ottomans, be they Jews, Christians, or Moslems.

We wish to advance in the path of civilization, but we declare resolutely, we do not wish to advance other than in fortifying the Ottoman element and in respecting its own condition of existence.

We are determined to guard the originality of our oriental civilization and, for this reason, to borrow from the Occident only the general results of their scientific evolution, only the things truly assimilable and necessary to guide a people in its march towards liberty.

...

We are opposed to the substitution of direct intervention by the foreign powers for Ottoman authority. This is not from fanaticism, because, for us, the

religious question is a private affair --but from a legitimate sentiment of civil and national dignity.[83]

Although this program is mostly the work of Ahmet Rıza than the society in general,[84] it was the common outlook of the Young Turks to the existent problems. Rıza and his associates were mainly trying to "Ottomanize" the subjects of the Empire rather than promoting the idea of nationalism. This was an important phenomenon indicating their appeal to save the integrity and unity of the empire. The general Ottomanistic character of the intellectuals remained dominant until the beginning of the Balkan Wars, despite the opposition views of certain elements such as nationalists and Islamists. Under one identity there were several identities coexisting together as foisted.

This program signifies another phenomenon that the problem of finding the right path of civilization to follow was an initial concern for the intellectuals. It is asserted that they wished to advance in the path of civilization, but the meaning of civilization is not clear. On the one hand, the "originality" of their Oriental civilization would be kept, on the other hand the developments in the scientific field would be taken from the Occidental civilization as long as they were assimilable and favorable to the march towards liberty. It seems quite paradoxical: the search was mainly for a regeneration of the civilizational culture, adapted to the requirements of science, liberty and progress/evolution, but retaining at the same time its "originality"[85]. Hence, it is very difficult to refer to an

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[83]Ramsour, E.E. pp.24-25.

[84]Ibid. p.25.

[85]I was inspired mostly from Partha Chatterjee's arguments on the distinctiveness of the national culture in these statements. In fact, he was writing in the context of

originality or distinctiveness of the national culture because the elements of Western civilization determine the local elements. As it is clear, the intellectuals had ardent sentiments in order to overcome the problems and uneasiness that would lead to the dissolution of the unity of their state.

Apart from the society gathered around *Mechveret,* there were various people that had claimed different sorts of ideas. Mizanci Murat Bey, editor of the *Mizan,* was also a prominent figure among Young Turks. In his article *Le Palais de Yildiz,* Murat Bey offered more practical and concrete administrative and bureaucratic reforms and prescriptions than the relatively abstract program of *Mechveret.* Due to the fact that his implicit acceptance of the European intervention for providing the reforms in the empire and his assumption that it was not sufficient to regain the constitution of 1876, some of the Young Turks mainly criticized him[86]. Nevertheless, Murat Bey remained a notorious character both by his partial contributions to the Turkish nationalism in *Mizan* and his attempts to prevail the Western ideas of liberty, progress and revolution in order to change the structural basis of the empire.[87]

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nationalism, but I think it is also meaningful in civilizational context. For more information see Partha Chatterjee, (1993) *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: a derivative discourse,* Univ. of Minnesota Press.

[86]Mardin, Ş. (1992) *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908,* İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, p.96.

[87]He gave an remarkable importance to the term "Turk" in his writings. In *Mizan* there were several articles that asserted the significance of the Turkish language and Turkishness: "Arapların her türlü hikem ve bedaini istişare edelim, fakat Türk olduğumuzu... unutmayalım." see Serif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri,* p.114, However the main trend of *Mizan* was Ottomanist and it was opposed to the nationalist tendecies. For instance, *Mizan* objected to the use of "Albanian Muslims" of the newspaper *Sabah* instead of using "Muslims" alone, and the term "Albanian" became the focus of a heated debate between these two nawspapers. See David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism,* p.25.

The other person who have played a greater role in the formation of the Western liberal ideas in the empire was Prens Sabahaddin. His ideas differed from the other Young Turk leaders in various senses. First of all, he was a true liberal and his ideas on liberalism had strong philosophical implications that can be traced back to the English tradition of liberalism. Secondly, he was totally against the Hamidian regime and was in the favor of interventions of great powers. He favoured a minimal, decentralized government with as much room as possible for private initiative and free enterprise, which he saw the motor of progress. Unlike the other Young Turks, he was not against the commercial and political domination and influence of the European countries in the Empire if it would accelerate its development.[88] His ideas were in considerable opposition with the centralized government. He formed *Teşebbüsü Şahsi ve Adem-i Merkeziyet Cemiyeti* (the League for Private Initiative and Decentralization) in Paris in order to attain his goals. For Mardin, the ideas of Sabahaddin were not so original and new. His attempts to create an "effective citizen" (verimli vatandas) had been a recurrent ideal since 1870s on the part of the intellectuals. The idea that in order to be successful in modernization, first of all, it is necessary to increase the educational levels of the citizens, was quite widespread.[89]

With the increasing effects of Prens Sabahaddin in Paris among some Young Turks led to a polarization and fragmentation. This fragmentation can be seen at the first "Congress of Ottoman Liberals" which was held in Paris in February, at the invitation of Prince Sabahaddin.[90] Since, the

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[88]Zurcher, E.J. *The Unionist Factor*, p.17.

[89]Mardin, S. op.cit., p.299.

ideas of Ahmed Rıza and his association were tending towards centralization and Ottoman-Muslim patriotism and they were adverse to the foreign interference in the affairs of the Empire in any form, they were in a disagreement with Sabahaddin and his followers. Therefore, there began to appear two fractions between them. Moreover, beside these fragmentation, there were several other divisions which ran deep and were to play a part in the politics after the constitutional revolution of 1908.

Until the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, these divided ideas had acquired more definite and specific forms and were specified in quite systematic manners by some certain figures and publications. The common purpose of these currents were to find remedies for preventing the dissolution of the Empire. There were three main currents at that time namely Pan-Islamists, Westernists and Turkists.

The pan-Islamists, mainly represented by Sait Halim Paşa, M. Şemseddin, Musa Kazım and Hacı Fehim[91], maintained that the Empire had lost its power due to the increasing removal of the Islamic doctrines and practices from the institutions of the government. For them, like the Young Ottomans, there was a compatibility between the Islamic

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[90]Zürcher, E.J. op.cit. p.17. In the Congress Sabahaddin's decleration had more Ottomaist and pluralist implications:

"It must be thoroughly understood that the Turks who constitute today the majority in the Empire, ask nothing for themselves which they do not ask also, and in the same measure, for all their compatriots, Moslem and non-Moslem...
We reiterate: the reforms whose application we demand in our country and for whose execution we are working with all our power, we do not demand them for such and such a people, such and such a religion, to the exclusion of such and such others: we demand them for all the Ottomans without exception..." see Ernest E. Ramsaur, op.cit. p.67.

