CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE IDEOLOGY OF THE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (MHP), 1965-2015: FROM ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ TO DEVLET BAHÇELİ

A Ph.D. Dissertation

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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

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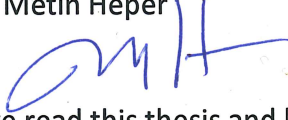İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN Political Science

THE DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

October 2020

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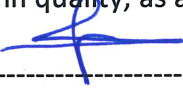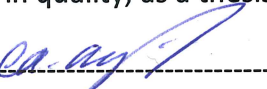Examining Committee Member

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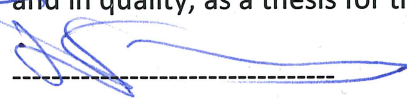

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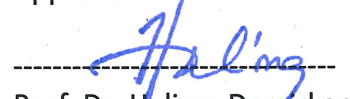

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ABSTRACT

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THE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (MHP), 1965- 2015:
FROM ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ TO DEVLET BAHÇELİ

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October 2020

This Ph.D. dissertation offers an in-depth, systematic study of the continuities and discontinuities from 1965 to 2015 between the nationalist ideas and practices of Alparslan Türkeş (the founder and first leader of Turkey's Nationalist Action Party [Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP]) and Devlet Bahçeli (the second and current leader). To this end, this study focuses on (i) general theories of nationalism; (ii) the historical development of Turkish nationalism from the late Ottoman Empire until 2015; and (iii) whether there are discernable differences between the nationalist ideas and practices of Türkeş and Bahçeli, and, if so, how and why such differences emerged. There appears to be no far-reaching comparative analysis of the nationalist ideas and practices of these two leaders in the academic literature, so this dissertation, using a comparative and historical methodology, provides the first systematic analysis of this topic within the relevant structural context. The dissertation argues that while the

two leaders' nationalist ideas and practices show continuity in terms of the party's foundational claims, their ideologies have evolved as each leader has varied his emphasis on the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism. These changes parallel the party's tactical needs in response to the perceived threats arising from specific historical contexts. The findings of this Ph.D. dissertation contribute evidence that theories and arguments based on types of nationalism have little empirical traction, at least in the Turkish case.

ÖZET

MİLLİYETÇİ HAREKET PARTİSİ İDEOLOJİSİNDE SÜREKLİLİK VE DEĞİŞİM, 1965-2015: ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ'TEN DEVLET BAHÇELİ'YE

Opçin Kıdal, Arzu

Doktora, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Metin Heper

Ekim 2020

Bu doktora tezi, 1965'ten 2015'a kadar Alparslan Türkeş (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi'nin kurucu lideri) ile Devlet Bahçeli'nin (ikinci ve şimdiki lider) milliyetçi fikir ve uygulamaları arasındaki süreklilik ve süreksizliklerin derinlemesine sistematik bir çalışmasını sunmaktadır. Bu amaçla, bu çalışma (i) genel milliyetçilik teorileri, (ii) Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son döneminden 2015'e kadar Türk milliyetçiliğinin tarihsel gelişimine odaklanacak ve (iii) Türkeş ve Bahçeli'nin milliyetçi söylem ve pratiklerinde ayırt edilebilir farklılıkların olup olmadığını ve eğer varsa, bu farklılıkların nasıl ve neden ortaya çıktığını soracaktır. Akademik literatürde bu iki liderin milliyetçi fikirleri ve uygulamalarının kapsamlı bir karşılaştırmalı analizi yoktur, bu nedenle karşılaştırmalı ve tarihsel bir metodoloji kullanan bu tez, konunun ilgili yapısal bağlam içinde ilk sistematik analizini sağlamaktadır. Bu doktora tezi, iki liderin milliyetçi fikir ve pratiklerinin, bir yandan, partinin temel iddiaları açısından süreklilik gösterdiğini, diğer yandan, söz konusu tarihsel bağlamın

algılanan tehditlerine karşılık gelen partinin taktiksel ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda Türk milliyetçiliğinin etnik, kültürel ve sivil bileşenlerine değişen derecelerde vurgu yaparak evrildiğini savunmaktadır. Bu doktora tezinin bulguları, en azından Türkiye örneğinde, milliyetçilik türlerine dayanan teorilerin ve argümanların çok fazla ampirik desteğe sahip olmadığına dair kanıtlara katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alparslan Türkeş, Devlet Bahçeli, Milliyetçilik, Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, Türk Milliyetçiliği

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey of my Ph.D. dissertation started when I said to my dear supervisor Prof. Dr. Metin Heper, "Professor, I am very curious about how it is like to be an idealist (*idealist olmak* in Turkish)." He answered with confidence as usual: "This is a very broad question Arzu, perhaps even you may not be able to find it in a lifetime, let's narrow it down and examine it through an empirical example, like the ones who consider themselves idealists such as *ülkücüler* (idealists) in Turkey." And I lost myself in this subject quite pleasantly for a long time. I would not have been able to complete this project or even to begin it, without the help of many people over the years. While I am surely leaving someone out, I am grateful to all.

In writing this Ph.D. dissertation I, therefore, incurred many debts and I am very content to acknowledge them in this part. My greatest debt is to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Metin Heper, one of the doyens (*duayen* in Turkish) of political science, for his generosity in providing detailed feedbacks to this Ph.D. thesis. His faith in me, wisdom, and forbearance allowed me to surmount all the obstacles that stood in the way. This Ph.D. would not have been finalized without his guidance and supervision. I am deeply grateful to Assistant Professor Dr. Berrak Burçak Della Fave for kindly accepting being part of my thesis monitoring committee. Dr. Burçak Della Fave always

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> "Turning all four corners of the country into a flourishing land,
> We will lay the foundations of Nationalist Turkey!
> If we are martyred on this road, if we shed blood,
> We will taste the pleasure of serving our homeland."[1]

1.1.   Introduction

Shouting such slogans, the voices of *Bozkurtlar* (Grey Wolves)[2] have echoed across

the streets of Turkey during the second half of the twentieth century. Armed clashes

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[1] These verses are from the Nine Light Anthem, the anthem of the idealist movement.

[2] The name was taken from the animal prominent in ancient Turkic mythology in Central Asia. The term *Bozkurt* signified a totem in the legend, centering on the she-wolf as a guardian. The MHP was born with reference to a mythological *topos* from the epoch of heroes in Turkic history: a she-wolf called *Asena*. This mystical hero, who appears as a protector in Turkic legends, inspired the basic philosophy behind the MHP's existence: to protect the homeland from the internal and external threats that the MHP identifies itself with. The youth wing of the MHP, the *Bozkurtlar* (Grey Wolves) —whose members have frequently made a signature gesture consisting of an exposed palm with the second and fifth fingers raised as an imitation of the shape of the head of a wolf— have been key actors in mobilizing the party's grassroots to engage in actions that are thought to protect the homeland against 'Turkey's enemies.' Türkeş's strong leadership made possible the development of an idealist movement characterized by the Idealist Hearths and the Nine Lights doctrine —a leader-organization-doctrine philosophy— that has survived to the present day more or less unchanged.

between rightists and leftists were a common sight in the 1960s and 1970s, leading to a large number of deaths. This violent ideological struggle showed that the country faced a murky political future, and consequently determined the fate of recent Turkish political history: to be trapped in a struggle between left- and right-wing ideologies. Furthermore, this violent political antagonism has supplied the language in which Turkish political history has (with some exceptions) been read ever since: as a history of conflicts between right- and left-wing ideologies, rather than a story of compromises on important political questions. This thesis depicts this historical journey from the eyes of two important players —Türkeş and Bahçeli— who defined the rules of Turkish politics in a number of ways.

The Turkish Republic's journey towards nationalist-leftist street fights was born by the Kemalist Revolution's attempt to radically create a new society based on a novel definition of national identity, one that oscillated between ethnic/cultural and civic components of nationalism; nevertheless, despite strong efforts to unify the various sections of society, tensions between conflicting notions of national identity remained beneath the surface. Since the establishment of the Republic, the concept of identity (and the relationship between 'Turkishness' and Islam) has been a central theme of Turkish ideological conflicts, and it is in this context that the *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party, MHP) emerged in the Turkish political arena as a sociological and cultural reaction to redesign the Republic in a more nationalist way.

Nationalist mobilization has been one of the most important factors in shaping modern Turkish political history. In the 1950s, this ideological strand has firmly

established itself in Turkey's party systems through a number of political parties and leaders, and Alparslan Türkeş, the founder and first leader of the MHP, can be said to have been seemingly the most important player in this respect. Türkeş carried out a nationalist agenda over the course of a lengthy political career; he remained at the forefront of the Turkish political scene for more than twenty years, surviving three coup d'états and many other crises that reshuffled the cards in Turkish politics.

Although the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, AKP) has been the dominant force in Turkish politics over the last decade, under Devlet Bahçeli — the party's second and current leader — the MHP has played a pivotal role in several recent political turning points. These include the early election decision on November 3, 2002, the 2007 presidential election, and helping the AKP win the early election on November 1, 2015, following the failed attempt to establish a government after the June 7, 2015 election. Given these two political leaders' outsize contribution to nationalism in Turkish politics, it is possible to come to an understanding of the evolution of Turkish nationalism by studying their respective approaches and policies.

The MHP appeared as a sui generis party in Turkish politics with its name including 'nationalist.' It has also carried out a nationalist agenda throughout a long political life. Like other nationalist movements, the MHP's *ülkücü hareket* (the idealist movement)[3] has some idiosyncratic characteristics that require examination of its

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[3] In Turkish, *'ülkü'* means 'ideal.' The leader of *ülkücü* (the idealist) movement and the MHP in Turkey, Alparslan Türkeş (1996: 16) defined the concept as such: "*ülkü* is to construct the Turkish nation that is the most advanced, civilized, and powerful entity of the world. People who follow this ideal

particularity at the conceptual and theoretical levels. The MHP has played critical roles in the Turkish political scene in various contexts for many years, expressing its unique political identity with the formulations of the Nine Lights doctrine and later Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

Like most political ideologies, it would be difficult to argue that this nationalist ideology and practice remained constant over time. Despite the salience of nationalist ideology in Turkey since the establishment of the Republic, not many studies have systematically examined how nationalist ideology as defined and practiced by the leaders of the MHP, has changed over time. Therefore, this research aims to examine the possible continuities and discontinuities between the nationalist ideas and practices of Alparslan Türkeş (1965-1997) and Devlet Bahçeli (1997-2015). In doing so, this research will focus on (i) general theories on nationalism, (ii) the historical development of Turkish nationalism, starting from the late Ottoman Empire up until 2015, and, in relation, interrogates (iii) whether discernable differences between the nationalist ideas and practices of Türkeş and Bahçeli exist, and, if so, how and why such differences emerged.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

This Ph.D. dissertation proposes to study whether/how the nationalist ideas and practices of Türkeş and Bahçeli evolved between 1965 and 2015. In order to shed

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constitute *ülkücüler* (the idealists). Idealists must be ready to sacrifice themselves in serving the state and the nation." Throughout the thesis, the idealists refer to *ülkücüler*. *Bozkurtlar* and *ülkücüler* can be used interchangeably, yet the name *Bozkurtlar* was abolished after the movement gained a more religious and mystical character (Akpınar, 2005).

light upon the factors which led to the evolution of the MHP's ideology, the dissertation aims to elaborate on the stages as well as the divergencies of the nationalist movement's ideology. By exploring the journey of the nationalisms of both leaders in the aforementioned periods, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolution process of the MHP in Turkey. This understanding also intends to determine the influences of the previous tenets and context (particularly major changes/interruptions in domestic and international politics) on the nationalist ideas and practices of its two leaders.

There is no far-reaching systematic analysis of the nationalist ideas and practices of the two leaders within the relevant structural context (1965-2015) in the academic literature. This dissertation aims to fulfill this academic gap and thus offers an in-depth systematic study of both leaders within the specified framework and context.

The study attempts to elucidate the following research questions: (i) What are the continuities and discontinuities between the nationalist ideas and practices of Alparslan Türkeş and Devlet Bahçeli from 1965 to 2015? (ii) Under what conditions did Türkeş and Bahçeli change their ideas and practices, if such change did occur at all? (iii) How and why did they adjust their discourse and/or practice when challenged by domestic and international developments? (iv) What does the interruption of the 1980 Coup indicate? (v) What kinds of factors affect their ideas and practices?

Accordingly, the following are hypothesized in this research: (i) Türkeş and Bahçeli preserved the foundational claims of the MHP (what later came to be called

the 'Nine Lights' doctrine) while also shifting emphasis on particular aspects of the ideology and the tactic of altering any aspect of the ideology was driven by context-bound perceptions of threats; (ii) Evolving nationalism theory increases the likelihood that the leaders of the MHP might have attuned their ideology as a short-term tactic required to survive in difficult circumstances so as to continue pursuing their idealist/nationalist mission. As this variation in their ideology thrived (their ability to practice inclusivity while shifting emphasis on particular ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism), their existence and capability to pursue their idealist/nationalist mission with a dependency on the official view of Turkish national 'membership' grew; (iii) This tactical ability of the idealist movement under Türkeş's leadership to adjust its foundational claims (as evolutionary dynamic posits) stands in opposition to the argument in the literature that the systemic/environmental shock of the 1980 coup d'état acted as a "cognitive punch" that diverted his path from one of an otherwise steady nationalist ideology to create an incentive to change (as rational adaptation posits).

1.3.   Methodology

This Ph.D. dissertation employs a comparative and historical methodology. This study systematically analyzes the possible continuities and discontinuities between the nationalist ideas and practices of Alparslan Türkeş (1965-1997) and Devlet Bahçeli (1997-2015). This research develops a comparative framework for the analysis of Türkeş and Bahçeli. To do so, this study employs related themes to nationalism such as ethnicity (e.g. being an ethnic Turk, approach to the Kurds), religion, language, approach to violence, the conceptualization of democracy, military, state, approach

to youth, left, economy, Westernization, EU, and globalization to grasp the nationalist ideas and practices of the two leaders.

Among these themes, Turkishness and Islam constitute the greater part of the MHP's ideology. Other themes have been identified to better understand their approach to these two basic themes. It is, therefore, possible to analyze the whole MHP history based on the two components of its nationalism: Turkishness and Islam. The extent of the relationship between Turkishness and Islam has determined the roadmap at the historical intersections of the MHP. Therefore, the relationship between these components can be adopted as a benchmark for a comparison of the nationalist ideas and practices of Türkeş and Bahçeli.

In the introductory chapter, this Ph.D. dissertation develops a general theoretical framework and surveys the literature on the MHP. The second chapter examines the roots of Turkish nationalism in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and the brief historical development of Turkish nationalism in the Republican era. The third and fourth chapters are the biographies and nationalist ideas and practices of Alparslan Türkeş (1965-1997) and Devlet Bahçeli (1997-2015). The fifth and final chapter presents the analysis.

1.4. Sources/Data

Primary sources written by Türkeş -such as *9 Işık* (the Nine Lights)- and the ones by Bahçeli -such as *Ülkü ve Şuur* (Ideal and Consciousness)- as well as archival research, their biographies, election manifestos, electoral propagandas, party programmes, party publications, the speeches of leaders at the Parliament, party congresses,

public meetings, media interviews, newspapers together with pedagogical materials of the youth movement of the MHP constitute the data of this research.

1.5.   Contribution of the Study

This Ph.D. dissertation stands as the first comparative, systematic analysis of the MHP's leaders within the relevant structural context (1965-2015) in the academic literature. The contributions of this study to the academic literature are three-fold. Not only does this work describe how the nationalist ideas and practices of the MHP's leaders have changed over nearly half a century, but it also tries to come to an understanding of their evolution. Academic research on the MHP (or nationalism in general) is mostly based on arguments about types of nationalism. Arguments about types of nationalism fail to explain different manifestations of nationalism and the particularity of the nationalist ideologies. Based on the assumption that nationalism is a multidimensional ideology and movement comprising of ethnic, cultural, and civic components that encompass varying degrees of emphasis and/or different forms, this Ph.D. dissertation suggests an evolutionary understanding of the "re-imagining" of the MHP's nationalism. The dissertation also contributes evidence that theories and arguments based on "types" of nationalism have little empirical traction, at least in the Turkish case.

1.6.   General Theories of Nationalism

Contrary to other -isms, "nationalism has never produced its own ground thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes or Webers" (Anderson, 1991: 5). Therefore, there is no single, universal theory of nationalism. Leading scholars of nationalism

(Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990) argue that the idea of a nation-state that appeared as a new ideology of government originated in Europe and dated back to the eighteenth century. Accordingly, different analyses of the nation-state point to several scopes for defining a nation, such as imagined community (Anderson, 1991), a myth (Gellner, 1983), a large body of people regarding themselves as a nation (Hobsbawm, 1990), and a territorial entity (A. D. Smith, 2000).

The word *nation* derives from Latin (natio, breed/race), meaning "the idea of common blood ties" (Connor, 1978: 302). Having distinguished the meanings of the nation from the state, Connor (1978: 300) argues that "it is difficult to think of any pure cases of a culturally, ethnically, and linguistically homogenous people (the nation) corresponding perfectly to the sovereign territory of political control (the state)." Therefore, throughout the dissertation, the words nations and nationalisms will be considered as multidimensional concepts comprising of ethnic, cultural, and civic elements, that are, the multiple dimensions of nations and nationalisms.

The ideas of the nation-state, the nation, and nationalism are not new. Some scholars (e.g. Tilly, 1975) trace the origins of nation-states in Europe back to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and its spread through colonialism whereas for others (Carr, 1945; Cobban, 1945; Hayes, 1931; Kohn, 1946; Snyder, 1954) nationalism appeared as a phenomenon in the second half the 18th century in Western Europe and expanded to Eastern Europe in the 19th century, and to the rest of the world in the 20th century. Liah Greenfeld (1992) traces the idea of the nation to the 16th century in England (the country that she regards as the first example of a nation) and to the concept of civic nationalism in the United States in the 18th century.

Hans Kohn (1946), on the other hand, argues that the origins of nationalism trace back to the ancient Hebrews and Greeks: the former defined themselves as chosen people; the latter distinguished themselves from the barbarians. Later, the ideology of nationalism was rejuvenated in Europe during the Renaissance and Reformation, the former experiencing Greco-Roman patriotism. Nationalism first manifested itself in the French Revolution and became an expansionist idea and then was progressively transformed into a statist ideology subsequent to the 1848 Revolution. Elie Kedourie (1960)[4] traces the term's roots to German Romantic thought towards the end of the 18th century, particularly as a result of their influence from their predecessors such as Immanuel Kant of the Enlightenment Tradition.[5]

It is also generally argued in the modern historiography that the nation-states are the product of the 1789 French Revolution, not only because of the revolution's effect on nationalism in France but even more so for its influence on Europe. Prior to 1789, monarchial kings claimed to have taken their sovereignty from God, together with the church and the nobility, all at times in reconciliation, sometimes in conflict. The Revolution of 1789 is said to have ended religious authority and replaced it with popular sovereignty with a new ideology. This new ideology, namely nationalism,

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[4] Kitromilides (2020: 194), one of the leading historians in Europe, considers Elie Kedourie as the founding father of the study of nationalism critically in modern academia due to his scrutiny of the idea of self-determination by Kant and the Western principle of nationalism.

[5] Kedourie (1994) also designated three main models of the relationship between nationalism and religion: (i) nationalism as a "secular replacement" for religion, (ii) the "neo-traditionalist" model, and (iii) nationalism as a secular "substitute" for religion. While the "replacement" aimed at fulling universal needs, the "neo-traditionalist" model aimed at mobilizing the masses against colonialism. In the end, in Kedourie's account, nationalism became a secular political religion: "religious in form, but secular in content" (Grigoriadis, 2013: 8).

enabled communities with very different identities, which felt loyal to their village, kinship ties, tribes, religion to a certain extent, create a nation living in the borders of a certain country. Thus, from this historical perspective, the establishment of nations was preceded by nation-states.

Another revolution, simultaneous to the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, which had begun in Britain, radically changed economic and social life. The industrial and economic developments occurring within the 18th and 19th centuries of the Industrial Revolution resulted in unprecedented significant and radical social changes. The Industrial Revolution radically changed the concepts/perceptions of time and space. Time divided into a day, night, and the seasons now appeared accelerated by its new connection to the rhythm of machine production. Likewise, the concept of space has changed: distances shortened by the appearance of railroads and steam trains; rural migration to the big cities for factory work, for example. Urban life united people from different languages, cultures, ethnicities, religions, and classes living in the same places with a new (national) identity superior (and/or including) to all these local identities. The acceleration of transportation and communication spread the exchange of news, information, and ideas, which later paved the way for spreading the ideology of nationalism (Gökçen & Alpkaya, 2004: 1-30). A. D. Smith (2000: 20) defines nationalism as an "ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation." It might manifest itself as a component of the official state ideology or as a prevalent non-state movement along cultural, ethnic, civic, and/or different lines.

Debates on nationalism have revolved around three main issues in the literature: "(i) the nature and the origin of the nation and nationalism, (ii) the antiquity or modernity of nations and nationalism, and (iii) the role of nations and nationalism in historical and especially recent social change" (A. D. Smith, 2000: 18), each based on varying degrees of emphasis on periodization/origins, characterization/location, and the role of nationalism and nations. In these debates, the historiography of nationalism has been structured within three paradigms:

> (i) the organicist versus the voluntarist understanding of the nation and the contemporary debates between primordialists and instrumentalists that stem from these understandings, (ii) the perennialist[6] versus the modernist approaches to nations and nationalism and contemporary debates about the antiquity or modernity of nations, (iii) the social constructionist versus ethnosymbolic approaches to nations and nationalism and the contemporary debates about the relationship of the past and present in the formation and future of nations (A. D. Smith, 2000: 19-20).

Having based his typology on these debates, A. D. Smith (2000: 20) designated four main paradigms of nationalism: the primordialist,[7] the perennialist, the modernist, and the ethnosymbolic paradigms, each differing on their understandings of the role, character, and formation of nations and nationalisms. Having followed Geertz (1973), A. D. Smith (2000: 23) argues that "nations and nationalisms can be termed primordial, existing, as it were, before history, in nature's first order of time" and

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[6] Özkırımlı (2010) argues that perennialism is simply a milder form of primordialism; therefore, he does not treat perennialism as a separate category other than primordialism. Yet, A. D. Smith (2000) differentiates perennialism as a separate category for belief in the antiquity of nations, without holding that they are in any way natural.

[7] Özkırımlı (2010) defines primordialism as a belief that nationality has been a natural part of humankind.

evolved in pre-history. A. D. Smith (2000) identifies three strands of primordialism: sociobiological, cultural, and organicist primordialism: each similar in their idea of naturalness and/or antiquity of nations with a different attribution to the meaning of a nation. Sociobiological primordialism, unpopular in historical debates, attributes genetic meaning to ethnicity (Hobsbawm, 1990). Cultural primordialism, in contrast, posits that primordial attachments hinge on cognition, perception, and belief. National and ethnic ties evolve out of "cultural givens" of social beings, that are, language, race, kinship, and customs (Geertz, 1973). A. D. Smith (2000) concentrates on the widespread version of primordialism: organicism- the organic and historicist conceptualization of nationalism.

The debate[8] on organic versus voluntarist nationalism is the most far-reaching distinction in the field: the former is variously categorized as ethnic, collectivistic, and cultural; the latter, as civic, individualistic, and political (Özkırımlı, 2005: 22). Hans Kohn (1946)'s famous dichotomy between Eastern and Western nationalisms based on geography[9] had been reconceptualized in the post-1989 period (the dissolution of the Soviet Empire) as ethnic (German) and civic (American) nationalisms correspondingly. This ethnic versus civic framework has been commonly used as an analytical tool that classifies nations and nationalisms into contrasting and theoretically conflicting types (e.g. Brubaker, 1992). Yet, there are still normative

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[8] Meinecke (1970) is considered one of the first scholars who made a distinction between *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation,* which are cultural and political nations respectively, in the literature.

[9] In this typology, West comprises of West of Rhine -in France, America, Britain, the Low Countries, etc. where there are voluntarist forms of nationalism, whereas East involves Eastern and Central Europe, the Middle East, Russia, and much of Asia where there are organic forms of nationalism.

connotations behind this scene: civic nationalism has been welcomed (e.g. its inclusivity) while ethnic nationalism has been decried (e.g. its exclusivity).

The characterizations of Western (civic) and Eastern (ethnic) nationalisms differ in many ways in the academic literature. Kohn (1946) argues that the most striking difference between these two is how the individual attaches itself to the nationhood. Putting aside the inevitableness of belonging to a nation, in Western-type, an individual might voluntarily choose his/her nation, thus the nation is constructed through contractual/political[10] relationship with the state; whereas in the Eastern type, an individual is born into a nation regardless of its choice and always retains this fact wherever s/he goes. In the former type, the nation is constructed through rational territorial association with a citizenship tie based on laws written on a contract by a strong rational bourgeoisie, while the latter type imagines a community on a spiritual basis constructed through a myth of common origins and common historical culture with a mystical character. From Kohn's perspective, Western European style appears rational, political, and liberal whereas Eastern European style nationalism appears as romantic, cultural, and authoritarian (Kohn, 1946). Comparably, in his book *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism*, Özkırımlı (2005) argues that civic nationalism in its most formulations has been demarcated based on a common commitment to the communal establishments of civil society and the

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[10] This idea takes its basis from John Locke's *social contract theory* which speculates the origins of organized societies as such: individuals voluntarily relinquish some of their rights and give them to a higher authority, which is the state, to organize society; in return, they expect mutual protection and welfare or regulation of relations with the other fellows.

state; on the other hand, ethnic nationalism has been constructed through common descent and culture.

Similarly, Verdery (1996) posits two major meanings of the nation, regarding state and subject relations that constitute modern nationalisms. Drawing upon her analysis of Eric Hobsbawm's theory, Verdery (1996) identifies the two different meanings: on the one hand, there is a citizenship relationship, in which "the nation consists of collective sovereignty based in common political participation;" on the other hand, there is the ethnicity relation, in which "the nation comprises all those of supposedly common language, history, or broader cultural identity" (Verdery, 1996: 227). Thus, how individuals attach themselves to nationhood differs in civic and ethnic nationalisms in the academic literature: while the former relates the individual to the nation with citizenship, the latter does with common descent.

The second debate about nations and nationalism in the literature deals with whether nationalism is a modern or perennial phenomenon. As opposed to perennialists (e.g. Bloch, 1961) emphasizing the longue durée of nationalism arose in medieval times, modernists (e.g. Anderson, 1991; Breuilly, 1993; Gellner, 1998; Hall, 1998; Hobsbawm, 1990; Kedourie, 1960) argue that the ideologies of nationalism, and that of nation-states, are modern phenomena and "nations and nationalisms are the product of modernization and modernity" (A. D. Smith, 2000: 57). Others (e.g. Hertz, 1944; Shafer, 1955) emphasize the medieval national sentiments and also their differences from modern times. A. D. Smith (2000) calls this last position sociological, rather than diachronic. This distinction occupies a central place in Kedourie's and Gellner's ideas. Kedourie (1960) traces the philosophical bases of nationalism back to

Romanticism and Enlightenment -the belief in reason, idea of progress, and the Cartesian method of searching certainty adopted by Immanuel Kant. Therefore, in this interpretation, Kant appears as an ideational father of self-determination of the national will. Kedourie (1960) posits that nationalism is current, new, invented, and European, and can be established through uncountable violence, a position which resembles antinomian medieval Christian movements.

Going beyond this historical approach of Kedourie, Gellner (1983) asserts that nations and nationalisms are modern phenomena (current and new). According to Geller (1933), tiny elites in agroliterate/pre-modern societies did not have a personal stake in spreading their culture; thus, the idea of the formation of a nation appeared as an elite project in the modern era as a result of industrialism. Since industrial society necessitates a 'high culture' to operate, that is, a professional, literate people were constructed through specialization and standardized education who elevate or stimulate national consciousness. Furthermore, changes in settlement (from rural to urban) led to the change in the mode of culture and large-scale urbanization created a new form of identity for individuals —national identity— due to national sentiments. In Gellner's understanding of nationalism, which arises from a common cultural commitment, one might argue that social homogeneity, values derived from the common education, and anonymity stand out.

How the idea of a nation or the nation itself has been constructed is another issue discussed in the academic literature. Gellner (1964: 168) says that "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist." Similarly, Hobsbawm (1990: 8) argues that it is not the nations that

make nationalisms and states; it is the other way around: nationalists create nations in the independent territorial state. Gellner and Hobsbawm thus frame nation-states as an elite project.

The final debate regarding the nations and nationalisms concerns social constructionist versus ethnosymbolic approaches. Social constructivists mainly argue that it is nationalism in the modern era which creates nations and it is the nationalists who "imagine" (Anderson, 1991) or "invent" (Gellner, 1983) the nation through social sacraments and cultural media. Anderson (1991) metaphorically defines the nation as "an imagined political community." In this characterization, fellows of the nation may have never met most of the other members, but the image of a community creates a sense of unity in the minds of each individual. This sense of cohesive belongingness thus provides members the impression/certitude that this group of people can relate to one another.

This idea of imagined communities is historically embedded. These imagined communities (the transformation from small-scale to large-scale societies), Anderson (1991) argues, were crystallized by the medium of printing or "print capitalism." Print capitalism led to the emergence of national consciousness in three ways: "(i) means of discourse and communication between fellows of a given language territory, (ii) standardization of language for identification with the past; (iii) prioritization of certain language fields" (Anderson, 1991: 44-46). Print capitalism met certain conditions for the creation of this cultural artifact such as global linguistic diversity, the decay of holy monarchies, cosmological script communities, fear of death, the change in perception of time (from messianic, simultaneous time to homogeneous,

linear time) due to calendar and clock. Thus, the roots of nationalism, Anderson

(1991) argues, go back to the print revolution, followed by print capitalism. The

origins of nationalism, therefore, might be traced to commercial printing activities,

leading to the proliferation of ideas including nationalism.

Contrary to this social constructivist approach analyzing nations and

nationalisms in a modernist paradigm, ethnosymbolists (Armstrong, 1982;

Hutchinson, 1994; A. D. Smith, 2000) emphasize the historicity of cultural ideologies,

identities, and sentiments with a focus on symbolic components over the *longue*

durée view. A. D. Smith's ethnosymbolic approach points to how past cultural

identities may be correlated to modern nations while being aware of the historical

cutoffs (the relationship between the ethnic past and national present) with three

factors, that is, recurrence, continuity, and appropriation, each differ in the ways in

which the ethnic past may affect the national present. Recurrence denotes the

habitual idealization of the nation with slightly possible changes in its form in time.

Continuity stresses the permanence of institutional processes while moving from

ethnic past to the national present. Appropriation refers to the tendency of

rediscovering the appropriate/authenticate aspects of what they think of their ethnic

past (A. D. Smith, 2000: 110-112). A. D. Smith (2000) also distinguishes between

ethnie and nation:

> *Ethnies* share with the nation's elements of common name, myth, and memory,
> their center of gravity is different: *ethnies* are defined largely by their ancestry
> myths and historical memories; nations are defined by the historic territory they
> occupy and by their mass, public cultures, and common laws. A nation must
> possess its homeland and an *ethnie* need not- hence, the phenomenon of diaspora
> *ethnies* … the concept of the nation includes both ethnic and civic elements:
> shared myths and memories but also common laws, a single economy, a historic
> territory, and a mass, public culture. In this way, the potential was there for

nations to develop beyond single *ethnies* and incorporate and assimilate other *ethnies* or fragments thereof; alternatively, to incorporate and accommodate diverse *ethnies* in a polyethnic and multicultural nation (A. D. Smith, 2000: 113-114).

In this approach, there are both similarities and differences between nation and *ethnie*. The most striking difference between nation and *ethnie* is that the former, together with its ethnic and civic elements, holds a historic territory while the latter need not. On the other hand, they have some commonalities. According to A. D. Smith (2000), the content of modern national identities comprises of premodern ethnosymbolic elements: memories, myths, values, and traditions that inspire and legitimate their present claim to land and statehood. Moreover, the concept of the nation includes processes such as myth-making, territorialization, legal standardization, memory formation, cultural unification, and the like. These intertwined features create ambiguity between the two concepts.

To overcome this ambiguity between the nation and the *ethnie*, A. D. Smith (2000) proposes an ethnosymbolist paradigm to grasp nationalisms by merging them under the same roof rather than dichotomizing them as ethnic or civic nationalisms. Accordingly, nations and nationalisms have both ethnic[11] and civic elements - they are not mutually exclusive with, yet, varying degrees of emphasis and/or different forms. Every nationalism has varying degrees and different forms of civic and ethnic elements; sometimes civic and territorial elements are dominant and sometimes ethnic and indigenous elements are valid (A. D. Smith, 2000). Ethnosymbolism regards the essential apparatuses of national and ethnic phenomena as symbolic and

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[11] In Smith's terms, the ethnic component includes cultural components as well.

sociocultural rather than political or demographic. Symbols such as rituals and language embedded in myths and memories constitute the ethnic/cultural essence of nations.[12] A. D. Smith (2000) argues that the main debates between primordialists, perennialists, and modernists fail to explain nationalisms when adopting the difference between nation and *ethnie* with the methodology of la longue durée to see the complexity of relations of the present, past, and future. Therefore, he suggested going beyond the ethnic/civic dichotomy to understand modern nationalisms and adopt a more ethnosymbolic approach to analyze the symbolic, cultural, historical components of specific nations/nationalisms at particular historical junctures.

The ambiguity in defining nation and ethnic community has led to many conflicts such as civil wars between different ethnic groups claiming rights over territory. A. D. Smith (2000) posits the theory that cultural and symbolic issues constitute a central place in ethnic conflicts. Identifying causes and cures for a civil war is a difficult task. Scholars have set forth many reasons that may explain the onset and termination of a civil war. These reasons spawn around many levels (such as the individual, societal, and international), or areas (such as economic, political, cultural, and/or psychological).

To address the complexity of this conceptual framework and to simplify our understanding of civil wars, I posit that the variables civil war scholars discuss indirectly reflect basic negotiation concepts such as the presence (or absence) of

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[12] R. M. Smith (2003: 15) considers "ethically constitutive stories" as "components of the politics of peoplehood."

BATNA (Best Alternative to Negotiated Outcome),[13] hurting stalemate, and a civil war being ripe for resolution. Fearon's "Sons of Soil" theory, for example, proposes that insurgents belonging to a disputed territory tend to fight longer civil wars in a conflict over land (or natural resources) between the local inhabitants (the ethnically distinct 'sons of the soil' who inhabit the region in question) than insurgents who do not belong (state-supported migrants to a debated region who belong to the dominant ethnic group) (Fearon, 2004). "Sons of the soil" might be a case in point to show how the strength of the belief of a sense of belonging to one's region enables ethnic communities to strive for what they call their territory. This phenomenon of the strength of regionalism may be aligned to BATNA (Best Alternative to Negotiated Outcome) —a concept coined by Fisher and Ury (1991)— when explaining why insurgents who belong to the disputed land tend to fight longer civil wars. These insurgents may associate their whole livelihood, their memories, and eventually their identity to that land. When their 'homeland' is under risk, no BATNA exists for these insurgents; fighting until the end remains the only option. Alternatively said, the "Sons of Soil" argument can help the insurgents obtain more support from their population. Hence, longer civil wars. The PKK's[14] ideological switch, for example, from more socialist-internationalist propaganda in the 1980s to a more provincial one where they claim to be the indigenous representatives of Kurdistan and its culture towards the late 1990s onwards may be evaluated in this respect.

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[13] It is the best you can do if the other party refuses to negotiate with you.

[14] The PKK, founded by Abdullah Öcalan in 1978, is a Kurdish organization in an armed conflict against the Turkish state. The PKK is designated a terrorist organization by Turkey, NATO, the EU, the USA, etc.

To see how much "Sons of Soil" feel attached to their territory and fight until the end, we may look at the coups and popular revolutions, in which one political regime is switched with another and when the civil war ends quickly. In these instances, the population's support may not be as strong as one would see from "Sons of Soil." The instigators of coups and revolutions are aware of this unstable support and of the BATNAs available for their supporters (such as reverting to the status-quo, siding with counter-revolutionaries, or opting for half-way outcomes such as the Girondins during the French Revolution or the Mensheviks during the Communist Revolution in Russia). Since there exists ample room for a compromise concerning how the new political institutions will shape, parties can negotiate a stable outcome —and therefore end a civil war quicker— in coups and revolutions. These civil war theories can be an analytical tool for understanding nationalist movements as well.

The application of the concept of hurting stalemate and a civil war being ripe for a resolution to Fearon is a bit more challenging. While the presence of natural resources for the insurgent group (and possibly its ability to hide across the border in other states) increases the chances for insurgents to hang in longer in a civil war, the resulting hurting stalemate may not necessarily push parties towards resolution. Unlike a business negotiation, processes in civil wars create a lot of emotional and political baggage that may be difficult to overcome – therefore an issue may turn from ripe to 'spoiled' for resolution very quickly in civil wars, making their resolution more difficult. Furthermore, civil war 'trade' may create parties who benefit from the continuation of conflict and so spoil peace processes.

To address the complexity of this conceptual framework and to simplify our understanding of civil wars, some scholars have borrowed existing international theories. Neo-realism is a major international relations theory that civil war scholars have frequently used. Among the major foundations of neo-realist thinking, security dilemma, anarchy, and the balance of power appear as main points that civil war scholars borrowed from this major international relations theory. I argue, within the context of ethnic civil wars, these three major concepts have varying levels of success in helping us understand the onset of and cure for civil wars.

Among these major points, the security dilemma also turns out to be the most applicable convincing component of realist thinking. "The security dilemma asserts that effort to improve one's security in an environment of anarchy makes others less secure and thereby lessens security for all" (David, 1997: 558). This security dilemma may apply to both civil war occurrence and its termination. At this point, the governments cannot conceive how sincere they are in committing peace. When the government becomes more powerful and insurgent groups do not want a cease-fire, the conflict escalates. Even though minorities want disarmament, they cannot do that because of the fear of government attacks once they disarm.

According to neorealist theory, anarchy is an underlying cause of armed conflict within states just as between states. In the absence of a higher authority, states operate in a self-help system, often resorting to war to settle their differences. On the contrary, ethnic conflicts do not necessarily occur in the anarchic structure. In many of the ethnic conflicts observed around the world, for example, the IRA in Northern Ireland or the PKK in Turkey, the conflict occurs in a state where the

government is fully functional. Occasionally, the legal system can even favor the insurgents or their representative political party in their parliament.

Realism posits that the balance of power leads to peace in international relations because states can deter each other when their power levels are similar. However, this idea may be problematic in some intrastate wars. While one can talk about a balance of power in civil conflicts where the government is run by the minority (such as Saddam's Iraq and Esad's Syria), in some instances, the minority may very rarely be able to establish a balance of power with the ruling majority (such as the ETA in Spain). That said, these small groups can also form a balance-of-terror instead of a balance of power, especially if they can use weapons of mass destruction. Fearon and Laitin (2003: 78) also argue that "countries with an ethnic majority and a significant ethnic minority are at greater risk for civil war." Here, they also suggest — counter to the realist thinking— that balance of power does not deter the parties, but rather enable the minority to fight.

Similarly, in one of the recent works on nationalism, *the Politics of Majority Nationalism*, having drawn on the earlier works in the field, Loizides (2015) dichotomizes nationalism as minority and majority typologies or the non-dominant and dominant groups, respectively. This typology does not correspond to numerical terms since statistical majorities do not necessarily politically override governmental structures (such as Saddam's Iraq and Esad's Syria). Similarly, majorities are not necessarily ethnic; they may be political or cultural. Loizides (2015: 6) uses the term "majority" as "those ethnic groups enjoying the effective control of a sovereign state of their own, with an effective numerical superiority."

Majority nationalism has been synonymous with other terms in the academic literature such as "titular nationalism" (Laitin, 1998) or "non-state-seeking nationalism" (Brubaker, 1998), supposing the group having its own state, and "*Staatsvolk*" (O'Leary, 2001: 284-285) to define "the national or ethnic people, who are demographically and electorally dominant." Majority groups have thus been two-thirds of the people of a country (a demographic advantage), as Loizides (2015) argues, they are both culturally and politically dominant (governing the sovereign state) whereas mobilizing minorities to seek for establishing their state or at least an autonomous region. In recent literature, drawing on these precursors of nationalism, Gellner in this case, O'Leary (1998) maintains that "nationalism, so far the most potent principle of political legitimacy in the modern world, holds that the nation should be collectively and freely institutionally expressed, and ruled by its co-nationals." This collective expression has been achieved, McGarry and O'Leary (1993) argue, through the elimination of ethnic/national disparities such as genocide, regional reorganization through secessions, and social engineering by assimilation or integration by the elites. Recently, Mylonas (2013) investigates how the international and regional environment affects the choice of the state to acculturate, or assimilate, or eliminate ethnic minorities.

Still, some scholars (Bloemradd, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008; Brubaker, 1992, 1998; Greenfeld, 1992; Hollinger, 1995; Ignatieff, 1994, 1999; Kedourie, 1960; Laitin, 1998; Loizides, 2015; Miller, 2000; O'Leary, 2001; Özkırımlı, 2010; Pehrson & Green, 2010; Schildkraut, 2014; Uzer, 2016) use a dichotomy of conceptualization of national identity/membership, usually ethnic or civic. Between those, some (Greenfeld, 1992; Ignatieff, 1999) use the ethnic and civic distinction as an analytical tool and in reality

they accept the two types of nationalism coexist: what they call fusing the two (Ignatieff, 1999: 145) or mixed type (Greenfeld, 1992: 11). Others (Anderson, 1991; Chatterjee, 1993) classify nationalisms in terms of the place of people in the political and social structure or their affiliation with the state- extricating between official/state nationalism and its complements. Some scholars (Brubaker, 1992; Gelvin, 1998; Hobsbawm, 1990) highlight class dynamics and differentiate popular and elite nationalisms. Yet, others (Brubaker, 1999, 2004; Eisenstadt & Giesen, 1995; Kymlicka, 2001, 2015; Reijerse, Van Acker, Vanbeselaere, Phalet, & Duriez, 2013; Reijerse, Vanbeselaere, Duriez, & Fichera, 2015; Shelef, 2010; Shulman, 2002; A. D. Smith, 2000)[15] oppose adopting a dichotomous conceptualization of nationalism since it overstresses the opposition between the two concepts of the nation (that is, ethnic-civic in this case) as having become a two-player contest, the conflict between them turns out to be a zero-sum game.