[91]See Kemal Karpat (1967) *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi: Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Değerler,*İstanbul, p.24.

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teachings and the Western science and technology. For the development of the Empire, it was necessary to turn back to the pre-eminent fundamental Islamic ideas. As a believer in the universality of Islam, they were in opposition with the Turkists who wished to form a national society in a narrow sense[92].

The leading Westernists of the Young Turks were Abdullah Cevdet, Celal Nuri, Süleyman Nazif, Kılıçzade Hakkı and Ahmed Muhtar. Their foremost aim was to educate, civilize and enlighten the "people" and to integrate the Ottoman masses to the contemporary civilization[93]. They were complaining about the ignorance of the people. If this problem was to be overcome by abolishing the fatalist and supernatural beliefs and constructing the cause-effect relationship of the events, the uneasiness and discontents taking place in the Empire would have been solved. They have supported the replacement of the sheriah laws by the civil laws, and that of the Arabic letters by the Latin alphabet, the abandonment of the religious schools in order to remove the fatalist world view, and the establishment of a national economy and industrialization[94]. Furthermore, they were advocating an Ottomanist type of policy, rather than nationalist.

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[92]Ibid., p.24.

[93]A poem by Abdullah Cevdet very well summarizes this attempt:

Sizi aydınlatmaya çalıştım gece gündüz
Aydan güneşe gittim, güneşten aya geldim
Peygamberler vaat ederler cennet öbür dünyada
Ben size bu dünyayı cennet yapmaya geldim

See Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p.221.

[94]Karpat, K. op.cit. p.26.

The third and the most significant ideology developed in the Young Turk era was nationalism. This policy appeared primarily in the field of literature and merely had some cultural dimensions at the beginning. In some newspapers and journals, certain intellectuals began to remark on the importance of language for the preservation of the national culture, and the significance of purifying the language. The movement of *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* (New Literature) centered around the magazine *Servet-i Fünun* was the first representative of that ideas. Şemseddin Sami, for instance, argued:

> The first symbol of a nation and a race, its foundation, and its common property, shared equally by all its members, is the language in which it speaks. People speaking one language constitute one nation and one race. Each people and nation must therefore first of all bring order its language[95].

In the Hamidian period a great consideration was given to the national aspect of the role of the language: Revising the Turkish language, its structure, vocabulary etc. was the prerequisite to the preservation of the Turkish nationality. If it did not so, it would also cause to the elimination of nationality (*mahv-ı kavmiyet*). In this sense, the journalist and writer Said Bey's statement is very interesting: "Let the one who seeks Arabic go to the Arabs, those who seek Persian, to the Persians, and the 'Frenks' to 'Frengistan'; but we are Turks and we need Turkish."[96]

Beside these developments in the field of language, there were other attempts that stimulated the national sentiments of the Turks. A number of European Turcologist began to find out the Turkish past, their historical background in the great Central Asian civilization, and the

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[95]Kushner, D. op.cit. p.62.

[96]Ibid., p.63.

importance of their language and culture in the history. They have written several books that signified the great and covered accomplishments of the Turks in history. A.J. de Guignes, A.L.David, Mustafa Celaleddin Paşa, Arminius Vambery and Leon Cahun were the most famous scholars who have attempted to discover the Turkish past[97]. The scholarly researches of Orientalists acquainted Ottoman Turks with their ancient history and language, and with the Turks outside of the Empire.

On the other hand, these studies had not enough reflections within the Empire. However, the main impetus to the increasing Ottoman acquaintance with Turks living outside the Empire was the move of intellectuals and scholars from Russia into the Ottoman Empire, generally toward the end of the nineteenth century. In a short period, these men became very influential in the cultural and political domains in the Empire and introduced the people with the fruits of long years of intellectual revival in the Muslim community of Russia[98], and they have played a greater role in the formation of Turkish nationalism. The national awakening of the Turks in Russia had started several years before than that of the Turks in the Ottoman empire as a reaction to the Russian domination and pressures. The Turkish intellectual activities which were centered mainly in the Crimea and Kazan, were influenced by Western liberal ideas, Islamic modernization thoughts of Jamaladdin Al-Afghani, Muhammed Abduh and Abdurrahman Al-Kawakibi[99] as well

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[97]Shaw&Shaw (1985), *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol.2, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, p.261.

[98]Kushner, D. op.cit., p.12.

[99]Kırımlı, Hakan. (1994) *National Movements and National Identity among the Crimean Tatars:1905-1916*, p.57.

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as the writings of Young Ottomans. The most outstanding figure of this movement was Ismail Bey Gaspıralı whose newspaper, *Tercüman*, established in Crimea in 1883 which became the longest-lasting and certainly the most influential newspaper among the Muslims of the Russian Empire. He also established an educational reform program, the "New Method" (*Usul-u Cedid*) which was, in a course of time, turned out to be the general appellation of all reformist-nationalist movements among the Turks of the Russian Empire[100]. He emphasized the unity of all the Turks in the face of Russian nationalism and tried to develop a common literary dialect and a unification of languages that could be understood by all[101]. Moreover, Gaspıralı "envisioned a profound coalition of the Muslim Turkic peoples of the Russian Empire on the basis of a common ethno-national and religious consciousness, and sought to reform their societies and remedy the current maladies through modernism. A national unity based on a combined ethno-linguistic and Islamic platform, and a transformation and reconstruction of society along modern lines, were the inseparable elements of Gaspıralı's program."[102] Although his attempts were not directly related to the construction of a pure nationalism, he had considerable contributions to the development of Turkism through the followers that he had inspired. Yusuf Akçura is the most important disciple of Gaspıralı who had spent most of his life for the formation of the Turkish nationalism[103]. Another Russia originated intellectual was an Azerbaycani, Ahmed Agayev (Ağaoğlu), studied in Paris, contacted with

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[100]Ibid. p.62.

[101]Shaw&Shaw, op.cit., p.261.

[102]Kırımlı, H. op.cit., p.50.

[103]I will deal with the ideas of Akçura in detail in the following pages.

Ahmed Rıza and other leaders of the Young Turks and started to publish a daily newspaper, *İrşad*, in 1906. Eventually , he played a significant role in rising Turkish nationalism in the empire after 1908 revolution.

Turkish nationalism in the Young Turk era can be evaluated in two time period. The first one is the opposition years between 1889-1908. In this period Turkish nationalism could not manifest itself evidently. Because, with the expectation to get their independence after victory, the minorities were supporting the Young Turks as opposed to the Hamidian regime. Moreover, the Young Turks did not see a benefit in dissociating themselves from the minorities by supporting nationalism manifestly[104]. Since, "a unifying force in a society enjoying cohesion and social solidarity, nationalism can prove disruptive in a population as composite as the Ottoman. It was feared that adoption of nationalism might tempt the non-Muslim communities to seek their salvation in the collapse rather than in the perpetuation of the structure under which they lived[105]. They rather tended to incline towards Ottomanism, in order not to lose the support of minorities.

3.2 THE YOUNG TURK REVOLUTION

The second period was between the years 1908-1913 in which Young Turks gained the power in the empire. For dealing with the nationalist attitudes of the Young Turks in this time period, it should be irretrievably mentioned about the Committee of Union and Progress and its so-called Turkification policies. In May 1887, Kazim Nami Duru and

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[104]Karpat, K. op.cit., p.27.

[105]Khadduri, M. (1983) *Political Trends in the Arab Worlds: The Role of Ideas and Ideals in Politics,*Greenwood Press, Westport, p. 14.

five fellow students formed a group called the Society of Union and Progress (*Ittihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*). It does not seem to have lasted too long, but two years later, in May 1889, an Albanian Muslim named Ibrahim Temo, joined with a Circassian student, Mehmet Resit, and two Kurds, Abdullah Cevdet and Ishak Sukuti, in order to reconstitute the Ottoman Society of Union (*Ittihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti*) and then they renewed its name as the Ottoman Society of Union and Progress (*Osmanli Ittihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*). They called for a program of constitutionalism, Ottomanism and freedom, and a demand to replace the sultan with one of his brothers[106].

In a course of time, the CUP had spread around the empire, and the opposition groups began to label themselves with the name of the committee. With the increasing influence of the committee, sultan's police kept the CUP well suppressed in and around the capital after 1897. However, the conditions nurtured and strengthened its cause, especially among the students, the lower officer ranks in the army, some bureaucrats and intellectuals. There emerged several underground organizations against the sultan's policies who wished to reestablish the constitution. Consequently, Abdulhamid could not stand the opposition, uprisings and rebels from almost all segments of the society, and in 1908 he recalled the Parliament in order to establish a constitutional government. Without any real revolution, without any violence and demonstrations, the Young Turk Revolution had taken place on July 23. "The sultan declared that he had suspended the Parliament until the work of modernization was completed and the time had now come for it to meet again so it could share in the difficult task

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[106]Shaw&Shaw, op.cit. p.256.

of saving the empire from its enemies[107]." Although the intellectuals outside the empire had indirect contributions, the revolution of 1908, especially, was the result of the work of groups working inside the Empire. In contrast with the opposition groups abroad, "generally the members of these opposition groups do not seem to have been much concerned with theoretical approaches to the reforms they wanted, nor with the building of a coherent ideology.[108]"

3.3 COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS

AND

THE TURKIFICATION POLICIES

With the Young Turk Revolution, the reign of Abdulhamid II was over, and the era of CUP started. I do not want to go into detail by giving all the historical and political events taking place in the era of CUP. Rather, this thesis primarily aims at elucidating the policies of CUP which are directly related with nationalism and its attitudes towards the minorities.

The new rulers came across with three possible policies of action when they were in power: (1) Pan -Islamism, (2) Ottomanism, and (3) Turkish nationalism, while faced with the problem of what national policy to formulate for the maintenance of unity. A clear and coherent policy was never adopted officially due to the complexities of the situation and the conflicting views of the leaders. "The new generation, in the majority, acting under the influence of nationalist thinkers, seem to have favored Turkish nationalism. Pan-Islamism was discredited because it failed to

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[107]Ibid., p.267.

[108]Zurcher, E.J. op.cit., p.21.

rehabilitate Islam under Hamidian rule, while Ottomanism was put forward too late to create cohesion among diverse groups who had adopted conflicting national identities. It was Turkish nationalism which gradually came to dominate the new rulers and they sought to impose new loyalties on all the non-Turkish elements of the empire with a policy of Turkification"[109].

At this juncture, the so-called Turkification policies of the CUP in their power is an important criteria that signifies the shift of their attitudes towards the issue of nationalism from the pluralistic policy of Ottomanism to the separatist national course of action after 1908. Conventional interpretations on this issue argue that the Turkification (Türkleştirme) policies of Ottoman governments initiated by Abdulhamid II and proceeded during the Committee of Union and Progress(CUP). These policies stimulated the national sentiments of the non-Turks and they were responsible for the awakening of the national identity of peoples such as the Arabs.[110] The other argument say that Abdulhamid pursued a policy of centralization and limited Turkification in the local administration: a policy of centralization. Then, the CUP changed this situation, it not only continued Abdulhamid's centralization and Turkification policies but also tried to expand and broaden these policies. As a result the increased centralization and Turkification without incorporation had stimulated, especially, the Arab nationalism and the Arab hostility to the Ottoman empire.[111] Dawn, contrarily,

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[109]Khadduri, M. op.cit., p.15.

[110]For the wide range of information on these interpretations see Rashid Khalidi and Lisa Anderson (ed.) *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Colombia Univ. Press, New York, 1991.

[111]Haddad, M. op.cit. p.204.

asserted that "Arabism was not a response to Turkification, and it remained a minority tendency in Syria and the Arab world generally until 1918.[112]" The other challenge to the conventional interpretations is that there was not a Turkification policy in the reign of Abdulhamit, but rather it was a policy of centralization, unification and modernization of the fragmented elements of the Ottoman Empire. His education programme was mainly related with this problematic. On the other hand, it is true that with the CUP government the process of centralization, secularization and Turkification became dominant. For Şükrü Hanioğlu, the CUP leaders had a strongly nationalist orientation:

> In light of the attitudes of the many Young Turk leaders toward the Arabs...it is not a great surprise that after 1908 a conflict developed between Arab nationalists, who came to think of the Turks as oppressors, and the Young Turks, who thought Turks were the superior race in the Middle East and had the right to govern the Arabs[113]

Khalidi also reaffirms the impact of CUP policies "that were perceived by many Arabs as being motivated by Turkish nationalism in spurring the growth of Arabism[114]" Perhaps the failure of the CUP in World War I left the dominant faction of the Arab elite with no alternative to Arabism.[115] However, the CUP had no consistent policy towards the

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[112]Khalidi, R. "The origins of Arab Nationalism:Introduction" in Rashid Khalidi and Lisa Anderson (ed.) *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Colombia Univ. Press, New York p. xii and also see Ernest C. Dawn D (1973) *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Univ. of Illionis Press, Chicago, pp.122-147.

[113]Hanioğlu,M.Ş. (1991) "The Young Turks and the Arabs Before the Revolution of 1908" in Rashid Khalidi and Lisa Anderson (ed.) *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Colombia Univ. Press, New York p.44.

[114]Khalidi, R. op.cit. p.xiii.