Unfortunately, the dichotomous conceptualization of nationalism might not precisely reveal the degree of the applicable variation among units. For example, Indian nationalism competes with two different types of separatist nationalism, one in Punjab, one in Kashmir, and results from a conflict between Hindu nationalism and secular nationalism. In Japan, however, the definition of national membership was debated between the statist (elite) or ethnonationalist versions before the second World War, while it also varies depending on whether Taiwanese and Koreans were Japanese. In contrast, American nationalism comprises of liberal, cosmopolitan, multicultural, and nativist versions. South African nationalisms, on the other hand,

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[15] Brubaker (1999) suggests the analytical distinction of state-framed and counter-state understandings of nationhood other than ethnic-civic dichotomy to analyze nationalisms.

encompass Africanist, racial, transethnic, and civic notions of national membership (Shelef, 2010: 11-12). Shelef (2010) also discussed Turkish nationalism, the spectrum of which contains Islamist, Kemalist, and Pan-Turanist versions of nationalism. Rather than adopting a dichotomous conceptualization of nationalism, Shelef (2010: 12-13) notes the multidimensionality of nationalism which denotes that "even if movements disagree, for example, on the extent of the homeland and the national mission, their shared idea of the nation's membership criteria makes cooperation possible."

Dichotomizing nationalism constrains the way we consider change, in viewing it as an oscillation from one alternative to another. Much like the metaphor of the mutual pendulum, which by its nature locates the ends of the oscillation at opposite extreme poles, conceiving change in this manner unnaturally immobilizes understanding. Without considering societal transformation, history, the systems, and their supporters' exterior to the impact of politics, this metaphor constrains our possible research to examine in what ways substantive changes in the content of nationalist statements occur. Such an approach emphasizes the comprehensive transformation of the leading ideology rather than considering fractional, incremental changes in the content of these ideologies. Concentrating on the sort of nationalism is also problematical in seeking to explain in what ways change occurs in the connotation of nationalism since such examinations are likely to consider a single criterion to differentiate among categories of nationalism, the scope of the variation is a priori restricted to the two opposing wings of whatsoever criterion they select (Shelef, 2010: 12-13). Therefore, Shelef (2010) proposes what he calls the evolutionary dynamic in which interactions spur the variation that might result in

ideological transformation. This study applies theoretical tools developed by Nadav Shelef in the study of evolving nationalism.

The evolutionary dynamic holds that a change is assumed to occur once a rhetorical variant of nationalist ideology is better-off when compared to old ideological formation until, under the ripe circumstances, the new form replaces the old version (Shelef, 2010). In other words, the nationalist movements "select" between the unsuccessful and successful variants of foundational claims depending on the context. Shelef's analysis indicates that nationalism changes unintentionally similar to evolution. The evolutionary dynamic anticipates a change in the ideology of a nationalist movement which fine-tunes its rhetoric to resolve mundane political problems and/or to accomplish its short-term political targets. The complicated interactions amongst rival movements[16] and external pressures resulted in first tactical modifications to the particular claims voiced by political leaders and finally (at some point) changes in their core beliefs (Shelef, 2010). Shelef (2010) considers as opposed to "rational adaptation" to post-Holocaust reality, the cooperation of religious nationalists with the secular Labor movement —known as the "historic alliance" in Israel— in order to protect religious people from what they call "godless socialists" without abandoning their imagined homeland; yet tactically modifying their territorial claims in order to cooperate with the fear of anti-clerical Labor movement as an evolutionary dynamic. In return, religious nationalists could reinforce religion in the public realm. The multidimensionality of identity politics proposes that democratic engagement results in a change in one ideological

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[16] This is one common reason tactical modulations are undertaken.

dimension, changing all of them is unlikely. Moreover, the nationalist missions also evolved over time. In addition to a tactical change in their imagined homelands, the secular Labor Zionist movement, which once sought to create a new, secular Jew, and the ultranationalist Revisionist Zionist movement, which once sought to create "monism,[17]" later accepted the role of religion in affecting the Israeli public realm – a sing of evolving nationalism (Shelef, 2010).

Going further, nationalism is not a static ideology, rather it changes over time. For instance, Breton (1988) argues that both English Canada and Quebec, to a lesser extent evolved from the ethnic nationalism of French Catholic or White British culture to civic nationalism based on multiculturalism including non-White immigrants. While the former was more of an exclusive version, the latter appears as inclusive of large numbers. Similarly, Castles, Cope, Kalantsiz, and Morrissey (1988) argue that Australia experienced an evolving nationalism from the ethnic nationalism of White British to civic nationalism based on multiculturalism including Asian migrants from the 1960s, if not so with ease for aboriginal Australians.

In this dissertation, I argue that within the context of nationalism, three major conceptual/analytical tools —the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of nationalism [schema]— have displayed varying levels of success in describing variations in the MHP's nationalist ideology. Based on the assumption that nationalism is a multidimensional concept, in this dissertation, the ethnic component refers to the perception of common descent or origin; the cultural component is

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[17] "A nationalism 'undiluted' by commitments to any other ideology, including religion or socialism" (Shelef, 2010: 6).

made up of common symbols, values, and beliefs, norms, and material culture, including technology, such as language, traditions and customs, rituals, religion, myths, and memories (a common history); and the civic component consists of elements such as citizenship, basic rights and liberties, equality before the law, democracy, and territory. Due to the genealogical basis of ethnic component, for instance, it might consist of cultural components as well such as myths, memories, and symbols as A. D. Smith (2000) argues. Due to the multidimensionality of nationalism, all or some of these components intersect or intertwine and together constitute the phenomena of nationalism, reflecting nationalism's Janus face. In other words, by the multidimensional nature of the phenomena of nationalism, the components of nationalism are not mutually exclusive, many nationalist movements or nationalisms combine all or some of these components to varying degrees.

In this dissertation, I argue, within the context of nationalist movements, these three major conceptual tools have varying levels of success in helping us understand the evolution of the nationalist ideology. Therefore, separating nationalism into its components is merely an analytical tool; it does not serve the political scientist to separate nationalisms. The boundary between these components of nationalism is often a matter of emphasis, rather than a sharp distinction.

1.7. Literature Review

In his article named *The War of Words: Defining the Extreme Right Family*, having analyzed diverse descriptions of far-right and determined common features (that are, racism, nationalism, xenophobia, a strong state, and anti-democracy), Mudde (1996:

229) characterized "far-right" as having xenophobic, anti-democratic, ethno-nationalist, authoritarian, and racist tendencies in the right-left ideological spectrum. Drawing upon this definition, the ideological spectrum of the MHP has been widely discussed in the literature.

Different analyses of the MHP have pointed to many definitions regarding its position in the ideological spectrum, such as far-right (Bora & Can, 2015; Çınar & Arıkan, 2002)[18], extreme right (Arıkan, 2002b; Landau, 1982), ultranationalist (Arıkan, 2002b; Balcı, 2011), the ultranationalist right (Ağaoğulları, 1987), radical right (Avcı, 2011; Poulton, 1997), fascist (Uslu, 2008), neo-fascist (Jacoby, 2011), radical nationalist (Canefe & Bora, 2003; Uslu, 2008), center-right (under Bahçeli's leadership) (Yavuz, 2002), sui generis (Öniş, 2003), and not as far right (Heper & İnce, 2006). Others (Bora, 2009; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Landau, 1979) regarded the MHP as Pan-Turkist, some (Canefe & Bora, 2003; Çınar & Arıkan, 2002; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Poulton, 1997; Tepe, 2000) called its ideology as Turkism, and few (Canefe & Bora, 2003; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992) discussed its Turanist leanings. Many scholars

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[18] Çınar and Arıkan (2002: 25) argue that the MHP has been "the only party on the far-right of the ideological spectrum in Turkey," yet it became closer to the center under the leadership of Bahçeli while remaining as the only party constituting varying degrees of ethnic, racial, and cultural elements of right-wing nationalist ideologies. Çınar and Arıkan (2002) put forward that the nationalism of the party crosses ethnic and cultural conceptualization(s) of the nation and that this ambiguity of the party's definition of nationalism allowed it to situate itself in any nationalist political spectrum; either being close to the center-right voters or radical nationalist electorate. Çınar and Arıkan (2002) argue that this, in turn, led the MHP to dominate the nationalist views and claim to be representative of the national interest, rather than the ideology itself alone.

(Bora & Can, 2015; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Landau, 1982; Tepe, 2000)[19] talked about the MHP's Kemalist leanings.

The MHP's approach to nationalism has also been debated in the literature, one such being as cultural (Heper, 1999; Heper & İnce, 2006; Karaca, 1971; Öznur, 1999d), racist and xenophobic (Arıkan, 2002b), ethnocentric (Avcı, 2011), crossing between ethnic and cultural nationalism (Çınar & Arıkan, 2002), ethnic (Yavuz, 2002), and ultranationalist (Arıkan, 2002b; Başkan, 2005). Yet, how the nationalist ideology, as defined and practiced by the nationalist movement, has changed over time under different leaderships has not been sufficiently addressed by scholars in the field of political science except in a few articles (e.g. Aras & Bacik, 2000; Arıkan, 2002b; Bora & Can, 2016; Çınar & Arıkan, 2002; Heper, 1999; Heper & İnce, 2006; Öniş, 2003; Uzer, 2016; Yavuz, 2002).

The Islamic notion attributed to the MHP's identity claim has been debated in the literature. While some scholars (Bora & Can, 2015; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Uslu, 2008) call the MHP's approach to Islam as strict Sunni Islam, others (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Tepe, 2000) name it as "Anatolian Islam" or "ethicist understanding of Islam" (Yavuz, 2002). Anatolian Islam[20] or what she calls Turkish-Islamic synthesis, Tepe

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[19] Having taken its philosophy from Kemalism, according to Landau, the MHP is a "typical best for everyone's ideology with the obvious emphasis on nationalism, idealism, and morals in a popular vein" in the 1980s (Landau, 1982: 602).

[20] MHP's Islamic orientation, in particular, Anatolian Islam, Tepe (2000) contests, comprises different practices of Anatolian Islam, which appear as an umbrella concept of conflicting notions of Islamic identity as well as an attempt to reconcile Islamic and nationalist discourses in private and moral domains.

(2000) conceives as was somewhere in between the incompatible claims or the conflicting demands of Islamists/Islamic society and secularists/the Kemalist state which embody a political solution over the national identity crisis. The MHP, Tepe (2000) contends, acted as a consensual political party, one that would compromise between the state (the conflictual Kemalist national identity) and society with its umbrella concept Anatolian Islam which promotes an Islamic nation and a secular state. By the relation of the local to global, the MHP has idealized a Turkish community with its Turkish-Islamic tradition in *nizam-ı âlem* (global order) - a reconciliation between the Islamic and secular values/basic tenets of Kemalism (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Başkan, 2005; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Tepe, 2000, 2008) or at the "crosscurrents of Kemalist nationalism and Islamic values" (Tepe, 2008: 161).

Not only their approaches to Turkism and Islam but also their approach to modernization/Westernization/Europeanization has also been debated in the literature. Some scholars discussed the MHP's approach to Westernization as anti-Westernist (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Tepe, 2000), anti-European (Bora & Can, 2015, 2016; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Öniş, 2003), and pro-globalization rhetoric (Başkan, 2006; Heper, 1999). *Milliyetçi muhafazakarlık* (nationalist conservatism), which traces to the early Republican period, has long been criticizing the debates about [pro-] West, Westernization, Europe, and Europeanness such as its identity, culture, and ethics in Turkey. In their article, Canefe and Bora (2003) discuss some of the significant issues regarding this intellectual heritage which has had extensive reflections in the fields of grass-roots political movements and party policies alike. Canefe and Bora (2003) highlight the similarities between the contributions of this intellectual tradition and present ideas and practices of the MHP's leaders concerning the relationship

between Turkey and the EU. Canefe and Bora (2003: 128) claim that the MHP has had "the intertwined traditions of Turkism, Islamism, cultural purism, defensive nationalism, and reverse Orientalism in Turkish political culture."

Since the birth of Republican Turkey, Canefe and Bora (2003) contend, the Kemalist-oriented single-party era and its revolutionary circles have been harshly criticized for being uncritically Western-oriented and distanced from its heritage by the opposition circles: on the one hand the past and present republicans argue that Turkey is being civilized without mimicking the Europeans; the nationalist-conservatives including the radicals, on the other hand, have created a counter-argument to this line of thought. For instance, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, a conservative-Islamic poet who wrote the Turkish national anthem, called Western civilization a weak monster. Contrary to Kemalist/modernist nationalist elite wishing for political changes that are similar to the nation-states in Europe, Canefe and Bora (2003) think, the nationalist-conservative political thought is the tenacious renunciation of all things related to being "European" while excluding the scientific and technological developments. This tradition of thought is, Canefe and Bora (2003) argue, unlike that of its Islamist counterparts desiring the lost heyday of the Empire.

The nationalist-conservative groups have thus criticized the political and cultural reforms of the early Republican era as mimicking the West. Having characterized the early Republican era as primarily a Tanzimat tradition of imitating the West in the late Ottoman Empire, Canefe and Bora (2003) claim that nationalist conservative groups regarded these reforms as defective, neglecting Turkish culture or Turkish community origins. The nationalist-conservative ideologues have thus criticized the modernizers of the Republic for forgetting their cultural heritage- a

reminiscence of Ziya Gökalp's (important ideologue of Turkish nationalism) famous dichotomy between civilization and culture, as we shall discuss in the next chapter.

The ways in which the MHP's identity has been built has also been discussed in the literature. At the grassroots level as well as in the upper echelons of the party, the MHP's identity was built along the axes of 'us versus them' dichotomy.[21] The image of the 'other' they built with this dichotomy has been a significant matter for constructing the identity of the MHP and played a vital role in the MHP's ideological and practical affairs too. The MHP has constructed its nationalist ideology through what they call the 'other' as an 'enemy' against which they consider as being worthy of fighting for. Landau (2002) proposes that self-identification was constructed along the lines of the nation for which it is worth fighting for in a self-sacrificing, disciplined way to achieve national grandeur. In her article titled *When Defense Becomes Offense: The Role of Threat Narratives in the Turkish Civil War of the 1970s,* Ugur Çınar (2014) discusses how threat narratives of groups in conflict during the Turkish civil war of the left-right of the 1970s promote political mobilization/violence by inciting fear against the other group —what they call— 'the enemy.'

Some scholars (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Arıkan, 1998; Avcı, 2011; Bacık, 2011; Başkan, 2006; Bora, 2003; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Yavuz, 2002) claim that the enemy image of the 'other' has transformed in time: it was the

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[21] Druckman (1994) metaphorically refers to "*us versus them*" dichotomy to denote the stereotypical images of the other in the society. According to him, societies create enemies as well as friends in a way that 'we' create the stereotypical enemy image of the other by attributing negative characteristics to it. Kelman (2007) calls this mirror images: on the one hand there is a positive image of the self; on the other hand, there is a negative image of the other.

communism and/or leftism in general [as well as left-leaning Alevis (Yavuz, 2002)] in the 1960s and 1970s, the *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*[22] (the Kurdistan Workers' Party, PKK) in the 1980s; and, the pro-Islamist *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party), political Islam, and the PKK in the 1990s. Not only has this enemy image contributed to unite the Turkish extreme right, Arıkan (1998) argues, it also gave the MHP a political legitimacy in the Turkish party system by allying it with the state for the same purpose of fighting against the common enemies of both. Yet, Avcı (2011) argues that among all these enemies, PKK[23] has remained more of a tenacious threat as a result of continuous terrorism. The MHP has claimed what the state called the enemy as its enemy and the MHP's youth wing did not hesitate to engage in an armed conflict with these groups until 1980.

The MHP's ideological stance compared to that of its European counterparts has also been debated in the literature. Western European democracies of the post-1980 period witnessed the depiction of the flourishing far-right as a strong state, authoritarian, racist, xenophobic, and ethnonationalist tendencies such as Jean Marie Le Pen's *Front National* (the French National Front, FN), Jörg Haider's *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (the Austrian Freedom Party, FPÖ), first Karel Dillen's and later of Filip Dewinter and Gerolf Annemans's *Vlaams Blok* (the Belgian Flemish Bloc, VB), each based on varying degrees of emphasis both on the xenophobia and racism. Europe has still shown some degree of authoritarian and robust xenophobic tendencies, both of which originate from its ethnonationalism; on the contrary,

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[22] Kurdish version of the party name.

[23] In *Devlet ve Kuzgun,* Bora and Can (2016) argue that the MHP has systematically denied the ethnic identity of Kurdish people with their definition of a Turk as everybody living in Turkey.

Heper and İnce (2006) argue, the far right of Turkey has never shown these ethnonationalist tendencies, rather in the 1980s, its party eliminated its militant spirit and authoritarian inclinations, and in late 1990s, transformed itself into a respected political party.

Having called the MHP radical nationalists, Mudde (1996) argues that the Turkish radical nationalists differ from their European counterparts in a way that European extreme right parties agree upon the presence of shared and greater European heritage. Although the ideological stances of the former and the latter such as *Centrumpartij'86* (the Centre Party '86, CP'86) and *Centrum Democraten* (the Centre Democrats, CD) in the Netherlands, *Vlaams Blok* (the Flemish Bloc) in Belgium, or *Die Republikaner* (the Republicans, REP) and *Deutsche Volksunion* (the German People's Union, DVU) in Germany show similar characteristics, the notion of Europeanness remains an outlandish notion for the Turkish extreme right while the subject embodies cultural rootedness for the others. Öniş (2003) also discusses characteristics of the MHP which reflect its European counterparts' far-right concerns, particularly that of commitment to the liberal democratic institutions, but not its fundamental values. Additionally, Öniş (2003) argues that the MHP has its sui-generis characteristics due to its particular historical context such as a less serious immigration issue in Turkey as a result of the low level of economic development when compared to its European counterparts. Öniş (2003) also claims that contrary to the general belief that the MHP is approaching a more moderate stance, it still shows some anti-reformist characteristics as well as an anti-EU coalition stance.

Another scholar, Arıkan (2002b: 373) contends that the MHP shows "strongly nationalist, racist, xenophobic, anti-democratic, and strongly statist" tendencies;

therefore, it is within "the extreme right-wing family in general and the European one in particular." Avcı (2011), on the other hand, asserts that the MHP reflects only some characteristics of the radical right in Europe, particularly the themes it has been using such as the protection of the territory, ethnocentrism, and an emphasis on the struggle among nations. Going further, Avcı (2011) puts forward that the MHP supports Turkishness with a racist and romantic understanding of Turkish history and a broad notion of culture under which all Turks have a shared ancestry. Landau (1982) argues that this romantic orientation of the MHP lay behind its reference to the glorified early Turkish history/culture, yet it appeared as an ultra-modern party in its approaches to economics and society. In that sense, imagined Turkey in the eyes of the MHP was constructed through powerful leadership and discipline as well as a commitment to multi-party politics.

Moreover, Jacoby (2011) argues that the ethicized and pragmatic portrayal of religion has been instrumental for many within the center-right, which seems so similar to the relationship between Christianity and fascist movements during the interwar period in Europe. Not only this tendency towards religion, Jacoby (2011: 919) thinks, but Turkey's far-right movements also resemble its European counterparts with the student enrollments such as "the Federation of Atatürkist Thought Clubs" and "the Association for National Struggle." Finally, Jacoby (2011) maintains that all these (un) civil society organizations achieved in gathering more support since the perception of a state crisis portrayed as the weakening of the Turkish state gained popularity similar to European counterparts.

In addition to these academic articles, there are also books written on Türkeş, Bahçeli, or the MHP. Among these, the series of *Ülkücü Hareket* (the Idealist

Movement) constitutes the greater part written on the MHP with six volumes; yet it does not include the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership (Öznur, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 1999e, 1999f). Moreover, Metin Turhan's two thick books contain a collection of Türkeş's speeches between 1963-1997, without, unfortunately, the dates of speeches (Turhan, 2016a, 2016b). In *Türkeş'in Anıları: Şahinlerin Dansı* (The Memoirs of Türkeş: The Dance of the Falcons), Hulusi Turgut (1995) provides a comprehensive biography of Türkeş, without, yet systematically analyzing his ideas and practices. Some authors (İzci, 2016; Nalbantoğlu, 2010; Uzman, 2017) compile the speeches of Türkeş, some others (Güler, 2017; Kuzu, 2014; Tekin, 2001; Yalçın, 2017) only write about Türkeş or only about a specific event such as 1980 coup (Ülkü, 2017) or within specific period such as until 2000 (Şahbudak, 2015). Some authors (Bahar, 2017; Cengiz, 2018) reprint the Nine Lights while adding Türkeş's biography and dip notes. They are based on non-academic research except some (e.g. Güler, 2017; Şahbudak, 2015; Tekin, 2001; Yalçın, 2017).

There are also some books written about Bahçeli. In *Devlet Bey: Bir Liderin Portresi* (Devlet Bey: A Portrayal of a Leader), Burak Kılıçaslan (2011) touches upon Bahçeli's biography and his important speeches, yet, without mentioning the dates of speeches and systematic analysis. Similarly, Çapkıner (2017)'s book titled *Devlet Bahçeli'yi Anlamak: Duruş* (Understanding Devlet Bahçeli: Stance) is also not a systematic analysis, which mentions some of Bahçeli's ideas, especially after 2009. His style is like praise for Bahçeli. In contrast, Olcaytu (2006) harshly criticizes Bahçeli in his book, but the book is not a systematic analysis of ideas and practices neither. Tekin (2000) and Cengiz (2014) also analyze Bahçeli's period in the history of the MHP, without considering Türkeş's period.

Books written about the MHP mostly based on non-academic research are relatively more. There are Tanıl Bora's and Kemal Can's (2015, 2016) two famous books on the MHP: *Devlet, Ocak, Dergah: 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket* (State, Hearth, Lodge: Idealist Movement from 12 September to 1990s) and *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP* (State and Raven: The MHP from 1990s to 2000s). Even though these books provide a comprehensive historical analysis of the MHP, Bora and Can did not systematically analyze the leaders of the movement with concrete evidence; nor did Turhan Feyizoğlu (2005) in his *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket* (The Idealist Movement in Turbulent Years) and Metin Turhan (2010) in his *Ülkü Ocakları* (Idealist Hearths). Similarly, in his *Kurtların Kardeşliği* (The Brotherhood of Wolves), Hakan Akpınar (2005) provides a very good summary of the MHP's history, but his analysis is mostly based on the empirical data from the press (such as press briefings and newspaper interviews of the leaders) since he is a journalist. Yanardağ (2002b) surveys the MHP's history between 1965 and 1980, yet with a particular emphasis on the violent character of the idealist movement. Similarly, Ağaoğulları (1987) focuses on the armed anti-communist struggle of the idealist movement, without, yet, talking about the ideological nuances of the movement. On the other hand, Kurt Karaca's (1971) *Milliyetçi Türkiye* (Nationalist Turkey) offers a detailed analysis of the ideology of the movement, that is the Nine Lights; yet does not talk about how the ideology of the idealist movement has evolved in time. In the recently published work *Cereyanlar,* Tanıl Bora (2018) briefly touches upon the history of the MHP as he writes a Turkish political history without, however, presenting a deeper analysis. Others (Çakır, 2008; Çolak, 2018; Günay, 2011; Kaplan,

1996; Kırcı, 1998; Okuyan, 2010; Soylu, 2015) discuss issues regarding the MHP in a partisan way.

From a broader perspective, the existing studies on Turkish intellectual and political history mostly focus on the historical period earlier to 1960 (particularly the late Ottoman and early Republican times) or the period after the 1980s, yet the two decades between 1960 and 1980 have been comparatively neglected. This turbulent era in (modern) Turkish political history has not been systematically investigated. When considering particularly the MHP case, other than a few master and Ph.D. dissertations mostly about the relationship between media and the MHP or a particular topic regarding the MHP other than nationalism such as woman's role in the party, there are only three systematic Ph.D. dissertations particularly on the MHP's nationalism, covering the extended historical period (not to the extent to which this study covers, of course). One is Mustafa Çalık's (1991) Ph.D. dissertation in which he investigates the cultural motives of the MHP voters especially in certain Central Anatolian villages. The other is Turgay Uzun's (2000) Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Nationalism as a political ideology and its institutionalization in Turkish political life: the MHP example[24]," which was written in 2000 and thus could not cover the later period. The latest is Ali Erken's (2013) Ph.D. dissertation in which he explores the creation of nationalist discourse and tactics of the MHP between 1965 and 1980, particularly the role of its youth wing in the nationalist movement throughout this period. The other Ph.D. dissertations comparatively study the MHP with other parties about the effects of the intra-party relations, election campaigns, political

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[24] See also Turgay Uzun, *Türk Milliyetçiliği ve MHP* (İstanbul: Ebabil Yayıncılık, 2006).

communication, globalization, media, and European Union in its political life.[25] Except for these dissertations, the studies on the MHP in Turkish politics literature are fragmented. The academic literature offers no systematic comparative examination of the evolution of Türkeş's and Bahçeli's nationalist practices and ideas over the period that is covered in this study. This Ph.D. dissertation aims to fulfill this important gap in the academic literature.

The literature also discusses the MHP's Turkist and/or Islamic leanings as if the party's ideology has never changed. Academic researches on the MHP (or nationalism in general) are mostly based on arguments about types of nationalism. Scholars tend to take the "strands" or "types" of nationalism as central units of analysis, and therefore generally argue that the MHP has always been the party advocating "a type of" nationalism. Arguments about types of nationalism yet fail to explain different manifestations of nationalism and the particularity of the nationalist ideologies.

Rather than dichotomizing nationalisms into two opposing types (usually ethnic and civic), this dissertation suggests that nations and nationalisms have ethnic, cultural, and civic components that encompass varying degrees of emphasis and/or different forms. From this point of view, it is possible to identify the elements that make up the MHP's nationalism, rather than characterizing its type of nationalism that has remained unchanged as generally discussed in the academic literature. Based on the assumption of the multidimensionality of nationalism, this Ph.D. dissertation suggests an evolutionary understanding of the "re-imagining" of the MHP's nationalism.

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[25] For more information, see https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The Roots of Turkish Nationalism[26]

It is important to first analyze the discussions regarding the beginning of the 20th century —the last period of the Ottoman Empire— a historical starting point for the dynamics that shaped the evolution of Turkish nationalism in the Turkish Republic as well as that of the MHP.

The use of the ethnonym 'Turk'[27] has often led to considerable confusion. The English name of Turkey denotes the 'land of Turks.' Lewis (1968) and Kafadar (1996) argue that the word Turkey has been used as one of the names of Western Europeans used for Anatolia since the late twelfth century. Yet Turks themselves adopted this name as *Türkiye* only in 1923 with the establishment of the Republic. Kushner (1977)

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[26] Part of the data and arguments proposed in this chapter was accepted for publication in Ioannis N. Grigoriadis and Arzu Opçin-Kıdal, "Imagining *Turan:* homeland and its political implications in the literary work of Hüzeyinzade Ali [Turan] and Mehmet Ziya [Gökalp]," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020.

[27] For a detailed analysis of the origins of Turkic people (geographical and sociocultural journey of Turks), see Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turks in world history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

argues that the term 'Turk' and 'Turkey' had long been used with reference to the Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire. In Akçura's[28] view, one means the sum of tribes whose ethnography, philology, and history sometimes belong to "Turk-Tatar," and sometimes to "Turk-Tatar-Mongol" denomination. Iranian, European, and Ottoman writers identify Tatars, Kazakhs, along with Azerbaijanis, Kyrgyz, and Yakut as Turks (Akçura, 2001: 1). Findley (2005: 6) differentiates Turkish and Turkic as well. While Turkish referred to the Turks of Turkey, Turkic denoted all Turks everywhere. Nevertheless, Turks regarded themselves as mainly Muslims until the nineteenth century and felt loyal to Islam and the Ottoman state on different levels (Lewis, 1968). It was Europeans who first used 'Turk' as a term (Davison, 1977).

In the Ottoman era, the term was applied when referring to Turcoman nomads or Turkish-speaking Anatolian peasants. The term Ottoman denoted a dynastic, not a national denomination. Patriotism and later nationalism grew in the context of late Ottoman modernization in three phases, the Tanzimat, the Hamidian, and the Second Constitutional Eras with the ideas put forward by the Tanzimat Pashas, the Young Ottomans, and the Young Turks.[29] The nationalist content in these three phases varied greatly. The concept of an 'Ottoman nation' emerged in the late 19th century under the influence of the Enlightenment and initially had no ethnic connotations. The Tanzimat reformers advocated a civic, religion- and ethnicity-free version of Ottoman

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[28] Akçura's book titled *Yeni Türk Devletinin Öncüleri: 1928 Yazıları* published by T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı in 2001 was published by Ötüken Neşriyat A. Ş. in 2016 with the name *Türkçülüğün Tarihi.*

[29] Since nationalism did not correspond with any Turkish word when Western nationalism was introduced to Ottoman society, Thomas (1952) argues, the term Young Turks was read as *Genç Osmanlılar* (Young Ottomans), not as *Genç Türkler* (Young Turks).

identity that came to be called Ottomanism. On the other hand, the Young Ottomans imbued their version of Ottomanism with Islamism while the Young Turks adopted nationalism which included ethnic elements.

Different analyses of Turkish nationalism have pointed to several scopes for defining the key elements of a nation as ethnicity/race (Akçura, 2016; Gaspıralı, 2004; Hüseyinzade, 1907), language association (Gaspıralı, 2004), national culture or "hars" (Gökalp, 1976b), Pan-Turkism[30] (Akçura, 2016; Gaspıralı, 2004), and Pan-Turanism[31] (Hüseyinzade, 1907). The international conjecture, both in terms of Russian-Turkish relations (Gaspıralı, 2004) from a larger perspective (see Turhan on the First World War and the rise of Turkish nationalism, as well as Turkey's international role in the post-war era), has also been an important factor in shaping the evolution of the Turkish nationalism (Opçin, 2018).

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[30]In his book called *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, Landau (1995: 1-2) attributes different meanings to Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanism. Pan-Turkism aims at cultural and/or physical unification of all peoples of Turkic origin living in/out of the Ottoman Empire whereas Pan-Turanism aims at uniting all peoples of *Turan* origin such as Estonians, Finns, and Hungarians.

[31] Hungarian Turanist movement aimed at unifying all Turanians comprising of Turks, Hungarians, Mongolians, and Finns. Pan-Turanism appeared as a Hungarian reaction against Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism. This broad conceptualization of Turan was never welcomed by the intellectuals in Turkey (Uzer, 2016). Hüseyinzade Ali Bey -Azerbaijani intellectual and poet- addresses to a certain extent about this lack of welcome with an expressed kinship for the Hungarians in his poem called *Turan*: "You, the nation of Magyars, are our brothers. Both of our races come from Turan." Yet, Uzer (2016: 7) maintains that the conceptualization of Turanism has generally been denoted "unification of the Turks from the Balkans to Inner Asia in a single state;" therefore, he employs the terms *Turancılık* (Turanism) and *Pan-Türkizm* (Pan-Turkism) interchangeably in the context of Turkey like Gökalp's and Atsız's writings.

The emergence of the nationalist ideas dates back to the eighteenth century, originating in Europe (Breuilly, 2016).[32] As of the 19th century,[33] these ideas traveled to Ottoman lands. Ethnic minorities living under the Empire called for their rights of self-determination such as Serbs, Greeks, Albanians, and later Arabs. In such a chaotic environment, the Ottoman reformers[34] were seeking new ways to restructure the state in line with modernity, which later paved the way for Turkish nationalism. One

[32] Alter (1989) traces the emergence of nation-states to the Vienna Congress.

[33] As opposed to this argument tracing the genesis of Turkish nationalism to the 19th century, Kohn (1929) dates the term back to the First Constitutional Reforms of the Ottoman Turkey in 1826 originated in Egypt by Mohamed Ali Pasha and his achievements in Anatolia and Syria since these reformist actions led to a chain of events resulting in the revolution of Young Turks and the involvement of Ottoman Turkey to First World War. The Committee of Union and Progress awakened the nationalist sentiments throughout the War, particularly with the Pan-Turkist propaganda of Enver Pasha. Some scholars (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992; Kansu, 1995), on the other hand, trace the emergence of Turkish nationalism in the Empire to the beginnings of the twentieth century during the era known as the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918) when the leading elite Young Turks and its political organization the Committee of Union and Progress were struggling with saving the Empire. Subsequent to the Balkan War and its inevitable result of the separation of states in the Balkans, Kansu (1995) and Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) argue, the Young Turks realized the impossibility of uniting the Empire on the grounds of Ottoman and Islamic identities, rather they pursued Pan-Turkism and Turanism ideologies to construct a new identity by recognizing the Anatolian Turks who had long been ignored by the Empire, thus did not create a sense of national identity. Therefore, Kansu (1995) and Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) argue that the 1908 Revolution prepared the grounds for the rise of Turkish nationalism as a political movement. On the other hand, Hostler (1993) argues that the Young Turk movement cannot take all counts to be marked as proto-Turkish nationalism, rather the defeat of 1918 awakened the nationalist feelings which led to the rise of modern Turkish nationalism.

[34] For a detailed analysis of Westernizers, see Niyazi Berkes, *The development of secularism in Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

of the important modernization attempts was Western-style education.[35] Tanzimat Reforms of the Ottoman Empire, Mardin (2000) asserts, were also designed to restructure the state in line with the European lines to save the Empire. The *Hatt-ı Şerif-i Gülhane* (the Imperial Rescript of the Rose Garden) of 1839 claimed to provide freedom/political equality to all people living in the Empire irrespective of ethnicity and religion, thus imagining an Ottoman society beyond national and religious ties, that is, the territorial Ottoman nationalism comprising of both non-Muslims and Muslims. Yet, Poulton (1997) argues that the Tanzimat Reforms failed to make non-Muslims loyal to the Ottoman Empire; at the same time, however, these reforms were successful in affecting the ideas of the Muslim Turkish-speaking population, among which there were Young Ottomans and the Young Turks.

Turkish nationalism was born in the late nineteenth century and developed further in the twentieth century. Three factors contributed to the emergence of nationalism among Turkic populations (Berkes, 1999; Georgeon, 1986; Kohn, 1982; Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981; Lewis, 1968). Firstly, the political environment of the late Ottoman Empire was unstable with successive secessionist movements of non-Muslim and later non-Turkish minorities which severely weakened the viability of

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[35] According to Burçak (2008), these attempts date back to the 18th century[35] when *Hendesehâne* and *Mühendishâne* —novel Ottoman educational institutions where modern Western science was introduced to the Ottoman Empire— were established. Even though this first effort for modernizing education in the Empire was purely military, Burçak (2008: 70) argues, it was functional in creating a new Ottoman intellectual: the Ottoman engineer.

Ottomanism[36] and Pan-Islamism[37] as remedies for the Empire's ills. Ethnic Turkish nationalism eventually appeared as an inevitable response to minority nationalisms aiming at the partition of the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, the arrival of millions of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus and Balkans reinforced Turkish nationalism (Berkes, 1999; Georgeon, 1986; Hostler, 1993; Kohn, 1982; Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981; Lewis, 1968). Ethnic Turkish nationalism became a dominant ideology after the Balkan Wars (Zarevand, 1971) and progressively increased its appeal among the public as well as the *intelligentsia*. Ethnic nationalism focuses on *hars* (culture) in Gökalp's terms while civic nationalism on *medeniyet* (civilization). Both have European origins, but ethnic nationalism arrived in the Ottoman Empire via Russia, unlike civic nationalism which came straight from France.

Second, the rise of Turcology as an academic and research study and the concomitant increase in Turkish historical and linguistic studies underlining the pre-Islamic and pre-Ottoman history conducted in Europe facilitated the reinforcement (Berkes, 1999; Georgeon, 1986; Hostler, 1993; Kohn, 1982; Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981; Lewis, 1968). Learning about their historical roots, Turks sought avenues of escapes from military and political calamities of the immediate history and elucidated their national identity set against that of Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Iranians, Russians, and others.

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[36] Ottomanism was an idea of uniting the various peoples living within the boundaries of the empire, regardless of religion and nationality under the name of the "Ottoman" nation.

[37] Pan-Islamism is the unity of all Muslim peoples.

Third, educated Turkic émigrés from the Russian Empire such as Hüseyinzade Ali Bey (Turan),[38] Zeki Velidi Togan,[39] Yusuf Akçura,[40] and Ahmet Ağaoğlu[41] contributed to the spreading of nationalist/Pan-Turkist thought in the Ottoman Empire (Arai, 1992; Berkes, 1999; Eissenstat, 2001-2002; Georgeon, 1986; Kohn, 1982; Kurt, 2012; Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981; Lewis, 1968; Poulton, 1997; Shissler, 2002; Swietochowski, 1985), particularly Turkic émigrés from Russian Azerbaijan. These pioneers lived through very turbulent times, which witnessed revolutions, wars, and the demise of three great multi-ethnic empires (as well as the birth of Turkey and the Soviet-Union).

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[38] Hüseyinzade Ali Bey (Turan) (Azerbaijani: Əli bəy Hüseyzadə, English: Ali bey Huseynzade) (1864-1940) is an Azerbaijani intellectual as well as a doctor. His surname *Turan* refers to the imagined homeland of all Turks (Grigoriadis & Opçin-Kıdal, 2020). In the literature, he is generally accepted as "the intellectual father of *Turanism*" (Gökalp, 1976a; Mardin, 1983). Hüseyinzade (1907)'s *Turan* *r*eferred to the unifying the Oghuz, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Tatars, and Yakuts with respect to literature and culture. As opposed to other Turkish intellectuals who dichotomized Western civilization and Islamic humanism, Hüseyinzade, for the first time, put forward the idea of reconciliation of these two terms (Heyd, 1950).

[39] Zeki Velidi Togan (Bashkir: Әхмәтзәки Әхмәтшаһ улы Вәлиди) (1890-1970) is a historian and Turcologist born in Bashkortostan where he later led a revolutionary and liberation movement.

[40] Yusuf Akçura (Tatar: Yosıf Aqçura) (1876-1935) is an intellectual of Tatar origin who is famous for being a political Pan-Turkist based on race/descent/ethnicity in the literature. In his famous article titled *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* (Three Styles of Politics), Akçura analyzed Pan-Turkism, Ottomanism, and Pan-Islamism. With the help of this famous article in 1903, nationalism in Turkey was politicized (Soysal, 2009).

[41] Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Azerbaijani: Əhməd bəy Ağayev) (1869-1939) is an Azerbaijani journalist and one of the founders of Pan-Turkism. For a detailed account of Ahmed Ağaoğlu's contribution to Turkish nationalism, see A. Holy Shissler, *Between two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the new Turkey* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002).

Turan has become an important symbol that has fired the imaginations of some Turkic nationalists such as Hüseyinzade (without, however, ever leading to the formation of a serious political movement) (Grigoriadis & Opçin-Kıdal, 2020). The more popular idea of Pan-Turkism was born and developed among these Turkic émigrés as a reaction to Pan-Slavism and its burdens such as Christianization and Russification policies. Since they were excluded due to Pan-Slavism, they emigrated to the Ottoman Empire, particularly to İstanbul, "the land of promise for their ideological inclinations and literary ambitions" what Swietochowski (1985) called, and joined the Young Turks. Turkist policies of the Union and Progress, which dominated Ottoman politics starting with the Second Constitutional Era in 1908, that allowed freelance work for these intellectuals in Istanbul, especially the Azerbaijani ones, was instrumental for their migration (Swietochowski, 1985: 70-71). They found the chance to interact with Ottoman intellectuals, which aided the national awakening movement to gain a political character.

Publications such as newspapers, magazines, and books also shaped the spirit of the emerging Turkish nationalism (Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981). Among these, one of the most important ones was *Türk Yurdu* (The Turkish Homeland) which was founded in 1911 and involved the participation of many Turkic intellectuals of Russian origin. *Türk Yurdu* gave the Ottoman intelligentsia an "ethnic" view which was, in fact, foreign to the Ottoman culture. This ethnic outlook met the expectations of young Ottoman intellectuals who felt disenchanted by the developments subsequent to the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and its failure to bring about the resurrection of the Empire. In *Türk Yurdu,* important Turkic intellectuals united under the mantra of Turkish nationalism with the aim of "creating an ideal to be accepted by all Turks,

protecting the political and economic interests of the Turkish element in the Ottoman Empire and making efforts to develop and strengthen the Turkish national spirit among the Ottoman Turks" (Landau, 1981: 43). Furthermore, one of the poems written by the Turkish national poet Mehmet Emin Yurdakul boosted the national feelings in the Greek-Ottoman War (1897) with his poem called *"Cenge Giderken"*[42] (While going to war) (Darendelioğlu, 1975). Among the intellectuals writing during this era was Ziya Gökalp[43] who discussed Pan-Turkism and Westernization, particularly in *Yeni Mecmua* (New Magazine) in opposition to the other two important ideologies of his era, that is, Pan-Islamism and Ottomanism (Georgeon, 1986). A leading figure among them, Ismail Gaspıralı[44] produced popular publications in Crimea, *Tarjuman* (Turkish: Tercüman, English: Interpreter)[45] in line with the idea

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[42] The poem begins as such: "*Ben bir Türk'üm; dinim, cinsim uludur*" (I am a Turk, my religion and my race is great).

[43] Mehmet Ziya Gökalp (Turkish) (1876-1924) was an intellectual, sociologist, poet, writer, and politician. He is regarded as "the intellectual father of Turkish nationalism." In his monograph, Uriel Heyd (1950: vii-x) said Gökalp was "the spiritual founder of Turkish Republic and "the theorist of modern Turkish nationalism." About Gökalp, Niyazi Berkes (1954: 376) said "Gökalp is the best intellectual formulator of the main trends of the Turkish Republic: Westernization, democracy, political and economic national independence, and secularism."

[44] İsmail Gaspıralı (Crimean Tatar: Ismail Gasprinski/ Gasprınsky) (1851-1914) was an intellectual who initiated the Pan-Turkist movement with his famous publication *Tercüman* newspaper (first published in 1883). He also opened *Usul-ü Cedid* (New Method) schools, which inspired the Jadidist movement - the first Turkish enlightenment movement in the fields of language, education, and religion at the beginning of the second half of the 19th century in the Central Asian Republics. These schools were intended to be "administrated by and for Muslims" (Eissenstat, 2001-2002: 32).

[45] Both newspapers *Yeni Mecmua* (New Magazine) and *Tercüman* (Interpreter) were written in the Ottoman Turkish language with the Arabic alphabet. They were later romanized when the alphabet

of *dilde, fikirde, ishte birlik* (unity at language, opinion/idea, and work). In *Tarjuman*, Gaspıralı suggested that Muslims living in the Russian Empire should seek union in language, purpose, and work for their unity in culture. He also suggested that Ottoman Turkish (the common language of Istanbul) be used among the existing Turkic dialects as a common language in Muslim organizations as well as in the press. This was a necessary step to achieve cultural union through a literary language (Gaspıralı, 2004). Thus, through publications, a sense of unity among all Turkic communities in Russia was gradually emerging (Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981).

Cultural Pan-Turkism, which Gaspirali initiated to protect the Turkic communities living in Tsarist Russia with the motto of "unity at language, opinion/idea, and work," Özdoğan (2009) argues, was transformed into a political movement by Yusuf Akçura with his article *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* (Three-Style Politics).[46] In that piece, Akçura (1998) discusses the three possible political ideologies that could potentially save the Empire, namely, Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism, and Pan-Turkism. Having discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each policy,[47] Grigoriadis (2007: 434) observed, Akçura "seemed inclined towards Pan-Turkism." Later on, Akçura

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reform took place in Republican Turkey in 1928. Both aimed to simplify the Ottoman Turkish language by eliminating Arabic and Persian words or phrases.