[115]Cleveland, William L.(1971) *The Making of an Arab Nationalist:Ottomanism and Arabism in the life and thought of Sati al-Husri*, Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, p.46.

peoples of the empire, they "pursued a number of approaches that emphasized Turkish nationalism, Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism in different geographical areas[116]"

Although the common views about the nationalist attitudes of the Young Turks argue that their nationalistic feeling increased, even emerged, after the 1908 Revolution, Hanioğlu disagree with these arguments, and argues that Turkish nationalism developed well before the 1908 Revolution among the Young Turks: "It is obvious that the Young Turks had strong nationalistic feeling even before the Young Turk revolution of 1908. Contrary to commonly held views, this policy did not begin until after the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. In their early opposition years, they claimed that the Turks had certain rights because they were the majority in the empire, just as Austrians had rights in the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the Russians in the Russian Empire. A number of prominent members of the CUP, moreover, authored articles that claimed that only Turks were real Ottomans or that the Ottoman language was Turkish. Also, in the official organs of the CUP, Turks were described as an ethnically different group from Arabs or other Muslim groups in the empire, such as Albanians."[117] Ernest Dawn criticizes this view and supports the conventional interpretations:

While Turkism had its advocates before 1908, they were a decided minority and the ideology of the CUP before 1908 was Ottomanist, without any Turkish bias... The Unionists continued to be Ottomanists ideologically for a considerable time after 1908... The most important Unionist ideologist, Ziya Gökalp, did not become an active

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[116]Haddad, M. op.cit. p.214.

[117]Hanioğlu, Ş. op.cit., p.43.

advocate of Turkism until 1913 or so, and he remained a believer in Ottomanism until late in World War I[118]

Indeed, after the Balkan and Tripoli Wars where the Ottoman army were defeated and lost of the enormous amount of territories, the nationalist aspirations of the intellectuals and the Ottoman government increased. "With the conclusion of the Balkan Wars, in which most remaining Ottoman Christians and even the largely Muslim Albanians broke away from the Empire, the leading members of the governing Committee of Union and Progress embraced a Turkish nationalist and even Pan-Turkist position.[119]" Since, the expectations to preserve the unity of the empire had vanished with the increasing loss of the territories and with the rising nationalist movements of the non-Turkish nations and the Ottoman public opinion joined the Turkish nationalists in abonding Ottomanism in favor of Turkism. The Turks pragmatically became aware of their potentials to overcome the maladies of the empire. That is, the understanding that 'the problems of the Turks can only be solved by the Turkish nation' became dominant in the minds of the people. Meanwhile, the policy of Turkism gained an enormous support , and the fellow of Turkism who had not been advocated by the majority before, achieved a great opportunity. At this point, Ziya Gökalp appeared as an outstanding theoretician of Turkish nationalism and he gained more adherents among the Turkish intellectuals. Particularly influential in developing the ideological basis of Turkish nationalism, his works contributed to the

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[118]Dawn, E. op.cit., p.18.

[119]Rose, J.A. (1981) "Politics, Religion and Ethnic Identity in Turkey", in Religion and Politics in the Middle East, Michael Curtis (ed.), Westview Press. Boulder, Colarado, p.328.

intellectual development of the empire in its latter days and of the Turkish Republic that followed.[120]

3.4 ZİYA GÖKALP AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISM

With the aid of modern sociology, especially of Durkheimian sociology, Gökalp was able to systematize ideas into a coherent doctrine of Turkism. In his program he gave ample consideration to the socio-economic reform of Turkish life as well as to questions of leadership and government.[121] He turned from Ottomanism to Turkism, from the community of peoples living under Ottoman rule and in the brotherhood of Islam to the assumed racial and cultural unity of all the populations speaking a Turkish language and looking upon Turan as their common home.[122]

The recurrent theme in Gökalp's writings was the question of how the Turks should adopt Western civilization, and how this effort should be harmonized with the Turks' two historic traditions, i.e. their Turkish and Islamic backgrounds; or, in other words, what the Turks as a nation and Islam as their religion would look like under the conditions of contemporary civilization[123]

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[120]Shaw&Shaw, *History of the Ottoman...*, p.301.

[121]Kushner,D. *The Rise of...*, p.99.

[122]Kohn,H. *The Age of Nationalism*, p.106.

[123]Gökalp,Z.*Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, trans. and ed. by Niyazi Berkes, New York, 1959, p.13.

In early writings of Gökalp, he saw the Western civilization as a negative and destructive element which would be harmful to muslim's own culture: Because of the existence of certain conditions peculiar to our life, we muslims could not imitate the ready-made norms of Europe and its standardized ways of living. For us, it was necessary to leave them to have them made to order, like tailored suits, to fit our own body."[124] He declares that the Western civilization is based on rotten and decaying foundations and is doomed to ruin[125]. This negative approach to Western civilization increasingly turned to a positive approval, suffering the huge loss of territory of the empire. As I have implied earlier, with the vanishing expectations to save the state, Ottomanist patriotism among the intellectuals was replaced by a new kind of national sentiment, i.e., Turkish nationalism. Paradoxically, this situation also enabled them to turn their face from the East to the West. We can see this process exactly in the life of Ziya Gökalp. "The defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Tripoli and Balkan wars made him painfully aware that European civilization must not be underrated"[126] and instead of Oriental theocratic civilization Turkish nation must follow the Western secular civilization. Then he came to the conclusion that: "...Ottoman civilization, being a part of Eastern civilization, will be destroyed in any case, to be replaced by Islamic religion and Turkish culture on the one hand and by Western civilization on the other. The mission of Turkism is to seek out the Turkish culture that has remained only among the people and to graft onto it Western civilization its entirety and in a viable form."[127] The

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[124]Ibid., p.59.

[125]Ibid., p.60.

[126]Heyd,U. *The Foundations...*, p.79.

[127]Gökalp,Z.*The Principles of Turkism*, trans. and annot. by Robert Deveroux, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1968, p.33.

attempts to reconcile the Turkish/Islamic culture with the 'alien' Western culture were constituting a big dilemma for both the society and the intellectuals;

> Western-oriented modernization efforts, throughout, not only elicited opposition and intermittent revolts from the traditional sectors of the Ottoman society, but also posed agonizing intellectual dilemmas for the modernizers themselves. To reconcile Western concepts and practices with traditional Islamic and later Turkish values was not an easy undertaking. The result was, invariably, either shallow eclecticism or internally contradictory combination. In this respect...Ziya Gökalp was to stand out as the originator of the least inconsistent synthesis[128]

Actually, this eclecticism and combination indicates the foisted character of Gökalp's ideology. Though there are seeming paradoxes and contradictions in his formula, these different elements were coexisting in harmony and they constituted a coherent identity.

In Gökalp's terminology, culture and civilization are two closely related and complementary traits of social reality. These concepts occupied a major position in his thinking. For him, civilizational elements assume meaning and function in the life of human beings only when they enter into the service of culture. Without a cultural basis, civilization becomes merely a matter of mechanical imitation. According to him this situation very well fits to the position of the Turkish nation where civilization had come to be a mere skeleton detoriating and destroying all cultural flesh and blood of the social body. When the Western civilization manifested itself to the Turkish nation, this deceased skeleton lost all meaning and

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[128]Parla, T. op.cit., p.2.

creativity. To Gökalp, the reason for the anomalous situation in Turkey was a lack of adjustment between these two aspects of social life.[129]

Gökalp's considerations on nation and nationality were mainly adapted by Durkheim's sociology. He especially modified Durkheim's theory in a decisive and rather arbitrary way. For Durkheim's "society" he substituted "nation" for instance. Moreover, he transferred to the nation all the divine qualities he had found in society, replacing the belief in God by the belief in the nation; nationalism has become a religion.[130]

> Gökalp's own definition of a nation is: a society consisting of people who speak the same language, have had the same education and are united in their religious, moral and aesthetic ideals —in short, those who have a common culture and religion.[131]

He believed that it is the people, or the nation which is the final and unerring criterion of what is desirable or undesirable, what is to be taken and what rejected. Whatever the 'collective conscience' of the people accepts is normal; whatever it rejects is 'pathological'. As the ultimate reality of contemporary society is the nation, and as national ideals are ultimate forces orienting the behavior of the individuals, so the most difficult mission for the Turks, according to Gökalp, is awakening as a nation in order to adapt themselves to the conditions of contemporary nationalism. He transformed the Turkism of the purist pan-Turkists from a mere political concept into a cultural one.[132] :

> We shall create a genuine civilization, a Turkish civilization... The Turkish race has not been degenerated like some other races by alcohol debauchery. Turkish blood has remained rejuvenated and hardened like steel with the glories of the battlefield. The Turkish intelligence is not worn out, its sentiments are not

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[129]Gökalp,Z. *Turkish Nationalism...*,p.23.

[130]Heyd,U. op.cit.,p.57.

[131]Ibid., p.63.

[132]Gökalp,Z. *Turkish Nationalism...*,p.22. These concepts, namely, collective conscience, normal and pathological were adapted by Durkheimian sociology.

effeminate, its will is not weakened. The conquest of the future is promised to Turkish resolution.[133]

Gökalp describes his age as the "age of nationalism" and maintains that the most powerful force over the mind of this age was the ideal of nationalism. To him, if states ignore the existence of that important social factor, they would doomed to failure. Furthermore, he argues that states have to govern on the basis of national consciousness. He complains for the negligence of that fact among the Turkish nation: "The Turks' avoidance of the idea of nationalism was not only harmful for the state..., but it was fatal for the Turks themselves."[134]

In Gökalp's writings, the notion of "state" and "fatherland" have taken a considerable place. But his assertion is mostly on the fatherland rather than the state. Because at that time in the empire , state was signifying a representative of the multi-national entity, that is, Ottoman state, and this situation was disturbing to Gökalp. As I quoted above, for him, a state can exist if based on one nation, since men belonging to different nations cannot love the same fatherland.[135] He criticized Tanzimat leaders' attempts to construct the Ottoman nation, a pseudo nation-state. He made this criticism after referring to Egyptian and Albanian separatist movements.[136] Then he argued: " If the aim of Ottomanism was a state, all the subjects would actually be members of this state. But if the aim was to construct a new nation whose language was the Ottoman language, the new nation would be a Turkish nation, since the

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[133]Ibid., p.60.

[134]Ibid., p.72.

[135]Heyd,U., op.cit.p.73.

[136]Arai,M. *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1992, p.61.

Ottoman language was no other than Turkish."[137] In short, he criticized them for constructing the Ottoman nation through Ottomanization without a national Turkish identity.

Nevertheless, at the beginning, Gökalp was a supporter of the Ottoman state; "Turkish nationalism is not contrary to the interests of the Ottoman state; in fact, it is its most important support... Turkism is the real support of Islam and of the Ottoman state, and is against cosmopolitanism."[138]

For Gökalp, state is not a power existing by itself. The state derives its power from the nation and from the *ummah*. Thus there are only two things which are sacred: the nation and the *ummah*. State cannot be a sacred thing. On the other hand, the concept of fatherland, for him, means a sacred piece of land for whose sake people shed their blood. For the Turks, the real fatherland is *Turan*[139]: " For the Turks, Fatherland means neither Turkey, nor Turkestan; Fatherland is a large and eternal country: *Turan*." This pan-Turkist zeal of Gökalp, gradually disappeared in his writings, towards the end of his life, and it was replaced by a more moderate and democratic sense of nationalism.

In Gökalp's terminology, the underlying issue was on the combination of the three ideological components which can be traced back to the Young Ottoman thought; Turkification, Islamization and Westernization.

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[137]Gökalp,Z. *Turkish Nationalism...*, pp.70-71.

[138]Ibid., p.74.

[139]Ibid., pp.78-79.

In constructing such a synthesis, Gökalp's genius was able to present an equivalence among all these elements.

> He could handle the dichotomies of tradition-modernity, continuity-change, nationalism-internationalism, and Islamism-secularism much better than his contemporaries. What has not been duly appreciated in Gökalp's thought is the fact that, in his synthesis, the emphasis is always on the second terms of these dichotomies... In this sense, Gökalp's thought is more modern than traditional, and universalist than nationalist...[140]

While such an amalgamation caused a paradox as to the identification process, it also made so much crucial contributions to the nationalist tradition of Turkey which constituted a heritage for the later generations. Indeed, this kind of synthesis shows the foisted identity in Gökalp's ideas.

The corporatist and solidarist way of thinking is also a noteworthy issue that signifies somehow a totalitarian and anti-individualistic aspect of Gökalp. That is, he gave a considerable importance to the society and nation in whole, and in his system, there was no room for the absolute value of the individual. "The individual who, according to his definition is not self-centered ego, can never serve as a moral ideal. Personality also, as we have seen, is worthy of honor and esteem only because it represent and reflects society, i.e. the nation."[141]. In his solidaristic model, the individual does not have rights as in the liberal model, but he has duties. For him, one cannot change the society by changing the individual, but *vice versa*:

Do not say 'I have rights';

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[140]Parla, T. op.cit. p.22.

[141]Heyd, U. op.cit. p. 124.

there is only duty, no right.

There is no 'I' and 'you,; but We;
We are both Ruler and Ruled, to be.
We means One;
I and You worship the One.