[46] Akçura wrote Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset (Three Ways of Policy) in Cairo in 1904, yet his main influence appeared before the Balkan Wars in 1911, when it was re-published in Istanbul.

[47] "Akçura dismissed Ottomanism as a chimera, given that none of the Ottoman ethnic and religious communities was willing to substitute Ottomanism for its own identity. Pan-Islamism was also rejected as unrealistic, given the reaction it would cause from colonial Western Powers, which ruled over large numbers of Muslim subjects. Akçura also noted that Pan-Turkism would antagonize the Russian Empire, which governed the Caucasus and Central Asia" (Grigoriadis, 2007: 434).

became a political Pan-Turkist —an imagined community comprising of people from Turkic ethnic origin— which constituted the basis of Turkish nationalism (Georgeon, 1986). Cultural Pan-Turkism aimed at uniting all the Turks under a common cultural roof by "creating a literary Turkish intelligible from Bursa to Bukhara," while political Pan-Turkism appeared with the aim of "unification of all Turks in a single state spanning a territory from the Balkans to Eastern Turkestan" (Uzer, 2016: 8). Solidarity around the publication activities among the Turkic intellectuals was an important instrument of Turkic intellectuals in their struggle for constructing an idea of a common language. Publications were bridges between the intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkic populations beyond its borders. Therefore, the present nation-states have their particular 'national print languages,' and the idea of a nation was constructed through an ideal: the unity in the language (Opçin, 2018).

Not only publications but also associations played a critical role in constructing Turkish identity subsequent to the Balkan Wars. Among these were *Türk Bilgi Derneği* (Turkish Knowledge Association) an association founded in 1913 by medical students under the auspices of *Türk Ocağı* (the Turkish Hearth) and *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (the Committee of Union and Progress), *Türk Derneği* (the Turkish Society) (1908), *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Homeland) (1911), and *Türk Ocağı* (the Turkish Hearth) (1912) (Arai, 1992; Kushner, 1977; Landau, 1981). Through these associations, repertoire based on Turkish nationalism with social and historical origins was formed and disseminated. Finally, with the establishment of the Turkish Hearth Association in 1912, Bora (2018) argues, Turkish nationalism appeared as a political movement. The idea of Turkish nationalism later manifested itself as one of the most important tenets of the founding Turkish Republic in 1923.

2.2.   The Brief Historical Development of Turkish Nationalism in Modern Turkey

Modern Turkey's history, Aydın and Taşkın (2018) argue, is divided into two great paradigmatic periods: from the Tanzimat to the Republican era (1839-1923) and the Republican era (1923-present). The sub-periods of both periodizations emerged as the Tanzimat, the Hamidian, and the Second Constitutional Eras for the former part; and mono- and multi-party periods for the latter part, each based on varying degrees of emphasis either on the state or society. While both mono- and multi-party periods manifest a historical permanence regarding shared political heritage and practices of founding ideology (Kemalism), the former period witnessed an authoritarian regime lasted until 1946 whereas the latter period seems more democratic with the exceptions of four successful military interventions in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997, and two unsuccessful coup attempts (Heper, 2019).

The Kemalist Revolution's sui generis political vocabulary[48] enabled the founders to build a new nation-state —the Republic of Turkey— by abolishing traditional allegiances and thus presenting a new definition of Turkishness. Having left the patrimonial characteristics of the Ottoman *ancien régime* (Mardin, 1971), the new state was born as a Republic in 1923 with the principle of "Sovereignty rests unconditionally with the nation." The new notion of national identity enabled unity with the help of *Cumhuriyetçi Halk Partisi* (the Republican People's Party, CHP)

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[48] For instance, *millet* referred to distinct religious communities in the Ottoman Empire (Davison, 1990) while the term *ulus* appeared as more of a secular term in the Turkish Republic.

guided by Six Principles of Kemalism[49] (the founding political philosophy of the new-born Turkish Republic), among which there were *cumhuriyetçilik* (republicanism), *milliyetçilik* (nationalism), *halkçılık* (populism), *laiklik* (laicism), *devletçilik* (statism), and *devrimcilik* (revolutionism).[50] Mardin (2000) puts forward that the CHP's elite pursued the nation-building with Turkish identity, yet not chauvinism. The establishment of the Republic of Turkey appeared as an elite project of top-down revolution with some of past legacies from its predecessor Ottoman Empire underneath such as a strong state tradition (Heper, 1985); strong center, and weak periphery (Mardin, 1973). With this project, the founder of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk][51] aimed at creating a nation which included diverse groups that "declared their willingness to live in Turkey with shared ideals and viewed themselves as makers of a common history" (Tepe, 2000: 61) while also modernizing the country along Western lines.

The definition of Turkishness has yet taken many other different forms in changing contexts. Like many identity claims, the definitions of Turkishness, at least some of its manifestations, varied greatly in their emphasis on the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism in different contexts. The extent to which these components are related to the Turkish identity has hitherto been debated in modern Turkish politics.

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[49] At the Third Congress of the Republican People's Party in Ankara in 1931, these Six Principles of Kemalism was adopted and later added to the constitution as an official state ideology in 1937.

[50] Having treated them as modern traits of nationalism, Hostler (1993) thinks that these principles are nationalism and its derivatives.

[51] The surname, like all other surnames, was adopted after 1934 with the Family Name Law.

There have been various, even conflicting, perspectives of Turkish identity since the early 1920s. In the early 1920s, Turkishness was defined mainly on the basis of Islam. For instance, in one of the meetings held on February 19, 1920, in the National Assembly, Abdulaziz Mecdi Efendi talked about the concept of *"anâsır-ı islâmiye"* which denoted Muslim elements/Islamic nations[52]: "What we call 'Turks' is diverse Muslim groups such as Turks, Kurds, Laz, Cherkess… Is that right? If not, please use the concept *anâsır-ı islâmiye* (members of the Islamic community) ((Karesi), 1920: 170). In one of his speeches at the Parliament in 1920, May, Mustafa Kemal (as cited in Heper, 2007: 91) said: "The people who constitute this exalted Assembly are not only Turks, or Circassians, Kurds, or Lazes. They are composed of all the Islamic elements, and they together constitute a coherent whole." Many members of the Parliament, including Mustafa Kemal, emphasized the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam) in the early 1920s.

In the process of the establishment of the Republic, Islam was a *de facto* criterion of Turkishness, excluding the non-Muslims (Grigoriadis, 2013) since the society was predominantly Muslim (Poulton, 1997). Much of the immigration policy of Turkey, such as "the Great Population Exchange"[53] between Turkey and Greece in the early Republican period, was based on religion. This policy was applied even to

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[52] The definition is taken from luggat.com

[53] The Convention regarding the mandotary exchange of Turkish and Greek populations was signed at Lousanne, Switzerland, on January 30, 1923, by Turkey and Greece.

non-Muslim Turkic communities, as in the case of the Gagauz population,[54] most of whom are Orthodox Christians. These policies indicate that the defining element of Turkishness was Islam at the time. Given the dilemma of Islam as a *de facto* criterion of Turkishness and secular aspects of the nation state-building process, one might argue that the tension between religion and the nation and/or nationalism existed in the early Republican period.

Later, Tepe (2000) claims that the Kemalist state did leave almost no room for Islam in the public sphere.[55] Aydın and Taşkın (2018) contest the view that the Kemalist notion of nationalism was based entirely on Turkishness (ethnic Turk) and based on the idea of establishing a society that excludes Islam and did not live with an Islamic ethos. Similarly, Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) argues that Islam and sectarianism were denied in the definition of the Turkish national identity since Islam was considered as an obstacle to modernizing the country along Western lines, and sectarianism might have had a possible divisive impact on a community comprising predominantly the Sunni sect but had lived for centuries together with the minority of Alevi sect of both Kurdish and Turkish stock. Instead, Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) thinks

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[54] For more information regarding the case of Gagauz community during the establishment of the Republic, see Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, *Instilling religion in Greek and Turkish nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[55] "Radical reforms include the following: Law number 689, dated 12/26/1925: Amendment to the Calendar; the law dated 11/30/1925: Closure of *Tekke, Zaviye,* and *Türbe* (Religious educational complex, shrines, and tombs); Law number 1353, dated 11/1/1928: Acceptance of Latin Alphabetical System, the law dated 5/24/1928: Acceptance of New Numeric System, the law dated 5/2/1928: Elimination of the statement "the religion of the Turkish state is Islam;" finally, declaration of the Turkish state as secular in 1937" (Tepe, 2000: 70). In addition, the caliphate was abolished in 1924, March 3 by the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

that Turkish ethnicity constituted a central place in the Kemalist ideology of nationalism to create a societal bond within people.

The ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism were being emphasized by Atatürk between 1920 and 1924 while its civic component remained constant, until the adoption of the 1924 constitution when there occurred an increasing emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism. In his analysis of how nationalism has evolved in various periods of Turkish politics, Heper (2007) argues that the founders of the state adopted cultural nationalism in the early 1920s, and then the Republican nationalism moved —at least legally/constitutionally— from cultural to civic one in 1924. According to the 1924 Constitution, "irrespective of race and religion, every citizen is a Turk" embodies the very tenets of the civic components of Turkish nationalism. However, Heper (2007) contends, underneath this civic nationalism, cultural nationalism continued to exist among the statesmen and people.

Even though there occurred an increasing emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism in 1924, other components persisted underneath. For instance, "the religion of the Turkish state is Islam" constituted the second article of the 1924 Constitution.[56] Although the statement that "the religion of Turkish state is Islam" was eliminated in 1928 and the Turkish state was declared to be secular in 1937, *Imam-Hatip Okulları*[57] and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* (the Directorate of Religious

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[56] For more articles, see https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1924-anayasasi/

[57] *Imam-Hatip Okulları* (Imam-Preacher Schools) are religious vocational schools that aim to train imams and preachers in Turkey.

Affairs)[58] continued to exist, reflecting the continuing role of Islam, yet limited. Moreover, Islam, Mardin (1991) contends, provided a set of tools for societal interaction in society. While the Kemalist state declared to be dedicated to its principle of secularism, religion has remained as a symbolic tie for social cohesion thus far.

In the process of secularization policies in the second half of the 1920s, the Kemalist discourse emphasized one of the cultural components of Turkish nationalism that is language, such as Turkification of Ottoman language and Latinization of the alphabet since Turkish was considered to be appropriate for the Westernization project, not Persian or Arabic while also including its ethnic components. The researchers tried to prove the origins of the Turks as from Central Asia, the source of civilization as Turkic, and the minorities in Turkey as also of Turkic origin in the early years of the Republic. Despite the fact that one might infer a tendency towards an ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (that is, Smith's ethnic model) —that is, creating a perception of common descent in the nation-state conjuncture—, the civic component of Turkish nationalism was at the forefront in defining the Kemalist nationalism. The territorial, secular aspects of the nation state-building process in line with Gellner's modernization paradigm (that is, high-culture-building and state-building within the given boundaries) were effective in this orientation.

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[58] In the law about the Directorate of Religious Affairs, it is said that it was founded "to carry out the works related to the beliefs of Islam, worship and moral principles, to enlighten the society about religion and to manage places of worship." See,
https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.633.pdf

Even though Atatürk at the beginning supported the Turkish History Thesis[59] and the Sun Language Theory[60] developed in the 1930s, Heper (2007) argues that at the end of the day, neither did he believe the plausibility of the projects, nor approved them. While the former aimed at boosting national pride and morale with a glorious past, the latter was intended to build the nation's self-esteem (Heper, 2007).[61] One might argue that the emphasis on the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver for the nation-building endeavor of the founders of the Republic. With all these developments, history was rewritten to build a new Turkish identity, emphasizing the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism, and leaving the Ottoman and Islamic identity behind.

The emphasis of the Republican ideology, therefore, moved from its emphasis on cultural and civic components to the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (what Tepe (2000) calls racism[62]) in the early 1930s while the other components

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[59]The Turkish History thesis is a pseudohistorical hypothesis that posited that Turks, as the most ancient people, contributed to civilization in the areas they inhabited. Moreover, it posited that the origins of all ethnic groups trace back to Turks (Heper, 2007).

[60] The Sun Language Theory was a pseudolinguistic hypothesis which posited that all languages originated from proto-Turkic language.

[61]"The history of nationalism [in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic], is partly the history of the increasing prestige of the term "Turk" from the nineteenth to the twentieth century" (Mardin, 1993).

[62] Eissenstat (2005: 254) argues that "race" in the Turkish context was used as "a metaphor of national unity" in the official ideology with the inclusive discourse (as opposed to exclusivity in the West): "The ties of blood, it was hoped, would combine with those of language, culture, citizenship, and religion to weld diverse communities into a single people."

remained part of the repertoire. For instance, Recep Peker —an ideologue of the CHP— talked about the ethnic characteristics of Turkish nationalism such as "the pureness of the Turkish blood" or "the power of the Ottoman militia echoed the particularity of Turkish blood" during the 1930s (Peker, 1936: 5-7). As a result of this ethnic element, the phrase, the Turk, denoted a name for a particular descent which traces its roots in Central Asia in the official discourse. Tepe (2000) challenges this romanticized construction of pre-Islamic Turkish history as ideologically instrumental for making an alternative foundation for secular Turkishness. On the other hand, Çağaptay (2002) claims that (juxtaposition) territorial, religious, and ethnic concentric zones of Turkishness embodied the Turkish nationalism of "the High Kemalism era" during the 1930s.

While the ethnic component was emphasized, other components persisted underneath. For instance, at the Third General Congress of the CHP held in May 1931, the nation was defined as "a social and economic community connected through language, culture, and ideals" (as cited in Heper, 2007: 86). Mustafa Kemal (as cited in Heper, 2007: 84) defined the nation on the basis of "historical affinity, common morality, loyalty to a common political entity, a common homeland, common roots and descent, and a common language." As can be seen from the definition, like other nationalisms, Kemalist nationalism comprised of ethnic (i.e., common roots and descent), cultural (e.g., common morality, common language), and civic components (e.g., loyalty to a common political identity, a common homeland) of Turkish nationalism due to multidimensionality of nationalism in the nation-state structure. Consequently, the ethnic, cultural, and civic of Turkish nationalism constituted the

very tenets of Kemalism[63]- the ideology of the Turkish Republic ascribed to its founder, Mustafa Kemal. Even though all currents of Turkish nationalism have concerned with protecting the sovereignty and unity like this official nationalism (Kadıoğlu, 2011), from the late 1930s onwards, there have been various perspectives of Turkish nationalism.

Nationalism was, therefore, not only a construct in the state's ideology but was also evidenced among civil groups in the early 1930s as a result of Hüseyin Nihal Atsız's (a Turkist scholar at İstanbul University) literary works reflecting racist views such as *Atsız Mecmua* (1931) and *Orhun* (1933). In these journals, Atsız generally criticized the Turkish History Thesis[64] (Aytürk, 2011). Later, Atsız was accused of being involved in civilian anti-communist protests in 1944 and some pro-Atsız circles later joined the MHP, as we shall see in chapter 3.

During the single-party era, *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (the Republican People's Party, CHP) had a monopoly over the political activities conducted by students'

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[63] The term Kemalism was first used by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu to mean "the new nation- and state-building ideology that defined the legitimate political vocabulary constituting the basic principles and values of the Turkish path to modernity" (İrem, 2002: 87). In the mainstream historiography of the Turkish Revolution, it was later used as "a new political stand that interpreted the revolutionary practices that had taken place between 1923 and 1935 with the framework of the tradition of ideological positivism" (İrem, 2002: 87).

[64] Turkish History Thesis as well as the Turkish Language Thesis of the 1930s "put the ancient Turks on the highest pedestal possible, extolled their contribution to civilization and reminded the Western nations that they had to acknowledge the Turks as part of their family, as a nation which contributed most generously to their civilization" (Aytürk, 2004: 2). Balcı (2011) argues that the Kemalists used racism pragmatically contrary to the strict racist approaches in Germany and Italy in Turkish history textbooks, aiming to provide a source of pride for the Turkish people.

associations and trade unions as well as economic activities (Karpat, 1959). Landau (1982) claims that some sections of Turkish society have had almost no chance to form a political movement until the 1940s due to the CHP's monopoly.

Turkish political history witnessed a remarkable change in terms of democracy during the 1950s, when it adopted a multi-party system. Turkish multi-party politics have also defined the general themes in the changing definitions of national identity. Tepe (2000) contends that the 1950 elections resulted in an electoral victory of those who were the long-term opponents of the Kemalist reforms such as secularism, the decreasing role of Islam in the public domain, and the extensive state involvement in the market during the CHP government, that is, the *Demokrat Parti* (the Democrat Party, DP). Demirel (2011) considers the DP as a prominent movement with national discourse against bureaucratic opposition, which, for years, looked warmly at the traditional religious conservative groups, coded as 'the other' of the Republic. According to Demirel (2011), the political meaning of the DP coming to power can be read as opening the way for the mass excluded from the political life during the consolidation of the Republican regime to make its presence felt in the process of influencing the executive block. On the one hand, experiencing democracy was creating excitement in the state and society, on the other hand, this new experience was creating anxiety in the upper echelons of the state.

Having ended the one-party chapter, Turkish politics entered into the multi-party period in 1946 with first the Democrat Party, continued with its successors (the Justice Party and with minor parties under the leadership of conservatives). Other than these groups, Lewis (1968) claims, there were extremists in the far-right of the ideological spectrum who were small, exterior to the system, usually chauvinist with

a Pan-Turk, anti-communist orientation, and never achieved to form a political party until 1965. As opposed to the state-centered characteristics of the Kemalist regime such as constraining religion to the personal sphere, Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) argues, the society-centered approach of the multi-party era and liberal aspects of the 1960s weakening the social influence of Kemalism led to the emergence of new ideologies and their mass movements challenging the Kemalist tenets. Among them, the MHP as a bottom-up movement together with the radical left were born with their particular identity claims. In the next chapters, we will see how and why the identity claims of the MHP has evolved in time in detail.

CHAPTER III

ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ: LEADER IN PRISON, IDEAS IN GOVERNMENT[65]

This chapter contextualizes Türkeş's nationalist ideas and practices. While providing a historical/contextual framework, this chapter will discuss Türkeş's nationalist ideas and practices by considering the components of Turkish nationalism. Concurrently, Türkeş's biography will be offered.

3.1. Origins and Political Career

Türkeş had been the cult leader of the idealist movement and ideologue of the CKMP/MHP. He was born in 1917 in the capital city of Cyprus —Nicosia— where he received both his primary and secondary education. Later, to pursue his studies further, in 1932, he and his family migrated to Turkey. Between 1933 and 1936, Türkeş continued his secondary education at *Kuleli* military lycée in İstanbul.

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[65] Part of the data and arguments proposed in this chapter was accepted for publication in Ioannis N. Grigoriadis and Arzu Opçin-Kıdal, "Imagining *Turan:* homeland and its political implications in the literary work of Hüzeyinzade Ali [Turan] and Mehmet Ziya [Gökalp]," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2020.

Türkeş passionately continued his military career and graduated from "the General Military School" in 1938, "the Infantry Shooting School" in 1939, and "the Military Academy" in 1955 (Landau, 1982: 588). He worked as "a staff officer, a member of the Turkish General Staff delegation to the NATO Standing Group in Washington" between 1955-1957 and "the Nuclear School in Federal Germany" between 1959-1960 (Landau, 1982: 588).[66] Türkeş was successful in his military career and finally promoted to a colonel rank. Besides his military career, Landau (1982) notes that Türkeş had always been ambitious about politics. Yet, Özbudun (as cited in Landau, 1982: 589) claims that the tradition was the separation of the military from the politics, established by Mustafa Kemal in the early Republic. At the time, a military career rarely led to a political road. Türkeş was among those who rarely were active in the Turkish political arena while having a military career.

In addition to his military and political career, Türkeş was an author who wrote numerous volumes that comprise of his articles and speeches[67] (Türkeş, 1968a, 1974a, 1977b, 1979a, 1994b, 1994d, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1996, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2017), among which 'the party's doctrine' constituted the greater part, *the Nine Lights*, which later became the guiding principles of the party. The Nine Lights doctrine was first published in 1965 as a 16-page booklet and in its numerous editions, was entitled *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık* (The National Doctrine:

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[66] Subsequent to his internship in the USA, he returned to Turkey and Türkeş (as cited in Turgut, 1995: 80) said that he was appointed as a guerilla teacher at Çankırı. Yet, there is no guerilla school in Çankırı. There is no such thing in the Turkish Armed Forces as well, Türkeş here might have talked about a course that taught special warfare techniques.

[67] Several of which were reprinted in later volumes.

Nine Lights). In his later works, Türkeş generally elaborated on this first booklet. The 2017 edition contains the original text with more explanations and extra articles, making up a 549-page volume. These writings, as well as his speeches, help us grasp Türkeş's ideas and practices.

Among his publications, his first printed article in 1939, March 19, titled *Tuna* (The Danube) indicated important signs of his Turkist ideology, which had remained more or less the same in his discourse until his death. In it, he wrote "*Türksüz Tuna öksüz, Tunasız Türk yaslıdır*" (The Danube is an orphan without the Turks; the Turks mourn without the Danube), praising Turkishness (reprinted in Türkeş, 1961: 5-7) together with its close relationship with the Danube. *Tuna* was a river along which the Ottoman army was defended Plevne (a city of Bulgaria) against the Russian invasion which was called *Plevne Savunması* (the Defense of Plevna) during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878.[68] With this historical and symbolic event, Türkeş referred to the heroism of Turks, praising Turkdom.

Türkeş appeared in the political arena in 1944, when he joined the civilian anti-communist protests.[69] These protests were the first important break in the

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[68] The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, also known as the 93 War in Turkish history, is one of the last battles of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century.

[69] Türkeş wrote his memoirs regarding these events in 1950 in his books *Türkçülük ve Türk Birliği* (Pan-Turkism and Turkic Unity), reprinted in *Gönül Seferberliği* (Mobilization of the Heart) as well as in *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayı* (1944 Nationalism Event). In his book called *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayı* (1944 Nationalism Event), Türkeş (1968) pointed out that the 1944 Events had started with a letter Nihal Atsız sent to the Prime Minister of those times -Şükrü Saraçoğlu, - which later caused a violent conflict between the communists and the nationalists in the streets and resulted in the famous 1944 trials at which Atsız and Türkeş were imprisoned around twenty-five months.

nationalist tradition/thought of the protestors and the state - what Aytürk (2014) calls the break between the non-Kemalist (the Racist Turanist Atsız group) and Kemalist nationalists as a result of disagreements over homeland and racism (Aytürk, 2014).[70] In these protests, Türkeş strove for the rights of Turkic communities living under the Soviet Union regime and emphasized the union of all Turkic communities to render Turkey a world power.

The protests Türkeş involved in 1944, leading to a chaotic situation in the country, were immediately repressed by the government. The following proceedings resulted in his imprisonment together with other participators, which was called as *ırkçılık-turancılık davası* (racism-turanism case) in Turkish politics. In his trial, Türkeş gave clues about his understanding of nationalism. His defense in these trials is in two books called *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayları* (1944 Nationalist Events) and *Bir Devrin Perde Arkası* (Backstage of an Era).[71] In his trial, Türkeş glorified Turkish history and talked about the superiority of Turkishness (Türkeş, 1968a, 1998a). He said:

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[70] Aytürk (2014) suggests that before that break Turkish nationalism could be considered as secular, Westernizing, and positivist.

[71] How he further explained this issue by giving an example differs from the descriptions in these books. In *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayları* (1944 Nationalism Events), Türkeş (1968a: 74-75) said, "For example, today a Jew comes to claim to be a Turk. But his/her language is not Turkish, traditions are not Turkish traditions, everything else is different. Such people are not called Turks. As I said, the way I can accept is to internalize Turkishness with its language, tradition, and everything." One might argue that in this speech, Türkeş emphasized the cultural components of Turkish nationalism. On the other hand, in the other book entitled *Bir Devrin Perde Arkası* (Backstage of an Era) which quoted his speech, Türkeş (1998a: 20) adds to his original statement above with this change in emphasis: "For example, today a Jew comes to claim to be a Turk. But his/her language is not Turkish, his/her mother is not Turkish. Everything is different. Such people are not called Turks. As I said, s/he should be Turkish with her mother, language, everything." This last sentence emphasizes descent since he talks about being a Turk from the mother's side. This crucial difference between the two sources in defining Turkishness

I believe that the Turkish nation is a unique being on earth and regarding heroism, there is no superior nation than the Turkish nation. I can show the War of Independence as the closest example … Even though we were surrounded by enemies on four sides, thanks to our heroism and superior being we have raised our honor 10 times and 20 times superior to the enemy in all respects … In our barracks, we hang Atatürk's sayings such as "a Turk is worth ten enemies," "a Turk is worth the world" … I think that the principle that the Turkish Republic adopted is right, that is, to prioritize Turkishness more than anything else as well as to represent non-Turkish elements with culture. I see it right, as far as the administration is concerned, my personal opinion is that all the persons who will work should be Turks who are represented and who do not consider themselves to be anything but "Turkish" or "people of Turkish blood" (Türkeş, 1968a: 72-74).

As can be seen from this speech, in his early years in the political arena, Türkeş emphasized the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism more than other components. In this period, one might argue that the Pan-Turkist tendencies of Türkeş were evident, and therefore the emphasis on the ethnic component prevailed. One might also argue that the distant ideal in Türkeş's political agenda was Pan-Turkism - a glimmer of hope that Gökalp sowed its seeds years ago. However, this ideal of Türkeş remained as the distant ideal in Türkeş's ethnic political agenda and, as we shall see, he tried to adapt his ideas and party to changing conditions, with varying degrees of emphasis on various components of Turkish nationalism.

The broad definition of nationalism on the axis of cultural and linguistic partnerships expanded the geography of Türkeş's Turkism. Going beyond the borders of Turkey, the distant ideal in Türkeş's political agenda was thus Pan-Turkism. Tuğcugil (1980) argues that Türkeş's Turanism (what actually is Pan-Turkism) strived

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renders the issue ambiguous. Yet, as it is seen in his other books, writings, and practices, Türkeş emphasized both ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism as well as the civic component of Turkish nationalism (to a lesser extent) in the following years.

to "unify all Turkish speaking ethnic Turks in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the Soviet Union." In his book, *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık* (the National Doctrine Nine Lights), Türkeş (2017) maintained that the Turks living outside of Turkey are considered as part of the Turkish nation. This is what makes Türkeş a Pan-Turkist.[72] Moreover, his title *Başbuğ* (Chieftain)[73] means leader in pre-Islamic Turkic communities, which could also be an indicator of his loyalty to the Pan-Turkism ideal. The title of *Başbuğ* was instrumental to Alparslan Türkeş with its historical-cultural heritage to create a cult leader representing an authority that transcends spatial and temporal boundaries (Erken, 2013). He also often ended his chapters with the slogan "*Zafer Büyük Türk milletinindir*" (Victory to the Great Turkish Nation!) (Türkeş, 1972), implying his Pan-Turkist tendencies.

Jacob Landau presents a difference between Pan-Turanism and Pan-Turkism. Pan-Turkism aims at cultural and/or physical unification of all peoples of Turkic origin living in/out of the Ottoman borders, whereas Pan-Turanism refers to the unification of Turanian people such as Hungarians, Estonians, Finns, and with those living in the Ottoman lands and the prairie lands of Central Asia (Landau, 1995). In addition to this definition of Pan-Turkism based on ethnic origin, Charles Warren Hostler also regards Pan-Turkism to be a matter of language unity. Hostler (1993: 1) claims that the Pan-

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[72] Landau (2002) argues that Türkeş's memoirs of growing up in Cyprus might have promoted his strong support for his union with the other Turkic communities as Türkeş had been consistently an ardent advocate of Pan-Turkism. Similarly, Poulton (1997) thinks that the Pan-Turkist overtones of Türkeş are not so surprising that Türkeş was born and raised in Cyprus.

[73] The title "was first used at the 1967 Congress" (Erken, 2013: 91) and it means "the leader of a tribe in former Turkic states (Erken, 2013: 8)

Turkism concerns "Anatolia and the Turkic-speaking areas of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as well as other Central Asian Territories (including Sinkiang, Afghanistan, Turkestan, Iranian, and Azerbaijan." Hostler (1993) further argues that Pan-Turkism emerged as a result of the increasing nationalist ideology subsequent to the demise of the Ottoman Empire (1918) and the 1917 Russian Revolution. That said, the 1917 Russian Revolution awakened the nationalist sentiments of Turko Tatars and other non-Russian people in the Russian Empire, an awakening which finally led to the transformation of the centralized empire into a federative state comprising of several republics with varying degrees of autonomy.

Drawing upon Landau's definition, Türkeş appeared as a Pan-Turkist, rather than a Turanist (yet these terms in Turkey have been used interchangeably). Türkeş defined himself as a Pan-Turkist as well. In his book, *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık* (The National Doctrine Nine Lights), Türkeş (2017) also touched upon the difference between Turanism and Pan-Turkism. Türkeş (2017) argued that the conditions before the First World War created an idea of uniting not only Turkey's Turks but also Turks living outside Turkey among the intellectuals such as İsmail Gaspıralı in Crimea and others in Kazan, Azerbaijan, and Turkestan where people were struggling against domination and tried to establish cultural ties with the communities similar to themselves. This gave rise to the flourishment of the idea of Pan-Turkism. On the other hand, Türkeş (2017) argued that Turanism was a concept of a broader area, that is, Hungarians, Finns, Mishar Tatars, and other nations with Turan origin first created this idea against German and Slav domination.

Concerning Turkey, Türkeş (2017) discussed six different dominant ideas, among which there were Islamism, Ottomanism, Nationalism, Pan-Turkism and

Turanism, Turkic Unity; and, *Türkiyecilik* and *Anadoluculuk.* According to Türkeş (2017), Islamism is the view that unifies all Muslim countries. The idea of Ottomanism, on the other hand, has been an idea to unite the various peoples living within the boundaries of the Empire, regardless of religion and nationality under the name of "Ottoman" in the *Tanzimat* Era, yet the conditions in the relevant historical process rendered this idea impossible. Lastly, after the National Liberation War, the ideas of *Türkiyecilik* and *Anadoluculuk* flourished. While the latter argues that Turks settled down in Turkey after the 1071 battle of Central Asia, Muslimized the people living in Anatolia and brought a new presence; thus, the racist history should be separated from national history, the former is an idea of protecting and advancing the Turks living in Turkey's borders defined by *Lozan* Treaty, not the Turks living outside Turkey (Türkeş, 2017: 58-59). The most 'impressive' idea in Turkey, according to Türkeş (2017), was the idea of a Turkic Unity —implying his Pan-Turkist tendency— which was manifested as a political movement by Enver Pasha, yet this idea could not come to fruition due to historical conditions subsequent to First World War.

How and when the idea of a Turkish nation/nationalism appeared in the history of political thought was another concern of Türkeş. The idea of Turkish nationalism, Türkeş (2017: 56) argued, was born from the desire of the Turkish nation to defend its existence legitimately. Turkism and his understanding of nationalism are based on this spiritual consciousness of protecting one's national self. Türkeş (2017: 57) asserted that everyone who has reached the consciousness of being a Turk and sincerely says "I'm Turkish" is Turkish. Turkish nationalism thus lacks the anthropological racism that endangers world peace of his understanding of nationalism is in his own words a "spiritual, rational, democratic, modern

nationalism" and the idea of Turkism was born out of this consciousness and emotion; moreover, it is the opinion that every activity is organized and implemented in a way appropriate to the interests of the Turkish nation (Türkeş, 2017: 57). Turkish nationalism is thus a state of feeling and consciousness that takes strength from the deep love and belief in the Turkish nation in Türkeş's understanding.

3.2. From the Republican Peasants' Nation Party (CKMP) to the Nationalist Action Party (MHP)

Türkeş re-appeared in the political arena on May 27, 1960, among the leaders who initiated a military intervention. During the 1950s, Turkey had witnessed growing socio-economic turbulence and political chaos under the DP government. The Turkish military had long perceived the DP government as a threat to Kemalist tenets due to its approach to religion (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018). To overcome these difficulties, the military intervened in politics in 1960, May 27 with a declaration on the radio by Colonel Alparslan Türkeş.[74]

Soon after, the active officers involved in the coup formed *Milli Birlik Komitesi* (National Union Committee), in which Cemal Gürsel[75] was President and Alparslan Türkeş undersecretary of prime ministry, and intervened in the political sphere, by

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[74] Taylak (1976) says that Türkeş appeared in the political arena as a man of his own rules and he did not accept this action as a coup d'état. Türkeş (as cited in Taylak, 1976: 17) said: "We called this movement a public order movement and *Ak Devrim* (White Revolution). As a matter of fact, after the 27th of May, we called my book *Ak Devrim* which we prepared and published at the Prime Ministry. May 27 was not a coup d'état; it was not prepared as a coup d'état."

[75] He was a Turkish army officer who later became the fourth President of Turkey.

banning all political meetings/activities. In the process, disagreements arose within the committee. On the one hand, there was a group headed by Cemal Madanoğlu, who advocated a quick transition to political life; on the other hand, the group headed by Alparslan Türkeş demanded that the military administration should continue for a long time rather than turning to democracy (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018). The latter group, including Türkeş and 13 others —the group called "The Fourteen"[76]— was liquidated by an operation known as *"14'ler Olayı"* (The Event of the 14) and appointed to posts abroad in 1960.

After the 1960 coup, Turkey moved into the regular parliamentary regime with a new constitution —the 1961 Constitution— which differs from previous constitutions. The first difference is the broadening of the area of citizens' rights and freedoms, which were very limited in the previous constitutions, giving weight to the social responsibilities of the state and bringing the institutions needed in the rule of law (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018). The second difference contrasts with the first. This second feature, based on the experience of the DP period, is the creation of new tutelage institutions and the weakening of the possibilities of the democratic sphere by bringing strict control of these institutions over the parliament (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018: 89). The former feature led to the founding of political/trade union organizations and a wide berth for the press changes accelerated youth movements.

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[76] This group comprised of Alparslan Türkeş, Muzaffer Özdağ, Dündar Taşer, Ahmet Er, Münir Köseoğlu, Numan Esin, Orhan Erkanlı, Orhan Kabibay, Şefik Soyuyüce, Muzeffer Karan, Rıfat Baykal, Muzaffer Kaplan, Fazıl Akkoyunlu and İrfan Solmazer. In the joint letter Türkeş sent to this group at the beginning of 1962, Türkeş (cited in Akpınar, 2005: 29) referred to themselves as "*Türklüğün ümit dünyasını aydınlatan meşale*" (torch that illuminates the hope world of Turkishness) for his friends.

As a result of rising youth movements, Turkish politics of post-1960 has been depicted as a clash/conflict between left-right axes of the political spectrum, among which nationalism occupied a central place in the Turkish right. In this environment of freedom resulting from the 1961 Constitution, a Turkish "left" was born, educated in Marxist classics. This intellectual Marxist/socialist trend later turned out to be street politics/youth movement with frequent protests and boycotts; finally leading to fights on the streets and university campuses. Having considered itself as a reaction against the "left," the Turkish "right" perceived these leftist actions and organizations as a threat against the Kemalist state; and the MHP's youth wing did not hesitate to engage in an armed conflict with these groups. To represent nationalist youth against the Idea Clubs of the left, a CMKP youth was established; the first one at Ankara University.

Modern Turkey witnessed other such trends during the 1960s/70s. On the one hand, Aras and Bacik (2000) argue, there was the articulation of Islamic elements in constructing Turkish national identity; on the other hand, there also developed an adoration of the Ottoman historical heritage. These events which created a new type of state-society relation contributed to the rise of the CKMP/MHP. The rise of nationalism in Turkish political culture results from several factors, among which Canefe and Bora (2003) identify large-scale socio-economic changes especially between the 1950s and 1970s as the most important factor contributing to the emergence of what they call fascist movements such as de-centralization of the domestic market and massive migration from rural to urban environments and the post-1980 corrosion of center-right political heritage. Furthermore, Canefe and Bora (2003) claim that, since the 1960s, radical Turkish nationalism and state-sponsored

Kemalism were side by side as allied ideologies in certain matters like anti-communism, citizenship, cultural politics, and migration issues.

On the other hand, Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) argues that the society-centered approach of the multi-party era and liberal aspects of the 1960s weakening the social influence of Kemalism led to the emergence of new ideologies and their mass movements challenging the Kemalist tenets. Among them, the CKMP together with the radical left was born with its particular identity claims. Instead, Landau (1982), argues that the military's bust to realize any meaningful improvements regarding the socio-economic inequalities led many groups to pressure the government to take actions such as liberalizing the broadcasting. Leftist circles began to flourish; one of which was able to form a political party under the name of the Labor Party of Turkey in 1961. Landau (1982) claims that under these situations, the emergence of the extreme right as a combative/aggressive power was only a matter of time and chance.

Having returned from his post in India in 1963, Türkeş re-entered politics while leaving his military commission. In the same year, Akpınar (2005) argues, Colonel Talat Aydemir[77] planning to make a military coup, asked Türkeş to join his plan. Having rejected him, Türkeş proposed Aydemir do legitimate politics under the umbrella of a political party Türkeş would lead; Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 34) indicated his growing political ambitions as follows: "Today, the country has turned to a multi-party democratic regime. If we think to serve Turkey in the political sphere, we should do in the way of a legitimate constitutional order." Here, Türkeş

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[77] A Turkish soldier

emphasized that the way of serving the country goes through democratic ways, rather than military interventions. His attitude in the 1960 coup seems to be replaced by a democratic perspective. Therefore, we see the first signals that Türkeş would very soon lead a political party.

After returning to Turkey from his post in India, Türkeş had continued to be in contact with some members of 'the fourteen.' Together with important members of this group, namely, Dündar Taşer, Münir Köseoğlu, Numan Esin, Muzaffer Özdağ, Ahmet Er, Rıfat Baykal, Şefik Soyuyüce, Fazıl Akkoyunlu, and Mustafa Kaplan (Öznur, 1999a: 81-82), Türkeş took part in the Congress of *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* (Republican Peasants' Nation Party, CKMP)[78] in 1965 to capture the leadership of the Party to reorganize it in line with their ideological orientation. At the Seventh Extraordinary Congress held between July 30 and August 1, 1965,[79] having defeated

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[78] The roots of the CKMP trace back to 1948 when *Millet Partisi* (Nation Party) was established by a group, including Osman Bölükbaşı and many others who had left the *Demokrat Parti* (the Democrat Party, DP). Yet, the party was closed by the DP government in 1954 with the claim that its propaganda was against the laicism; at the same time, these individuals formed a new party under the name of *Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi* (Republican Nation Party, CMP). Having achieved parliamentary representation with four deputies and united with *Türkiye Köylü Partisi* (Turkey Peasant Party, TKP), the party was re-named *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* (Republican Peasants' Nation Party, CKMP) in 1958 and struggled against the DP (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018). The leadership of the party was, Arıkan (1998) explains, then in the hands of Osman Bölükbaşı during the 1950s when the party's rhetoric was more of a conservative, populist, and nationalist with the support of middle classes and peasants. The CKMP's first programme lasted until the 1960s, Arıkan (1998) posits, comprised of a developmental-modernist, a corporatist ideology which also emphasized the Kemalist agenda.

[79] One of the most important changes in the 1965's political life was the division of the CKMP since Osman Bölükbaşı left the party and founded *Millet Partisi* (the Nation Party, MP), and Ahmet Tahtakılıç took over the leadership of the CKMP. The MP was more successful in the elections, despite its recent establishment with the influence of Bölükbaşı's political charisma (Aydın & Taşkın, 2018). With the

Ahmet Tahtakılıç, Alparslan Türkeş captured the leadership of the Party (Öznur, 1999a). From then on, Türkeş has always been associated with this Party (Landau, 1982: 589).[80] With this new configuration, the idealists under the leadership of Türkeş took their place on the political scene with ambitious nationalist discourses. Subsequent to Türkeş's leadership, the history of the party carried out endless efforts to reconstruct its ideology and to make the party an important player in Turkish politics.

The Party then started to have close contacts with the organizations such as *Aydınlar Ocağı* (Hearth of Intellectuals, AO), *Türkiye Milliyetçiler Birliği* (Turkish Nationalists Union), and *Vatansever Türk Teşkilatı* (Patriotic Turkish Organization). These organizations including *Komünizmle Mücadale Dernekleri* (Struggle Against Communism Clubs) played a significant role in the rebuilding of the party structure and ideology (Öznur, 1999b). Especially, the ideas of Hearth of Intellectuals —right-wing think thank— such as defining nationalism as a "national culture" instead of race heavily influenced the party programme, not unlike the Nouvelle Droite in France (Arıkan, 1998).[81] This ideological approach affected the MHP's understanding

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rest of the people, the CMKP continued its political life under the leadership of Ahmet Tahtakılıç until Türkeş challenged him.

[80] The rest of the fourteen did not follow Türkeş's ideological road but rather became leftists. While Muzaffer Karan joined *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (the Turkey Workers' Party, TİP), İrfan Solmazer, Orhan Kabibay, and Orhan Erkanlı realigned with *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (the Republican People's Party, CHP) (Öznur, 1999a: 47).

[81] La Nouvelle Droite was a far-right movement in France in the late 1960s, struggling for "national culture" against multi-culturalism.

of nationalism conceptualized as *milli kültür* (national culture), which was frequently mentioned by Türkeş.

Türkeş's CKMP appeared in the political arena with a claim of a new role with its ideological formulation that came to be called *toplumcu milliyetçilik* communitarian nationalism). Accordingly, the Party framed the *Dokuz Işık Doktrini* (the Nine Lights doctrine)[82] which have been variously called a doctrine and/or an ideology. Türkeş (1979a) had taken the Nine Lights as a doctrine/national opinion which was based on the Turkish nation, history, and culture. The doctrine was presented as a third way instead of communism and capitalism (Türkeş, 1994b). The Nine Lights doctrine comprises nine components[83] regarding the ideology of the movement, *milliyetçilik* (nationalism), *ülkücülük* (idealism), *ahlakçılık* (moralism), *toplumculuk* (communitarianism), *ilimcilik* (scientific mentality), *hürriyetçilik[84]* (later also, *şahsiyetçilik* [personalism]), *köycülük* (peasantism), *gelişmecilik ve halkçılık* (progressivism and populism), and *endüstricilik ve teknikçilik* (industrialism and technical advancement).

The nine components regarding the ideology of the movement are defined in Türkeş's book as *Dokuz Işık* (The Nine Lights)- first published in 1965. In the first

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[82] In the book tag of the first edition of the Nine Lights, Türkeş (1965) noted that the number 'nine' was considered as holy in the pre-Islamic Turkic tradition, and he wished luck for new Turkey with the Nine Lights doctrine.

[83] In his interview with Poulton, Ümit Özdağ (as cited in Poulton, 1997: 146), one of the members of the MHP who is also an academic, said that "The number nine was chosen for as Atatürk had talked about nine principles when founding the CHP, and thus had an accepted tradition behind it."

[84] There is no one-word translation of '*hürriyetçilik*' in English. For Türkeş it means being for liberty or freedom. See p. 86 below in this Dissertation.

version of the book[85], the first principle, nationalism, denotes "a deep love of the Turkish nation and loyalty to the Turkish nation while also aiming at the advancement of the Turkish nation to the level of modern civilization" (Türkeş, 1965: 1). Just as ideas deeply affected Türkeş, so too did feelings in the development of his nationalist ideology. As it is well known since emotions play an important role in creating a sense of belonging to a particular identity, emotions and ideals hold a grip on the imagination. Türkeş, for instance, frames his nationalism as "a sense of deep love."[86] Türkeş infused his patriotic feelings by drawing upon the power of imagination. Concerning this principle, it is also said that "Anyone who does not bear the pride of another race in his heart, who sincerely feels Turkish and devotes himself to Turkishness, s/he is a Turk." (Türkeş, 1965: 1). The idea of a nation with the feeling of Turkishness is quite imaginary. Essentially it takes us to Anderson's conceptualization of the nations as "imagined communities."

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[85] The Nine Lights doctrine, which was introduced at the 1967 Congress, was first published in sixteen pages in 1965; and then in several later editions, the original text also included interpretations while having additional articles. This version was expanded later and the meaning of its principles has become clearer.

[86] Many nationalists of the idealist movement emphasized what they denote as a state of feeling when defining their nationalisms. In his interview with Osman Çakır, Deputy Secretary-General of the Nationalist Action Party elected in 1970, Nevzat Köseoğlu (as cited in Çakır, 2008: 37) expresses his feelings about nationalism as follows: "Nationalism as an emotion in me has emerged as a rebellion against the backwardness of Turkey, the economic weakness of Turkey and injustice in Turkey. Köseoğlu (as cited in Çakır, 2008: 398) claims that the struggle of the nationalist movement between 1960-1980 was more sincere when compared to those struggles post- 1980. Another idealist Tuncer Günay (2011) indicates that nationalism offers him hope. Günay (2011) further contends that the reason behind the increasing popularity of the idealist movement was the positive emotions associated with hope, a safe place, a perfect character, and honorable life that the movement gave to the people.

Even though this definition emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism, the other definition narrowed down its scope: "our nationalism also means *Türkçülük* (Turkism). Turkism means conforming in all spheres to the Turkish spirit, traditions, and characteristics; and to assistance to all Turks and the Turkish nation in everything" (Türkeş, 1965: 1-2). From this point of view, there is an imagination of Turkic ethnic community or Turkification of a particular community in Andersonian terms. Hence, nationalist sentiments drew the borders of this imaginary community with ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism. Türkeş's understanding of nationalism also includes a strong state approach. In the later version of the book titled *Dokuz Işık ve Türkiye*, Türkeş (1979a: 130), for instance, replicated the nation-state as " … a sign of control and power, an iron hand in a velvet glove," emphasizing the strong state in political affairs.

In the later versions of the Nine Lights, Türkeş defined nationalism as "a deep love of Turkish nation" (Türkeş, 1967b, 1968b, 1972), "a deep love of the Turkish nation, loyalty to the Turkish nation and a consciousness of sharing a common history and common ideals" (Türkeş, 1979a: 62); "the love of Turkish nation, and loyalty and service to the Turkish state" (Türkeş, 2017: 22); "an expression of the sense of deep love and commitment that is nourished against the Turkish nation; and the consciousness of being directed towards a common history and goals"[87] (Türkeş, 2017: 80-81). In his book *Milliyetçi Türkiye* (Nationalist Turkey), Karaca (1971: 29) argues that the nationalism of Türkeş in the Nine Lights can be considered as cultural

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[87] Türkeş also used the same definition in his speech named as *Milliyetçi Görüş* (the Nationalist Opinion) published in *Töre* (Custom) journal on October 1975 numbered 53 and *Millet* (Nation) newspaper published on October 29, 1975 (Türkeş, 1998a: 140).

nationalism since "it aims to love Turkish culture and protects it from cultural imperialism." One might argue that all components of Turkish nationalism, especially ethnic and cultural elements, intertwine and together constitute the nationalism of the Nine Lights doctrine. However, it can be said that the ethnic/cultural components (e.g. Turkism and sharing a common history and common ideals) are at the forefront in the ideological configuration of the Nine Lights. One might infer a tendency towards a civic component of Turkish nationalism from "loyalty and service to the Turkish state." Nevertheless, this civic component received relatively little attention.

The second principle, idealism, refers to the idea of rendering the Turkish nation the most advanced, most civilized, and strongest. The principle of idealism gives us insights about the MHP's nationalism more. It resembles Gökalp's Turkism, "the advancement of the Turkish nation" (Gökalp, 2012: 27). Going further, it also reflects Gökalp's Pan-Turkism, the unity of Turkic communities (particularly, the Oghuz, Tatars, Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks, and Yakuts). Although the doctrine does not specify who the Turks are, it says under the principle of idealism: "Our idealism also includes this demand: "Every Turk should be a part of our sphere of love and interest" (Türkeş, 1965: 4). Türkeş, yet, carefully emphasized: "Our idealism is not an adventurous idea" (Türkeş, 1965: 3). Therefore, it implies an imagined community by saying that "it is not adventurous," [read as 'we do not aspire for the unity of all Turks; but we care about them'] reflecting Gökalp's expression, "an ideal which existed in the realm of imagination, not in the realm of reality" (as cited in Parla, 1985: 34). Therefore, the idealism principle reflects Gökalp's Pan-Turkist ideal.

The third principle, morality, is based on the principles that preserve and maintain the "high existence" of the Turkish nation in line with its spirit, customs, and

traditions, emphasizing cultural components. The most striking factor in the 1965 edition is the principle of morality that does not mention specifically Islam, rather refers only to *"Türk ahlakı, Türk geleneği, Türk ruhu ve Türk milletinin inançları"* (Turkish traditions, Turkish spirit and to beliefs of the Turkish nation) (Türkeş, 1965). In the 1965 version of the Nine-Light principles, which were later expanded, one may argue that the above-quoted Turkish beliefs in the principle of moralism imply Islamic beliefs, and therefore Islam constituted only one of the components of MHP's nationalism. Türkeş later specifically added Islam to his nationalism in 1972, *"Dokuz Işık yolunun temel kaynağı İslam inancı ve Türklük şuur'u ve gururudur"* (The main sources of the Nine Lights are the Islamic belief and, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness) (Türkeş, 1972: 76). In the detailed version of the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş (2017: 174) openly said that "the principles of Islam, *the religion of our nation,* and Islamic beliefs, are the main sources of our principle of morality" (emphasis added). While elaborating on the principle of morality in the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş (2017: 173) said that "the Turkish and Islamic ethics determine the principles of our morality principle." It should be noted that the articulation of the notion of religion to his nationalism was an important step, without, of course, moving away from the principle of laicism.

Islam, therefore, remained as a cultural element in Türkeş's discourse. He claimed that there is no sectarianism among this cultural element. Türkeş (2017: 57) said that "We do not believe in perverted measures, especially sectarianism, geography, and laboratory racism in the determination of Turkism and Turk." Türkeş (2017: 118) also pointed out "We do not believe in separatist elements, anthropological racism, sectarianism, and regionalism in nationalism and the

determination of Turkish." Here, even though Türkeş rejects sectarianism and ethnic separatism, his definition of nationalism was narrower in the principle of nationalism, emphasizing Turkism, as discussed before. The imagined community had a common descent and religion that gave it moral principles in the eyes of Türkeş. The "imagined community," therefore, contained not only an ethnic imagination but also Islamic values.

The fourth principle, communitarianism, is the opinion that all kinds of activity should be carried out in a way to benefit society. It covers two separate sections: social and economic. While in the economic system, it envisages free enterprise, the unification of small capitals, a mixed economy, and the main strategic economic activities to be under state control; in the social sphere, it aims to ensure the system of social justice, equal opportunity, and the establishment of social security and assistance organizations. In his book, *Türkiye'nin Meseleleri* (Turkey's Issues), Türkeş explains many of his ideas regarding the economy, ownership of private enterprise, politics, population policy, state, etc. According to Türkeş (1994d), economy and industrialization play an important role in the development of a country. The property right is an indispensable requirement of human creation, and every citizen should be able to own property since they are all involved in the production process. He is in favor of private enterprise, legitimate competition, and division of labor within the framework of the social state. In this scenario, the state must overcome the lack of knowledge of the people through education and doing away with traditional as well as legal barriers (Türkeş, 1994d: 20-21). In his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) on November 11, 1969, Türkeş expressed many of his ideas regarding education, the role of local governments, economy,

transportation, etc. Türkeş (1969b) thought that the wide powers should be granted to ministries; and local administrations were harmful in the exercise of the preparation and implementation of development plans since local administrations would be deprived of executive experts on technical and economic issues to carry out useful studies. For example, Türkeş (1969b) found the investments of raw materials dependent on foreign investments and the encouragement of foreign capital as destructive to the national economy. In the issue of social security, Türkeş (1969b: 127) posited that it is necessary to raise improve economic conditions to ensure social security and to adopt a full employment policy that will turn the service in favor of the client as opposed to strike and lockout rights. Furthermore, Türkeş (1969b: 128) thought that technical education policies were needed to increase employment rates. Therefore, one might argue that Türkeş's approach to social, economic, and political matters like that of cultural matters reflects what he called Turkism, as mentioned before.

While talking about his understanding of the economic structure, Türkeş (2017) suggested dividing the society into six social segments as peasants, tradesmen, civil servants, freelancers, employers, and workers, framing it as a national economic system. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992: 161-162) states that "Although the party advocated a 'third way' for economic development distinct from capitalism and communism, what this amounted to was a mixed economy with powerful state intervention which was based on a corporative system of the reorganization of society." Türkeş envisioned these social segments to be partners of government, profit, and property. Türkeş's Turkism had thus been a multi-layered concept comprising of cultural, social, and economic elements like Gökalp.

The fifth principle of the Nine Lights doctrine, scientific mentality, on the other hand, is a principle of examining the events by eliminating prejudice and replacing them with scientific logic. The sixth principle, *hürriyetçilik* aims to provide all the freedoms written in the Constitution of the United Nations such as freedom of consciousness, freedom of speech, and social and academic freedoms. This principle emphasizes the civic component of Turkish nationalism with the basic rights and liberties. This principle also includes *şahsiyetçilik* (personalism),[88] signifying the value of the personality of individuals to have mutual respect and to live in liberty. One cannot talk about individualism in a liberal sense here. All components of the Nine Lights should be evaluated holistically. For instance, in the idealism principle, it is stated that "if an individual wishes to serve humanity, s/he should primarily serve his/her nation" (Türkeş, 1965: 2). This principle emphasizes the importance of the nation or community over the individual. Instead of favoring the individual over the community as it is the case in liberalism, one might infer an understanding that holds the society above everything else. Moreover, in the expanded version of the Nine Lights, Türkeş (2017: 389) said that "When a person is born, he is an individual. Later, he gains personality with the cultural values of the nation in which he was born and raised." In this statement, Türkeş emphasizes the cultural components of Turkish nationalism. Türkeş (2017: 391) himself also said: *"Ferdiyetçiliği değil, şahsiyetçiliği kabul ederiz"* (We accept personalism, not individualism). Therefore, *şahsiyetçilik* cannot be individualism, rather it means mutual respect.

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[88] Later, the principle of *Şahsiyetçilik* (personalism) was also added to the title of the principle. It is generally translated as "individualism" (e.g. Balcı, 2011). Yet, Individualism is a concept that does not reflect the ideology of the movement.

The seventh principle, peasantism, foresees the development of villages by combining villages into agricultural towns. In the eighth principle, progressivism and populism, progressivism aims to advance the Turkish nation without breaking away from its history, national self, national spirit, national culture, and its roots while populism demands that "Everything will be done for the people, to the people, with the people" instead of a top-down approach (Türkeş, 1965: 16). This principle reflects Gökalp's modernization approach along with Turkish cultural values. The ninth and the final principle, industrialism and technical advancement, is about the urgency of the industrialization of the Turkish nation and thus its development for the nuclear and space era (Türkeş, 1965).[89] When analyzing the principles holistically, ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism are at the forefront in the ideological configuration of the Nine Lights (particularly the principles of nationalism and idealism) while also including civic components such as basic rights and liberties in the principle of *hürriyetçilik.*

The ideological configuration of the Nine Lights also resembles Gökalp's Turkism. Grounding his ideology on Gökalp's Turkism, the cultural/ethnic component of Türkeş's nationalism was related to the term "national culture"- *hars* in Gökalp's terms. According to Gökalp (2016b: 11-16), culture is a harmonious whole of a

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[89] Landau (2002: 157) delineates the nine 'lights' as follows: (1) Patriotism defined as the sentiment aiming to raise the Turks to the pinnacle of civilization, on all counts, chiefly as regards prosperity and modernization; (2) idealism, to serve one's nation in enhancing its security and well-being; (3) morality, conforming to Turkish traditions; (4) social-mindedness, to ensure both free enterprise and social welfare; (5) scientific mentality, to promote well-planned study and research, (6) liberalism, to guarantee all freedoms; (7) peasant care, to develop education, medical care, and the modernizing agriculture in rural areas; (8) populism, to direct all progress for the benefit of the majority; and (9) industrialization, to promote technology and prepare for the nuclear and space era.

nation's morality, language, aesthetics, law, reason, aesthetics, science, and economy whereas civilization, that is the technology passing from one nation to another, is cosmopolitan by means of imitation. The leading policy-maker of the Party, Somuncuoğlu (1972) defines the main theoretical component of the Party's nationalism as follows: "The exact term for Turkish nationalism is Turkism. Its characterization is the same as Turkish nationalism." In the first edition of the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş (1965: 1-2) defined his Turkism as follows: "conforming in all spheres to the Turkish spirit, traditions, and characteristics. ... We will speak the Turkish language; we will keep the Turkish language above everything." Similarly, in the later version of the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş stressed the importance of unity in the language and culture in defining Turkishness:

> In our view, a Turkish nation is a group of people who have the distinctive qualities of a common language, unity in breed, ideal, culture, and history; and who have the consciousness to live together independently. My understanding of the nation is based on natural and spiritual factors. One of the main factors is language and breed. The language that makes our nation is Turkish. No one is a Turkish speaker but not from Turkish descendants. Our Turkish language is one of the important reasons that we live vividly for centuries and remain on the stage of history (Türkeş, 2017: 246-247).

As can be seen from this speech, Türkeş's Turkism was based on Turkish culture and language similar to Gökalp who talked about the unity in culture and language when defining his Turkism (Gökalp, 2016a). Yet, the definition of a nation comprising of members of the human community adopting the characteristics of the Turk and the same language was a choice with obvious consequences for ethnic minorities such as the Kurds.

Türkeş also sometimes referred specifically to Turkism which took its roots from its ideational father Ziya Gökalp. As Alparslan Türkeş (as cited in Heper, 1999: 16) once stated, "The path of Turkish nationalism … has taken its power from Ziya Gökalp, the nation is a cultural entity blended with Turkish-Islamic tradition." As seen in this Turkish-Islamic approach, while imagining the national identity, not only Turkism but also the Islamic conceptions inspired by Gökalp were influential. This heritage of Turkism together with Islam (ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism) from Ziya Gokalp formed the backbone of the Party's ideology.

Considered as one of the important elements of Turkish culture, Islam constituted an important element in defining Turkishness throughout the intellectual as well as the political life of Türkeş. In his understanding, Islam always appears as a cultural bond —a bonding entity of the nation— which provides the ethical disciplines to the nation. Since Islam had always been an important component of Turkish traditions, it appeared as one of the important characteristics of Turks even in the earliest publications of Türkeş.[90]

One of the main arguments of this dissertation is that having started with the booklet Nine Lights as an implication of a moral template in 1965, Islam has been linked with Turkish (ness)/identity with varying degrees of emphasis in different contexts throughout the history of the MHP. In other words, the MHP's nationalism has always been blended with Islam with, yet, varying degrees of emphasis on it in the changing context. In the Nine Lights doctrine including an implication to Islam as being introduced as a moral framework, Islam constituted only one of the

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[90] For more information regarding Türkeş's ideas on Islam, see Alparslan Türkeş, *Ahlakçılık* (Ankara: Dokuz Işık, 1977).

components of the MHP's nationalism as a secondary component of national identity. The later version of the party's ideology, which was formulated as Turkish-Islamic synthesis, emphasized Islam more than the Nine Lights doctrine. As we shall see, in the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, Islam (cultural component) was given equal weight to Turkishness whereas the Nine Lights Doctrine emphasized Turkism more than Islam. Putting aside the varying emphasis on Islam in the party's ideology, the Nine Lights as guiding principles of the party (or what we can call the MHP's founding principles) have yet remained more or less intact thus far.

When the basic principles of the Nine Lights are examined, some principles of the Nine Lights doctrine seem similar to some extent such as nationalism, idealism, moralism, and progressivism - all implying the idea of modernization along with Turkish cultural values. Even if the doctrine contains nine elements, it reflects Gökalp's trilogy or synthesis of *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak* (Turkification, Islamization, Modernization)- the idea that being a Turk, a Muslim, and modern (the scientific and technological developments) are not mutually exclusive (Gökalp, 1999: 184-186). Similarly, according to Türkeş, modernization with Islam could be possible, influenced by the legacy of Gökalp. In *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık* (National Doctrine: The Nine Lights), Türkeş (2017: 191) said that "Islam orders progress, not backwardness." Having taken the legacy of Gökalp, the MHP criticized the modernization/Westernization perspective of the early Republican era. This intellectual perspective, built upon the distinction between culture[91] and

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[91] *Hars* (culture) symbolizes values while being national in Gökalp's terminology.

civilization[92], laid the groundwork for the cultural components of the MHP's nationalism, as we shall discuss.

In addition to these ideas, Türkeş expressed many of his other ideas related to his Nine Lights doctrine in detail in the later version of the Nine Lights. Türkeş (2017: 24) argued that the Nine Lights emphasizes *Türk toplumculuğu* (Turkish communitarianism), *sosyal-psikolojik (manevi) soyculuk* (social-psychologic, [spiritual] lineage), and real democracy[93]. In the Nine Light system, Türkeş (2017: 274) regarded lineage as a psychological principle rather than anthropological (laboratory) racism. The principal point was to hold the "belief" that belonged to the same lineage and belonged to the same nation. As can be seen again, one might again argue that all components of Turkish nationalism intertwine and together constitute the nationalist ideology of the Nine Lights doctrine. However, one can also argue that the ethnic/cultural components (e.g. Turkish communitarianism and respect for ancestral traditions) are at the forefront in this ideological configuration. One might infer a tendency towards a civic component of Turkish nationalism from a democratic system. Nevertheless, the civic component received relatively little attention. Even

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[92] *Medeniyet* (civilization) represents scientific advancement while being international in Gökalp's terms.

[93] Some circles evaluated the Nine Lights doctrine as being similar to National-socialism at those times. To answer them, in his later publication entitled *Milliyetçilik,* Türkeş (1996: 19) differentiated his doctrine and national-socialism as follows: "National-socialism is based on capitalism, (anthropological) racism created in laboratories, and anti-democratic ideas. However, the followers of the Nine Lights doctrine believe in Turkish communitarianism, a social-psychologically defined (moral) respect for ancestral traditions (lineages), and a truly democratic system."

so, all these concepts can be included in the same definition since all nationalisms have ethnic/cultural and civic elements, as argued before.

In addition to the ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism, Türkeş, therefore, also touched upon the civic components of Turkish nationalism. In addition to belief in a truly democratic system in the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş's concept of *milli devlet ülküsü* (the ideal of national state), for instance, reflected all components of Turkish nationalism. Türkeş (2017) defined the national state as a state form embracing all citizens living within the borders of the Republic of Turkey. One might argue that the term "national state" denotes the notion of a nation's membership, reflecting the multidimensionality of nationalism. The term enabled the existence of the civic component of Turkish nationalism in the ideology of the MHP, even while the other components remained constant.

Moreover, Türkeş's framing of the Turkish nation also reflects all components of Turkish nationalism to some extent. Türkeş (2017: 81) said that the Turkish nation comprised of the members of the human community living in the Republic of Turkey, adopting Turkishness, having the same culture and the same religion, emphasizing all components of Turkish nationalism. While "adopting Turkishness" reflects the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism, having the same culture and the same religion reflect cultural components of Turkish nationalism. Particularly, the definition of a nation comprising of members of the human community adopting Turkishness and the same religion (and the language as we saw) was a choice with obvious consequences for ethnic and religious minorities respectively. One might also infer an emphasis on a more inclusive component: the civic component of Turkish nationalism from the statement that defines the nation comprising of "the members

of the human community living in the Republic of Turkey." Yet, the phenomenon of being from the same religion, which he later said, narrows this discourse. Even so, all these concepts can be included in the same definition. One might, therefore, argue that the boundaries of these concepts are not rigid, rather transitive. In addition to other components of Turkish nationalism, Türkeş, therefore, also wrote about the civic component of the "national" state- the notion of citizenship (e.g. rejection of division based on the region- seemingly implying the Kurdish question). Türkeş wrote:

> In our eyes, the Turkish nation is a holy whole that does not accept division about region, sect, or party. The national state sees its citizens as the sacred trust of Allah, regardless of the region ... The Nationalist Movement will integrate our forty-five million citizens within the ideal of the national state and knead with the ideal of Turkishness (Türkeş, 2017: 129).

Considering Türkeş's thoughts about nationalism in different versions of the Nine Lights doctrine, one might yet argue that Türkeş emphasized the ethnic component of nationalism more than other components. For example, Türkeş (2017: 247) said that "The most important factor of the Turkish nation. Our breed is Turkish ... It is accepted by great scholars that Turkish lineage is a valuable lineage. The Turkish lineage proved essentially this value by establishing great world empires in history." Here, Türkeş talked about a particular *community*, which is Turks, who established great world empires. Although belonging to the same nation is based on a psychological belief in Türkeş's understanding, one might say that Türkeş emphasizes the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism here.

Moreover, in the later versions of the Nine Lights, Türkeş said that *"Tek hedef Türk için Türk tarafından"* (The main goal is for the Turk and by the Turk), *"Her şey*

Türk milleti için, Türk'e doğru ve Türk'e göre" (Everything is for the Turkish nation, according to Turkish) (Türkeş, 1975c) and *"Her şey Türklük için ve Türk'e göre"* (Everything is for Turkishness and by the Turk) (Türkeş, 2017: 159). Again, Türkeş talked about a particular *community*, which is Turks in these statements. One might argue that the ethnic component was emphasized more than the cultural components, while the civic component received relatively little attention in the Nine Lights doctrine (later in the other ideological configurations of the MHP as well.

The fundamental idea of the Nine Lights doctrine emphasizes the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism in descending order of importance. That is to say, the manifestation of the multi-structure of nationalism, of which, in essence, components are not independent of each other, rather intertwine and intersect, is the Nine Lights in the idealist movement. Considering the Nine Lights had always been referred to by Türkeş in the later years, all components of Turkish nationalism had always gone hand in hand while one was being emphasized contextually, as we shall see.

The Nine Lights doctrine was introduced to the party organization in detail at the CKMP Congress on 24-25 November 1967. It then became the official party ideology. The 1967 Congress marked a novel party programme, one such being that *toplumcu milliyetçilik* (communitarian nationalism) embodied by the Nine Lights doctrine,[94] among which there were nationalism, idealism, moralism, scientific mentality, communitarianism, peasantism, freedom and personalism, and progressivism and populism (Türkeş, 1967a). It was the programme of the 1967

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[94] Akpınar (2005: 40) says that the father of the idea is Türkeş and Kurt Karaca (Fikret Eren) expanded his writing.

Congress held on November 24-25/the Eighth Congress, which published in *Milli Hareket Dergisi* (National Action Journal) on December 15, 1967 (No:17), that Türkeş (1967a) introduced the Nine Lights with its guiding principles that reject imitations/imitationist Westernism, capitalism, liberalism, and communism, saying that "We, as the CKMP, is a political entity claiming to have a national doctrine. The name of our national doctrine is the Nine Lights doctrine." At this Congress, Türkeş (1967a) outlined the doctrine and emphasized a purely national path with the glorification of the history of the Turkish nation together with its traditions. This doctrine, which would be called the "political alphabet of the idealist movement" (Akpınar, 2005), constituted the backbone of the party programmes since 1967 (later, the MHP in 1969).

Even though the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism was at the forefront in defining the nationalism of Türkeş at the 1967 Congress,[95] other components of Turkish nationalism persisted underneath. At the Congress, Türkeş, for instance, portrayed democracy as a good regime, one better than Nazism, Fascism, and Communism. In terms of Türkeş's application of the concept of democracy, one might infer a tendency towards a civic component of nationalism as well. And yet, this civic component received relatively little attention here and throughout his political career, as we shall see in the thesis.

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[95] Even though the 1967 Congress appeared as democratic, Arıkan (1998) argues that they had some Fascistic and corporatist elements such as the extreme glorification of the idea of the paternalistic state, which embodies the MHP's position of democracy. Arıkan (1998) further argues that just like most of the extreme right parties in Western Europe, the MHP was successful at hiding its Fascist ideology within the conservative language. The approach of the MHP's party programme was thus characterized by Arıkan (1998: 129) idiom of describes "an iron hand in a velvet glove."

Moreover, Türkeş (1967a) ended his speech[96] with the verses from Tevfik Fikret (1867-1915)- a famous poet who is taken as the leading figure of modern Turkish poetry. By quoting the below-mentioned verses, Türkeş indicated that the cornerstone of the idealist movement was the struggle and emphasized the religious aspect of the idealist movement, thus the cultural component of Turkish nationalism:

"Koşan elbet varır, düşen kalkar.

Kara taştan su damla damla akar.

Birikir, sonra bir gümüş göl olur.

Arayan Hakkı en sonunda bulur."

The runner, of course, arrives; the one who is falling up stands up

Water drops from black stone.

It accumulates, then becomes a silver lake.

The one who is searching for God eventually finds it.[97]

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[96] The speech was later published in *Milli Hareket Dergisi* (the Journal of National Movement) in 1967, 15 December (No: 17).

[97] In the 1965 Congress of the CKMP held between 30 July -1 August (the Seventh Congress), Türkeş ended his speech with the same poem. The poem is also written in the first section of the book titled Milli *Doktrin Dokuz Işık* under the title of *"Yolumuz Uzun ve Çetindir"* (Our path is long and tough) in which he said, "I do not promise you easy success. Those who hope for power in a short time should not set off with us. Our path is long and tough" (Türkeş, 2017: 19).

In the 1967 Congress, Alparslan Türkeş became *Başbuğ*[98] (Chieftain or the great leader) and he (as cited in Çınar & Arıkan, 2002: 27) stated his motto as follows: "Whoever joins the cause and then becomes a traitor, kill him!" In the 1960s (and the 1970s, as we shall see), Türkeş constructed a discourse that was not distanced from a very harsh stance and attitude. Alparslan Türkeş (1994d) writes on the back cover of his book titled (Turkey's Issues): "I embrace the ideal. I am walking without looking back, without hesitation, ignoring everything. We are trying to accelerate and run. We will run … Do not fall behind and follow me … If I fall for any reason in this struggle, grab the flag and go further. Shoot me if I go back! Shoot everyone who joined the case! This motto later turned out to be a deadly armed struggle of the nationalists, who the nationalist movement calls *Cerrahlar* (Surgeons) (Günay, 2011: 9), with leftists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as we shall see.[99]

To sum up, Türkeş emphasized the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism between 1965 and 1969 via the Nine Lights doctrine while Islam was to a lesser degree a point of focus stressed. Between 1965 and 1969, the struggle with communism was at the ideological level and this struggle positioned Türkeş's party and his movement with nationalist motives. In the 1970s, we will see how this ideological struggle became an armed conflict and how this armed conflict affected the ideas and practices of Türkeş or vice versa.

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[98] Landau (2002) says that *Başbuğ* (the Great Leader), taken from Central Asian lore, was first used in the 1910s by *İzciler* (Scouts) of Enver Pasha when referring to him.

[99] In his book titled *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket*, Turhan Feyizoğlu (2005) narrates this armed struggle in detail.

3.3. "We are as Turkish as Mount Tian Shan, We are as Muslim as Mount Hira": The Grey Wolves on the Street Fighting against Communism

The late 1960s and early 1970s marked a bloody historical chapter in Turkish politics. During this era, idealists/Grey Wolves mobilized/politicized against what they and their leader identified as a threat —communism— and became involved in a violent conflict with leftists. This violent conflict between leftists and rightists turned into a deadly armed struggle until the Turkish military staged a coup in 1980, 12 September.

The era of anti-communist street struggle thus began in the history of the CKMP in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 45), sitting with party leaders in the CKMP Headquarters, said that "Our most vital struggle in this period is against the communist ideology and nationalist youth is our strength." For the Grey Wolves (and to their leader Türkeş) communism was regarded as the biggest threat to national unity. In his speech published in *Milliyet* (Nationality) newspaper after the general elections held in 1969; Türkeş (1998a: 39) declared that "The path we have drawn is the path of Turkish nationalism. It is social justice —a hundred percent indigenous and national vision that will enable the people to awaken and develop. We are working to ensure that this is the propaganda for the young people so that they won't be the prisoners of communist propaganda." However, having only cached 3 percent of the votes in 1969, the MHP did not appear to be a game-changer with the anti-communist propaganda. Türkeş also presented communism as a threat in his speech in the Parliament. In his speech delivered at the Parliament (14th Period 21st Volume 49 Combination), Türkeş (1975a: 478) warned:

We have always stated that we are against fascism as well as against communism, that fascism and Nazism are disabled systems that have emerged from the conditions of foreign countries, and that we are against them…We see communism as the leading danger for our nation and our state…Communism, as it is known, is expressed as an ideology of doctrine; but it is a foreign ideology, and this ideology tends to be especially attracted to young people, especially to hunt intellectuals. Friends; Ideas can only be beaten by ideas. It is not possible to meet this foreign ideology only with the force of the police, with armed forces. From this perspective, we are in a position to confront the ideology of communism.

The leader of the idealist movement, Türkeş, had always pointed to Communism as the biggest enemy. According to him, communism aimed to transform the Turkish nation into slavery (Anadol, 1995). In *Milli Doktrin: Dokuz Işık,* Türkeş (2017: 100) said that "besides being a rotten ideology, communism is a means of exploitation in the hands of the Russians, the greatest enemy of Turkdom." Anti-communist motives of the idealists were, therefore, driven by the perception of communism as hostility to religion (anti-religiosity), (historical) anti-Russia feelings as well as anti-(total) Westernization in the 1960s and 1970s, and the movement undertook the mission of protecting the state and religion against them.

The perception of nationalism as a mission against anti-communism was also evident in the European nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930 (Griffin, 1991; Laquer, 1977). Yet, Landau (2002: 156) argues, "there is no conclusive evidence of Türkeş being influenced by any of these; on the contrary, he consistently reiterated that his thinking was based on Turkish traditions alone." Against communism, which was perceived as a threat by the idealist movement that started in this period, the Islamic emphasis of Türkeş was gradually increasing in connection with the course of this conflict, as we shall see. The notion of religion, therefore, played an effective role in the fight against communism. Since communism was perceived as anti-religious,

the leader of the movement, Türkeş, struggled against this perceived threat by increasing his emphasis on Islam gradually, which is already in the doctrine, without, yet never being against laicism.

In the civil war atmosphere of the late 1960s and the 1970s, the MHP adopted a militant spirit that embodied grass-roots movements of its youth wing "the Grey Wolves." Concurrently, against the rising what they considered a threat — communism— (what they called a threat against the religion) due to the Turkish civil war of the 1970s, Türkeş started to intensify his emphasis on Islam. For instance, in his election manifesto before 1969, Türkeş said their main goal is Turkish-Islamic civilization ("Hedef: Türk-İslam medeniyeti," 1969). Other elections manifestos are as follows: *"Komünizme karşı set, milliyetçi hareket, kapılma hiç hayale, ver oyunu hilale"* (Set against communism, nationalist movement, do not dream, give your vote to crescent or *"Ahlakta, idarede, tarımda, sanayide, vergide, toplumda, reform biz yaparız"* (We do reform in morality, administration, agriculture, industry, tax, and society ("MHP'nin seçim manifestoları," 1969).

The process of massification of the grassroots began particularly after 1974 with the increasing political violence (Bora & Can, 2015). The idealist movement continued to be an anti-communist movement from this period onward during which it became massive in the environment of political violence that had started to escalate in 1974 until the end of the Cold War period. In this period, the grassroots of the party involved in mass street violence against leftists due to the communist threat named by their party (Landau, 1974; Poulton, 1997). In this armed conflict, several leftist journalists, politicians, and professors died (Çağlar, 1990). In return, leftists also involved in this bloody conflict to revolutionize workers against capitalism

and westernization in the early 1970s (e.g. kidnapping corporate figures and American soldiers), and later to create a climate of chaos in which only the authoritarian regime can salvage the country in the mid-1970s (Ahmad, 1993).

To contextualize the conflict between leftists and rightists in the 1960s and 1970s, the balance of power structure of the Cold-War[100] era appears as the most important dynamic. During the Cold War era, Middle Eastern countries formulated their strategies based on the competition and balance between the bipolar powers (Opçin, 2015). From this respect, Turkey, an ally of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was in the middle of the conflict: being identified in the Western block while having a greater strategic significance as a neighbor of the USSR, resulting in hosting American missiles and troops (Opçin, 2015). The governments in Turkey had to consider this balance of power to determine their foreign policy decisions. Concurrently, anti-Soviet or anti-American sentiments were on the rise, leading to socio-political reactions, particularly among the *intelligentsia.* Scholars of both camps tried to spread their ideas through mass media and scholarly publications (Erken, 2013). These intellectual trends later turned out to be street politics with protests and boycotts; finally led to fights on the streets and campuses.

The second important break in the nationalist tradition/thought to take its current form is the process of turning the CKMP into the MHP. The name of the party altered from *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* (Republican Peasants' Nation Party,

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[100] The concept of the Cold War (1947-1991) denotes a period of geopolitical tension without a large-scale direct fight between the USA, its NATO allies -Western Bloc- and the USSR and its allies in the Warsaw Pact -the Eastern Bloc. -

CKMP) to *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (the Nationalist Action Party, the MHP) in the Ninth Congress held in Adana (called as the Adana Congress) on 8-9 February, 1969. At this Congress, Türkeş drew equal attention to ethnic and religious characteristics of the nationhood, thus stressing equally the ethnic (Turkishness) and cultural (Islam) components of Turkish nationalism. By doing so, Türkeş acted pragmatically to mobilize his masses against what he called a threat —communism— (what he called hostility toward religion). In his speech at the Congress, Türkeş (1969a) said:

> There is the fire that melts the *Ergenekon* Great Wall[101] that we carry from the Mount Tian Shan[102] and the light of the sun rising from the Mount Hira[103] in our hearts and minds. We are the national movement that represents the national order of the Muslim Turk. Islamic faith and virtue, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness,[104] creating a new Turkish Muslim civilization in the space, atom, and electronic age of the 21st century with Turkish *hars;*[105] this is our case. With this aim, we aspire to power. For this purpose, we are determined to reorganize the Turkish nation and re-establish the state.[106]

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[101] Ergenekon is a myth of Turkic people that narrates the foundation of *Göktürk* state -the first Turkish state established under the name of a Turk. According to the Turkic mythology, after being trapped in the Ergenekon valley for centuries, the ancient Turks were set free when a blacksmith melt the mountain (that is probably why Türkeş was saying "… melts the Ergenekon Great Wall"), allowing the she-wolf *Asena* guide them whom later found the *Göktürk* state.

[102] Tian Shan, which means the *Mountains of Heaven*, is a Central Asian mountain range.

[103] Mount Hiraʾ (Ḥirāʾ) is a famous Saudi Arabian mountain where "Prophet Muhammad is believed to have received the first revelation," resulting in its another name Jabal al-Nour (Mountain of the Light). The mountain houses the cave of Hira where the Prophet Muhammad is believed to have spent a great deal of time meditating.

[104] This symbolic phase was also used in one of the later versions of the Nine Lights (Türkeş, 1975c).

[105] It is Gökalp's concept of culture, referring to the national culture.

[106] The speech was later published in *Milli Hareket Dergisi* (the Journal of National Movement) in 1969, 26 February (No: 32).

Türkeş used the two historically important mountains as metaphors for highlighting the equality of ethnic (being a Turk) and cultural (specifically, Islam) components of Turkish identity. The Mount Tian Shan is a metaphor for "the historic homeland of the ancient Turkic peoples," while Mount Hira, where "Prophet Muhammad is believed to have received the first revelation from God," is a metaphor for Islamic identity (Aytürk, 2014: 703). The speech reflects the slogan of "*Tanrı Dağı kadar Türk, Hira Dağı kadar Müslümanız*"[107] (We are as Turkish as Mount Tengri/Tian Shan and as Muslim as Mount Hira). Even if the slogan is later used in the party's discourse, Türkeş embraced this motto in a speech at the 1969 Congress with his phrase "Islamic faith and virtue, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness," reflecting a "Turkish Islamic ideal" in which a cultural component of Turkish nationalism (Islamic identity) equals an ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (being an ethnic Turk). Later, such symbolic phrases such as *''Türklük Bedenimiz, İslamiyet Ruhumuz''* (Turkishness [is] our body, Islam [is] our spirit) were also introduced into the party discourse.

The peaceful co-existence of Turkishness and Islam was the main goal in the Congress. At the Congress, Türkeş (1969a) also said: "An understanding of religiosity that rejects nationalism and an understanding of nationalism hostile to Islam is alien to us."[108] The inseparability of Islam and Turkishness was the main argument in this sentence. This conceptualization was supposed to have reconciled the long-lasting tension between Turkishness and Islam.

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[107] Aytürk (2014) puts forward that Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti (1917-1983), a right-wing member of the Turkish intelligentsia, invented this slogan in his journal *Serdengeçti* (1947-1962). Balcı (2011) argues that the pro-Islamic Pan-Turanists has used this motto since the early 1960s.

[108] Türkeş (1977b: 49) used the same statement in his book titled *Ahlakçılık (*Moralism).

Considering the speech of Türkeş at the Adana Congress, one can identify three main components of the MHP's identity. Like Gökalp, as argued, Türkeş tried to synthesize Turkish and Islamic values with modernization. Rather than imitating the West in all aspects, they advised not indiscriminately accept Western culture but selectively chose technological/technical developments from the West. Having taken the past legacy of Gökalp, the MHP can be said be a product of Turkism, Islam, and critiques of the Westernization process that were formulated in the early Republican era.

Following the introduction of *"İslam imanı ve fazileti, Türklük gurur ve şuuru"* (Islamic faith and virtue, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness), the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam) took a central role, equal to that of the ethnic component (being a Turk) whereas, in the Nine Lights Doctrine, Islam constituted only one of the components of MHP's nationalism as a secondary component of national identity. However, the boundary between these ideological configurations is a matter of emphasis, rather than a sharp distinction. This change in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the escalating conflict between rightists and leftists; however, this change did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. Turkishness and Islam have gone hand in hand in defining the character of the idealist movement thus far, with a varying emphasis on either.

Türkeş's Islamic rhetoric, in fact, started even earlier to 1969 in his book titled *Dokuz Işık* (the Nine Lights), as argued before. Türkeş's use of religion had started in the mid-1960s since the Nine Lights was first published in 1965 by Türkeş in sixteen pages including an implication to Islam as being introduced as a moral framework

and it formed the basis of the CKMP in 1967 and the MHP since 1969. Moreover, Islamic tendency existed even in the 1960s rising idealist movement in the commando camps where five times a day prayer were prescribed, in accordance with Islamic doctrine. Having started with the book Nine Lights as a moral template in 1965, Islam has been a part of the Turkish identity with varying degrees of emphasis in different contexts throughout the history of the MHP, as shown in this dissertation. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that what changes in the ideology was only a matter of emphasis when viewing the ideas and practices of Türkeş from a holistic perspective.

In that sense, the emphasis on the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (that is, Turkist discourse of the MHP) in the 1960s moved to an equal emphasis on both the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism (that is, Turkist-Islamic discourse) in the 1970s. Yet, one might argue that in the former period, Turk as an ethnic identity was one of first among the other equals (that are, cultural components); in the later period, its value/emphasis equaled that of Islam.

From the beginning, the Nationalist Movement has directed politics on two different levels; on the one hand, it conducted politics at the official level with the help of elections and the parliament/the Nationalist Action Party; on the other hand, it conducted on an unofficial level with the help of its supporters in other domains such as its youth organizations (Landau, 1982). Gourisse (2012) argues that the MHP's control of posts in the civil service was instrumental for easily mobilizing the human resources that it necessitated for its political activity. Gourisse (2012: 134) thinks that "the promise of obtaining material advantages motivated their engagement." The relationship between the party and the youth organization might be observed in

several ways. For instance, there was an emphasis on "leader-doctrine-organization" in the MHP's ideology, which is Türkeş, the Nine Lights,[109] and the youth organizations.

The leader Türkeş also accepted this organic relationship between the party and the idealist youth organizations in his speech published in *Ortadoğu* (the Middle East) newspaper on February 12, 1976, entitled "*Türkeş Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Ana Hedeflerini Açıkladı*" (Türkeş mentioned the main targets of Turkish nationalism). Türkeş (1998a: 198) wrote: "The nationalist movement is not the Nationalist Action Party ... it is also the youth who have the potential to struggle and organize with political consciousness. In *Hürriyet* (Liberty) newspaper dated January 10, 1969, Cüneyt Arcayürek's interview with Alparslan Türkeş published with a headline Türkeş was clear: "I support the commandos because we set them up and trained them" (Türkeş, 1969c). In the same interview, Türkeş's statement about the commando camps was as follows:

> These training camps are not reactionary, they are purely for action. The young people here grow up with the love of the homeland, the love of the nation, the consciousness of nationalism and morality. The national and spiritual upbringing of the youth who adhere to Islamic values is essential for Turkey's future. That's why we support these training camps and these young people (Türkeş, 1969c).

Between 1968 and 1970, 45 camps were opened. Having supported those camps, on August 18, 1968, Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 57) made the following statement: "In the commando camps, youth branches are engaged in various sports and cultural activities. Meanwhile, they are taught judo, too. The communists think that the

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[109] In his book *Kurtların Kardeşliği* (the Brotherhood of the Wolves), Akpınar (2005: 51) mentions that "the Nine Light doctrine was distributed to party organizations in 16-page leaflets" for the youth to fight against communism.

country is derelict and can establish street dominance. For this reason, we do train our young people to struggle." When the daily schedule in the commando camps[110] is examined, one sees a study program arranged around the Islamic five-time call to prayer. This shows us that the idea that will be proffered as a Turkish-Islamic synthesis in the future had already existed in the idealist movement in the 1960s.