Whatever is your service,
That is your assistance.
Your merit do not reveal,
So that it may be real.[142]

Hans Kohn and Uriel Heyd maintain that Gökalp's nationalism signifies typically a cultural nationalism rather than political. For Heyd, although Gökalp borrowed most of his theories from French sociology and philosophy, his nationalism is more of the central European and particularly German type. According to Heyd, the main reason for the similarities between Gökalp's Turkism and German nationalism lies in the political and social conditions which in both countries differed from those in Western Europe. " Autocratically ruled like Prussia, the Ottoman empire assigned to the Army and bureaucracy a similar prominence. Officers and officials were the most respected citizens in both countries. Gökalp's demand for the complete subordination of the individual to society, though adopted from Durkheim, confirms to the Prussian ideal of absolute devotion of the citizen to the state even to the extinction of his personality."[143]

From the standpoint of Kohn's definition of cultural (organic) nationalism, Heyd argues that Gökalp's Turkism, like nationalism in most politically and socially backward countries, found its first and main expression in the field of culture: " Gökalp's preoccupation with national

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[142]Parla, P. op.cit.,68.

[143]Heyd, U. op.cit., p.165.

folklore and sagas, ancient customs and popular traditions, bears a striking similarity to the romantic school of German nationalism and the ideologies influenced by it (Mazzini in Italy, the Slavophils in Russia, etc.) ... Thus Turkism resembles German nationalism which more than elsewhere aspired to be not merely a political programme, but a complete philosophy of life."[144]

The influences of German nationalism on Gökalp's ideas have been remarked also by Akçura. He resembles Gökalp especially to the German philosopher; Fichte:

Gökalp Ziya Bey reminds me the German philosophers in the first half of the 19th Century, the founder of systems, mystics and poets, especially Schelling and Fichte. The activity undertaken by Ziya Bey in the field of Nationalism the value and importance that he accorded to education, university, propaganda, to the theoretical and practical aspects of the economic and political questions, all reminds me very much the activity of Fichte in Prussia[145]

Kohn has the same idea that Gökalp's nationalism represents the German type of nationalism. After quoting his famous motto: "The Turkish people's fatherland is not Turkey, nor Turkestan, it is a far-flung land, and eternal: Turan.", Kohn concludes; "This semireligious effusion of nationalist sentiment was the typical language of central and eastern European, and soon of Asian and African, nationalism in the twentieth century."[146]

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[144]Ibid., p.166.

[145]Akçura,Y. "Gökalp Ziya Bey hakkında hatıra ve mülahazalar" *Türk Yurdu*, 2. seri, 1/4, Aralık 1924, pp. 156-162. (translated by me).

[146]Kohn,H. op.cit., p.106.

I have tried to give some theoretical accounts on Gökalp. All of these theories involve some misleading interpretations. In my opinion, restricting Turkish nationalism merely to such theories does not provide us a comprehensive basis to elucidate its many aspects. Although these theories specify several contemplation and contributions on this issue, I believe, they are insufficient to propose a satisfactory perspective. Because, for me, every nationalist tradition should be evaluated and understood in its own context. Labeling one nationalist tradition in accordance with the other would cause some misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Especially on Turkish nationalism this labeling would totally be improper. Since, to my mind, it consists of several peculiarities common with both German and Western European sorts of nationalisms. Additionally, Turkism owes particular characters that is only special and idiosyncratic to it.

3.5 YUSUF AKÇURA ON TURKISH NATIONALISM

Even though, Akçura could not get enough popularity as Gökalp, and remained as a "forgotten man"[147] in the tradition of nationalism in Turkey, his ideas and reflections were more noteworthy and valuable than Gökalp. While many intellectuals including Gökalp were firmly committed with the idea of Ottomanism and with the multi-ethnic structure of the empire at the beginning of the twentieth century, Akçura was establishing the foundations of Turkish nationalism based on the concept of race. "During these prerevolutionary years of discussion and intellectual confusion, only one voice reflected the values of the new

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[147]Berkes, N. (1976) "Unutulan Adam" in *Sosyoloji Konferansları*, XIV, İstanbul, pp.194-203.

nationalist group on a political level. That was Yusuf Akçura.[148]"
Moreover, his analysis of nationalism had very strong theoretical roots
different from other nationalist ideologues. However, he was not able to
escape from pragmatical solutions.

In a lengthy article entitled "Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset" (Three Ways of Policy)
published in 1904 in Cairo, Akçura surveyed the ideologies of
Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism and Turkism in order to find a plausible
answer to the question: "How can this state be saved?". The solution
proposed by Akçura with his own expression corresponded to the idea
of "a political Turkish nationality based on race "[149]. Before giving a
decision, he evaluates all of these policies from a pragmatical
perspective. Even though he accepts that Turkism is the right path to
follow, he did not ignore the Islamic religion due to its function as a
basis of emotional security and loyalty. The foisted identity is a
remarkable case also in the ideas of Akçura:

> Although, the nationalist ideas began to prevail among the Turks, with the
> influence of the West, it is a quite recent phenomenon. The idea of Turk, Turkish
> literature, the reverie of unifying the Turks is like a new-born infant. The well
> established organization, the ardent sentiments and enthusiasm that we see in
> Islam, in sum almost none of all matters and preparations that would provide a
> solid unity, do not exist in Turkishness. Today, most of the Turks have been
> unaware of their past.

> But, it should be noticed that the great majority of Turks are Muslims. In that
> sense, the Islamic religion can be an important element in the formation/genesis
> of a greater Turkish nationality. Those who want to define the nation, consider
> the religion as a factor(facteur). In order to play a role in the union of the Turks,

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[148]Berkes, N. (1964) *The Development of Secularism in Turkey,* McGill Univ. Press,
Montreal, p. 381.

[149]Georgeon, F. (1980) *Aux Origines du Nationalisme Turc: YusufAkçura (1876-1935),*
Editions ADPF, Paris, p.26.

Islam, like Christianity in recent times, has to be a transformer by giving a way to the rise of the nationalities within it. This transformation is almost an obligation; the general tendency in the history of our epoch, is in the favor of the races. Religions...increasingly loose their political importance and strength. Rather than being social, religions are becoming an individual phenomenon. In societies, the unity of religions (Vahdet-i Edyan) are being replaced by the free conscience (Serbesti-i vicdan)...Therefore religions can preserve their political and social importance by associating with, and even serving the races. (Orthodoxy in Russia, Protestantism in Germany, Anglicanism in England, Catholicism in diverse countries).[150]

As it is clear, Akçura specifies religion as a tool or an agent which provides the emotional security and the enthusiasm for nationalism. For him, religion should give way to or even be replaced by the nation. However, this does not mean that Akçura was against religion. I believe, such an estimation is totally wrong. He had never been apart from the ideas of Gaspıralı who tried to combine nationalism with Islam. Akçura was an adherent disciple of Ismail Gaspıralı.