Türkeş's strategy of commando camps resembles the strategies adopted by the leaders of Italian and German nationalist movements. In Italian and German nationalist movements, too, the leaders had adopted strategies like training the young militants to mobilize them, even resorting to violence (Evans, 2003; Paxton, 2005) as in the paramilitaries of Hitler (Evans, 2006). Moreover, Hitler and Mussolini had also done epideictic displays as an attempt to show their 'great' power to the public (Griffin, 1995; Paxton, 2005). Türkeş's Nine Lights marches in the late 1960s also seem to be similar to the strategies adopted by the leaders of Italian and German nationalist movements. In the civil war atmosphere of the late 1960s and the 1970s, the MHP adopted a militant spirit that embodied grass-roots movements of its youth wing 'the Grey Wolves.' It should be noted, however, that after 1980, the movement eliminated its militant spirit.

The 1960s and 1970s political life of Turkey was realized on two levels. On the unofficial one, the number of increased extra-parliamentary, particularly after 1968 due to the Electoral Law's offering more seats to big parties at the expense of small

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[110] Apart from breakfast, lunch, and dinner times, the daily schedule of the commando camps consisted of praying, reading, physical training such as boxing, judo, rope-walking, wrestling, wall-scaling, long marches, and lectures (particularly on nationalism). There were speculations regarding the instruction of the use of fire-arms in these camps, yet the party rejected this allegation (Landau, 1974).

parties, led to the struggling for power by trade unions, business groups; and youth organizations as well as other different political circles (Landau, 1982). Even though many of these small parties were on the side of the extreme leftists, many were also closely associated with the extreme right, often with the Nationalist Action Party, among which there were youth groups, Pan-Turkist groups, and professional associations (Landau, 1982). Within these circles, Pan-Turks supported the party for some time, particularly in the 1944 protests. One of them was *Türkçüler Derneği* (the Pan-Turkists' Association). However, the ideology of Pan-Turkist grassroots, Landau (1982) argues, differs from that of the MHP's leadership in a way that Pan-Turkism appears as the important principle for the former whereas it constitutes only one of the other important tenets in the ideology of the latter. Finally, *Türkçüler Derneği* separated from the party after the 1969 Congress due to a conflict in the party emblem, as we shall see.

On the other hand, the affiliation of the Youth groups with the party was more noticeable than that of the Pan-Turkists (Landau, 1982). Since 1968, the Grey Wolves appeared in the political scene, they attracted much interest when they engaged in a violent conflict with leftists. They were taking what Landau (1982: 594) or Akpınar (2005: 56) called "commando training" whereas what Muhittin Çolak (2018) —one of the leading members of idealists youth organizations— called "a patriotic education." The leader Türkeş (Türkeş, 1998a: 40) defined them as "the youth camp" where the nationalist youth were educated and Dündar Taşer[111] —the ideologue of the

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[111] The Bozkurtlar, a youth wing/mass youth organization socialized in Ülkü Ocakları (Idealist Hearths) found in 1968- it is what Aydın and Taşkın (2018) call the paramilitary youth organization founded by

nationalist movement— metaphorized them as "wolves." Türkeş (1974b) identified

their symbol of *bozkurt* (the grey wolf) as the national emblem of the Turkish nation.

The issue of *bozkurt* had been raised a couple of times in the parliament as a

written question from the Prime Minister of the period Bülent Ecevit (see Turkish

Grand National Assembly Meetings: "4th Period 3rd Volume 71st Combination, page

445"; "4th Period 3rd Volume 66th Combination, page 178"). To answer the questions

regarding his movement, in his speech at the Parliament made on February 27,

Türkeş (1975b: 571) said that "We are against brute force, we are in favor of the rule

of law; we always say that. In this country, there are courts, there is a justice

organization, there is a security organization, and all the organs of the state are

active." In his later speech at the Parliament made on April 4, 1975, Türkeş again tried

to answer the assertions regarding his youth organization:

> The youth organization of our party, what we call the *Bozkurtlar* (the Grey Wolves) always cooperated with the state forces, helped them, and acted based on the laws and regulations. [AP, MSP. «Bravo» sounds, applause].
> DENİZ BAYKAL (Antalya) - By what authority?
> MINISTRY OF STATE - Deputy Prime Minister ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ (Continued) - Those who pulled arms against the state forces were communists. At the Middle East Technical University, they were communist youths who spent hours in armed conflict with the state's gendarmerie and police.
> DENİZ BAYKAL (Antalya) - They are accountable in the courts.
> MINISTER OF STATE - Deputy Prime Minister ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ (Continued) - Lie, slander! (Türkeş, 1975b: 368).

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an ex-major/the father of the idealism Dündar Taşer, whose gesture of an exposed palm with second and fifth fingers raised symbolized the head of a wolf, as mentioned before.

Türkeş did not admit the illegal activities of the nationalist youth against communism.

In his speech at the Parliament, Türkeş (1975a: 479) said[112]:

> Like every party, the Nationalist Action Party has a youth organization and complies with the law. We are trying to tell the young people that applying to the ideology of communism is a crippled, dead-end, and we are successful in this. In this way, we protected a large part of the youth who were in higher education from being a member of *Dev-Genc.* They are nationalist, patriotic, Kemalist, faithful to the laws of the Republic as individuals, we have maintained in the case of the current regime.

Later, towards the mid-1970s, *Ülkücüler* (the Idealists) which "may have supplanted the Grey Wolves or organized concurrently with them (reports are contradictory in this respect) started to take more attention: It is more or less certain that the former was more ramified (with branches in all of Turkey's cities and provincial towns) and had a much larger membership —possibly 100,000 or more— than the latter" (Landau, 1982: 594). Its name was *Ülkü Ocağı* (Idealist Hearth) at the beginning, then transformed into the *İdealist Gençlik Derneği* (Association of Idealist Youth) from

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[112] Again, in his later speech published in *Tercüman* (the Translator) newspaper, Türkeş (1998a: 81-82) said that "The communists have been largely armed and engaged in armed guerrilla activities by taking advantage of university autonomy such as kidnapping, robbing banks, killing people ... Nationalist youths have not done any such illegal acts." Türkeş (1998a: 82) gave specific examples of the illegal activities of the communist youth including *Dev-Genç* such as attaching bombs to Lieutenant General Atıf Erçıkan's house, attacks on General Eken, forming gangs in the *Nurhak* mountains. Türkeş added that the nationalists were acting in self-defense. A famous militant member of the Grey Wolves, Mehmet Ali Ağca (2006: 50), is said to have accepted the use of violence for self-defense in the idealist movement: "In principle, I was from an idealist movement that did not agree not to use terror as a means to gain power, but it was accepted to resort to violence to protect yourself." In his *İtiraf: Eski Ülkücü MHP'yi anlatıyor* (Confessions: An ex-*Ülkücü* explains the MHP), Tanlak (1997: 31) talks about the decision to buy a gun for himself after joining the *Etlik* idealist Hearth. He also talks about the clashes at *Etlik* high school (his school) and the use of weapons from time to time.

1979. From the beginning, the organization prepared propaganda materials (seminars, bulletins, pamphlets, and books) against their leftist opponents. Even though the organization claims to have no link with the party, one of the leading members of the organization, Muhittin Çolak (2018)[113] says, they openly accepted the doctrines of the party.

In the chaotic environment of left-right political violence, on March 12, 1971, the General Staff Headquarters issued a very hard memorandum to the *Adalet Partisi* (the Justice Party, AP) government, and the government resigned. This led to the arrest and trial of many protestors involved in street violence, among them were some leftist youth leaders, Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan, Yusuf Arslan —members of *Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu* (People's Liberation Army of Turkey)— who were even sentenced to death by hanging.[114] Although the 12 March regime closed the left and right associations, it did not exert any special pressure on the idealist movement.

The 1970s were the times of increasing bloody street conflicts between leftists and Grey Wolves in the chaotic environment following the March 12 military memorandum. After 12 March, there occurred a substantial left-wing mobilization. This situation intensified MHP's struggle against what they called a communist threat. It armed the Grey Wolves as a civilian force along with that of the state's (Bora & Can, 2015).

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[113] After the death of Alparslan Türkeş (April 4, 1997), Çolak (2018) says "He was appointed acting chair of the MHP for a while." His nickname in the movement was *Rüzgârın Oğlu* (Son of the Wind).

[114] *Ulucanlar* prison, where they were detained and executed, was later turned into a museum, *Ulucanlar* Prison Museum, in Altındağ, Ankara.

Under the prevailing commotion in the country following the memorandum, the first break in the ideological line of the nationalist movement took place. In his speech at the Tenth Congress held on May 9-10, 1971 published in *Devlet* (the State) newspaper on May 17, 1971 (111th Issue), Türkeş (1971) had openly expressed the ideology of the MHP as nationalist-communitarian by saying "Long live Nine Lights, nationalist-communitarian system!" Yet, four months after the Congress on September 11, 1971, Akpınar (2005: 96) states, Türkeş abandoned his nationalist-communitarian discourse since the concept was misunderstood as fascism by some rival circles. Moreover, Türkeş liquidated the commando camps during the period when martial law was proclaimed and ended with the March 12 Memorandum, and even banned being called a commando. As of the mid-70s, probably due to its resemblance of 'SS and Storm Troops' of the Nazis, the concept of commando[115] which was a practical tool of this discourse, was put aside and replaced by the concept of 'Turkish nationalist' or 'idealist.' Türkeş even banned three crescent emblems and the book named *Milliyetçi Toplumcu Düzenin Esasları* (Principles of Nationalist Communitarian Order) written by Mürşit Altaylı, thus the concept of nationalist communitarianism (Akpınar, 2005: 97). One can argue that Türkeş acted more cautiously after the memorandum.

In fact, Türkeş's rhetoric was more of an anti-communist one with an emphasis on the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism between 1965 and 1969 while Islam

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[115] Since Türkeş appeared on the political scene in 1965 to the coup of September 12, 1980, a suspicious approach was prevailing in the State against the MHP and the Nationalist Movement. After the MHP report in 1970, in the process of 12 March, the idealists were considered as the "ideological section that should be carefully watched" at the state level (Akpınar, 2005: 104).

was emphasized to a lesser degree. He increased his emphasis on Islamic elements towards the 1970s. Türkeş came to the foreground with a new ideological configuration, after March 12, 1971, Memorandum in *Milli Mutabakatlar* (National Consensus) Programme, that came to be called '*Türk-İslam Sentezi*' (Turkish-Islamic synthesis)[116]—Hearth of Intellectuals[117] novel doctrine (Arıkan, 1998)— in which the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam) and the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (being a Turk) were equivalents; neither prioritized the other. Even though it is called '*Türk-İslam Sentezi*' (Turkish-Islamic synthesis)[118] in the literature, the MHP rejects the term 'synthesis,' rather it denotes

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[116] The Turkish-Islamic synthesis has been described, however, differently in the literature. The synthesis has been variously called the synthesis of Turkism/Turkish nationalism and Sunni/Anatolian Islam/Islamism. As opposed to Canefe and Bora (2003) who describe what they call "the Turk-Islam synthesis" as a synthesis of Turkism and Sunni Islam, Tepe (2000) on the other hand, argues that the MHP put forward an equivocal formula of traditional Islam, that is Anatolian Islam, which was antithetical strict Sunni Islam, in its embodying the Islamic practices in Anatolia which contributed Turkic-Islamic elements including the orthodox Sunnism. Thus, Tepe (2000) proposes that the Turkish-Islamic synthesis emphasizes the cultural essence of Islam, and in this way, Islam became an instrument to unite diverse religious and ethnic groups such as in the Alevi case.

[117] The MHP under Türkeş's leadership was greatly affected by Hearth of Intellectuals during the 1970s. Bora and Can (2015) argue that the Hearth of Intellectuals' stress on *Kemalism* was not just instrumental. Instead, according to Bora and Can (2015), Turkish nationalism was experiencing its years of glory during the beginning of the Republic and Atatürk has always been regarded as the chief of all Turkish nationalists. Therefore, the first years of the Turkish Republic appeared as a respectful period as the roots of the Republic were embedded in the national culture. Similarly, Hearth of Intellectuals' Turkish nationalism followed this fashion, that is, defining Turkish nationalism as a national culture instead of the race (Arıkan, 1998).

[118] The Turkish-Islamic synthesis, Tepe (2000) argues, embodies the resolution of the protracted conflict concerning the place of Islam in the public domain. Tepe (2000) further argues that the MHP adopted an ideological synthesis of the notion of the secular state, ethnoreligious national union, and the Islamic community. Tepe (2000) claims that the MHP undoubtedly presented an Islamic nation

the term 'ideal' (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1992). In his book, *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık*, Türkeş (2017: 192) used the concept of 'Turkish-Islamic ideal.'[119] In Türkeş (1969a)'s own words, this synthesis was as follows: *"İslam imanı ve fazileti, Türklük gurur ve şuuru"* (Islamic faith and virtue, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness) which was later sloganized as *"Tanrı Dağı kadar Türk, Hira Dağı kadar Müslümanız"* (We are as Turkish as Mount Tengri/Tian Shan and as Muslim as Mount Hira) and *"Türklük bedenimiz, İslamiyet ruhumuz"* (Turkishness [is] our body, Islam [is] our spirit) (Türkeş, 1995a: 60). The ideology reformulated as the 'synthesis' had, therefore, essentially the same meaning as these slogans.

The synthesis was yet not a novelty in the ideology of the MHP. As argued before, the idea that was proffered as a Turkish-Islamic synthesis had already existed in the idealist movement that arose in the 1960s. Although the ideology was not framed as the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, the morality and nationalism principles in

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and a secular state, in that Islam appears as a moral and spiritual source of Turkish nationhood in the MHP's understanding. On the one hand, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis compounds Islamic and Turkish values; Arıkan (2008) argues, on the other hand, it integrates into its doctrine western elements such as development in technology and science.

[119] Arıkan (1998) argues that the ideologue of Turkish-Islamic synthesis was İbrahim Kafesoğlu who was the first Chair of the Hearth of Intellectuals. Arıkan (1998) and Bora and Can (2015) say that Kafesoğlu put forward this synthesis in the 1970s and regarded Islam as an indispensable component of Turkish culture among many others without attributing it any superiority. Going further, Arıkan (1998: 126) argues that Islam was only and firstly revised by Turks according to their secular ethos with the separation of religion and state; therefore, it was not Turks who adopted Islamic principles, rather it was Islam that attached itself to the Turks' national culture. Arıkan (2002a) says that, some idealists who had increased Islamic tendencies in the post- the 1980 coup, were called *Alperen* and that their case was *İ'lâ-yi Kelimetullâh* (Exalting the Word of God) and this ideology called Turkish-Islamic ideal was put forward by S. Ahmet Arvasi. Balcı (2011) argues that the ideologues of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis are İbrahim Kafesoğlu, Zeki Velidi Togan, and Osman Turan, rejecting racism and suggesting a more Islamic leaning nationalist model.

the Nine Lights imply the synthesis. Although Türkeş did not frame ideology as a Turkish-Islamic synthesis, in his later version of the Nine Lights, Türkeş (2017: 160) noted that "the Turkish nation formulated a Turkish-Islamic synthesis with the acceptance of Islam." Moreover, Türkeş (2017: 192) said "Turkishness is pride and consciousness, the faith of Islam, morality, and virtue. In other words, it is the Turkish-Islamic ideal." Even though Türkeş talked about this ideological formulation in the 2017 edition of his book, the main ideology of the idealist movement was framed as the Nine Lights in the 1960s (since the Nine Lights was first published in 1965 by Türkeş as a 16-page piece including an implication to Islam as being introduced as a moral framework) in which Islam was only one of the components of this nationalism among others. Therefore, the difference between these ideological configurations (that are, Nine Lights doctrine and the Turkish-Islamic synthesis) is a matter of emphasis, rather than a sharp distinction, as argued before.

Like the Nine Lights doctrine, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis (while also including an adaptive Westernization approach) is a composition reminiscent of Ziya Gökalp's synthesis of Turkism, Islamism, and Westernization. The idea of a Turkish nation thus did not contradict Islam, rather Islamic values were articulated to Turkish nationalism. In other words, the idea that Turkism and Islamic thought could coexist was accepted by the MHP. Türkeş (1979a) maintained that history shows us that people deprived of religious unity could not found a nation. The Turkish nation was, accordingly, constructed through shared ethnic bonds blended with Islam. The basic philosophy behind these statements is that being a Turk and a Muslim are not mutually exclusive. Like Gökalp, Türkeş also stressed that there is no necessary conflict between Turkish ethnic and Islamic values:

> Islam constitutes a significant element of Turkish morality. Islam is a basis that keeps the nation united and offers spirituality and morality. Therefore, Turkish nationalism is not derived from a struggle between ethnic-nationalism and Islam, rather it historically synthesizes Turkish ethnic and Islamic values (Türkeş, 2017: 160).

The attempts to synthesize Turkishness, Islam, and modernity go back to pre-Republican period. In the search of political identity, the elements of Turkishness, Islam, and Westernism were taken as the basis. The differences in defining the identity were determined depending on how these three elements were synthesized with which emphases and in what order. Grounding their ideology on Gökalp's synthesis, the MHP under Türkeş's leadership also (and Bahçeli, as we shall see) criticized the Westernization approach of the early Republican era. Türkeş did not opt for "total Westernization" (Heper, forthcoming), that is imitating the West —what Landau (2002) calls "blind imitation,"— rather the Party advocated an adaptation of technical developments realized in the West without damaging the national values (or without what Parla (1989) calls "cultural inferiority complex"). Tepe (2000) contends that the material and moral growth constituted the basic principles of "development" with no reference to modernization/Westernization and Türkeş referred to "the Turkish tradition" to replace the Kemalist idea of the West as the utmost form of civilization. Türkeş (2017) claimed that that imitation and copying (throughout the Westernization process) have damaged the national self, that is, instead of bringing scientific and technical advancements, Turkish intellectuals brought superstitious and rancid impulses, and voraciousness of the West to Turkish society. Rather, Türkeş (2017) said that it was necessary to understand the main ideas and the main factors that make up the power/supremacy of the West and accordingly organize the Turkish state and nation; that is, we must adopt the idea of taking the

developments in the West and creating our own national culture and civilization. One might, therefore, argue that Türkeş advocated the adaptation of Western technological developments, rather than imitating their cultural values. This argument was built on the axis of the conceptual difference between culture and civilization as they considered.

This binary opposition had been introduced by Ziya Gökalp to the late Ottoman intellectual debates (Topal, 2017). The conceptual difference between *hars* (culture) and *medeniyet* (civilization) lay at the heart of Gökalp's intellectual perspective and had its roots in Ferdinand Tönnies's distinction between *Gesellschaft* [*cemiyet*] (society) and *Gemeinschaft* [*cemaat*] (community) (Grigoriadis & Opçin-Kıdal, 2020). Inspired by Durkheim, Gökalp conceptualized his own idea of society and community as *hars zümresi* (culture group) and *medeniyet zümresi* (civilization group).[120] Evin (1984) thinks that this conceptualization was supposed to have reconciled the long-lasting duality of Ottoman reformist thought that wanted to preserve Turkish values while also espousing western methods. In that sense, "Durkheim was thus Turkicized

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[120] According to Bora (2009), Türkeş as the leader of the CKMP/MHP during the mid-1960s, Türkeş categorized development as two kinds of phenomena: material and spiritual. Material development denotes absolute dominance of reason and science. Bora (2009) further describes Türkeş as having an instrumentalist view in such a way that industry and technique materialize power. On the other hand, however, Türkeş thought that the spiritual should be in harmony with material and in line with the national characteristics and culture to overcome the alienation that results from modernization. As a potential instrument of development, spiritual development appears as an internalization of the cognitive apparatus of modernism similar to the approach taken by the conservative modernist intelligentsia (Bora, 2009). With this ideological position, the CKMP/MHP defined itself as an enemy of the left/communism with its positive discourse on nationalism/idealism; and radicalized and popularized (Bora, 2009: 688-689).

in the process of interpretation" as Evin (1984: 16) calls, in that Durkheimian community became Gökalp's conceptualization of culture (symbolizing values while being national) whereas his Durkheimian society came to be called Gökalp's civilization (representing scientific advancement while being international). Gökalp (2016b) simply posits that culture, comprising of aesthetics, economy, language law, morality, reason, religion, and science, is national whereas civilization, that is the technology passing from one nation to another, is international, as mentioned before. Having taken Gökalp's famous binary opposition of culture and civilization,[121] Türkeş (2017: 329) said that "Civilization is not national like culture. It does not recognize national borders, it is universal."[122] Therefore, like Gökalp, he suggests adopting Western civilization (technology), not Western culture. This critical difference between culture and civilization[123] (adopted from Gökalp), has determined the MHP's political agenda thus far. This approach was also used as an instrument against what they call an enemy —communism— to abolish its social power by a violent campaign.

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[121] For detailed information about Gökalp's ideas on culture (particularly religion) and civilization see Ziya Gökalp, *Makaleler VIII* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1981).

[122] This type of Westernization approach as a critique of Westernizers of the early Republican era was also welcomed by the MHP cadres. In his conversation with Osman Çakır, Nevzat Köseoğlu (as cited in Çakır, 2008: 85) also talks about this Westernization approach of the idealist movement: "Our general orientation on the subject of Westernization was to realize a Westernization while preserving the moral values of the nation .... We read Mümtaz Turhan. This would be the main source for us."

[123] The distinction also exists in German nationalism. While culture is regarded as "an entity with soul," civilization is considered to be artificial and external by German nationalists (Kadıoğlu, 1996: 179).

The conceptualization of 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis' was also intended to have reconciled the ever-lasting conflict between Turkishness and Islam. Ideologically, the MHP, taking its roots from Anatolia, Aras and Bacik (2000: 59) argue, has referred to the "glorification of the Ottoman past and Turkish-Islamist tradition" and opted for "cooperation and even integration of what is perceived as the historical land of the Turkish people." Despite its secular orientation, Makovsky (1999: 161) contests, the MHP has underlined "the glorification of myths about the pre-Islamic origins of Turks," that is, Islam was a natural part of Turkish national heritage and this 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis' served as catalysis of the MHP's success in central Anatolian parts. Likewise, Bora and Can (2015: 54) assert that the MHP used Islam as "an integral part of Turkish history" to attract Muslim masses. Similarly, Arıkan (2008) argues that it was aimed that conservative voters would have supported MHP against the rising communist movements in those years. Bacık (2011) and Tepe (2000) argue that Türkeş suggested merging statist nationalist ideology with Turkish communitarian values to reconcile the Muslim people with the Kemalist state.

Contrary to other conservative or Islamic parties, Bacık (2011) argues, the CKMP/MHP under Türkeş's leadership had never criticized the Kemalist state, and Türkeş himself was an officer with a Kemalist orientation. Without eliminating the Kemalist paradigm, Bacık (2011) argues, he targeted the large conservative Anatolian masses with a new discourse on significant issues such as religion.[124] Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992), on the other hand, argues that the MHP did not accept the Kemalist notion

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[124] Ete, Taşdelen, and Ersay (2014) argue that the ideology of the party was affected by the high religious sensibilities of the peasant or conservative Central Anatolian people who migrated to the city with the wave of industrialization after 1950.

of Turkish nationalism as a bond for social cohesion; underneath the objective of modernizing existed in both the mono- and multi-party periods. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992) also argues that the respective periods witnessed a restrictive nationalism that served merely as a bond for national solidarity so that this form of narrowly defined nationalism could not threaten a Westernization process that was aligned with idealized Western values. According to Cizre-Sakallıoğlu (1992), both approaches to state-society relations, which is the society-centered liberal center-right approach, as well as state-centered CHP, advocated this tradition.

This dissertation argues that the introduction of *"İslam imanı ve fazileti, Türklük gurur ve şuuru"* (Islamic faith and virtue, the pride and consciousness of Turkishness, later Turkish-Islamic synthesis) in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the communist-idealist political violence since Islam was considered as an antidote to communism (identified as hostility to religion) during the 1970s, but it did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. That said, Islam spiritually nurtured the movements of the idealists. Moreover, the rise of Islamic politics not only in Turkey but also in the Arab world in the Cold War era might have also been effective in this orientation. The Turkish-Islamic line also made it easier for people from different ethnic backgrounds to move to the Nationalist Action Party's ranks; in other words, the Turkish-Islamic ideology laid the groundwork for a broader understanding of nationalism within the Party. This shows us how the nationalism of the nationalist movement has evolved in over 10 years from the CKMP to the MHP.

The main tension in the movement, from the beginning, was how to reconcile the tension between Turkishness and Islam. The marriage of Turkism and Islam

caused a deadlock in the nationalist movement in deciding the extent to which Islam played a role in defining the Turkish identity and finally led to a division as Turkists and the followers of the synthesis. For instance, there was a conflict in the party emblem at the 1969 Congress. Pan-Turkists opted for grey wolf (the ancient Turks' symbol) whereas the leadership decided on the three crescents (that includes Islam) —an Islamic symbol— as the party emblem instead of *bozkurt*,[125] implying the increasing emphasis on the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam). Yet, the conflict over the party emblem was a manifestation on the surface of a deeper conflict, that of identity conflict which embodies the place of Islam in the MHP's identity. That said, the added emphasis on Islam in the MHP's discourse led to separation in the party by people following Türkeş who supports the Turkish-Islamic ideal and people following Nihal Atsız who insist the MHP be in the line with the (race-based) secular nationalism which offers a nationalist understanding free of religion, which they called "Turkist thought." The latter group comprised of people called the *Bozkurtlar* (the Grey Wolves) in the party, whereas the former group was called as *Üç Hilalciler* (the ones supporting the three crescents)[126] which was reflected in the clash of ideological debates in *Ötüken* journal published by Atsız and *Devlet* (the State) Journal -the MHP's publication (Öznur, 1999f). To some degree, Türkeş's initiatives stand as a response to Atsız's views of Turkic nationalism. In his interview with Hulusi Turgut, about this break within the movement, Türkeş (as cited in Turgut, 1995: 409-

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[125] *Bozkurt* remained as the symbol of the youth organizations.

[126] Serdengeçti's statement "We are the descendants of the Ottoman Empire, "three crescents" must be our emblem" attracted great attention among the members of the party (Öznur, 1999a: 166). Three crescents on the flag of the Ottoman State are the symbol of domination on three continents, Asia, Europe, and Africa.

412) said that "the MHP's nationalism was different than that of Nihal Atsız which were not represented in the party's ideology." Those in the Party's Turkist grass-roots who opposed the change in the party's rhetoric with the added emphasis on Islam were, therefore, dismissed from the MHP in 1969. The role of Islam might be reinforced by juxtaposing what Türkeş did and said compared to what Atsız used to say. The success of Türkeş to dominate the movement may be indicative of the increasing religiosity of the party's grassroots.

Figure 1 MHP's emblem

3.4. "Even if Our Blood Spills, the Victory Belongs to Islam": *Alperens* (Sufi warriors) of the *İ'lâ-yi Kelimetullâh* Case (Exalting the Word of God)

As a result of the deaths of the idealists in the armed clashes and being declared martyrs, the idealist movement gained a religious and mystical character in the 1970s. The bloody armed struggle between the communists and the idealists articulated Islamic elements to the main ideology of the MHP as a practical and ideological tool. When the conflict between the idealists and leftists reached its peak

in 1977, the escalation of the conflict resulted in the deaths of many idealists and leftists. The increasing number of deaths during this period had a profound psychological impact on the idealists. The appearance of the deceased comrade Grey Wolf as a martyr sanctified the idealists' movement. Erken (2013) states that Türkeş was adaptable to this new political discourse coming from below, with the added emphasis on Islam, partly owing to the nature of the democratic competition in the country at the time. Concurrently, Türkeş increased his Islamic tone, emphasizing cultural components of nationalism (specifically, Islam) against the perceived threat between 1977 and 1980, while also cooperating with its rival parties against this perceived threat.

The articulation of Islamic elements can be observed in the idealists' slogans such as "*Kanımız aksa da zafer İslâm'ın*" ("Even if our blood spills, the victory belongs to Islam"); "*Çağımız İslam'a dirilişedir*" ("Our age is the resurrection to Islam"); and "*Türküz, Müslümanız, İslam'ın eriyiz*" ("We are Turks, Muslims, and soldiers of Islam") (Öznur, 1999b: 437). Their leader also changed. In his earlier publications, Türkeş was more cautious about Islam, referring to *Tanrı* (a non-Islamic Turkish term for God), not *Allah* (an Islamic Turkish term for God) (Türkeş, 1967b, 1975c). Thus, Türkeş (1975c) was saying: "*Tanrı Türk'ü korusun ve yüceltsin*" ("May God bless and glorify the Turk") rather than "*Allah Türk'ü korusun ve yüceltsin*" ("May *Allah* bless and glorify the Turk"). This rhetoric, which gave spiritual dynamism to the idealists, increased its influence day by day during this period.

This changing discourse in 1977 was essentially a reflection of the changing motive of the struggle. The idealist movement, which previously struggled with only anti-communist motives against the communists on the street, also started to fight

for the *nizam-ı âlem*[127] (global order),[128] meaning that the Turks had a mission of bringing the global order (Erken, 2013)[129]. This was sort of an adaptation of one of the Islamic teachings, *i'lâ-yi kelimetullâh*[130] (exalting the name and word of God). As a result of this ideological reconfiguration, the wolves became *alperen*[131] (both warrior and religious) (Zeybek, 2010). The rising political Islam might be effective in the increasing religiosity of the grassroots. Even though Türkeş was tolerant towards this new ideological reconfiguration, he did not use the concepts of *nizam-ı âlem* (global order) and *i'lâ-yi kelimetullâh* in the MHP's programme.

On the other hand, Türkeş went on a pilgrimage to Mecca during this period (Landau, 2002), performing a practical expression of his increasing emphasis on religion. At the same time, Bora and Can (2015) claim that Türkeş increased relations with religious people, including Sufi sheiks of the time. Moreover, in 1977, Türkeş published a book titled *Ahlakçılık* (Moralism) in which Türkeş (1977b) elaborated on the moralism principle of the Nine Lights while also praising Islam. Türkeş (1977b: 54)

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[127] For more information regarding *nizam-ı âlem*, see Osman Turan, *Türk cihan hakimiyeti mefkuresi tarihi* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2009).

[128] Similar teleological interpretations to *nizam-ı âlem* (global order) exist in the European right movements [e.g. German *Lebensraum* —living space,— imagining a larger homeland than they already have (W. D. Smith, 1989)].

[129] Erken (2013) argues that Osman Turan, a nationalist historian, skillfully articulated this concept, ascribing to it the meaning of Turks' imagined mission of establishing the global order.

[130] *İ'lâ-yi kelimetullâh* is defined as "the idea of exalting and spreading the name and word of God, and realizing its order" (Nizam-ı Âlem Ocakları) (Hearts of Global Order).

[131] It is the image of a Sufi warrior from the early Turkish-Islamic states (Erken, 2013). *Alp* means hero- a name that expresses the attributes of the valiant in the ancient Turks, and *Eren* means a person who is a saint and attained wisdom.

also said: "The Quran should be taught as a course in schools." One of the highest points of this cultural component of nationalism being emphasized in the discourse of Türkeş stands out in the late 1970s at the 1979 Party Congress when Türkeş (1979b: 38-53) called the path of the MHP's nationalism "the path of God." Yet, Landau (2002) argues that the reason behind Türkeş's retreat from his previous support of secularism to praising Islam (even to the extent to which he went on pilgrimage to Medina and Mecca) was perhaps related to the rising political Islam in Turkey —what he called the MHP's pragmatism. Landau has a point in arguing the effect of rising political Islam in the ideology of the MHP. The nationalist movements were gradually replaced by the Islamist movements in the mid-1970s (Rogan, 2009).[132] The added emphasis on Islam, which is already in the ideology of the party, can be considered as an evolutionary dynamic in the context of rising Islamic movements not only in Turkey but also in the Middle East. He positioned his party's ideology, one such being that Islam is a cultural component of the MHP's nationalism for the survival of the state as he reasons, against the rising Islamic movements.

At the time, Türkeş also gave importance to the wide range of images of the grassroots. Türkeş was uncomfortable with those harsh idealists, who wore Bozkurt medallions on their chest and adorned their fingers with wolf-shaped rings; instead, he wanted the Grey Wolves to adapt a spiritual nationalist identity. Türkeş (as cited

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[132] "The Muslim Brotherhood and its off-shoots defending the Islamic cause in politics had begun to gain a significant following, though often in very adverse circumstances, in most of the Middle Eastern countries from the 1950s onwards, but in Turkey such a political movement based on Islamic political discourse did not develop until the late 1960s" (Erken, 2013).

in Akpınar, 2005: 125) gave direct instructions to Namık Kemal Zeybek, who led the

Eğitimciler Grubu (Educators' Group)[133] formed in the MHP in 1977: "You will tell our

youngsters about Ahmet Yesevi.[134] You will show them *Alperens* as a model." Finally,

the wolves became *alperen* (both warrior and religious) in the eyes of their leader as

well. Furthermore, the Chair of *Ülkü Ocakları Birliği* (the Idealist Hearths Association,

ÜOB) (1969-1971), Muharrem Şemsek (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 115) said to the

idealist youth "to pray five times in a day" in one of his speeches in *Site Yurdu* (Dorm).

Ülkücü's oath had also changed. It was no longer ending with the words "*Tanrı Türk'ü*

korusun ve yüceltsin" (May God bless and glorify the Turk), but with the words "*Allah*

Türk'ü korusun ve yüceltsin" (May Allah bless and glorify the Turk). The following is

the revised oath of the idealists:

> *Allah'a, Kur'an'a, vatana, bayrağa ve silaha yemin olsun!*
> *Şehitlerim, gazilerim emin olsun!*
> *Ülkücü Türk gençliği olarak;*
> *Komünizme, faşizme, kapitalizme ve her türlü emperyalizme karşı*
> *mücadelemiz devam edecektir!*
> *Kavgamız; son nefer, son nefes, son damla kana kadardır!*
> *Kavgamız; milliyetçi Türkiye'ye, Turan'a kadardır!*
>
> *Başbuğumuz emin olsun!*
> *Yılanlardan olmayacağız!*
> *Satanlardan olmayacağız!*
> *Kaçanlardan olmayacağız!*
> *Yıkılmayacağız!*
>
> *Başaracağız!*
> *Başaracağız!*
> *Başaracağız!*
>
> *Allah Türkü korusun ve yüceltsin*! ("Yemin (25 Mayıs 1996 / Gençlik Kurultayı),"
1996)

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[133] It is an intellectual movement that marked the 1970s. The Group was founded to increase the educational and training activities of the idealists and to give ideological direction to the movement.

[134] Khawaja Ahmad Yasawi (Kazakh: Қожа Ахмет Ясауи; 1093–1166) was a Turkic poet and Sufi whose primary aim was to Islamize the Turkic-speaking world.

I swear to Allah, the Qur'an, the homeland, the flag, and the arms!
Martyrs, veterans, make sure!
As an idealistic Turkish youth;
Our struggle against communism, fascism, capitalism, and all kinds of imperialism will continue!
Our fight; until the last soldier, the last breath, the last drop of the blood!
Our fight is for nationalist Turkey, Turan!
Make sure our Başbuğ!
We will not be snakes!
We will not be sellouts!
We are not gonna getaway!
We will not go down!
We will succeed!
We will succeed!
We will succeed!
Allah bless and glorify the Turk!

The increasing place of Islam in the discourses and practices of Türkeş did not go beyond the fact that Islam was a cultural component of the MHP's nationalism. Erken (2013) states that Türkeş was uncomfortable with the excessive use of Islam among the idealists in the late 1970s since he suspended the journal called *Nizam-ı Âlem* (Global Order) published by the leadership of Idealist Hearths in late 1979 due to its incompatible views regarding nation and religion with the party's nationalism. This serious step taken by Türkeş was an indication that he wanted his emphasis to be considered in a period during which his emphasis on Islam was gradually increasing. In other words, Türkeş wanted to emphasize Islam on a cultural level, positioning his nationalism with a discourse that would not be against laicism and would not have an *ummah* approach.

Türkeş's understanding of Islam was, therefore, not Pan-Islamism. Türkeş (2017: 197) wrote: "We cannot deny that we are the ummah of Muhammad, of

course, he is the last prophet of Islam and we are his ummah. However, as an intellectual movement, Pan-Islamism has lost its influence politically." Therefore, one might argue that Türkeş did not opt for Pan-Islamism, rather Islam constituted ethical principles for him as well as his movement. In other words, Islam was a cultural component of Turkish nationalism among many others without attributing it to any superiority. So, it was an added emphasis on Islam rather than the changing ideology itself.

Even though Türkeş was dedicated to the Kemalist state, Tepe (2000) admits, he did not include one of the Kemalists principles, which is laicism, in his Nine Lights doctrine. Instead of laicism, Tepe (2000) claims, Türkeş advocated the principle of moralism by which he called for protecting the spirit of the Turkish nation. As can be understood from the motto of "Turkish pride and consciousness, Islamic morality and virtue," Islam constituted one of the elements that make up the nation as well as ethical and moral principles with a completely secular understanding in essence. Moreover, in *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık,* Türkeş (2017) claimed: "the principle of laicism should be preserved, but the religious needs of the society should also be taken into consideration." That said, the emphasis on Islam has yet always remained on the cultural level and within the framework of laicism.

MHP's support significantly increased when it joined the I. *Milli Cephe* (First National Front, 1975-1977) government where its allies were *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party, AP) led by Süleyman Demirel and *Millî Selamet Partisi* (National Salvation Party, MSP) headed by Necmettin Erbakan in 1974 during *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party's, CHP) —Bülent Ecevit's— government. At the end of this compromise between the parties, Türkeş became the Deputy Prime Minister.

According to Arıkan (1998), this coalition was due to two reasons: on the one hand, these allies were uniting against the communist threat; on the other hand, they were acting together against the rising CHP as a result of its popularity subsequent to military intervention in Cyprus[135] by its leader Bülent Ecevit. Ecevit's CHP had the potential vote base to come to power, an opportunity for the convening of conservative-nationalist groups under the roof of the MHP. In addition to the Nine Lights doctrine, the MHP's conceptualization of the 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis' ideologically nurtured this ground. Based on the evolving nationalism theory that "the partners in alliance move towards each other," coalition with Islamic partners might have been an important factor for the MHP to 'select' one of its ideological variants, which is Islam, and prioritizing it. Like the cooperation of religious nationalists with the secular nationalists in order to protect religious people from what they call "godless socialists" without abandoning foundational claims in Israel, the MHP's coalition with the AP and the MSP might be considered as an evolutionary dynamic. The tactical modulation of their claims, the added emphasis on Islam, might have been necessary to preserve their coalition with them so as to protect the religious public against the perceived threats 'communism and the CHP' despite their

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[135] The MHP criticizes the EU's position on the Cyprus conflict. According to the MHP, only the Northern and Southern Cypriot communities can resolve the Cyprus conflict, not the EU. In their publication called *Türkiye'nin AB Üyeliği ve Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi,* Bahçeli (2002f: 64) sees the EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus as an obstacle for conflict resolution of the Cyprus conflict. In the same publication, Bahçeli (2002f: 64) posits that "it has never been against Turkey's membership of the EU but has questioned whether Turkey should accept every condition of the union," rather it advocates EU membership of Turkey if this membership does not pose a threat against the national unity and perpetuity of Turkish state." The issue of Cyprus' membership of the EU has been criticized by the MHP cadres and seen as an attempt to realize the Greek *Megali* Idea and transform Cyprus as was Crete into an island without its Turkish Muslim heritage (Canefe & Bora, 2003).

continued disagreement on the extent to which Islam plays a role in defining the national identity. As a part of the coalition, the MHP had access to power and a role in the decision-making process, opening a space for nationalist cadres like the Religious Zionist movement after its alliance with the Labor Zionist movement -the two of the most important Israeli nationalist movements.

Concurrently with the peak of the conflict between rightists and leftists, the Islamization process in the movement base, and the rising political Islam in the country, the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (Islam) was at the forefront in defining the MHP's nationalism. This change in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the increasing religiosity of the grassroots, the rising political Islam, and Islamic coalition partners, but it did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. Türkeş positioned his party's ideology against rising Islamic movements, by emphasizing Islam already in its ideology, but never renouncing laicism. Among these factors, the Islamic coalition partners might have been an important factor in 'selecting' one of the ideological variants of the MHP, which is Islam, and to prioritize it.

The MHP appeared as a party of disadvantaged groups in the age of capitalism between 1974 and 1977 particularly that of the marginalized middle class due to their difficulty in adapting to entrepreneurial capitalism/globalization (Arıkan, 1998; Başkan, 2006; Bora & Can, 2015; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Çınar & Arıkan, 2002; Tepe, 2000). Even though the party had dramatically increased its votes in the 1977 elections, Arıkan (1998) argues that it was lower than what had been expected since the party was not successful at revising its strategy and remained only with its anti-communist propaganda. During the 1977 election propaganda, Türkeş started to

emphasize the cultural component of Turkish nationalism and increased his Islamic tone. In the 5 June 1977 General Election's election bulletin and also published in *Hasret* (Longing) newspaper on May 15, 1977 (No:25), MHP's slogans under Türkeş's leadership were "*Önce iman ve ahlak*" (First faith and morality) and "*Dinsiz millet, kanunsuz devlet, MHP'siz hükümet olmaz*" (There cannot be an irreligious nation, lawless state, and government without the MHP) (Türkeş, 1977a: 413). Going further, in his speech at the Fifth Congress of *Ülkü-Bir* in February 1977, Türkeş (1977c) said, "The Quran should be taught as a course in schools." This speech has attracted great interest in nationalist circles.

After this election bulletin, Türkeş published an election manifesto named "*Türk Milletine Beyanname*" (Manifesto for the Turkish Nation). The views contained in this statement might be the best indicator of the new political structuring of the MHP in 1977 with more emphasis on religion. For instance, in this manifesto, Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 118) characterized his nationalism as "… nationalism based on spiritual content … derived from the Islamic faith." The support the poet Necip Fazıl Kısakürek[136] gave to this manifesto brought spiritual dynamism to the idealists (Öznur, 1999f). Aydın and Taşkın (2018) argue that the year 1977 was a watershed in the history of the nationalist movement as it entered into a bloody struggle against the leftists with its Idealist-nationalist youth mass. In 1977, the conflict between the two opposing camps escalated and the bloody conflict reached its peak. It might have been one of the reasons for Türkeş's added emphasis on Islam. A year later, at the Seventh Congress of the Idealist Hearths, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu was elected as Chair and

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[136] For more information of the relationship between Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and the MHP, see Hakkı Öznur, *Ülkücü Hareket 6. Cilt: Portreler* (Ankara: Alternatif Yayınları, 1999).