While comparing the Islamic, Ottoman and Turkish components of the problems facing the Ottoman intellectuals, he asked "Are the interests of these three components common and identical?" The interests of the three major elements in the Ottoman Empire --the Turks, non-Turkish Muslims, and non-Muslims, did not altogether coincide. It was inevitable to recognize the national aspirations of the non-Turks and non-Muslims. Hence, there was only one thing left for the Turks to recognize their own national sentiments to disregard of being Ottomans, and to be content with being Turks[151]. He considered the unity of the Ottoman nations as an imaginary project that is impractical anytime:

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[150]Akçura, Y. (1987) *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 2nd edition, pp.34-35, (translated by me).

The history, traditions, religions, relations, aspirations and images, types of thinking, life styles, civilizational levels of the elements of the Ottoman subjects are too different from each other to imagine even of their unity with a sort of harmony. This is so strange. The Christian Serb who farms in the Kosova Plain and the Muslim Arab who lives as a nomad in the desert of Nedc have no connection point with each other. How can this unity and harmony be possible.

I ask: Is there any Muslim who will sacrify himself from his appointed religious personality in favor of the unity of elements (Ittihad-i anasir)"[152]

As it is seen here, Akçura differentiates Islamic nations from the non-Muslim subjects. While he was pointing that the harmony was impossible, his main criteria was the incompatibility between Islamic life styles with the non-Muslim civilizations. Akçura mentions about two different civilizations that are very different from each other. The Islamic and the Western-Christian civilizations.

It is very clear that in the Ottoman territories there are two civilizations, two philosophies of life which are separated from each other in the sense of their consideration of the life and universe, are now clashing. Is it possible of their harmony? If it is not, which one of them consents the other's domination/supremacy?... To sum up, in the Ottoman territories there is not only an impossibility of the representation but also the occurrence of the unity is absurd.[153]

One of the most important issue that differs Akçura from the other nationalists, was his considerable assertion on the economic prerequisites of nationalism. He accepted economy and the bourgeois revolution as *sine qua non* material condition of nation states. Unlike

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[151] Berkes, N. (1964) op.cit., p.381.

[152] Akçura, Y. (1904) "Ittihad-ı Anasır Meselesi" in *Sirat-ı Mustakim*, V/121, 16 Kanun-u evvel 1326/ 29 Aralik 1910, pp. 280-283, (translated by me).

[153] Ibid., p. 283, (translated by me).

Gökalp's solidarism and corporatism, he favoured the class-based analysis of the society which reminds the Marxist approaches. Akçura argued:

> The most important aspect of this economic awakening is the change we see in the mentality that despised trade and industry and believed that government and military occupations were the most worthy of an Ottoman Turk... The foundation of the modern state is the bourgeois class. Contemporary prosperous states came into existence on the shoulders of the bourgeoisie, of the businessman and bankers. the Turkish national awakening in Turkey is the beginning of the genesis of the Turkish bourgeoisie. And, if the national growth of the Turkish bourgeoisie continues without damage or interruption of the Turkish state has been guaranteed.[154]

Akçura was aginst the foreign capital penetration to the Ottoman State. For him , the inner rationale behind the dissolution of the empire was the exploitation of the country by foreign capital.

> The main reasons of the impoverishment of the country in time, was according to me, related to the penetraton of the foreign capital, through interest and dividends" by destroying our independent industry and commerce, foreign capital extracted and oppressed national wealth."[155]

Nevertheless, for Akçura, this situation would be helpful in stimulating the national consciousness among the Turks: " The hostility of the real bourgeoisie party against the supremacy and domination and of the

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[154]Cited in Niyazi Berkes. (1964) op.cit., p.425.

[155]Akçura, A. (1986) "Türkiye'de Avrupa Sermayesi" in F.Georgeon, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri*, p. 150, (translated by me).

international capital, would made the hostile nationalism more violent in the course of time"[156]

Akçura's studies consist of a wide range of analysis on his society which include various subjects. Unfortunately, I believe, the Turkish readers generally know only about his article *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* without a deep information. If we return to the article *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, one can say that there are two aspects discussed in "three ways of politics". The first is a critical aspect questioning of the thesis of the Young Turks on the issue of nationalism. The second is the political project represented by Akçura. First of all *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* can be considered as a pamphlet against the Young Turks. Akçura judged their political programme as "rather vague and outdated". *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, seeing the problem of cohesion and force more urgent than the problem of the liberty in the empire, accentuated on them. This idea led the complete break of Akçura from the liberalism of a Young Turk[157]

The whole article is devoted to the discussion of the ways of preserving Ottoman state from the decline and the dissolution. Akçura argues; for which societies interest should I work? I am an Ottoman and Muslim Turk ; therefore I want to serve in favor of the Ottoman state and all Turks. Although Akçura's evaluation was from the point of view of preserving the state, he did not hesitate to expose the idea of significant structural and territorial transformations and asked rather courageously whether the real source of the power of the Ottoman State comes from

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[156]Akçura, A. (1986) "Toplumsal Sınıflar ve Siyasal Partiler" in F.Georgeon, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri*, p. 151, (translated by me).

[157]Georgeon, F. (1980) *Aux Origines du Nationalisme Turc: YusufAkçura (1876-1935)*, Editions ADPF, Paris, p.25.

the conservation of its actual boundaries or not.[158] That is, for him, for the sake of the maintenance or perpetuation of the state, the territories of the state can be transformed and changed.

Considered as a whole Yusuf Akçura had no difficulty in defining strictly the understanding of the concept "Turkism". Certainly, he was not the theoretician of Turkish nationalism. He was mainly interested in the political aspect of the question: Pan Turkism rather than Turkishness. The "Turkic world "(Le Monde Turc) was a large and vague concept. It can be considered as a defensive solidarity for a group of societies which could not form an homogenous structure as well as a support against imperialism.[159] Akçura proposed very radical changes in general; a new form of solidarity based on race, a new territorial equilibrium and new perspectives for the future.

As it is clear, the Ottoman intellectuals were in a search for alternative solutions to save their state from the existent discontents and uneasiness. The maintenance and perpetuation of the state was an initial and vital concern for them. This situation enabled them to reach more pragmatic and immidiate solutions. Theoretical and speculative interest of the problem had not taken a greater place in their ideology. Different ideological components that seem to be contradictory with each other were easily combined in a coherent identity. This identity can be labeled as a foisted identity, because the ambivalent and conflicting paradigms constituted a harmonious and consistent ideology in their minds. In private and ethical sphere, they were Islamist

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[158]Ibid., pp.25-26.

[159]Ibid., p.27.

and religion was the main determinant for them. As a political ideology, they had the tendency to incline towards Turkism and anti-Western attitudes. On the other hand, in social and economic life, their ideas were Westernist and based on the adaptation of the West. These various spheres composed a compatible and congenial ideology for the sake of the perpetuation of the state.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

From the standpoints of all the arguments that are pointed out throughout the thesis, we can conclude that there is no unique way of studying the rise of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. Wide range of theories on nationalism, various interpretations on the origins of national awakenings, different historical facts and narratives enabled me not to make a definite conclusion. However, it can be argued that there are several points that would be correct and real as a conclusion on the origins of Turkish Nationalism. First of all, the adherents of Turkish nationalism were not a homogenous group. "They represented the entire constellation of nationalist, or rather protonationalist, tendencies...their basic political ideology was formed, not as a reaction to Ottomanism, but as a reaction to the possibility of its disappearance."[160] Until the end of the World War II, they continued to regard the Ottoman state as a source of legitimacy because it was regarded paradoxically as a defensive weapon against the Western colonialism.

Secondly, the intellectuals and the elites were in a search for an alternative remedy in order to save their state and to reach their past glorious days. The most popular solution was to adopt the material domain of the Western civilization to their states and supplement it with their spiritual and cultural virtues. For the first time in Ottoman history, they divided the world of social institutions and practices into two domains --the material and the spiritual (or moral). This formula, I think,

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[160]Haddad, M. op.cit. p.217.

is a fundamental feature of the nationalist thought of the time and it remained as an heritage among the later nationalists. Moreover, the acceptance of the material domain of Western Civilization, in course of time led to the intellectuals to adopt the social and ideological domain of it. The process of Westernization and modernization deeply affected their life styles. Their enemies gradually became their model of development. Due to the fact that the Ottoman State could not bridge the increasing power gap between the West and herself, the intellectuals paradoxically praised the virtues of modernization. Ottoman civilization lacked behind that of the West.

For the explanations of Turkish Nationalism, the studies that focus on the philosophical or the speculative writings of Turkish Nationalists such as Ziya Gökalp or the other Young Turks are far from having explanatory power. The effects of thinkers cannot be compared with the effects of Fichte on the development of German Nationalism. This difference did not stem from the importance of the thinkers. But, as Mardin puts it; "The weight of the German philosophers on the development of German Nationalism derives not only from the ability of the philosophers but also from the role of the philosophical speculations in the culture of the nations"[161]. So, "in those countries (Turkey is among them) which does not have a tradition of philosophy, explanations based on the 'great thinkers' would loose their explanatory power"[162]. The nature of the Turkish intelligentsia and political elite lead them to be realist and pragmatic end, rather than the romantic. The

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[161]Mardin, Ş. op.cit., p.10.

[162]Ibid., p.10.

search for "optimal solution" and the basic preoccupation with "how to save the state" made the Ottoman intellectuals of the time nationalist:

> That they chose to work for the strengthening of the Ottoman state is not really surprising since that state was the only important Turkish and/or Muslim state in existence at the time. There simply was no alternative... like all nationalists they opted for the 'maximal' solution. The Young Turks would continue to do so until the end of their rule in 1918, first with Pan-Islamism (after the debacle of the idea of the *Ittihadi Anasir*) and increasingly with (Pan)Turkism after 1913, when even Islam proved to fail as a basis for loyalty to the empire.[163]

But the general developments which created a cultural and scientific Turkism in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire helped these realist intellectuals in formulating their ideas at a more philosophical and theoretical level.

Formation of a new identity, instead of the old ones, created several dilemmas for the intellectuals. Due to the fact that the new identity was seen as a motor of progress and as liberal, the old identities, such as religious, had to be omitted or at least maintained under the umbrella of the new. Since it was the obstacle to progress and modernity. On the other hand, ironically, the source and the inventor of progress and liberty, i.e. the Western Civilization, apart from its "good sides", had to be rejected for its imperialistic and hegemonic character:

> Rejection of an alien intruder and dominator who is nevertheless to be imitated and surpassed by his own standards, and rejection of ancestral ways which are seen as obstacles to progress and yet also cherished as marks of identity. This contradictory process is therefore deeply disturbing as well. Eastern

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[163]Zürcher, E.J. op.cit., p.23.

nationalism is disturbed and ambivalent as the nationalisms of Herder and Mazzini were not.[164]

In order to overcome these dilemmas and contradictions and reach a plausible solution, the Ottoman intellectuals tried to combine different elements namely Islam, Westernization, Turkification etc. which can be traced back to the Young Ottoman thought. Given the fact that the paramount identification was a religious one, religion had always been included to the trinities. Religion was one of the basic problematic for the nationalists. As it is mentioned before, on the one hand, it was seen an obstacle in front of the development, but on the other hand, without religion it would be so arduous to foist the project of a new alien identity which was deficient in emotional security and vehemence. To reconcile Western concepts and practices with traditional Islamic and later Turkish values was not an accommodating endeavor and project. The result was, invariably, either flimsy eclecticism or internally paradoxical combination.

It is remarkable that, to the end of the Empire, despite the loss of more lands to nascent nations and European powers and despite the increase of Turkish nationalist feeling among the Ottoman Turkish elite, the concept of Ottomanism persisted and even implemented. "By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nearly all of the Muslim and non-Muslim subject peoples of the Ottoman Empire had turned to nationalism. The Turks however retained a vision of themselves as Muslim first and foremost. Nationalism came to them in a way that was very late, somewhat artificial, and extremely problematic..."[165] Indeed, the

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[164]Chatterjee,P. (1993) *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: a derivative discourse,* Univ. of Minnesota Press, p.2.

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transition from Ottomanism to Turkish Nationalism was not an easy process. Even the last Ottoman Parliament of 1920, voting the National Pact that was actually the charter of the Turkish Nationalist Movement, insisted that there should be "an Ottoman Empire and an Ottoman Nation"[166]. "The idea of an Ottoman nation was so brilliant that it would not be easily given up by Ottoman intellectuals. Almost all of the Young Turks displaying antidespotic activities in Europe, held this idea too; they regarded the unity of the nation as a matter of course."[167]

In short, Turkish Nationalism was not a consistent and coherent programme of action that aimed in accordance with a determined strategy or project. Nor it was inspired by certain theoretical and ideological patterns. Rather, it was mainly a pragmatic policy which was a last remedy to maintain the integrity and unity of the state for the intellectuals and state elites. It is true that there was a general intellectual awakening of Turkism in culture, history, language and literature. But we should not forget that these were not transformed into policies in an idealistic manner. Ottoman politics had a different logic and dynamics which generally disregarded these intellectual efforts and pursued Ottomanist and Pan-Islamist policies till the end. Only after the political exigencies necessitated the foundation of a Turkish nation state, these intellectual contributions were valued and transformed to political action.

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[165]Rose, J.A.. op.cit., p.327.

[166]Davison, R. (1977) "Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem and the Ottoman Response" in W.W. Haddad and W. Ochsenwald (ed.) Nationalism in a Non-National State, p.52.

[167]Arai, M. (1992) Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era, E.J.Brill: Leiden, p.3.

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