Abdullah Çatlı became Vice-Chair of the Idealist Hearths. With this change in leadership, a bloody chapter with the leftists started in the history of the idealist movement.

Another important development in 1977, after the election, the AP, MSP, and MHP coalition, called the Second National Front, was founded on July 21, 1977, and this coalition remained in office until January 5, 1978. While the idealists were on the street in the anti-communist struggle against leftists, their leaders were fighting against this perceived threat by uniting with the parties it was essentially rival against what they called "Godless communists." However, as previously stated, the post-1977 threat was not only the escalating right-left political violence but also the rising political Islam.

1978 was one of the most painful years of Turkish social and political history. Yavuz (2002) asserts that against one of the perceived threats (among which there were also communists and the Soviet Union) by the state and the MHP before 1980, left-leaning Alevis, Grey Wolves organized an attack in September 1978 in Sivas. There was also the *Maraş* incident[137] —what Yavuz (2002) calls the bloodiest conflict between the Alevis and Sunnis,[138] while also implying the idealists were responsible

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[137] For a detailed account of *Kahramanmaraş's* case, see Emma Sinclair-Webb, "Sectarian violence, the Alevi minority, and the left: Kahramanmaraş 1978," in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma: A comprehensive overview.* ed. Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

[138] Bora and Can (2015) argue that that the Alevi population, the majority of which came to the cities and towns from the rural and mountainous regions in the Republican period (a significant part of them migrated to this place with the capitalist process in the 70s), was considered as a foreigner in a sense. That said, differences in religious beliefs and customs and the minority position of Alevism caused this alienation to gradually turn into an enemy potential. Bora and Can (2015) further claim that the fact

for organizing bloody attacks against the Alevis— in December 1978. It was widely said that the idealists were also involved in this bloody conflict. Yaşlı (2019: 320) says that "Türkeş showed Ecevit and his statements as responsible for the incident in Maraş."

With the increasing incidents of violence in the country, the MHP proposed the government declare martial law. Martial law, announced on 26 November 1978, led Türkeş and the MHP administration to determine a new strategy in the fight against communism, that is, eliminating the violent character of the movement (Akpınar, 2005). A circular was prepared to be sent to the provinces. On June 29, 1979, the MHP's Headquarters sent to the idealist organizations the letter numbered 79/813 signed by Türkeş titled *Tamim*. In this document, Türkeş (1979c) said that "the movement will continue its struggle, respecting the constitution and without leaving the legal path, and that the members of the movement should not take part in the anarchical events." This letter was a manifestation of a novel Türkeş abandoning his earlier harsh discourse. A new chapter in the history of the idealist movement had thus started towards the end of the 1970s.

The 1980s marked a new era in Turkey's political history: identity conflicts were at the heart of Turkish politics. The neo-liberal economic policies in this era created new economic and political spaces in the market, media, and education within which Turkey's ethnic and religious groups- Islamists, Alevis, and Kurds- stepped onto the scene with their cultural identity claims. An ideologically rigid Kemalist state with an ethicist essence, Yavuz (2002: 203-220) argues, regarded these groups as "an

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that Alevis had relatively rising careers in these regions — at least in the eyes of traditional middle classes — was feeding a certain reaction to the Alevis and increasing their sensitivity to them.

existential threat to the core values of its ideology;" thus "enemies of the state and the Turkish nation." Against these threats as named by the state, the Turkish military started a public campaign, which later led to radicalize Turkish nationalism. These enemies as named by the state were common enemies of both the Turkish military and the MHP which presented itself as the party of state and the defender of its nationalism.

The deadly armed struggle between leftists and rightists resulted in the coup d'état by the Turkish military in 1980, 12 September. Subsequent to the coup d'état, the military banned all political parties from creating a new legal and institutional framework for Turkish politics as well as to strengthen the state. Accordingly, the military prepared a new constitution comprised of less basic rights and liberties as compared to the 1961 Constitution, particularly intending to limit the activities of voluntary associations and political parties. Furthermore, they changed the election law in 1983 to avoid the troubles triggered by coalition governments. Accordingly, ten percent of the total vote became the threshold to create more stable governments with clear majorities and to exclude extremist parties from politics.

The September 12 government (1980-1983) also opted for Turkish-Islamic synthesis, in that Islam started to be a major instrument for fostering political stability because they taught the 1970s of a turbulent era was due to its limited place (Öniş, 1997). The generals of 12 September, despite their loyalty to Kemalism, enhanced the place of religion in societal life, that is, the military affirmed Islam as the social glue of Turkish society in 1982 (Ahmad, 1993). For instance, they introduced obligatory religious classes in middle and primary schools and the number of *the*

Imam-Hatip schools increased abruptly from 258 to 350 (Ahmad, 1993: 219). The Prime Minister of the coming period, Turgut Özal, also accepted the increasing role of Islam in the public domain as "the antidote to the left" (Öniş, 1997). Turgut Özal's (Prime Minister and Chair of *Anavatan Partisi* [the Motherland Party, ANAP] between 1983-1989) liberal-conservative government of the 1980s were, Bora (2003) argues, more powerful than that of his precursors in its synthesis of Turkish, Islamic, and Western. Moreover, Öniş (1997) argues that the nationalization of religion by the military to reintegrate Turkish society tried to reconcile the conflicting notions of Turkishness and Islam in the public space in the early 1980s. The Turkish-Islamic synthesis on the state level paved the way for political empowerment for some Islamic powers soon, as we shall see.

Subsequent to the 1980 coup d'état, the violence between the two opposing camps ended after a while. In his book titled *Zamanı Süzerken,* Kırcı (1998: 168) said that "When our interlocutors surrendered, of course, the reason for our existence disappeared." As a result of the coup d'état, the MHP faced a major paradigm shift in 1980. The MHP has always positioned itself as an ally of the state (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Avcı, 2011; Başkan, 2006; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Jacoby, 2011; Makovsky, 1999; Öniş, 2003; Tepe, 2000), which in turn created a legitimate image of the party both in the eyes of the state and the society. Nevertheless, the 1980 coup d'état broke this good relation of some members of the MHP with the state due to its aggressive reaction. In his conversation with Rıza Müftüoğlu in *Yeni Düşünce* (New Idea) newspaper on February 24, 1989, Yaşar Okuyan, former MHP member, mentions that Türkeş (as cited in Okuyan, 2010: 175) said that "12 September was done against Turkish nationalism." Following the coup, having been put in prison, tortured, and even

executed, idealists became disappointed with what they previously referred to as the sacred state which they had thought as worth fighting for. The leader Türkeş was also imprisoned because his party triggered bloody conflicts that killed dozens of people. This, in turn, caused some of the MHP followers to reconsider its attitude towards the state (Çınar & Arıkan, 2002). In this context, some of the Turkish-Islamic idealists within the party came to the point of expressing themselves against the system, feeling betrayed. Cemal Anadol's quotation from the Middle East newspaper expresses this feeling clearly: "Those who made September 12 saw the Turkish nationalists who were in favor of the state and the separatist-communists who tried to destroy the state the same and even put more pressure on the idealists" (Anadol, 1995: 253). Türkeş (1995a) discussed this sense of disappointment after the 1980 coup d'état in his book *Basılan Kervanımız* (Our Suppressed Caravan) and Agah Oktay Güner (as cited in Söylemez, 2016) also reflected their disenchantment by saying that "We are in prison, yet our ideology is in government." Agah Oktay Güner was saying "our ideology," that is Turkish-Islamic synthesis, was in government, as elaborated above.

Another example of the contradiction between the MHP and the state was called the *Susurluk* Incident. In this incident, the victim of a traffic incident, Abdullah Çatlı, was considered a "true patriot" who died in service to his country by the MHP circles when in fact he was nothing more than a drug dealer, criminal, and murderer in the eyes of the Turkish state (Çınar & Arıkan, 2002: 34). Another member of Grey Wolves involved in the *Susurluk* Incident, Haluk Kırcı (1998: 172) said: "Çatlı served the state after 1980 and in various ways; its denial is not possible." In the end, the

enemy of one side became the hero of the other in the face of a crisis between the MHP and the state.

During the 1980s, while some questioned what they previously called the 'sacred state,' for many people, its mythos remained fundamentally intact. For instance, one of the important members of the idealists Muharrem Şemsek (as cited in Bora & Can, 2015: 98) declared that (even though he was imprisoned in Mamak jail), "the idealists had never been angry with the state." The resolution of this conflict between the state and the MHP (together with its followers) was realized in the 1990s.

There were also various, even conflicting, perspectives regarding the nature of the relationship between Turkism and Islam after the coup d'état. Some members turned to Islam after the coup so decisively, eventually leading to a division in the party. Due to this heterogeneity of the movement which embodied different perspectives on the place of Islam in the MHP's identity, in the 1990s, there again occurred a division in the idealist movement as the ones following a more Islamic line (the Great Union Party, the BBP) and the opposite, as we shall see.

The process of trial of members of the idealist movement and their leaders after the coup in the early 1980s includes clues to understand both the trauma experienced by the movement and Türkeş. In his trials held on *Ankara Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı* (Martial Law Command), Türkeş gave clues about his basic ideas on some matters. Türkeş (1994a: 111-112) said that "We (the idealists) are not fascists, racists, dividers (also not based on the sect) and not harmful/adventurous Turanists." Türkeş (1994a: 108) also said that "We should love the other Turkic communities to the

extent to which this would not harm the Turkish state." Yet, one might infer that Türkeş is inclined towards Pan-Turkism. Türkeş (1994a) also defined democracy during those trials: "When we say democracy and particularly, it must be the *sine qua non* principle of the Turkish nation to protect the unity, integrity, solidarity, and high interests of the Turkish nation. Behaviors that contradict this are abhorrent for the Turk and must be crushed." From this sentence, one might infer Türkeş's pragmatism in a way that democracy was a way of protecting the state or a tool for its survival. After these trials, Türkeş's practices went through a significant transformation and he started to be relatively moderate in his policies.

After the trials of the 1980 coup d'état, the court results were, too, shocking for the idealists. In the case against the MHP and the idealist organizations with an indictment of 945 pages in April 1981, the total number of 389 defendants asked to be executed together with Türkeş was 49; 212 defendants were also required to be sentenced to imprisonment with the hard labor of between 5 and 15 years. Following the 6-year trial, all of the defendants received 5 death sentences and 9 life sentences; 219 were sentenced to other prison terms; however, MHP senior executives were acquitted. Together with this, Türkeş's inability to give clear messages of his position and to take strategic actions led him to lose the grassroots' trust towards him, and eventually their relationship broke down (Bora & Can, 2015). As a movement mobilized by its leader, idealists began to experience difficulty in decision making and developing political will, while their trust in their leader was undermined (Bora & Can, 2015). In a sense, the idealist movement was now at sea without any direction from its leader. While the MHP's high ranks tried to massify the movement by Islamic means, the idealist base, in turn, attempted to reproduce Islamic values. Later, the

idealist movement thus started to undergo internal conflicts during the 1990s, as we shall see.

In their prison experience following the coup d'état, the tendency towards Islam intensified among the idealists who portrayed the 1980 coup as a *chosen trauma*[139] leading to an existential crisis. In this context, they searched for a moral template leading to an Islamic reading, at least with the motive of enduring prison life. The questioning and opposing the system triggered a process of Islamization on the axis of contextual developments (Bora & Can, 2015). These self-interrogation processes, in connection with the international conjuncture, led to a mental breakdown and triggered ideological dissociation from the secular MHP supporters based on the role of Islam in defining the identity of the idealists. For some idealist circles, a new chapter with the increasing emphasis on the Islamic component thus started. One might, therefore, argue that the Turkish-Islamic synthesis was more influential on some of the grassroots after the September 12, 1980 coup. The traumatic effect of the coup, as well as the rapid rise of the Islamic movements in Turkey, might have been effective in this orientation.

After 1980, Islam continued to be a part of the MHP's ideology. After their prison experience with Islamic reading, the idealist youth started to be more religious and Türkeş became more cautious. After the 12 September 1980 coup, imprisoned idealists started to be called *Yusufiyeliler* - inspired by Prophet Yusuf (Bora & Can,

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[139] The term was coined by Prof. Dr. Vamık Volkan. Volkan (2001) talks about the role of those polarizing events in the collective memory and how one builds an identity on a chosen trauma. Volkan (2001) also talks about how the Nazi Holocaust built a particular Jewish identity and how the Armenian genocide builds the identity of Armenian.

2015). Later, especially after 1980, the MHP youth began to call prisons madrasahs where they learned religious tenets (Bora & Can, 2015). In what they called a madrasah, they became more religious since they were given the Quran to read. The prison experience with Islamic reading thus intensified the religiosity of the grassroots. The increasing religiosity, in fact, started earlier than in 1980 with the possible influence of commando camps where five times a day prayer were prescribed, the rising political Islam, and the context, as shown before.

The consecutive events before and after the September 12 coup, therefore, contribute to our understanding of the idealist movement today. The uncompromising policies that Türkeş had followed before 1980 resulted in unexpected consequences for the idealists. This process, on the one hand, led some of the idealists to distance themselves from the state —what they previously regarded as an alliance— and, on the other hand, to revise their political agendas. Until the early 1990s, the idealist movement underwent a recovery process and the process of repositioning itself against the rising political Islam.

When we look at the history of the MHP, we observe fundamental differences both in the party programme and its approach to the party's grassroots before and after 1980. Türkeş adopted a more moderate approach/stand during the 1980s, even so more in the 1990s, particularly subsequent to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. One might, therefore, argue that 1980 appears as a turning point in Türkeş's discourse on violence. After 1980, Türkeş constructed a discourse that was distanced from a very harsh stance and attitude of pre-1980 so that the old, belligerent, irreconcilable idealistic image would be left behind. With all these aspects, the MHP

under Türkeş's leadership experienced a paradigm shift after 1980, which reflects its changing practices in the context while preserving its nationalist ideological essence.

Throughout the 1980s, Canefe and Bora (2003) argue that the MHP has left behind its previous characteristics such as absolute loyalty to the party, militant spirit, and cult status of the leader of the movement and as such, it approximated a central line in Turkish ideological spectrum. After 1980, Tepe (2008: 161) argues, the party also located itself in the "crosscurrents of the state-sponsored Kemalist nationalism and conservatism" (Islamic values), which is "the Islamization of Turkishness" (Tepe, 2000: 69). One might argue that this orientation did not start in 1980. While the emphasis on Turkishness and Islam (or the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism) has varied in Türkeş's ideas and practices in different contexts, particularly in line with the changing perception of threat, both Turkishness and Islam have gone hand in hand since the announcement of the Nine Lights doctrine in 1965.

Türkeş remained under arrest for 4.5 years until 1985 because his party and his movement triggered bloody conflicts that killed dozens of people. In the 1987 referendum for constitutional amendments, his political ban was lifted. Therefore, between 1980 and 1987, Türkeş was distanced from politics. During his period of detention, he received inpatient treatment at the *Mevki* hospital from time to time. Türkeş directed the idealist movement from the hospital room until April 1985, when he was released (Akpınar, 2005). Unfortunately, there is no discourse that we can analyze during this period. At that time, intensive efforts were underway to develop the idealist movement intellectually, and weekly media outlets were released within the knowledge of Türkeş. The first idealistic publication organ, the magazine called *Sözcü*, issued after the September 12 coup, was quickly shut down by the National

Security Council. Devlet Bahçeli, Ali Güngör, Tuğrul Türkeş, Muharrem Şemşek, Selahattin Baysal, Bahattin Ergezen, and Ahmet Hamdi Ayan were among the founders of this first idealistic movement of publication after 12 September.

The MHP re-appeared in the political arena with a new name called *Muhafazakar Parti* (Conservative Party, the CP) when political activities were released in 1983. It then transformed into *Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi* (the Nationalist Work Party, MÇP) on November 30, 1985. With the amendment made in the Law on Political Parties about the parties that were closed with the September 12 coup in 1992, the name of the party, MÇP, was transformed into MHP in 1993. With their establishment of a new party called MÇP in 1985, the idealists re-entered the politics but were not successful at the 1987 General Elections.

Before 1987, the idealist movement experienced an unprecedented dissociation process, chaos, and a vital authority gap for itself. The former MSP deputy, Abdülkerim Doğru, whom Türkeş proposed, was brought to the leadership at the 19 April 1987 Congress. Moreover, Bora and Can (2015) claimed that Türkeş was sitting with the sheik of Nakshibendi, Mustafa Bağışlayıcı, at the MÇP Congress in the spring of 1987 and distributed the Koran in the ceremonies of being a member of the party. Bora and Can (2015) argue that Doğru's leadership, the presence of the sheik of Nakshibendi at the Congress, and distribution of the Koran in the ceremonies of being a member of the party were beneficial in terms of reinforcing the Islamic image. This might have been Türkeş's pragmatism against the increasing religiosity of the grassroots after the Coup. Moreover, at the 1987 MÇP Congress, Devlet Bahçeli became Secretary-General of the MÇP and he took part in attempts to renew the party.

While Bahçeli and his team were modernizing and professionalizing the party in the background, which gave a certain moral momentum to the base of the MÇP, the discomfort with the leadership of Abdülkerim Doğru was growing (Bora & Can, 2015). In order to save the idealists from this discomfort, Türkeş took his place in the political arena. Türkeş was elected at the Second Extraordinary Congress on October 4, 1987, as Chair of the MÇP. So, the new chapter started in the MÇP under Türkeş's leadership. With the concern of both reinforcing his leadership and overcoming the party's congestion, Türkeş came directly to the head of the MÇP, but this would not be enough for the party/movement to fully resolve the crisis regarding the place of Islam in the ideology of the movement.

3.4. New Party Programme in 1988: Trial of Fresh Image

The most important development towards the end of the 1980s was the new programme prepared in 1988. Ali Güngör and Devlet Bahçeli played an active role in the 1988 Programme of the MÇP and party discourse (Arıkan, 2008). Bora and Can (2016) define this pair as the Bahçeli-Güngör faction and underline that their group is generally composed of intellectuals/academicians, bureaucrats/technocrats, and professionals, and this portrayal served as a fresh image of the idealists who had long been perceived as *çapulcu* (freebooters) in the eyes of the public. The MÇP under Türkeş's leadership made its new programme in 1988, as it had been since 1967, based on "Turkish nationalism, which is nurtured by the Nine Lights doctrine which addresses the Turkish nation in terms of the consciousness of common descent and culture, democracy, legitimacy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and *gönül seferberliği* (mobilization of the heart)" (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 17).

The most striking point in the programme was the emphasis on commitment to parliamentary democracy. Instead of *milli demokrasi* (national democracy) as it had been the case so far, the concept of *milli demokratik hukuk devleti* (national democratic state of law) as democratic rule of law with strict respect for human rights was adopted in the programme (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 11). In the new programme, it is stated that "Turkish nationalists are democrats who have adopted democracy. Turkish nationalists respect the will of the nation and national domination. Regardless of the reason, it rejects any intervention to the democratic social life, human rights, human dignity, the principle of national domination and the functioning of democratic social life, and it sought the solution in the consent and will of the nation (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 5). One might argue that commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law are indicative of increased emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism.

This added emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism within the MHP did not mean a complete rupture with its ethnic and cultural components. For instance, the programme still addressed the Turkish nation as "the consciousness of common descent and culture." Moreover, in its programme, the MÇP under Türkeş's leadership continued to talk about the cultural components such as "Islamic faith, morality, virtue, and the consciousness of Turkishness (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 3) as it had been the case since the announcement of the Nine Lights doctrine. An understanding of nationalism, which takes its source from the Turkish-Islamic ideal, was also mentioned (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 36).

Another striking issue in the new programme was the definition of nationalism. Nationalism was defined as a "psychological dynamic in mobilizing ideals of *Büyük*

Türkiye Ülküsü (the Great Turkish Ideal)" (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi, 1988: 17), implying, of course, Pan-Turkist tendencies. Therefore, even though the civic component of Turkish nationalism was at the forefront in the 1988 MÇP programme, the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism, even the Pan-Turkist version of it, persisted to be emphasized.

This programme, in which many classical discourses were expressed more moderately compared to the former MHP programme, brought some innovations such as the increasing emphasis on democracy (probably due to the traumatizing effect of the 1980 coup), though not in content since it still emphasized the Nine Lights doctrine again. In terms of Türkeş's application of the concept of democracy, one might infer a tendency towards a civic component of nationalism as well. This change in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the traumatizing effect of the coup and the rising neo-liberalism (globally and domestically), but it did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. This approach was a sign of evolving nationalism from an emphasis on the ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism in the 1960s to an emphasis on a more inclusive civic component.

This civic emphasis on 'embracing everyone' might have been a response to the increasing minority demands in the neo-liberalization process. One might also argue that Bahçeli and his team might have been effective in the added emphasis on the civic component of the MHP's nationalism that we observed after 1988. It might have also been the effort of Türkeş to re-establish his party in politics in the difficult period after the coup. After the 1980 coup, Türkeş pragmatically was approaching the centrist line, hoping that what happened after 1980 would not happen again,

therefore, the ethnic (being a Turk) and the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam) were being emphasized to a lesser degree.

3.5. The MHP in the Post-Cold War

The 1990s witnessed an outstanding change in the interstate order: the end of the Cold War and the dissolving of the Soviet Union (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, USSR). From a global perspective, the most important development in the 1990s was undoubtedly the end of the Cold War, changing many dynamics in the international environment. Following the dissolving of the USSR, Eastern European countries adopted new regimes; yet the collapse of their former regimes often led to serious problems, and even chaos (Opçin, 2015). Amid all the mayhem, nationalism emerged as a strong ideology in world politics, and ethnic conflicts mushroomed in many areas of the Balkans, Central Asia, and the Middle East (Opçin, 2015).

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the independence movements of the Central Asian Turkic Republics with the nationalist motives, including Azerbaijan, created great excitement among the idealists. In that context, the MHP activists helped Turkey to establish close relationships with the Turkic Republics (Bacık, 2011). However, the impression of any of the delegates who participated in the Central Asian tour of Türkeş, carried out by Süleyman Demirel with a very crowded delegation, was a great disappointment for the idealist community, while it was nothing but the overlap of their vision with the state strategy and the party top for Türkeş (Ete et al., 2014). For after the independence of the Central Asian Turkic republics was achieved, MHP did not actually have any preparation for the new situation that emerged in these countries nor did take any concrete actions (Bora &

Can, 2016). In his speech at the Parliament, Türkeş (1991a) raised the issue in the parliament and recommended opening a general discussion about the five Turkic republics and autonomous regions with a population of Turkic origin in the USSR. He said: "The Republic of Turkey has failed to establish adequate relations in the economic, cultural, and political spheres with the Turkish republics in the USSR." Moreover, Türkeş (1991a) added: "We have a unity in descent and culture with the Turkic Republics in the USSR," showing his Pan-Turkist tendency. As can be seen from the speech, his Pan-Turkist tendency continued in the 1990s. Yet, Bora and Can (2016) argue that this discourse did not attract much attention apart from the Pan-Turkist cadres in the country. This might have been one of the reasons why Türkeş did not emphasize Turkism much during the 1990s.

In the early 1990s, the struggle against communism ceased as the Cold War ended. Subsequent to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the perceived enemy changed: it was no longer communism, it became the PKK together with the existing political Islam during the 1990s. During the 1990s, the development of nationalist sensitivities in the urban areas, which followed that of PKK attacks. The young masses, especially after 1980, began defending Turkish nationalism, which led to the emergence of the MHP. Thereupon, as Arıkan (2008) argues, the MHP emerged as a party with the potential to establish a bridge between the center and the periphery due to both contextual reasons (rising PKK attacks and neo-liberalism) and the policies it pursued. Two critical issues Turkey confronts have thus contributed to the rise of the MHP: the rise of political Islam and the PKK due to identity claims, that are, threats defined by the Turkish state during the 1990s (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Arıkan, 1998, 2002b; Avcı, 2011; Başkan, 2006; Bora & Can, 2016; Canefe & Bora, 2003;

Jacoby, 2011; Makovsky, 1999; Tepe, 2000; Yavuz, 2002). Türkeş, therefore, turned his eyes to the forces that (he thought) threatened the integrity of the country. He made harsh statements about what he called a terrorist organization, the PKK, but displayed more balanced approaches in domestic politics such as educational policies, pursuing relatively moderate policies. In 1996, for instance, Türkeş started to emphasize the importance of education in the MHP and Turkey. Landau (2002) states that the March 1996 meeting of the MHP's General Central Committee, was filled with striking messages reflecting the importance of education.

The 1990s' political agenda was determined by the struggle between the identity claims of the Kurds, political Islamists, and Alevis, with the state suppressing their identities perceived as threats on the state's axis of the security paradigm. On one hand, the wave of the PKK violence started with the escalation of the conflict with the PKK, the Kurdish political opposition gained representation in Parliament; on the other hand, religious-conservative groups with the support of *Refah Partisi* (the Welfare Party, the RP) began to be a threat to the regime. In this context, Ete et al. (2014) argue that the MHP did not act in a reconciliatory manner to these political developments of identity claims on the axis of Islam and Kurdishness. Ete et al. (2014) also argue that the MHP came forward with dealing with what they called the 'threat' of the PKK and the legal Kurdish political opposition; this development was perceived as filling the representation gap left by the Welfare Party, which is not seen as legitimate by the system; it was considered as a party that would replace the center-right parties that were degenerating and unable to accommodate political demands. During the 1990s, Başkan (2006) contends that the MHP softened the Islamic tone of its ideology as it considered state concerns regarding political Islam. The MHP was,

Başkan (2006) thinks, staying in the middle of its conservative grassroots to satisfy their expectations and the Islamist political parties as it was trying to separate itself from them. In this context, Türkeş started to relatively emphasize the civic component of Turkish nationalism while other components persisted against both escalating PKK attacks and the rising political Islam.

The liberated identities during the 1990s were responsive in all aspects of Turkish political life. When considering the Islamic heritage of the MHP as a part of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, the party that might have affected the MHP deeply was the Welfare Party (RP) during the 1990s. In the 1970s, Islam had been an integrative instrument for the MHP in the context of the Cold War when communism (hostility to religion in their terms) was a threat until the 1990s. The RP had the potential to erode the MHP base, particularly in conservative and Islamic geographies while the Turkish-Islamic idealists who stated that the Islamic discourse should determine the course of the MHP led to a much more corrosive effect. The fate of the 1990s was thus determined by the emphasis/the place of Islam in the parties' ideologies.

Not only political Islam, but the 1990s' ideology of the MHP was also shaped around the security paradigm against the escalating PKK attacks. Against the escalating PKK attacks and political Islam, the MHP of the 1990s under Türkeş's leadership had a state-centered approach and reshaped its policies accordingly. Bora (2003) argues that supporting the state both materially and morally against what he calls Kurdish secessionism rehabilitated its relationship with the state and official nationalism and this, in turn, moved the MHP closer to the center. Ete et al. (2014) argue that Türkeş's discursive practices were in line with the security policies in the context of the Kurdish question and the alienation of Islamic language and discourse,

which had a major role and importance in the massification of the nationalist movement, due to the increase in the political effectiveness of the RP and the policy of Turkish-Islamic idealists under the BBP. During the 1990s, Türkeş emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism while also other components persisted underneath. This change in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the escalating PKK conflict and political Islam, which did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation.

In the 1990s, the circumstances in the country had changed dramatically. The 1990s of Turkey witnessed many funerals of the soldiers killed in the PKK attacks. According to Arıkan (1998), these funerals became arenas of political manifestation of the MHP against the PKK, an advantage that worked well in their political campaign. In the funerals of martyrs that turned into anti-PKK demonstrations, the idealists were shouting such slogans: *"Kahrolsun PKK"* ("Down with the PKK"), *"Türkiye Apo'ya[140] mezar olacak"* ("Turkey will be a grave to Apo"); *"Şehitler ölmez, vatan bölünmez"* ("Martyrs are immortal, our land is indivisible"); and *"Türk-Kürt kardeştir, PKK kalleştir"* ("Turks and Kurds are brothers, the PKK is treacherous") (Bora & Can, 2016). In the 1990s, Türkeş's strong anti-communist rhetoric was replaced by anti-PKK discourse particularly after 1989 when the PKK started to become strong. Arıkan (1998) posits the view that this mobilization against PKK separatism did not cause the MHP to deviate from its own goal of pronouncing the war against the real or imagined enemy; instead, MHP's transformation from anti-communist rhetoric to an anti-PKK discourse was due to its high adaptability to

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changing circumstances. One might argue that Türkeş once again acted pragmatically by moving from anti-communist rhetoric to an anti-PKK discourse.

The Turkish state took security measures against the rising PKK conflict during the 1990s. One of the state security policies during the 1990s, that is internal forced migration of the Kurdish population from East and Southeast Anatolia to firstly the South and then the West of the country to dilute the Kurdish population in these highly Kurdish populated regions against a possible Kurdish uprising and armament, might have led the MHP to change its emphasis on the components of its nationalism.[141] The reaction against this highly politicized Kurdish mass with more emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism instead of the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism might have been a tactical maneuver of Türkeş. Against this highly politicized Kurdish mass, Türkeş started to relatively emphasize the civic component of Turkish nationalism to mobilize his masses against what he called Kurdish secessionism by frequently referring to "Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood with the citizenship and culture" while the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism persisted underneath. In his speech that took place at the Parliament, (19th Term, Volume 2, 21. Unification), Türkeş (1991b: 386), for instance, said: "As I mentioned in the summary of the history,[142] regardless of being from the East and

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[141] Çalık (1995) underlines the effect of the wave of rural-to-urban immigration on the development of the nationalist tradition because of the economic policies of the Democratic Party government in the 1950s.

[142] To summarize, Türkeş (1991b: 385) said "Since 1071, all people of this country belonged to the same religion, prostrated to the same Qibla, as the ummah of the same Supreme Prophet and the same holy book)."

West, the people of our country are the brothers of each other. We are Kurds as much as our Kurdish-speaking brothers; they are Turks as much as we are Turks." In this speech, one might infer a tendency towards the civic component of Turkish nationalism with the statement "the people of our country." In the interview he gave to the newspaper *Orta Doğu* (Middle East) on October 22, 1992, Türkeş (as cited in Turhan, 2017) said: "We do not accept the Turkish-Kurdish distinction, we are together with the East, the West, the Sunnis and the Alevis, the Turkmen and the Kurds." In this statement, Turkishness and Islam appear as indiscriminate and insepable, as the Kurds and the Alevis were tried to be included in the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. In later years, in a speech on a TV discussion program, while discussing the PKK issue with Orhan Doğan —a deputy from Democratic Society Party—, Türkeş (1993) said that: "Our *eastern citizens*, our Kurdish speaking people are our brothers," emphasizing the civic component of Turkish nationalism with "citizenship." Türkeş (1994c) also said: "In the face of economic crisis and separatist terrorist activities, Turkey needs stability … We are a party that has been damaged, treated unfairly, and persecuted on 12 September. We want the remains of September 12 to be completely cleared. We want the constitution to be taken up and made it possible to enable a fully democratic regime." As can be seen from the abovementioned speech, one might infer a tendency towards the civic component of Turkish nationalism in the 1990s due to the traumatizing effect of the Coup.

In his book titled *Yeni Ufuklara Doğru* (Towards New Horizons) published in 1995, Türkeş (1995c: 100) also said: "Like every Turk, the Kurds have the right to be governors, ministers, and even presidents," emphasizing again the civic component of Turkish nationalism with basic rights, even while the ethnic component of Turkish

nationalism persisted. On the Kurdish issue, Türkeş stated in his interview with Hulusi Turgut published as *Türkeş'in Anıları: Şahinlerin Dansı* (The Memoirs of Türkeş: The Dance of the Falcons), that he opts for Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood and he is against racism and exclusion based on ethnicity (Turgut, 1995). In later years, in 1996, Türkeş (as cited in Landau, 2002: 160) stated that "Kurds were the brethren of the Turks, sharing the same culture and therefore an inseparable part of Turkey." Landau (2002: 160) thinks that this "was a sign of the evolving ('softening') views on Turkish nationalism." One might argue that Türkeş emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism by frequently referring to "Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood with the citizenship and culture" while the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism persisted underneath.

The notion of a nation's membership reflecting the multidimensionality of nationalism enabled the added emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism, even while the other components remained constant. Due to the multidimensionality of nationalism, many nationalist movements or nationalisms combine some or all components of nationalism to varying degrees. Therefore, the new emphasis on the civic component does not mean that the MHP became a liberal party, but that it was seen as a tool to serve the cause of national unity, integrity, and the survival of the state—the issue that the MHP claims to be the purpose of its existence. Underneath this rhetoric, there may have been a tactical maneuver against the escalating PKK conflict and the rising political Islam; this change does not signify a full deviation from the ideal but was the major tactic in realizing their untouched targets according to evolving nationalism theory. Türkeş's more emphasis on Islam

against what he called a threat —communism (hostility to religion) — and more emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism (while other components persisted) against what he called PKK secessionism (hostility to national identity/integrity) were evolutionary dynamics in this sense.

The MHP yet continued to articulate the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism like the re-emphasis of *bozkurt* (the grey wolf). With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the independence of the Central Asian Turkic republics, including Azerbaijan, prepared a very favorable ground for the revival of Pan-Turkism ideal during the 1990s. Therefore, the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism persisted underneath. For instance, the young idealists became once again *Bozkurt* (Grey Wolf) and less emphasis was placed on Islam. Turkism, Turkic mythology, and ancient Turkic history started to be once more emphasized (Bora, 2003). Furthermore, in the 1993 Programme, it was stated "*Bütün Türklük bir bütündür*" (All Turkdom is one entity) while also warning against *macera* (adventure) and *hayalperestlik* (fantasy), implying the external Turks be left to their faith, yet helping them if necessary, as refugees. This reminded Gökalp's approach to Pan-Turkism, in his expression, "an ideal which existed in the realm of imagination, not in the realm of reality" (as cited in Parla, 1985: 34).

The ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism, therefore, persisted underneath practically. On its own, such an idea might be read as such: "On the axis of types of nationalism, however, no change has taken place" or "A party with an ethnic essence cannot refer to the civic components of nationalism." Yet such an interpretation might be misleading to see the 'variation' in the other components

of the nationalist ideology. This variation -the fact that the MHP preserved its foundational claims while also shifting emphasis on the components of Turkish nationalism- supports the analytical significance of the diachronic approach for the multidimensionality of nationalist ideology. In other words, ethnic/cultural and civic components of nationalism can co-exist in a nationalist ideology. While the notion of nation's membership may enable the emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism, the other components may remain part of the repertoire, albeit with less emphasis. In the case of education, broadcasting in another language, the MHP continued to emphasize the cultural components of Turkish nationalism such as the Turkish language. As can be seen from the below-mentioned speech, while the civic component of Turkish nationalism is used as "our eastern citizens" for Kurds, the unity in language and culture were also emphasized. This maneuver, permitted by the multidimensionality of nationalism, confirms the argument that many nationalist movements or nationalisms combine some or all of these components to varying degrees. Türkeş (1993), for instance, replied to Orhan Doğan:

> Our eastern citizens, our Kurdish speaking people are our brothers ... I can give you examples from history. I can show the USA as an example. Today there are 10 million Italian-speaking people in New York. They do not say that we want our identity to be recognized, we will establish an Italian state, a republic here. Or they do not say that we will establish a federation. They are American citizens and their official languages are English. There are other things. There is the state of Dakota in America. There are 7 million German-speaking people there, but they do not say that we want autonomy, we want a federation or we will establish an independent German state, our official language will be German. You cannot say that let the formal education be in the Kurdish language in Turkey, or that broadcasting should be in the Kurdish language, or that the federation should be given to this area, or that the Kurdish identity should be recognized. This means dividing the society. We will not let the division in Turkey, we are committed to it. If we need to shed blood, we will shed blood for the integrity of our homeland. We can also give our lives to keep our state alive!

One might also argue that Kurds as a whole have not been perceived as an enemy by Türkeş; rather, Türkeş's attitude can be said to have been anti-PKK since the PKK became a political threat for the state. Türkeş (1993), for instance, said that: "The PKK started a partisan war in our Anatolia. Our eastern citizens, our Kurdish speaking people are our brothers. They have a place above our heads. Anger is against the PKK. It is against the murders committed by the PKK. You should not extend this to all Kurds." Therefore, the PKK was perceived as a threat on the axis of the security paradigm.

The added emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism was a choice with obvious consequences for ethnic and religious minorities as well. In the Nine Lights doctrine, Türkeş's definition of the Turkish nation was narrower. For instance, Türkeş (1965: 1-2) said: "Our nationalism also means *Türkçülük* (Turkism). Turkism means conforming in all spheres to the Turkish spirit, characteristics, and traditions; and to assistance to all Turks and the Turkish nation in everything," emphasizing the ethnic (Turkish characteristics), cultural (Turkish traditions), and civic components of Turkish nationalism (the Turkish nation) in descending order of importance, as mentioned before. Particularly, the definition of nationalism comprising of members adopting Turkish spirit, characteristics, and traditions was a choice with obvious consequences for ethnic and religious minorities. The statements regarding the Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood based on citizenship and culture in the 1990s were again signs of evolving nationalism from an emphasis on the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism in the 1960s to a more inclusive civic component towards the end of the 1980s.

Not only towards Kurds, but Türkeş also had a relatively positive approach to the Alevis during the 1990s. In his book titled *Yeni Ufuklara Doğru* (Towards New Horizons), Türkeş (1995c: 100) wrote: "Communism played another game on Turkey as sectarian incitement. It creates an Alevi-Sunni conflict. We are against it. The differences between Hz. Ali and Hz. Muaviye centuries cannot divide the Turkish people. The Turkish nation is a whole with its Alevis and Sunnis. Turkish nationalists defend this holistic understanding." When considering the 1960s and 1970s of the MHP's attitude of anti-left in general including the left-leaning Alevis, this was a sign of evolution in Türkeş's discourse regarding the Alevis. It should, however, be noted that as Landau (2002: 158) argues, "Türkeş appealed more to Turks than to Kurds (emphasis on Turkishness), to Sunnis rather than to Alevis (emphasis on the centrality of Sunnite Islam), to the traditionally minded but also to modernizing circles (presenting the cases of both), as well as workers and farmers." The anti-left attitude might have been instrumental in this orientation.

While the MHP of the 1970s was a party that non-Alevis were channeled against the 'Alevi generation' in the provinces where the Alevis[143] lived intensively,

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[143] Tepe (2000: 70) defines it as follows: "Sunnis and Alevis are the two main Islamic sects in Turkey. Alevis can be described as Turkey's Shia. The teaching of Ali, the fourth Caliph, and the twelve Imams constitute the foundation of Alevi religious practices. Sunnism is based on orthodox Islamic practices and considers Alevism to be heretical." "The term *Alevi* is related to heterodox Islamic groups that have lived in Anatolia and its bordering regions since the introduction of Islam in the late eleventh century" (Grigoriadis & Akdeniz, 2020). Grigoriadis and Akdeniz (2020) suggest that in the establishment of a secular republic, the Alevis faced problems such as the lack of official recognition (their status being a religious society) and the lack of recognition of places of worship while the Directorate of Religious Affairs had the monopoly of representing Sunni Islam without including heterodox groups and Sunni religious orders. For more information regarding the Alevi case in Turkey,

Ete et al. (2014) argue, the MHP of the 1990s turned into a party where the votes of the 'Turks' who reacted to the Kurdish political identity were channeled in the provinces where the politicized or immigrated Kurds were living in large numbers. The most important feature that distinguishes the MHP of the 1970s and the MHP of the 1990s is that in the former, Ete et al. (2014) reason, the decisive position is to maintain Islamic emphasis in the opposition to the 'Alevi-left,' while in the latter the Islamic emphasis turns into a null sign, becoming meaningless.

Türkeş wanted to be close to the center-right of the political spectrum, decreasing his Islamic tone in the 1990s. For this purpose, the Prime Minister of the period and then the DYP Chair Tansu Çiller's political cooperation proposals were warmly welcomed: "Our place is not on the margin but the right of the center ..." Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 227-228) said in his meeting to congratulate Çiller on the uncompromising PKK struggle. Throughout the 1990s until he died in 1997, Tekin (2001: 295) argues, Türkeş became more tolerant towards leftists and closer to the centrist line, even to the extent of reading verses from the poem *"Kurtuluş Savaşı Destanı"* (Epic of Liberation War) by the famous leftist poet Nazım Hikmet in the October 1994 Congress of his Party.[144] This centrist tendency can also be considered as evidence of evolving nationalism from the political violence with leftists in the 1960s and 1970s. These relatively moderate policies also increased the voting

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see Ioannis N. Grigoriadis and Pınar Akdeniz, "*Universal faith or Islamic denomination: On the Struggle to define Alevism,*" Journal of Church and State, Vol. csaa028, May 2020.

[144] The verses he read are as follows: "*Dörtnala gelip Uzak Asya'dan / Akdeniz'e bir kısrak başı gibi uzanan / Bu memleket bizim.*" (Galloping from Far Asia/ Stretching like a mare's head to the Mediterranean/ This is our country) (Tekin, 2001).

potential so as to be seen as an alternative for moderate, urban, and secular voters, without, however, ever leading to support from the party's grassroots.

Despite its ups and downs, the importance of the MHP in Turkish politics has nevertheless gradually increased. In 1965, the MHP's electoral vote was 2.2 percent, and in 1997 6.4 percent. Between 1975 and 1977, the MHP was a member of the leading coalition with the AP and MSP. In 1981, the junta regime banned the MHP together with other political parties but it was back in politics in 1987 as the MÇP under the leadership of Türkeş. However, the party garnered only 2.9 percent of electoral support in the 1987 elections.

Table 1 The Votes of the MHP in the Local and General Elections Before 1980

General Elections	%	Local Elections	%
1965	2.2	1968	1.0
1969	3.0	1973	1.3
1973	3.4	1977	6.6
1977	6.4		

Source: (Ete et al., 2014)

In 1991, the alliance formed with the pro-Islamist *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party, RP) and *Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi* (Reformist Democracy Party, IDP) captured 17 percent of the votes. Landau (2002) considered this electoral alliance with the Welfare Party the sign of the MHP's pragmatism. By entering the 1991 general elections with allies to overcome the 10 percent threshold, the MÇP won 19 seats in the Grand National Assembly, that is, for the first time after 1980, the MÇP was represented in the parliament.

Table 2 The Votes of the MHP in the Local and General Elections After 1980

General	%	Local	%
1987	2.9	1989	4.1
1991	16.9	1994	7.9
1995	8.2	1999	17.1

Source: (Ete et al., 2014)

The Nationalist Action Party gained legitimacy after mythicizing Türkeş as a wise leader subsequent to the 1991 elections; thereafter, the support of Türkeş as the leader of MÇP gave the coalition of *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti* (Social Democratic Populist Party, SHP) and *Doğru Yol Partisi* (True Path Party, DYP) (Can, 2009). The support to the left was not welcomed by the party's grassroots. Türkeş (as cited in Tekin, 2001: 295) once said to his staff: "Separateness is extremely costly. We need to build a wide front. Leftists and social democrats should take place in this front. We need to prevent from cooperating with the separatists ... So, we have to cooperate with leftists and social democrats." Tekin (2001: 295) said that thereupon, Türkeş was obliged to cooperate with leftists "for the sake of the high interests of the country and the nation." In his one of other speeches, Türkeş (as cited in Anadol, 1995: 366) said: "The support to the DYP-SHP coalition was given because the coalition government would wipe out what remained after September 12, bring about transparency for frequent elections would cause great damage to the national economy." The cooperation with leftists in order to protect the country (Türkeş said so) from what he calls 'separatists' (PKK) without abandoning his ideology can be considered as a useful step forward evolutionary dynamic. It reflects Shelef's

approach of the multidimensionality of nationalism which denotes that "even if movements disagree, for example, on the extent of the homeland and the national mission, their shared idea of the nation's membership criteria makes cooperation possible" (Shelef, 2010: 12-13). Similarly, this cooperation with leftists can also be considered as an evolutionary dynamic to cooperate with them for the escalating PKK conflict.

The MHP made its new programme (drawn up by Türkeş) in 1993, as it has been since the 1967 Congress, based on "Turkish nationalism, which is nurtured by the Nine Lights doctrine, which addresses the Turkish nation in terms of national, spiritual, and humanitarian aspects, and aims for the development of love, justice, peace, and security" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 1993). Again, one can see the ongoing emphasis on the Nine Lights with the addition of security in their definition and less emphasis on Islam (rather spiritual and humanitarian aspects being emphasized yet Islam was underneath as defined in the Nine Lights). The aspect of security might have been added due to the PKK armed conflict. The party has emphasized democracy since 1988, the less emphasis on Islam was a sign of a break in the MHP. We will see this break, the intra-party Islamic wing, which would soon leave the party. The less emphasis on Islam (when compared to the Turkish-Islamic synthesis of the previous period) together with the re-emphasis of the Nine Lights in the party programme demonstrates that the party tried to eliminate some idealists (supporting more emphasis on Islam) with whom the party had an internal struggle of differentiation on the place of Islam in defining the identity of idealists. This internal struggle elucidated the conflict in the Idealist movement.

From the 1980s onwards, the idealists began to question the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. This questioning later resulted in the political disintegration of the idealist movement as to which element would be prioritized more. Ultimately, this process of differentiation on the place of Islam in defining the identity of idealists/the debates on the kind of the MHP's religiosity was concluded by the departure of a significant mass from the MHP through the establishment of *Büyük Birlik Partisi* (the Great Unity Party, BBP) in 1993, January 29 by Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, an MHP elite. In his article titled "*The programme of the Nationalist Action Party: an iron hand in a velvet glove?,"* Arıkan (1998: 133) argues that the BBP emphasized the Islamic origins of "Turkish culture" and advocated "a Turkist-Islamist programme." In his book *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (the Nationalist Action Party)*,* Arıkan (2008) goes beyond this argument and describes the BBP as a Pan-Islamist party. Arıkan (2008) states that they referred to themselves as *alperens* (which was also the case of the MHP under Türkeş's leadership towards the end of the 1970s, as discussed before) of the *i'lâ-yi kelimetullâh* case. Arıkan (2008: 18) claims that Türkeş and his close colleagues did not accept the *i'lâ-yi kelimetullâh* thesis, which is close to political Islam and was written by S. Ahmet Arvasi,[145] yet they did not totally ignore the voting potential in

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[145] Seyyid Ahmet Arvâsî (1932-1988) is a Turkish nationalist, sociologist, writer, and the author of the book *Türk-İslam Ülküsü*, İstanbul, Burak Yayınları, 1989, volumes 1, 2 and 3- first published in 1979. In his book, *Türk-İslam Ülküsü* (Turkish-Islamic Ideal), Arvasi (1991: 8) distinguished the Turkish-Islamic synthesis and Turkish-Islamic ideal: "Religion and nationality are not opposing values. For this reason, since the synthesis will be in question between the thesis and the anti-thesis, instead of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis that we have been using for years, we chose the name of our book as the Turkish-Islamic Ideal, as the Turkish-Islamic ideal would be more appropriate." Arvasi defines "Turkish-Islamic ideal" as a coalesce of Turkishness with Islam and argues that "The idea of Turkish nation of the world domination overlaps the Islamic ideal of '*nizam-ı âlem'* (global order).

rural areas. Tepe (2000) cites that Yazıcıoğlu[146] contends that the ideology of the MHP

lacks a coherent embrace of Islam and disapproved of the MHP's lack of 32

commandments of Islam.[147] While Islam is perceived and blessed as an important and

indispensable component in the historical development of the case of the

glorification of Turkishness in the MHP tradition, Arıkan (2008) argues, the case of

the glorification of Islam is considered to be of higher priority than any case in the

BBP (e.g. Turkishness). Arıkan (2008) calls the ideology of the latter as Pan-Islamism;

that is, nationalism has been replaced by a more Islamic discourse. Similarly, Tepe

(2000) thinks that the BBP movement also used the notion of Islamic unity, which

confronted the MHP's notion of homogeneity of Turkish culture. Tepe (2000) argues

that even though the establishment of the BBP is seen as the Islamization of one part

of the party, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the general Islamization

process of the idealist movement. One might argue that Yazıcıoğlu seemed to be in

favor of preserving the ideological heritage of the old MHP line in the mid-1970s;

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[146] For more information about Yazıcıoğlu's counter-arguments against the MHP, see Mustafa Karaalioglu, *"Muhsin Yazicioglu ile soylesi"* (Interview with Muhsin Yazicioglu), *Yeni Safak*, 1 December 1996.

[147] The brief description of 32 commandments of Islam are 6 conditions of faith (Believing in the oneness of Allah, believing in angels, belief in books, believing in the prophets, believing in the Hereafter and to believe that fate, good and evil come from Allah); 5 Provisions of Islam (Bringing the Word-i Shahada, praying, fasting, giving Zakat and going on pilgrimage), 6 assumptions outside the prayer (Destruction from the hadith, destruction from Necâsett, setr-i avret, Qibla, time and intention), 6 assumptions inside the prayer (The pride of honor, doomsday, recitation, bowing, prostration and Ka'de-i ahîre, 4 phases of ablution (Washing your hands with your elbows, wash your face, washing one-quarter of the head and washing your feet with your heels), 3 phases of *Gusül* (Giving water to mouth, giving water to the nose, washing the whole body; and 2 Phases of *Teyemmüm* (Intention and to apply both hands to clean soil and wash the whole face. Again, hit the hands in clean ground, first to the right and then to the left arm to mesh).

however, as we saw in the 1993 Programme of the MHP, the party's emphasis on Islam decreased. This disengagement shows a clear demarcation between the leadership of the MHP and Turkish-Islamic idealists under the BBP at an ideological level.

With this ideological shift resulted in the departure of a significant mass from the party, the MHP entered the 1994 local elections and increased its votes by 8 percent, and further increased by 0.6 percent in the General Elections of 1995. Yet the 1995 elections had disappointing results for the MHP as it could not pass the 10 percent threshold; thus, they had no seats in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The frustration of the MHP in the 1995 elections was, Arıkan (2008) argues, basically the result of Türkeş's inability to respond to the demands of the provincialized radicals with their moderate policies as well as the elimination of extremist Islamists within the party in 1992 (Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu and his circles). The departure of a significant mass from the MHP through the establishment of the BBP in 1993 divided some votes of the MHP, reflecting the conflict over the ideology of the MHP. This division was a manifestation on the surface of a deeper conflict, that of the identity conflict which embodies the place of Islam in the MHP's identity —the tension between Turkishness and Islam— that has been with the MHP since its foundation.

Türkeş died at the age of eighty because of a heart attack on April 4, 1997, in Ankara. We shall examine this important development in the next section, which would lead to a leadership crisis in the idealist movement.

CHAPTER IV

DEVLET BAHÇELİ: THE MUSTACHELESS IDEALIST

This chapter contextualizes Bahçeli's nationalist ideas and practices. While giving a historical and contextual framework, Bahçeli's nationalist ideas and practices concerning the components of Turkish nationalism will be under discussion. Concurrently, Bahçeli's biography will be given.

4.1. Origins and Political Career

Bahçeli's first name, *Devlet,* means state, which is an interesting coincidence given the critical role he has played in the fate of the Turkish state. It is known that MHP party members consider him *İlteber Devlet* – a word used in the time of the *Göktürks,*[148] meaning Head of State (Heper, 1999).

Bahçeli was born in the prominent *Fettahoğulları* family in 1948 in *Osmaniye.* He received his early education in Turkey, graduated from *Ankara İktisadi ve Ticari*

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[148] The Göktürks were the first people who called themselves "Turks."

İlimler Akademisi (Academy of Economics and Commerce),[149] and obtained his Ph.D. in economics from *Gazi* University. At the same university, he established one of the Idealist Hearths in 1967 and worked as Secretary-General of *Türkiye Milli Talebe Federasyonu* (Turkey National Student Federation) between 1970 and 1971. Bahçeli worked as an assistant in the Department of Economics at "the Academy of Economics and Commerce" in Ankara in 1972 and he embarked on his teaching practice at Gazi University between 1982-1987 (Heper & İnce, 2006). In the 1970s, he was one of the founders of *Ülkücü Maliyeciler İktisatçılar Birliği* (Union of Idealist Economists, ÜMİT-BİR). He was also one of the founders and Chairs of *Üniversite Akademi ve Yüksekokullar Asistanları Derneği* (the Association of Assistants of University Academics and Colleges, ÜNAY). In 1987, he resigned from his academic position due to Türkeş's invitation and became Secretary-General of the *Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi* (Nationalist Work Party). He was always close to Türkeş and worked as his advisor from time to time (Heper, 1999).

His tasks in the MHP have continued uninterruptedly; still ongoing today. He served as Secretary-General, Deputy Chair, Central Executive Committee Member, and Chief-Advisor at various times. Devlet Bahçeli became the leader of the MHP after the Fifth Extraordinary Congress on July 6, 1997. At the General Congresses of the MHP on November 05, 2000, October 12, 2003, November 19, 2006, November 8, 2009, and November 4, 2012, Bahçeli got elected to the party leadership and has been in this position since then.

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[149] Academy of Economics and Commerce in Ankara was later incorporated into Gazi University and formed the current Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences.

Bahçeli had numerous volumes comprising gatherings of speeches (Bahçeli, 1997b, 1999a, 2002e, 2002f, 2005c, 2007c, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2008e, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2009f, 2009i, 2009j, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d), among which nationalism and 'the party's doctrine' constituted the greater part. From the beginning until the last party programme called *Geleceğe Doğru* (Towards the Future), the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership accepted the Nine Lights doctrine (which reflects all the elements of nationalism) as guiding principles for his party. Having taken the past legacy of Türkeş, Bahçeli continued to define the MHP's identity around the Nine Lights doctrine with varying degrees of emphasis on different (ethnic, cultural, and civic) components of Turkish nationalism in line with the tactical needs of the corresponding period.

4.2.   New Leader, Old Heritage: "The Gate between the Past and the Present"

The beginning of 1997 was a new chapter in the MHP's history. In this important watershed, the idealist movement was struggling to exist without their leaders after Türkeş's death.[150] During this significant year, having competed with the son of Alparslan Türkeş —Tuğrul Türkeş— in the elections for leadership, Devlet Bahçeli became the leader of the party and aimed to transform it by creating a centrist image, as he calls, and eliminating its militant spirit. One cannot talk about a total transformation in this period. That said, the non-violent approach of the idealist movement started earlier than Bahçeli's leadership, going back to the 1980s of the

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[150] A book containing the thoughts about him was published in memory of Türkeş after his death. See M.H.P. Genel Merkezi, *Alparslan Türkeş: Birinci yıl armağanı* (1997) (İstanbul: Mavi Ofset, 1997).

party's history while preserving its main ideology more or less intact thus far. As Avcı (2011) contends, the MHP of the pre-1980 period shows different characteristics than the post-1980s; that is, the legacy of the former was more violent than later.

Bahçeli appeared as a new leader who could unite the MHP under the umbrella of its founding principles. Right after his leadership, Arıkan (2002b) argues, Bahçeli restructured the strategy of the party for appealing to rural as well as urban electorates. Accordingly, Arıkan (2002b) put forward that Bahçeli tried to re-establish the links in central Anatolia, particularly with the conservative electorate. Bahçeli also gave importance to the wide range of images of the party members ranging from clothing to daily communication. The media called Bahçeli as "*Bıyıksız Ülkücü*" (Mustacheless Idealist) (Hürriyet, 1999) and he added "the ban on white socks" to these image changes he initiated in 1999. Additionally, he discouraged inappropriate behavior in public places on the part of party members such as knocking one's heads together. His approach to knocking one's heads together was reminiscent of the ban in 1973 on the idealist greeting in the circular issued by Türkeş (Akpınar, 2005). The election of Bahçeli as a new leader was thus the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the MHP when he made radical and significant changes in the party, though not so much in content. Rather, Bahçeli worked on the renewal of the party's image, and so was the grassroots'.

In the first years of the party leadership, Bahçeli followed the same fashion of Türkeş's Turkish-Islamic ideal: "The Turkish-Islamic ideal is the main principle for the party" (Bahçeli, 1997b). At the First Extraordinary Congress held under Bahçeli's leadership, the MHP's imagined community comprised of Turkishness blended with Islam —presenting itself as "a bridge between the Ottoman Empire and the

Republic," "a bridge between Islam and Turkishness," and thus "a gate between past and the present" (Bahçeli, 1997a: 12) with the goal of reconciling the idealists with their history and culture (Bahçeli, 1997a: 13-14). Throughout the speech, Bahçeli (1997a: 18) emphasized unity in emotions and language like Gökalp- the ideational father of Turkish nationalism by saying that "I don't just speak the same language, I share the same feelings, the same excitement, and the same ideals." Throughout his political career, regardless of the varying emphasis on ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism, Bahçeli has referred to unity in emotions and culture from time to time.

Above all, the Turkish-Islamic ideal is yet an umbrella concept for all these elements (language, culture, and homeland) in Bahçeli's terms. While Turkishness is defined with the unity in language, culture, homeland, and emotions, Islam constitutes an important place in defining the Turkish culture. Bahçeli placed equal emphasis on Turkishness and Islam to define Turkish identity between 1997 and 2000. In the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (Islam) and the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism (being a Turk) were given equal weight whereas, in the Nine Lights Doctrine, Islam was only a secondary national identity. Bahçeli, for instance, (as cited in Kılıçaslan, 2011: 140) said that "We do not give up either Turkishness or Islam. These are the nested sacred life springs for us and they are values with meaning which cannot be changed," emphasizing the inseparability of Turkishness and Islam. Specifically, Bahçeli (as cited in Kılıçaslan, 2011: 133) suggested to follow the Prophet's Sunnah:

Turkish nationalism pursues an environment in which the Turkish nation can properly say "Elhamdülillah (Thank God) I am Muslim and can comfortably fulfill

the obligations arising from Turkishness and religion. Our supreme religion should be taught comparatively and practically, based on the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah, and prevent our children from being exploited by superstitious and perverse beliefs and from being alienated from the Turkish nation and the Turkish elders.

In the MHP's rhetoric, Islam appears as a cultural construct. In the MHP's understanding, "Islam does not have a nationality but each nation uniquely adopted Islam according to its national characteristics" (cited in Tepe, 2000: 66). Bahçeli also talked about the role of the state in religious matters. At the Sixth General Congress, Bahçeli (2000a: 85) said: "The basic duty of the state is to facilitate and create a favorable ground for its citizens to fulfill their religious obligations" believed that "the overwhelming majority of our nation is both sincerely committed to their own beliefs and respectful of other beliefs. There are no serious problems in this sense among our people." The MHP followed again the Kemalist path, that is, the contentious subject of Islam cannot be resolved by employing civilian discussions, Heper (1999) asserted that it is the state which needs to determine the extent to which Islam will play a part in the politics in Bahçeli's understanding. That said, Heper (1999) argues that the state, according to Bahçeli, is there for the nation, as opposed to fascism's concept of the nation-building by the state. In Bahçeli's understanding, the state is there for its people to facilitate a suitable environment for its citizens' religious obligations. Bahçeli has never constructed an overly religious discourse. That said, the emphasis on Islam has yet always remained on the cultural level and within the framework of strong state and laicism.

Islam constituted ethical principles for Türkeş (as mentioned in Chapter 3) and Bahçeli as well as the idealist movement. That said, Islam plays a role at the level of the individual, rather than at the level of the state. Accordingly, the state cannot be

ruled by a religious regime in the MHP's Policy Statement: "The meaning of the state is order. In the times of the Ottoman, despite the significance of religion, the regime of the state was not based on main Islamic sources such as the holy book, Qur'an. The regime of the Empire cannot be called a theocracy, rather customs were tools to define the regime. The definition of the regime is determined by the nation establishing its state" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 1999b).[151] Bahçeli (2000a: 84) defined laicism as "a form of government that has evolved to balance and regulate human-religion-state relations in the light of these long and difficult historical experiences." Laicism, Tepe (2000: 65) argues, appeared as a "historical compromise between Islam and Turkish progress" in the MHP's ideology. The emphasis on Islam has yet always remained on the cultural level and within the framework of laicism.

The end of the 1990s was a turbulent time for Turkish political history. The changing power relations resulted in the closing of the Islamist *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party, RP) and the military interventions in politics. Meanwhile, Aras and Bacik (2000) argue, the MHP portrayed itself less conflictual with an emphasis on serious nationwide concerns such as terrorism due to its distance from non-constructive domestic tensions. Bora (2003) argues that the MHP implicitly approved of the closure of the RP for the sake of winning the trust of the state. This, in turn, Bora (2003) argues, strengthened the secular tendency of the MHP. Moreover, as a result of the rivalry between nationalist and Islamic movements and the latter becoming a hegemonic power, Bora (2003) argues, the MHP started to echo the state's nationalism and become closer to a secular position. Against the escalating PKK

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[151] In Turkey, of course, the state established the nation, that is, Turkey being "a *state-nation*", rather than "a *nation-state*" (Heper, 2007)*.*

attacks and political Islam being declared as threats by the Turkish state during the 1990s, Bahçeli has emphasized the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, as discussed before.

The equal emphasis on Turkishness and Islam in the ideology of the MHP (Turkish-Islamic synthesis) might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the escalating PKK attacks and rising political Islam; however, this change did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. Bahçeli preserved the foundational claims of the party while also the tactic of changing any aspect of his ideology was driven by context-bound perceptions of threats.

Turkey witnessed a remarkable division in politics due to the decisions of 28 February 1997 and the military was suspicious about the actions of the coalition government of *Doğru Yol Partisi* (the True Path Party, DYP) and the RP such as speeches critical of republican secular principles (Aras & Bacik, 2000). Lombardi (as cited in Aras & Bacik, 2000: 51) argued, these actions appeared as the rise of political Islam which the military perceives a threat to Atatürk's legacy; thus, it started to constrain the Islamic-led coalition government. Therefore, in the 28 February meeting among members of *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* (National Security Council, NSC), Islamic movements were declared as the most dangerous threat to secular foundations of the Republic. Later on, pseudo-military rule, Aras and Bacik (2000) contends, reigned due to military pressure forced the government to resign.

The NSC was effective in politics, particularly on the youth of the MHP with its discourse of Kurdish nationalism and Islamism as enemies of the state. The NSC declared and portrayed religious activism, Muslim business, the religious (Islamic) education system, and media as crucial threats to the secular core of Turkey on February 28, 1997. Ever since this point in time, the anti-Islamic attitude of the

military has occupied part of the nation's consciousness. Therefore, NSC's 28 February decisions, known as the "28 February" process, were a turning point in Turkish political history. Aras and Bacik (2000) argue that the decisions of the February 28 process created a new power configuration as a conflict between two competing political blocks: those supporting the decisions versus those opposing. The latter block comprises of the previous coalition government members- the True Path Party and the Welfare Party- whereas the Democratic Leftist Party and the Republican People's Party constitute the former (Aras & Bacik, 2000). The MHP joined the former block.

Bahçeli introduced two popular election propaganda items before the 1999 general elections, reflecting the Turkish-Islamic ideal: "The MHP respects faith," "Only the MHP can resolve the *türban* (turban) issue" and "the resolution of turban problem is not in the campuses yet it is in the parliament" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 1999b). Going further, for the solutions to Turkey's problems including the Öcalan's (PKK) case, Bahçeli was reported saying: "not as a coward but as a man!" In the election manifesto, the nation defined, on the ground presented by a common history, "a social whole that reveals the desire and will to live together, has adopted an ideal of common future regarding the shared destiny in the historical process and believes that it has its common qualities and identity within the human family … The concepts of national culture, national sovereignty, national state, and solidarity have strategic importance among the elements of nationalist thought systematic"(Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 1999a: 28). By this definition, Bahçeli emphasized the ethnic (i.e. common qualities and identity within the human family) and the cultural components of Turkish nationalism (e.g. national culture), while also

emphasizing the civic component of Turkish nationalism (i.e. national state), albeit to a lesser degree. In the following years, the synthesis continued to exist in Bahçeli's nationalist ideology by changing emphasis in different contexts.

The results of the 1999 elections reflected an increased interest in the nationalist parties; the MHP and other nationalist Islamist parties captured the votes of central and eastern Anatolia whereas *Demokratik Sol Parti* (Democratic Left Party, DSP) captured that of western part and *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi* (People's Democracy Party, HADEP) took that of the southeastern Anatolia. These results indicate that in the 1990s, Turkey was a divided society with respect to identities (Yavuz, 2002).

With the help of strengthening the rural electorate against the rising PKK attacks, the 1999 General Elections became a victory for the MHP Cadres as it arose as the second-largest party in the Assembly for the first time throughout its history. The 1999 election was, therefore, a turning point in the history of the MHP as it became a game-changer in Turkish politics with its nationalist propaganda by receiving the second-largest vote rate, that is, 18.1 percent electoral support. After this electoral success, many argued that radical nationalism became more popular than the religious extremism in Turkish politics when compared to these elections with that of 1995 when the Welfare Party was in the MHP's place. Others argued the MHP's success was a manifestation of a deeper concern of a discontented Turkish voter from the other extremes and the remainder concluded that victory was the result of the emergence of a strong Turkish nationalism subsequent to the capture of Öcalan in 1999. Some scholars (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Başkan, 2005; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Tepe, 2000) insisted that neither of these indicates the MHP's success, that is, it was not the MHP's extremism, rather it was an *ideological compromise* between

the conflicting demands of Islamists/Islamic society and secularists/the Kemalist state together with ethnic groups which accounts for the MHP's electoral success.

The MHP was successful at attracting those who were frustrated by the previous government. Devlet Bahçeli, for instance, promised to solve the headscarf issue, from which some groups in the society long suffered, during the 1999 elections' campaign (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 1999a), as mentioned before. As a result of the 28 February Process, that resulted in constraining religious freedom as well as frustration caused by the important mistakes of the Virtue and Welfare Parties, Aras and Bacik (2000) argue, conservative-Islamic masses changed their position to support the MHP as they did for the Welfare Party four years ago. This political atmosphere can be considered as the result of MHP's ideological compromise between Islamic and secular values that came to be called 'Turkish-Islamic ideal' according to some scholars (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Başkan, 2005; Canefe & Bora, 2003; Tepe, 2000, 2008). Rather than compromising ideologies, one might argue that the synthesis underscores that there is no necessary conflict between Islam and nationalism - a reminiscence of two main components of Gökalp's trilogy.

Particularly, Aras and Bacik (2000: 48) claim that the 1999 electoral accomplishment of the MHP was an "ideological compromise between conflicting demands of nationalist, Islamist, and secularist positions in the Turkish political system." The major events leading to this success, according to Aras and Bacik (2000), were the MHP's party-political attitude throughout the 28 February Process, the factors feeding the nationalist sentiments in Turkey, and an environment of frustration on the part of conservatives due to coalition government of Welfare and True Path Party. Similarly, Tepe (2000: 59) thinks that the electoral accomplishment

of the MHP in 1999 was a result of its sui generis position in Turkish political culture, which both has a "counter-hegemonic discourse" and legitimacy through Kemalist tenets and its ideal of Turkish nation appears as "the historical embodiment of ethnic-religious unity with an emphasis on strong state involvement to sustain national order." Finally, Tepe (2000) maintains that the dichotomy between the statist and societal centers led to MHP's electoral success in the 1999 elections.

The ways in which Islam was used, Aras and Bacik (2000) contend, distanced the MHP's Islamic orientation from its pro-Islamic counterparts and enabled the MHP to capture the votes from the base of the Welfare and Virtue Party. In addition to these domestic factors, the internal factors also feed the national sentiments across the country such as the exclusion of Turkey from the European Union. Not only did traditional and conservative masses found this issue as humiliating, Aras and Bacik (2000) also argue, but they were also frustrated by the EU's attitude on Öcalan's case, and this situation also prepared a favorable ground for the MHP since it enabled to construct a successful discourse of the Kurdish conflict to attract those masses and appear as the only party capable of solving the conflict. The capture of the leader Öcalan of the PKK as well as the funerals of dead soldiers in the terrorist attacks was instrumental for the MHP's electoral propaganda in 1999 despite the lack of support from the Turkish media (Aras & Bacik, 2000; Çınar & Arıkan, 2002).

Another important issue lied behind the MHP's electoral success in 1999, Aras and Bacik (2000) argue, was the Turkish society's suspicion of politics as it became rather a dirty business serving politicians, bureaucrats, and media-patrons. The *Susurluk Crisis* was a case in point which some people perceived some government officials as aiding the gangs for their underground aims, as mentioned before. Since

the MHP failed to meet the ten-percent threshold to enter the Parliament in the previous elections, Aras and Bacik (2000: 55) claim that media bosses did not pay enough attention to the MHP regarding illegal issues, an error which helped the MHP to save face and appear as a "new party with a new leader," ready to open a new page for Turkish society.

Basing their analysis on Katherine Verdery's dichotomy between cultural/civic nationalisms, Çınar and Arıkan (2002) argue that the MHP's success in the 1999 elections lay in its ambiguous definition of a nation oscillating between cultural and civic nationalisms. In the 1999 elections, the MHP was successful at wakening up dormant patriotic feelings by presenting itself as the merely nationalist party which embodies the national interests, a stance advantageous for the MHP in a chaotic environment in a country experiencing PKK attacks. The celebrations for Öcalan's capture and funerals of soldiers who died in PKK attacks were the places for the MHP propaganda where the nationalist and patriotic emotions were on a large scale. Besides, Çınar and Arıkan (2002) claim, the construction of Bahçeli's image around the representation of the national interest rather than his party or his own identity was another dynamic leading to the 1999 electoral success. In his book titled *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (the Nationalist Action Party)*,* Arıkan (2008) argues that one of the most important reasons behind the success of the MHP was the successful isolation of itself not only from the political Islamic movements that questioned the state, order, and regime in the 1990s but also the defense of the state and the regime.

Başkan (2006), on the other hand, argues that the globalization process contributed to the rise of the MHP, particularly in the 1999 general elections. In those elections, the MHP captured the votes of rural parts of eastern and central Anatolia

together with the low-income people in big cities. The marginalized unemployed, small merchants, and farmers in the globalization process comprised of main voters of the MHP- what Başkan (2006: 89) called "losers of the globalization process." Not only was the success of the MHP subsequent to the general elections in 1999, Başkan (2006) argues, but the disappointment in the general elections in 2002 was also due to the course of globalization. In contrast, Yavuz (2002) argues that the reason behind this success of the MHP was its youth organization and its presentation of itself as the guardian of Turkish nationalism; that is to say, the center-right of the political spectrum led to an increase in the MHP's political growth and the MHP was successful at showing itself as the state's party. Therefore, Yavuz (2002: 219) argues, under the leadership of Bahçeli, the legitimacy of the MHP is derived from the state. Moreover, Yavuz (2002) contends that the MHP has a hierarchical structure representing the soul of *asker millet* (military nation); decision mechanisms are thus top-down in the MHP's organizational structure; that is why, the reconciliatory, mild, and urban image of Bahçeli's "new" and "untried" MHP has made his movement appear moderate claiming to represent the center-right party without radical discourse throughout the election process.

Similarly, Çınar and Arıkan (2002) argue that Bahçeli was successful at bringing the rural and urban nationalist electorate together under the same roof. The 1999 electoral victory shows the clues of this establishment such as appealing to the urban electorate. Çınar and Arıkan (2002: 31) contend that one of the important differences between those leaders is their public images, that is, Türkeş has generally been portrayed as "paternalistic partisan leader," whereas Bahçeli appeared as "a leader who honors the interests of his country" in the public image. On the one hand, Çınar

and Arıkan (2002: 31) assert, the image of the former leader is more closely linked to the militant, ultranationalist movement pursued by the MHP during the 1970s when the youth organization of the party was engaged in an armed conflict with leftists/communists; on the other hand, the image of the latter leader is considered as trustworthy and reliable mostly due to his image, his academic career, and orientation as an educator not a militant activist in the party.

One might argue that many dynamics contributed to the MHP's success in the first elections held under Bahçeli's leadership. The new and untried image of his party, the capture of Öcalan, and election propaganda based on the Turkish-Islamist synthesis contributed to this electoral success. While the capture and trial of Öcalan aroused Turkic nationalist feelings, the promise of a solution to the 'headscarf problem' aroused interest in the ideology of Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

Nevertheless, contrary to some evaluations of the political conjuncture in the 1999 elections (Arıkan, 2002a; Yanardağ, 2002a), for example, Öcalan's capture, one might argue that the context does not have a mere impact on the results. That said, the vote that MHP received in the 18 April 1999 election cannot be evaluated only contextually. Bahçeli's leadership also had a major impact on MHP's success in the 1999 elections. One might argue that Bahçeli's mild image during the elections as a new leader also contributed to the MHP's success in the 1999 elections as he achieved to appeal to the urban electorate.

Subsequent to the 1999 elections, *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (the Nationalist Action Party, the MHP) *Demokratik Sol Parti* (the Democratic Left Party, DSP), and *Anavatan Partisi* (the Motherland Party, ANAP) formed a coalition government; that is what Başkan (2005: 53) called "cooperation across ideological lines" to create a

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harmonious environment for the long-term interests of the state, which in turn resulted in the consolidation of democracy in Turkey (Başkan, 2005). Devlet Bahçeli served as Deputy Prime Minister in this coalition government. Between 1999-2002, not only was the MHP a coalition partner with the DSP and the ANAP, Başkan (2005) argues, but it was also an important player in Turkish politics in passing reforms in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. The DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition, Kınıkoğlu (as cited in Başkan, 2005: 65) explains, appeared as "the most stable and internally harmonious coalition since 1961" and might be regarded as the start of "paradigmatic change" in Turkish politics (Heper & Başkan, 2001). According to Heper and Başkan (2001), this harmonious functioning of the government was due to two main reasons. Firstly, the two opposing camps, that is, the ultranationalist the MHP and leftist the DSP, have similar positions on critical issues like Kurdish nationalism, political Islam, Turkey's relationship with the EU, and the globalization. Secondly, the leaders of the corresponding parties, Bahçeli and Ecevit, acted in fact as state elites by considering the long-term interests of the country beyond their political parties' interests.

Moreover, the coalition with leftist DSP reflects Shelef (2010: 12-13)'s approach of the multidimensionality of nationalism which denotes that "even if movements disagree, for example, on the extent of the homeland and the national mission, their shared idea of the nation's membership criteria makes cooperation possible." This coalition with leftists can also be considered as an evolving nationalism from the armed conflict with leftists in the 1960s and 1970s to cooperation in the 1990s for what Bahçeli calls 'high interests' of the country since it might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the escalating PKK conflict. As a part of the coalition,

the MHP had access to power and a role in the decision-making process, opening a space for nationalist cadres.

Some scholars yet argue that the MHP was criticized for failing to do what it had promised in the 1999 elections. Among those, Çınar and Arıkan (2002) maintain that the MHP was accused of failing to do what it had promised in 1999 elections, among which issues were the headscarf[152] and that of the death penalty —not carried out— in Öcalan's case. For instance, one of the promises in the election campaign of 1999 was "The head-covering issue will be resolved not by cowards but by real men," which targeted the pro-Islamic voters of *Refah* and *Fazilet Partisi* (Welfare and Virtue Parties). In addition to the Öcalan's case, the other issue was also the headscarf issue, particularly the fact that MHP deputy Nesrin Ünal swore without her headscarf in the parliament ("MHP, Türban sözünü tuttu," 1999). Çınar and Arıkan (2002) argue that the oath-taking ceremony subsequent to the 1999 elections gave clues about the MHP's new stance on Islam. Despite heavy criticisms from the party's supporters, Çınar and Arıkan (2002) argue that Bahçeli's attitude towards the head-covering issue (Islam in general), indicates the degree to which he is committed to statist and centrist line. Heper and İnce (2006) argue that the reason behind Bahçeli's request from Nesrin Ünal for removing her Islamic scarf in the plenary sessions in the Assembly was to sustain political stability in the country, so he did not opt for an abrupt elimination of the ban on the headscarf in public buildings even though he was quite respectful towards people's religious orientations.

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[152] "The headscarf issue" in Turkey denotes the ban of the headscarf in public buildings since it is labeled as a symbol of political Islam, in particular by the military.

Bahçeli, in fact, criticized the Islamist political parties for abusing the headscarf issue. Bahçeli (2002: 64) proposed to solve the headscarf issue employing "a compromise rather than creating a conflict between secular-anti-laic or republic-democracy polarization to enable social peace." At the Sixth Congress, Bahçeli (2000a: 87-88) also said: "It should be kept in mind that there is a special place of freedom of religion and conscience in the democratic republic … Our party advocates that the issue of the headscarf that hurts our nation should be handled in the most equitably without causing new tension… We know and believe that the Turkish nation has the experience and will live, both as a republic and democracy with its religious beliefs in the most beautiful way." Therefore, Bahçeli (2002: 64) stated, "The basic approach of the MHP in solving the headscarf problem is to in accordance with the common values and expectations of the people without confronting the nation and the state." One might argue that the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership tried to act as a mediator between the state and society, particularly on the issue of headscarf.

The other issue was the Öcalan case,[153] that is, the MHP's elections pledge in 1999 elections to ensure the execution of the leader of the PKK. The debate on the removal of the death penalty in Article 125 of the Turkish Criminal Code in the Parliament, which had direct implications for the Öcalan case, ended with a consensus among the ANAP, the DSP, and the MHP coalition government. Heper and İnce (2006) maintain that Bahçeli did not immediately support the abolition of the death penalty since he had promised to ensure Öcalan's execution when the

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[153] Abdullah Öcalan -the leader of the PKK- was considered to be responsible for 35,000 deaths in a guerilla war between PKK and the state between 1984-1999, so Ankara State Security Court sentenced him with a death penalty in 1999 (Avcı, 2011).

Parliament raised the case with the involvement of the European Court of Human Rights. At the same time, Turkey was in the process of European integration and the removal of the death penalty was a prerequisite for the full membership. Bahçeli stated that "the MHP would continue to oppose the amendment when it is taken up by Parliament; however if the amendment is adopted by the votes of the other coalition members as well as those of the opposition, the MHP would not terminate the coalition" ("Bahçeli'den idamı kaldırma formülü," 2000)- what Heper and İnce (2006) call a reconciliatory manner in Öcalan's case despite the high costs, rather than creating a deadlock and inharmonious functioning of the government. Heper and İnce (2006) claim that Bahçeli acted in a conciliatory manner towards other counterparts in the coalition for the healthily functioning government and considering general interest. In Bahçeli's own words (as cited in Heper & İnce, 2006: 878), this coalition is a "coalition of principles, not a coalition of political parties", read 'interests.' Öniş (2003) too argues that Bahçeli's image has always been reconciliatory in the coalitions as he prevents conflicts and tries to enable political stability. One might argue that Bahçeli had a compromising attitude with his coalition partners in the issue of Öcalan; however, this does not indicate a change in his other views for his anti-PKK attitude has continued in the following years.

On the other hand, Bahçeli's stance on the issues of Öcalan and the headscarf was not welcomed by the grass-roots at his party. The MHP always identifies itself as an ally with the state, Aras and Bacik (2000) argue, even though it risks the majority of its support base, particularly conservative nationalists. For instance, Heper (1999) states that the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership did not allow its electorates subsequent to its electoral victory to shout slogans against secular electorates

wishing to prohibit headscarves, a decision intending to create what he calls a "reconciliatory image." Aras and Bacik (2000) argue that this disengagement shows a clear demarcation between the leadership of the MHP and its grassroots at an ideological level. One might suggest that such actions (or lack thereof) characterize the evolution of the MHP. Yavuz (2002: 212) creates a good metaphor by saying that "if the leadership of the party is the lamb's skin, the body is still a wolf."

Particularly after the capture of Öcalan, the Kurdish issue awakened dormant Turkish-Islamic nationalism. Since the emergence of PKK attacks in 1984, Turkish nationalism has developed more as a response to Kurdish ethnonationalism. The MHP under Bahçeli's leadership too identified itself as a reaction to the PKK during the 1990s. Since Bahçeli saw what he called ethnic separatism as a threat to national unity, he emphasized strong state and the cultural components of Turkish nationalism between 1997 and 2000 while other components of Turkish nationalism such as the civic component persisted. The MHP posited that "The separate ethnic groups form the Turkish nation through a historical compromise, and in the case of unawareness of their shared national values, the state is supposed to unite them" (MHP Ar-Ge, 1999: 30). Islam has been a cultural bond to unite these different ethnic identities according to Bahçeli. As stated in the MHP programme, "Turkish identity has been designed by Islamic notions since its formation, comprising numerous Turkic groups, 'others' in Turkish nationalism never constitutes Islamic components and Kurdish people" (Önder, 1997). One might argue that Kurds as a whole have not been perceived as an enemy by Bahçeli; rather, Bahçeli's attitude has been anti-PKK.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that Bahçeli denied the ethnic origins of Kurds. Having repudiated their ethnic origin, Başkan (2005) states, the MHP under

Bahçeli's leadership supported the idea that Kurds should not receive news broadcasts and education in their mother tongue, which was the Copenhagen Criteria for EU membership of Turkey since the MHP has considered these activities as a danger to the national unity. For instance, the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership criticized the EU demands of the amnesty for terrorist organization members, abolishing the death penalty, and broadcasting and education in a mother tongue other than Turkish (Bahçeli, 2002f). Therefore, some scholars (Başkan, 2005; Bora & Can, 2016) argue that the MHP denies the existence of a Kurdish problem in Turkey. One might argue that Kurds as a whole have not been perceived as an enemy by Bahçeli; instead, Bahçeli's attitude can be said to have been anti-PKK. Because Bahçeli saw the PKK as a threat to national unity, he emphasized equally the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism (specifically, Islam).

Between 1997 and 2000, even though Bahçeli emphasized ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism, he also rarely talked about the civic component of nationalism. In one of the speeches that he delivered at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) (21th Term, Volume 20, 37. Unification), Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism as democracy and equality of all citizens as opposed to the emphasis on ethnic and/or religious identity. He said:

> No one can impose a sub-identity, ethnicity, or sect on the democratic system. [Applause from the MHP rankings] These characteristics of people are meaningful to them as their historical, cultural adjectives; however, the democratic state structure cannot be shaped based on these characteristics. The democratic state is not based on people, ethnic identities, and religious beliefs, but based on equality as citizens. In this sense, the democracy of our age is a form of government that does not make cultural and ethnic differences between people as the subject of political conflict. In this respect, a strong understanding of democracy represents an advanced understanding that has left behind fights based on religion, race, and ethnicity; instead, emphasizes a participatory

approach in which civil society participates in decision-making processes in every field from individual to society, from society to state (Bahçeli, 1999c: 362-362).

4.3.   The November 2000 Party Congress: The Beginning of a New Era

The threats once again changed in the eyes of the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership in the 2000s; they were now new ruling party AKP, some aspects of the EU harmonization process, some aspects of the EU (especially its multi-cultural order), and some aspects of globalization together with the ongoing threat, the PKK.

Due to continuing PKK attacks as well as particularly globalization, Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism (specifically, citizenship) above all other identities starting with the November 2000 MHP Congress. There, Bahçeli (2000b) talked about nationalism as follows: "In the 21st century, two key concepts of human pluralism and solidarity will be democracy and nationalism. Nationalism will continue to be a system of ideas and sensibilities that have become increasingly important in the new century along with democracy." In the 2000 Programme of the MHP, the nation is defined as follows: "It is a social entity that reveals the desire and will to live together on the ground offered by a common history, has the feeling of sharing a common fate in the historical process and the future ideal, believing that it has its own unique qualities and identity in the community of nations" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2000: 8). Moreover in the programme, although his party's legacy from the past speaks of the principles of national culture and national unity, it has been mentioned that republic and democracy are integral values of these foundations (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2000: 13), and democracy has been mentioned and emphasized throughout the

programme. The perception of democracy and nationalism as an inseparable pair has made democracy a *sine qua non* condition. This approach was a sign of evolving nationalism from an emphasis on the ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism in the 1960s to an emphasis on its more inclusive civic component.

Not only nationalism but Bahçeli (2000b), therefore, also talks about democracy and globalization. At the Sixth General Congress, while discussing democracy and globalization, Bahçeli talked about going beyond ethnic and religious identities, instead suggesting cultural unity and solidarity through democratic means:

> Democracies have a value and function that goes far beyond being a policy-making style in which ethnic and religious divisions and conflicts are decisive. Designing the political institution according to ethnic and religious differences as well as social and economic expectations, demands and suggestions will not strengthen democracy. Therefore, democracy cannot be the means of deepening differences in a country and legitimizing destructive and divisive activities… The essential duty and the reason for the existence of a democratic regime are to ensure and encourage the brotherhood of all members of the Turkish nation, regardless of their origin, profession, sect … For those who do not accept the importance of a culture of unity and solidarity, the constant emphasis on the institutionalization of points of difference and conflict will serve something else, not democracy … Therefore, our constitution should be the document of social reconciliation and democracy (Bahçeli, 2000a: 94-95).

In terms of his concept of democracy, one might infer an approach to the civic component of nationalism. In one of his speeches at the Parliament (21th Term, Volume 20, 37. Unification), Bahçeli (1999c: 362) defined democracy "as a political system in which the relations among the individual, family, society, and the state are shaped in a way that leads to the rule of law, starting with fundamental rights and freedoms" and "Democratic values are the legitimate source of these rights and freedoms of citizens who are individuals with equal rights and freedoms as well as

citizens' responsibility to the state." One might argue that with this definition of democracy revolving around citizenship with equal rights and freedoms, Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism. In his speech, a year later at the Parliament (21th Term, Volume 31, 85. Association), Bahçeli warned those who are threatening the unity of the country and trying to divide it based on ethnic ties while also continue to emphasize the civic component of Turkish nationalism:

> Again, it cannot be allowed to move our country to a new point parallel to the terrorist activities aimed at dividing our country based on ethnicity or between different sects and beliefs. Such malevolent activities facilitate the work of Turkey's enemies. Anyone who is identified with the fate of this country will only suffer from such activities. To overcome the problem of Turkey ... we need to make a more modern democratic constitution based on tolerance and compromise and national sovereignty as the fundamental framework of legitimacy (Bahçeli, 2000d: 504-505).

The 2000 General Congress was, therefore, a congress in which Bahçeli left his mark on the MHP with the changes such as the new party programme. The 2000 Congress was also a turning point since for the first time in the MHP's history one can see so much emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism. Bahçeli talked about globalization and democracy as frequent as nationalism. At the Congress, most importantly, Bahçeli showed a positive attitude about the candidacy of Turkey to the European Union. In the program instructed by Bahçeli and announced in the 2000 Party Congress, Bahçeli defined nationalism as a principle that "… constitutes the intellectual and driving force of social, economic, and cultural developments in ensuring that it is at the forefront of the national community as one of the powerful, reputable, and powerful societies of its era" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2000). According to Öniş (2003), the 2000 General Congress was, therefore, a turning point

in the transformation of the party from an extreme right to a moderate party of nationalist standing by particularly eliminating its violent character. Similarly, Aras and Bacik (2000: 54) think that Devlet Bahçeli achieved the creation of an image of "a centrist party and downplayed its earlier emphasis on ultranationalist and extremist views." Yet, one might argue that this distance of the MHP from violence had started long before the 2000 Congress; it was the 1980s when the MHP distanced itself from violent practices, as argued in Section 3. Moreover, rather than a fundamental ideological shift, both Türkeş (as we saw) and Bahçeli placed varying degrees of emphasis on the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism, in line with the tactical needs corresponding to the perceived threats arising in the historical context in question.

There was yet almost no emphasis on Turkish-Islamic synthesis at the 2000 MHP Congress. That said, while Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism at the 2000 Congress, ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism were being emphasized, albeit to a lesser degree. In the 2000 Programme of the MHP, the party stated the elements of nationalist thought as national culture, national domination, national state, and solidarity (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2000: 8). The concept of 'national' contains all components of Turkish nationalism to some extent. While the term 'national culture' emphasizes the ethnic/cultural components, the concepts of national state and solidarity underscore the civic component of Turkish nationalism. This approach supports the main argument and theoretical framework of this study, in that the various components have not been independent of each other but rather intertwine and intersect. Due to the multidimensionality of nationalist ideology, the idea of national membership enabled

this variation in the MHP's ideology, even while the other components remained constant. Even though the civic component of Turkish nationalism was at the forefront in 2000, the party has not given up on the concepts and cultural heritage that it inherited from the party's past, and tried to adapt itself to the new conjuncture that came with globalization.

After 2000, even though Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism, from time to time he referred to the Nine Lights (by its nature it comprises of all components of Turkish nationalism) under which he emphasized the ethnic (being a Turk), the cultural (being a Muslim), and the civic (being a Turkish citizen) components of Turkish nationalism in descending order of importance. Even though the civic component of Turkish nationalism was at the forefront of the 2000s, Bahçeli also talked about cultural components of Turkish nationalism with a lesser degree of emphasis. In 2002, for instance, Bahçeli (2002f: 56) posited that "the ones who share a common culture, history, and language constitute the Turkish nation," which emphasized cultural components of Turkish nationalism. Bahçeli sometimes directly referred to Turkish-Islamic synthesis, too. For instance, Bahçeli (2003) said that "Turkey has to implement major policies which are in line with its national consciousness of history and culture, guided by the Turkish-Islamic heritage and traditions of national values." Meanwhile, his emphasis on democracy yet continued in the later years. In one of his speeches delivered at the Parliament (23th Term, Volume 1, 9. Association), Bahçeli (2007d: 132) defined democracy as "a regime of morality, virtue, and renunciation based on sound beliefs and guarantees, which requires an honest, clean and honest policy" and emphasized "the essentials for

democracy such as sobriety, clairvoyance, tolerance, mutual understanding, reconciliation, and ethics of political responsibility."

When evaluating his emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism, one might argue that Bahçeli defined Turkishness as an upper identity of Turkish citizenship. His emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism, particularly after 2003, laid the groundwork for a broader understanding of nationalism within the Party. In his speech at *Türkmen* (Turkoman) Festival, Bahçeli (2005a) described Turkey as "a colorful and beautiful garden," implying the diverse groups living in Turkey. Bahçeli sees Turkishness as the upper identity of all identities as well as the identity of citizenship as well. Therefore, as argued before, all these components, especially ethnic and cultural elements, intertwine and together constitute the nationalism of Bahçeli.

Bahçeli introduced a new economic programme, called the 'Economic Recovery and Transformation Programme' in 2002. At his election declaration introduction meeting for the 3 November 2002 Elections, Bahçeli (2002a) explained its key objectives as follows: "Improving the competitive market economy and strengthening its legal infrastructure, increasing the economy's global efficiency capability, improving the investment environment, financial policies to strengthen the system and capital markets, protecting the small investor, and complete privatization healthily and effectively." These innovations created significant economic policy differences from Türkeş's MHP. As pointed out in Chapter Three, the Nine Lights doctrine written by Türkeş had emphasized a mixed economic system that gave the state a strategic economic role whereas Bahçeli's new programme supported a liberal economic system by joining the neo-liberalization followed by

many of Europe's right-wing parties since the 1980s. In *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık,* the party's founder, Alparslan Türkeş (2017), clearly stated that his party advocated a corporatist programme and that the MHP movement rejected an individualistic, class-based competitive society. This discourse, built on criticisms of capitalism, dominated Türkeş's period. Thus, although the Nine Light principles remained an indispensable part of the MHP, Bahçeli, under the influence of the conjuncture, tried to build a new MHP through an economic discourse with liberal economic claims. In contrast to Türkeş, Bahçeli adopted a reformist economic programme.

The election results of 3 November 2002 shocked the ruling parties; that is, all of the ruling parties fell below the 10 percent election threshold while the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, AKP) celebrated victory alone with 34.42% of votes, the MHP experienced a shock in the elections due to its low 8.3% percentage of votes. MHP returned to the parliament it left in 2002, in 2007. After the 3 November elections, Devlet Bahçeli started to harshly oppose the AKP, pursuing a policy against the European Union (EU) and opening up new nationalist lines. Due to the AKP's EU policies such as Kurdish television broadcasting which Bahçeli viewed as threatening national interests, Bahçeli regarded the AKP as a threat in 2002. The AKP remained a threat until the rapprochement in 2015, as we shall see. In his speech at the Seventh Congress, Bahçeli said that:

> The AKP is trying to overcome the legitimacy crisis and therefore making concessions to the European Union. The AKP, for this purpose, uses the European Union and it raises every issue with the specific aim of 'being European' and the 'EU standard.' In contrast, the European Union sees the AKP as the most appropriate means to implement its wishes which damages Turkey's national unity and undermines the social fabric. In this sense, the AKP and the European Union use each other for their specific agendas and purposes (Bahçeli, 2003: 123).

After the Seventh Congress of the party, Bahçeli continued to emphasize the civic

component of Turkish nationalism in line with the conditions of the period. In this

period, Bahçeli mostly used the concept of citizenship in describing his nationalism.

It went beyond being an ethnic identity and the concept of Turkishness appeared like

a roof for other ethnic groups living in Turkey and would create a sense of belonging

to civic identity. This added emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism

was observed in his speech at the Sixth Congress; Bahçeli (2000a: 100) said:

"Nationalist Movement is the party of the whole Turkish nation and the whole of

Turkey. Because the Nationalist Movement, not only today's but also the party of the

future." In later years, Bahçeli continued to emphasize the civic component of Turkish

nationalism with the concept of citizenship:

> The Republic of Turkey was established as a national state with a unitary structure.
> All of its units are factors that play a role in the formation of the unitary state.
> Regardless of their ethnic origin and cultural characteristics, its people are equal
> members of the Turkish nation, connected with a tie of the citizenship of the
> Republic of Turkey. Considering the long history of Turkey, it will be seen that it is
> a concept built on a common culture, language, and history. The concept of the
> nation in its establishment has been seen as a uniting and fusing entity (Bahçeli,
> 2002f: 56-57).

> All forms of nationalism based on blood ties and lineage are alien and contrary to
> Turkish Nationalism. Turkish Nationalism is also against separatism based on
> religion, language, race, and sect. Turkish Nationalism represents a unifying and
> integrative mentality that deems all those who are connected to the Turkish state
> with a citizenship bond as Turkish and rejects all kinds of discrimination and
> exclusion (Bahçeli, 2005d).

Globalization was another phenomenon of the 2000s.[154] During the 2000s, almost every year, Bahçeli frequently talked about globalization (Bahçeli, 1999c, 2000a, 2000c, 2001, 2002d, 2003). He did not see globalization as a threat in itself, rather he saw it as a threat to the societies that have fallen behind in the process of democratization and development —the slaves of the globalization process as he calls them. Bahçeli (2003: 64) said that "It should be known that there are certain ways that human beings become masters, not slaves of the globalization process. These pathways await discovery through the collective efforts and sensitivities of humanity." Therefore, one might argue that Bahçeli did not have anti-globalization rhetoric, he is just cautious about it not to become "the slaves of the globalization process." In one of his later speeches that took place at the Parliament (21th Term, Volume 61, 89. Unification) in 2001, Bahçeli talked about the process of globalization as a threat to political sovereignty and national existence:

> Some developments caused by globalization threaten political sovereignty and even the national existence of some countries, particularly the societies that have fallen behind in the process of democratization and development. In this respect, there is a need to adopt an approach that will be the most effective and creative synthesis in solving the problems by making national domination as the principle of democratic legitimacy (Bahçeli, 2001: 9).

Not only did Bahçeli talk about globalization, but he also touched upon supporting the idea of following the West, yet, by not being a 'slave' of it. In his understanding of Westernization, Bahçeli (as cited in Kılıçaslan, 2011: 191) said that "Being at the center, Turkey should turn its face to both the East and the West." Having taken a

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[154]In the 2000s, Can (2009) argues that the MHP became closed to the *toplumcu* (societal) approach as a result of globalization threatening the nation-states and national values.

legacy from Ziya Gökalp, Bahçeli has tried to reconcile the aspects of Westernization with the national values/culture. Bahçeli (2000a: 56), for instance, said "This is one of the global claims and targets of Turkish nationalists. This ideal, which Ziya Gökalp, the great intellectual man, formulated and underlined as "equality and cooperation of nations," should be accepted and developed as a starting point." Having taken Gökalp's famous binary opposition of culture and civilization, Bahçeli (2010a: 32) stated that "Our nationalism aims at sustaining our national values kneaded with our historical depths and developments accumulated in the epoch and grounded in interpreting the national together with universal." Grounding his ideology on Gökalp's synthesis of Turkism, Islamism, and modernization, Bahçeli interprets 'the national,' that is national culture, with "the universal."

One might argue that Bahçeli's approach to Westernization and globalization reflects the MHP's long-standing critical attitude toward the Westernization process that was formulated in the early Republican era. That is, rather than imitating the West culturally, Bahçeli thinks that Turks need to develop their own culture and adopt Western technology. In the globalization case, the latter become global technology. Bahçeli (as cited in Heper & İnce, 2006: 882) posited that "Turkey should adopt universal values" and talked about humanitarian concerns including modernity, peace, freedom of speech, and democracy while also considering national sensitivities. In one of his speeches at the Parliament (21th Term, Volume 20, 37. Unification), for instance, having called this era as "Information Age," Bahçeli touched upon both globalization and the issue of Westernization:

> The process of globalization influences economic and technological power centers or states. We cannot stay out of this process. What we need to do is, on the one

hand, the new formation of Turkey in the Islamic culture and geography, while building relationships that will serve as a response to this need on the global scale, and on the other hand, it is to find ways to mobilize our potential within the existing global structure such as the European Union. Turkey, nor should break off ties with the West nor should be convicted to it (Bahçeli, 1999c: 363).

In addition to his welcoming approach to globalization, Bahçeli advocated caution about it. Bahçeli (2000a: 63) stated that an International Science and Technology Auditory Board should be established to control technological and scientific developments, so as "not to leave human life in the void of new uncertainties." Furthermore, Bahçeli (2000a: 63) suggested the need for "development and institutionalization of a global sense of ethics and a new sense of responsibility." Bahçeli also stressed the importance of extending human rights in the globalization process and he suggested three ways of accomplishing this goal:

> First, the process of globalization should be more humanitarian and fairer. For this, it is necessary to conduct healthy analyses on the dimensions of globalization, its current and possible consequences. Secondly, technological developments should not be used only by the owners but should be used for the common good of all humanity. Third, the concept of human rights and policies should not be limited to individual rights and freedoms. The second and third generations of rights, such as environment, development, and social rights, need to be considered … Our wish as Turkish nationalists is that such a human rights approach should form the backbone of a global order for the common interest of all humanity (Bahçeli, 2000a: 61-52).

Even though Bahçeli talked about a global sense of ethics and values, he thought that nationalism would be still an important phenomenon in the 21st century: "In the 21st century, the two key concepts of human pluralism and solidarity should be democracy and nationalism. Those who see nationalism as an idea that has completed its mission are those who act with ideological prejudices. Nationalism will

continue to be a system of ideas and sensitivities that have become increasingly important in the new century together with democracy" (Bahçeli, 2000a: 60). Bahçeli, therefore, tried to adopt globalization from the nationalist perspective. That is, he tried to find a way for them to coexist without damaging one another. In one of his speeches delivered at the Parliament (21th Term, Volume 92, 90. Association) in 2002, Bahçeli (2002d: 663) emphasized both national and global perspectives for challenging situations we face in the age of globalization: "At a time when the globalization process has an impact on every aspect of our daily life from every aspect of international relations, it is becoming increasingly necessary to develop national and global perspectives and solutions." At the Parliamentary Group Meeting, Bahçeli (2002b) stated that "All countries must unite in their global commonalities as well as their own national goals and interests, and strengthen their solidarity and dialogue. Global poverty, stability, ecological balance, and terrorism are important in this respect as four main issues and problem areas." Therefore, one might argue that Bahçeli's stance on globalization reflects the MHP's long-lasting critical stance on the Westernization process of the early Republican Era. That is, Bahçeli tries to point out national sensitivities in the age of globalization.

In addition to the globalization issue, another important issue was Turkey's candidacy to the European Union during the 2000s. In time, the EU process gained momentum. Prime Minister of the period —Recep Tayyip Erdoğan— increased the momentum of the EU harmonization process. Finally, Turkey, 17 December 2004, received a conditional date for starting accession negotiations on 3 October 2005 Brussels Summit. But this was a time when the nationalist values of Turkish idealists were quite sensitive. Nationalist reflexes increased when the seemingly inexhaustible

demands of the EU commission conflicted with national interests as the MHP reminded (Akpınar, 2005). Bahçeli (1999b) claimed that the MHP has "no enmity towards Europe" and that it has "no intention of making Turkey a closed society," yet he underlined the significance of one's own national character as well as sovereignty and unity. Bahçeli also said that he was not against the full membership of the European Union, yet he emphasized national sensitivities:

> The issue of full membership to the European Union has become a "state policy" in our country and has taken its place among national goals and strategies. The Nationalist Action Party maintained its distant approach to the European Union until the early 1990s. Since then, it has started to develop a more calm and versatile approach … The Nationalist Action Party takes the issue of full membership in the European Union seriously and believes that Turkey's membership would be realized in a reasonable time if the European Union's approach was friendly manner and realistic … In this process, it is our natural right to expect the basic sensitivities of our country and nation to be taken into consideration. Again, the European Union in its relations with Turkey should not be behind Greece; and, it should cease unilateral approach to the Cyprus and Aegean issues (Bahçeli, 2000a: 82).

Not unlike his cautious attitude on globalization, Bahçeli was also cautious about the EU integration process. Having been sensitive to human rights issues, Bahçeli (2002c) maintained that any changes regarding the improving human rights in response to globalization should be compatible with the particularities of the Turkish nation, not with EU demands. Bahçeli did not reject EU membership. This approach again reflects the MHP's long-lasting critical stance of the Westernization process of the early Republican Era. For instance, in the later years, Bahçeli (2005d) stated that "we want to take part in this Union," yet in the same speech he also insisted that "this participation should comply with the magnitude, history, and potential of our country." Moreover, he added that "it is hard to claim that the EU administration is

quite aware of Turkey's efforts and contributions to the Union so far." Despite being cautious about the EU integration process, Bahçeli was not totally against it.

Bahçeli's support for EU relations was, therefore, limited to economic and security realms; not to the extent to which the identity is defined based on European heritage. In other words, while he opted for economic unification with the EU, he was strongly against cultural union with it. For the MHP cadres as well as for Bahçeli, Europeanness was, Canefe and Bora (2003) argue, still an alien concept and Europe appears only as an economic and security-related alliance contrary to its European radical nationalist counterparts such as Vlaams Blok in Belgium, Die Republikaner and Deutsche Volksunion in Germany, or Centrumdemocraten and Centrumpartij'86 in the Netherlands. The latter political parties treat Europeanness as a cultural heritage, that is, "extreme right parties across the continent are by and large in agreement with the existence and exhalation of a common, and presumably superior, European heritage" (Canefe & Bora, 2003: 145). Bahçeli's approach to the membership issue of Turkey to the EU resembles the MHP's lasting critical stance on the early Republican total Westernization process, which is, imitating the West. Bahçeli emphasized national sensitivities for the EU integration process whereas in terms of the national culture in the Westernization project he suggests taking economic and technological improvements.

There were three main issues in Turkey's political agenda regarding the EU during the first decade of 2000 according to the MHP under Bahçeli's leadership. Bahçeli (2002e), in *Türkiye ve Siyaset* (Turkey and Politics) journal, said that the critical issues of the EU-Turkey relations comprise the Cyprus conflict, the EU's stance on terrorism in Turkey, the national unity of Turkey, the Kurdish conflict, and the

remedy for postponements of fiscal aid packages, rather than what else Turkey is required to do for EU membership. Furthermore, he also found some of EU countries' actions as "unjustifiable behavior" as their denial of PKK as a terrorist group and refusal of "national importance" of Cyprus for Turkey. Bahçeli (2002e: 13) thought that Turkey's accession to the EU should be taken as "a matter of the meeting of great (equal) civilizations, rather than 'Turkey learning to be European." At the MHP's Seventh Congress, Bahçeli (2003: 127) said that "Turkey, under any circumstances, will not sacrifice the Turkish Cypriots. Again, it should be well known that Turkish nationalists will never allow it."

The post-2002 period constituted an important context for the MHP and other parties in this period since the dominant role of AKP in the Turkish party system has affected many dynamics. According to Bacık (2011), this situation transformed political coalitions in the direction of right in the political spectrum. The interesting configuration of the Parliament after the 2002 election, Bacık (2011: 172) argues, situated the MHP somewhere in between the right and left or society and state, that is, the MHP appeared as a party between secular Kemalist CHP and the conservative AKP. The 16th *Erciyes* Victory Congress held in *Erciyes Tekir* Plateau on 5-6-7 August 2005 was filled with striking messages reflecting this change in the ideological line of the MHP. For the first time in the plateau of the Wolves, Alevi folk songs, Pir Sultan Abdal sayings, and Kıvırcık Ali songs were performed (Akpınar, 2005). In a sense, the *Bozkurts* accompanied folk songs and relatively embraced the Alevis. Furthermore, *10. Yıl Marşı* (the 10th Year Anthem), which was mainly used by the CHP and Kemalist groups, was also read for the first time at the Congress (Akpınar, 2005). These developments, Akpınar (2005) argues, should be considered as an effort to reflect

the new nationalist line that emerged in the MHP together with what Bahçeli realized in practical politics. Having constructed Alevi practices as ethnoreligious, Tepe (2000) argues, the MHP tried to get the support of the Alevis. In the later years, Tepe (2000: 66) says, their motto against the Alevis continued to be "let's be united and be stronger" —"the Alevi proverb calling for unity."— This approach was a sign of evolving nationalism in the ideology of the MHP regarding the Alevis from the 1970s to the 2000s. That said, the MHP started to have a relatively welcoming approach to the Alevis.

Regarding Turkey's Alevi community, Bahçeli tried to play a conciliatory role by raising their issues in Parliament (Bahçeli, 2008a, 2009e, 2009h, 2012a, 2012h, 2013j, 2014c, 2014j) and proposing solutions. These included "establishment of a Research Center of Alevism in Turkey and the Department of Sufi Sciences in the Faculty of Theology, the inclusion of the Alevi religion in the curriculum of religious courses by the Ministry of Education, preparing an inventory and literature of Alevi Islamic beliefs in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and related institutions, structural arrangements in the Presidency of Religious Affairs to represent Alevi Islamic beliefs, embracing *Cemevis* (Alevi houses of worship), and the allocation of a state budget to these institutions" (Bahçeli, 2009h). In a later speech at a Parliamentary Group Meeting, Bahçeli (2014j) portrayed Alevis as brothers: "I would like to underline that it is impossible for our brothers of Alevi Islam to cross paths with terrorists." Acknowledging Alevism as an Islamic belief, Bahçeli (2009h) said: "Alevism can neither be seen as apart from our beliefs nor be separated from our nation." Thus, in promoting the policies mentioned above to improve Alevi rights, Bahçeli emphasized the civic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism in the Alevi case.

Turkey entered the 22 July 2007 general elections with a political crisis experienced over the presidential elections. In the election, the MHP found undeniable support from both the Anatolian voters and the voters on the coastline and had the opportunity to enter the Parliament with 71 MPs with 14.27 percent of the vote. In addition to the rhetoric that the MHP has adopted for rising political tension over terrorism, it can be said that two sensitivities in the society have increased MHP's votes (Ete et al., 2014). The first sensitivity was the spread of the opinion that a parliamentary composition without the MHP would be incomplete, as *Demokratik Toplum Partisi* (Democratic Society Party, DTP) was foreseen to enter Parliament with independent candidates and form a group (Ete et al., 2014). The second sensitivity was that the political climate that has been strained in opposition to the AKP-CHP between 2002-2007 can be relieved through the MHP; it was the assumption that the MHP would help overcome the political tensions that might arise, as evidenced by its declaration that it would participate in the General Assembly in the presidential elections (Ete et al., 2014). The two sensitivities led the society to support the MHP with its 'balance element' mission (Ete et al., 2014).

Bahçeli played a pivotal role in Turkish politics in the 2007 presidential elections by enabling the AKP politician, Abdullah Gül, to become Turkey's 11th President in 2007. After the Constitutional Court ruled that 367 deputies should be present in the General Assembly for the first round of the presidential election to be valid, MHP supported holding an early general election because there were fewer deputies than this. A later MHP party publication explained the reasoning: "To prevent the system crisis from turning into a regime crisis, the MHP called for the parliamentary elections to be held early. Following the elections held on July 22, 2007, our party entered the

parliament with 71 deputies and resolved the 367 crisis by participating in the voting at the General Assembly in the presidential election" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (2018). After these actions resolved the crisis temporarily, the AKP government proposed a constitutional amendment package, to elect the president by popular vote. This was approved with about 69% of the votes in the referendum held on October 21, 2007. This amendment passed in this referendum significantly changed Turkey's governmental system.

While these events appeared to represent a rapprochement between the AKP and the MHP, Bahçeli continued to see the ruling AKP as a threat, particularly regarding the government's *Kürt Açılımı* (Kurdish Opening) policy, later renamed *Demokratik Açılım* (Democratic Initiative). The Kurdish Opening, which AKP's leader, Tayyip Erdoğan, first announced in 2005 in a speech in the Kurdish-majority city of Diyarbakır in southeast Turkey, was the government's attempt to solve the armed conflict with the PKK through negotiations. According to Grigoriadis and Dilek (2018: 292), the Kurdish Opening represents "the first instance of [a government] openly challenging the traditional official state policy of non-recognition of the Kurdish problem and approaching the problem beyond the conventional security framework." In exchange for PKK disarmament and/or disbanding, the AKP's reform package included returning towns in the southeast to their original Kurdish names, allowing languages other than the official language (Turkish) in courts, opening up university-wide Kurdish study centers, and launching a Kurdish-speaking television channel (TRT Şeş).

The PKK has been one of Turkey's most important political problems in Turkish politics over the past four decades. Since 2009, the conflict and attempts to resolve

it have both escalated (2011-2013, 2015-present) and de-escalated (2009-2011, 2013-2015). This bumpy Kurdish Opening formally started on July 31, 2009, when the Minister of Interior, Bashir Atalay, explained publicly that contacts had been made and held a workshop with journalists on the Kurdish Opening at the Police Academy on negotiating the Kurdish issue. After this announcement, 34 PKK members obeyed the command from the PKK's imprisoned leader, Abdullah Öcalan, to surrender themselves at Turkey's Habur border crossing point on October 19, 2009. Unfortunately, this de-escalation only lasted until August 19, 2011, when PKK forces attacked police and gendarmerie buildings in the Çukurca district in Hakkari province, followed by the Roboski attack when the Turkish Air Force attacked targets near the province of Şırnak Uludere.

PKK violence continued with a bomb attack in Gaziantep on August 20, 2012, and another attack on a military unit in Beytussebap district on September 2, 2012. In response to this escalation, the Turkish military started operations against PKK members in Hakkari, Yüksekova, and Şemdinli. On December 28, 2012, Erdoğan announced that talks between Öcalan and *Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı* (National Intelligence Organization, MİT) had restarted. This de-escalation was followed by a PKK withdrawal in March 2013 and the launch of the so-called Wise People Commission on April 3, 2013. However, conflict restarted in 2015 after the *Suruç* bombing attack on a progressive gathering. This attack was blamed on Turkish ISIS, the local affiliate of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant/Syria (ISIL/ISIS, or IŞİD by

its Turkish acronym and also called Daesh by its Arabic acronym).[155],[156] Nevertheless, it ended Turkey's Kurdish peace process.

While all this was happening, Bahçeli harshly criticized the PKK, the ruling AKP, and the Kurdish Opening. Bahçeli never welcomed this process, seeing both AKP and its EU-related policies as a threat to Turkey. For example, Bahçeli (2005b) declared that by presenting ethnic separatism and bloody terror as a "Kurdish problem", the government could be enabling political demands that divide Turkey.[157] According to Bahçeli (2005b), "The Republic of Turkey is the only state, its country and nation are one. The ideal of one state, one nation, one flag, and language is the foundation of our national unity and integrity and the most important guarantee of our future." Here, he emphasized the civic components of Turkish nationalism against the threat, as he saw it, of the PKK and AKP. This change in the MHP ideology might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver against the PKK and AKP, which did not signify any fundamental ideological deviation. Bahçeli preserved the party's foundational claims.

Bahçeli's approach to the issue did not change in 2009. He believed the government's efforts would legitimize the PKK: "The Kurdish Opening process means accepting that the PKK achieves its separatist goals through political means and methods" ("Bahçeli: Kürt açılımı, PKK'yı meşru kılmaktır" 2009). One of the most

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[155] ISIS is a jihadist armed organization that mainly operates in Iraq and Syria to establish an Islamic state. It is recognized as a terrorist organization by many countries and international bodies (the EU, the UN, the USA, Turkey, etc.)

[156] The timeline and events regarding escalation and de-escalation of the conflict are adapted from http://www.cnnturk.com/fotogaleri/turkiye/baslangictan-bugune-gun-gun-cozum-sureci?page=101.

[157] For more information regarding why Bahçeli considers Erdoğan as a threat to Turkey, see http://www.mhp.org.tr/htmldocs/genel_baskan/konusma/595/index.html

controversial political issues was *Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu* (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation, TRT)'s launch of a state-run Kurdish-language channel on January 1, 2009. For Bahçeli (2009e), this was still evidence of the threat posed by the PKK's politicization strategy and developments in Turkey's EU harmonization, which he labeled the ethnic separatism agenda, which had been ongoing since 2002.

In response, Bahçeli (2009e) highlighted the cultural components of Turkish nationalism, claiming that "There is an inevitable natural link between common language and nationalization for social solidarity and the desire to live together". However, while referring to the cultural components of Turkish nationalism, he continued to emphasize the civic component. In one press briefing, for instance, he framed his view of nationalism around citizenship:

> Our political party possesses a political understanding that embraces all our citizens, who embody the Turkish nation, regardless of ethnic origin, as an integral part of the great Turkish national family ... Our brothers of Kurdish origin are honorable individuals of the Turkish Republic having equal rights in Turkey ... The main problem in the AKP government's approach to this issue is that it presents the issue of ethnic separatism as a problem that concerns and encompasses all our citizens of Kurdish origin and seeks solutions based on distinctions. Trying to spread the demands of separatist terrorism to all our citizens of Kurdish origin will mean that the PKK is the spokesperson and representative of all of them (Bahçeli, 2009a).

Thus, according to Bahçeli, the problem is neither a Kurdish problem nor due to the cultural demands of a minority group. Rather, he thinks that the PKK is merely a security issue causing a divisive uprising. This means that the problem can only be eliminated by combating separatist terror while negotiations can never offer an acceptable solution.

In 2009, while harshly opposing the Kurdish Opening, the MHP was also developing a new party programme. Unchanged since 1967 (when the party's name was Republican Peasants' Nation Party), it was based on "Turkish nationalism, which is nurtured by the Nine Lights doctrine, which addresses the Turkish nation "as a social whole, revealing the will to live together on the ground presented by a common history, carrying the feeling of sharing a common fate in the historical process and the future ideal, believing that it possesses unique qualities and identity in the community of nations" (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, 2009: 18-19). The Programme emphasized all components of Turkish nationalism to some extent. While Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism between 2000 and 2009, he also occasionally mentioned ethnic and cultural components, particularly by referring to the Nine Lights doctrine.

Bahçeli also questioned the manner and practice of expression of nationalist thought. "I do not want idealists to be on the street," he said, suggesting not being a part of street clashes. He especially tried to convince the idealistic base, which is sensitive to the actions of the PKK, that the MHP is a legitimate party on democratic grounds. In his speech at the MYK meeting in March 2005, Bahçeli (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 310) said, "The idealistic youth needs not bullets, arms, they need knowledge." In a similar speech on January 7, 1978, Türkeş (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 311) said in the opening speech of the MHP mayors' training seminar that "the idealistic youth should put down the gun and buy a book." In one of his speeches at the party's group meeting in Parliament, Bahçeli said: "My nationalist brothers and nationalist Turkish youth…shall not become part of siblings fighting even when faced provocation"

("Bahçeli: Ülkücü kardeşlerim hain tahrikler karşısında sokağa çıkmayacak," 2006). This approach determined the future direction of his nationalist movement.

In 2009, Bahçeli also founded a party school, research, and development department, to educate and indoctrinate the members with novel world-view. In this context, in the MHP's School of Politics and Leadership,[158] the seminars[159] called '*Beşeri Münasabeletler*' (Human Relations) were organized. In the party's webpage, it is stated that "the education programme created and implemented by the Nationalist Action Party Politics and Leadership School aims to introduce the fundamental dynamics and developments that shape the world and our country from a historical, sociological, cultural and political perspective, give a wide range of education opportunities from politics to the economy, from law to human rights, from international relations to security issues, from culture and arts to personal competence techniques, to its youth" ("Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi siyaset ve liderlik okulu,"). "Having gained a vision based on the national, spiritual, moral and human values of Turkish culture; it strove to teach the idealist youth the MHP's ideas, political mission, and vision relevant to all these issues" ("Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi siyaset ve liderlik okulu,"). In addition to this school, Bahçeli established a Research Center where the Science and Technological Research Group investigated current

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[158] For more information about the MHP's School of Politics and Leadership and its founding principles, see
http://www.mhp.org.tr/htmldocs/mhp/738/mhp/Milliyetci_Hareket_Partisi_Siyaset_ve_Liderlik_Okulu_Bilgi_Sayfasi__Acilis__10_Ekim_2009.html

[159] For more information about the seminars, see the MHP's official website:
http://www.mhp.org.tr/htmldocs/mhp/738/mhp/Milliyetci_Hareket_Partisi_Siyaset_ve_Liderlik_Okulu_Bilgi_Sayfasi__Acilis__10_Ekim_2009.html

developments regarding technology and science as well as the historical development of the MHP. About the establishment of the school and the research center, Bahçeli (2009g) said: "Not street, but school. Not conflict, but politics. Not fighting, but the government in power. Turkey is governed by the Parliament, not in the streets." With the establishment of the school and the research center, Bahçeli brought a new dynamic to the party's grassroots with his approach as an educator and researcher. Bahçeli emphasized the importance of education and research for politics to be a tool for negotiation on a democratic ground rather than a street struggle. Under the leadership of Bahçeli, the establishment of a Party-Political School and a Research and Development Unit (AR-GE) served to sustain the positive portrayal of the party.

After 2009, there were various important political developments events for both MHP specifically and Turkey generally, particularly the constitutional referendum on September 12, 2010. Some of the key amendments were restructuring the Constitutional Court and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK), and establishing the Ombudsman Institution.[160] While some of the senior party members who were opposed to Bahçeli supported the constitutional referendum, other senior party members opposed it, including Bahçeli, who described it as the "Sakarya[161] Battle on democracy." Bahçeli's stance regarding AKP

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[160] For all articles on the constitutional amendment, check http://www.anayasa.gen.tr/5982.htm. For more discussion regarding the constitutional amendment, see Ergun Özbudun, Turkey's constitutional reform and the 2010 constitutional referendum," *Mediterranean Politics,* 2011.

[161] The Battle of Sakarya is one of the important battles in the Turkish War of Independence. It is considered the turning point of the War of Independence.

was consistent: "No to division, terrorism, divergence, opening, and the AKP to protect our national values, to defend our national unity" (Bahçeli, 2010e). The MHP's Central Anatolian voters, who remained close to the party's idealistic values, publicly criticized the leadership's decision to vote against the constitutional reforms in the referendum. Ete et al. (2014) argue that this was the most powerful known objection by MHP's Central Anatolian voters to the party's discursive transformation, which had become more evident since the late 1990s. These objections and divisions within the party's base were reflected in the party's disappointing results in the 2011 elections.

One of the main arguments of this dissertation is that not unlike Türkeş, Bahçeli preserved the foundational claims of the party while also shifting emphasis on the components of Turkish nationalism. For instance, even though Bahçeli continued to emphasize the civic component of Turkish nationalism, from time to time, he referred to the cultural components of Turkish nationalism. For instance, Bahçeli (2007d: 134) highlighted the unity in emotions/culture in defining the Turkish nation: "The basic bond that constitutes the Turkish nation is not a blood bond and ancestry, but unity in culture and emotions", similar to Gökalp. Thus, Bahçeli (2007d: 134) defined the Turkish nation as consisting of "Regardless of their ethnicity, Turkish citizens, who share a common past, have a common culture, and believe in a common future ideal, have united around the identity of the Turkish nation and have jointly embodied the Turkish nation." In one of his later speeches at the Parliament (23th Term, Volume 53, 18. Unification), Bahçeli again defined the 'Turkish nation' as one of the shared cultural values:

This homeland found its true owner thousands of years ago. The past decades have created a great nation that has left its mark on history from its geography. The name of it is the Turkish nation. We are proud of ourselves, which is above roots, languages, and sects; rather unites us with material and spiritual ties. It was our sorrow, our memories, our victories, and our enthusiasm that brought us together. Every shot was taken, every drum was beaten, every meeting, every wedding, every opened veil, every born child, every rocking cradle, every burning hearth, every martyr together made us a nation. For thousands of years, we participated in conquests, resisted invasions, saved the country. We together were sad, happy, cried and laughed, and most importantly, our sons martyred for these values (Bahçeli, 2009k: 22).

In the same speech, not only did Bahçeli emphasize the cultural component of Turkish nationalism, but he also underlined the civic component of Turkish nationalism by referring to the Constitution of the Turkish Republic:

[According to Article 10 of the Constitution] "Everyone is equal before the law regardless of language, race, color, gender, political thought, philosophical faith, religion, and denomination. Women and men have equal rights. The State is obliged to ensure the implementation of this equality. No person, family, group, or class shall be granted a special privilege. State bodies and administrative authorities must act in accordance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings." [According to Article 12 of the Constitution] "Everyone has untouchable, transferable and indispensable fundamental rights and freedoms." There is no reason to distinguish between individuals according to the provisions of the Constitution of Turkey. Every individual has all human rights and freedoms, which are also declared in the Constitution. Citizens freely enjoy these rights and freedoms within the limits of democratic legitimacy, participate in all political activities, and have the right to vote and to be elected. In this respect, no citizen can claim that s/he is deprived of the rights of equal citizenship under the law (Bahçeli, 2009k: 24).

In addition to the unity in emotions/culture in defining the Turkish nation, Bahçeli also emphasized unity in language to constitute a nation. At the Sixth Congress Bahçeli (2000a: 78) said that "Beyond being a symbol and a means of communication, the Turkish language is one of the basic assets that make us a nation." Bahçeli (as cited in Akpınar, 2005: 287) said: "The existence and future of Turkey depend on the

Turkish language. Going beyond being a symbol of our future, the Turkish language is what makes us a nation." Throughout his party leadership, regardless of the varying emphasis on ethnic/cultural and civic components of Turkish nationalism, Bahçeli has thus referred to unity in language from time to time. In the later years, in his book, *Çözülen Ülke Türkiye ve Tavrımız,* for instance, Bahçeli (2009c: 45) stated that "The Nationalist Action Party considers an inevitable natural link between common language and nationalization"; therefore, said that "language is the backbone of national identity. It is the main pillar of nationality." In the same book, Bahçeli (2009c: 49) stated that "One of the most distinctive qualities of nationality is language. The people who are called the Turkish nation should speak Turkish." A year after, Bahçeli (2010d: 9) said that "The basis of national unity and indivisible unity is one nation, one state, one homeland, one flag, and one language ideal" and "The Turkish nation constitutes a unity, the state is unique, its language is Turkish, its capital is Ankara." Therefore, as noted earlier, between 2000 and 2011, despite the emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism, the cultural components also persisted in Bahçeli's nationalist ideas and practices.

Indeed, Bahçeli continued to send celebratory messages to 'the Turkish-Islamic world' on religious occasions, such as Ramadan,[162] Eid al-Fitr,[163] Eid al-Adha,[164] the

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[162] According to Islamic belief, Ramadan, when Muslims fast, is the month (the 9th month of the Islamic calendar) when the Qur'anic verses were sent to the Prophet Muhammad. Fasting in this month is one of the religious duties of Islam.

[163] Festival of Breaking the Fast

[164] Festival of the Sacrifice

night of *Kadir*,[165] and the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. Indeed, throughout his political career, Bahçeli has always mentioned these days. From time to time, he also quoted thinkers like Mevlana and discussed their contributions to 'Turkish-Islamic civilization' and their ways of thinking. Bahçeli also referred to Türkeş's contributions to Turkish-Islamic values on his commemoration days.

4.4. The Strongest the Enemy, the Bitterest the Struggle: Bringing the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis Back in

The 2011 election results caused a second shock for MHP. The AKP received 49.83 percent, the CHP received 25.98 percent, and the MHP received 13.01 percent of the votes. The MHP's electoral support had dropped compared to the previous general elections in which it got 14.27 percent. Its lack of strong ties with Turkish business circles and its election manifesto, which offered no solutions for Turkey's major political problems might have been the cause of that result. Previously, the MHP had monopolized the votes in the Eastern and Central Anatolian towns and villages, offering a third way for those who rejected both Islamic parties and the Kemalist CHP. However, Bacık (2011) argues that the rise of *Gülen Örgütlenmesi* (Gülen Organization)[166] challenged the MHP in its heartlands to the extent that it even lost

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[165] The night of *Kadir* (the 27th night of Ramadan) is considered sacred by Muslims as the night when the Prophet Muhammad first started receiving the Qur'an.

[166] According to Başkan (1998: 111), the "*Gülen* Community (cemaat) is one of the branches of *Nurculuk* – a community that came to be organized around the teachings of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi." For more information regarding the historical context of the emergence of *Nurculuk* and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, and analysis of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and Fetullah Gülen, see Filiz Başkan, *The nature of*

strongholds like Çankırı and Yozgat. Since the 1990s, the *Gülen* organization had also challenged the MHP beyond Turkey in the newly created Turkic states of Central Asia by establishing and funding new schools, which increased people's sympathy for the organization (Bacık, 2011). Throughout the Cold War, the MHP had dominated the politics of Turkic people in Turkic states or regions like Kyrgyzstan, Crimea, and Azerbaijan. Bacık (2011) argues, the *Gülen* organization became a game-changer in these transnational spaces, which in turn eliminated MHP's traditional role in building transnational spaces between Turkey's Turks and others. Between the 2011 elections and the *Çözüm Süreci* (Solution Process) in 2013, no major events were able to change Bahçeli's threat perceptions: he continued to emphasize the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism.

Following the general election in 2011, Bahçeli faced a series of problems caused by the results of the 2010 constitutional referendum and the election. The first was divergence within the party base over the referendum. To prevent this widening further, MHP tried to calm the sensitivities of its nationalist-conservative faction by reverting to the discourse it had adopted before and after the 2011 general election (Altunoğlu, 2015: 19-20). For example, Bahçeli supported Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in his 'raising religious youth' discussions, opening *Imam-Hatip* high schools (Altunoğlu, 2015), and promoting elective *siyer*[167] and Qur'an courses

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the relationship between religious communities and civil society in Turkey: The case of Fethullah Gülen Community," Ph.D. Thesis, 1998.

[167] The T. C. Presidential Presidency Religious Affairs website defines *siyer* as "the science that is about the life of the Prophet Muhammad from his birth until his death" (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2014).

("'Kuran seçmeli ders olsun' önergesi," 2012). These policies were reinforced by an increasing emphasis in his discourse on the Turkish-Islamic ideal.

Bahçeli's approach to the components of nationalism also changed by increasingly re-emphasizing the Turkish-Islamic ideal during 2011-2015, particularly when addressing his grassroots (Bahçeli, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2012b, 2012c, 2012d, 2012e, 2012f, 2012i, 2013b, 2013c, 2013f, 2013g, 2013i, 2013k, 2013l, 2014a, 2014d, 2014e, 2014f, 2014g, 2014h, 2014i, 2014k, 2014l, 2014m, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e, 2015f, 2015g). As a result, the cultural component of Turkish nationalism (Islam) now took a central role in the MHP's nationalism, equal to the ethnic component (being a Turk); previously it had constituted only one component of its nationalism (as a secondary component of national identity).

Turning to Bahçeli, since 2007, to deal with the perceived threats, he also cooperated with other political actors. For instance, he supported some of the AKP's foreign policies against external threats by voting in support of the *tezkere*[168] (a memorandum for cross-border operation permit in this case) in parliament. That is, the MHP supported sending the Turkish Armed Forces abroad in case of external threats. Although Bahçeli had viewed Erdoğan and the AKP as a threat for a while, he now acted with him against both the internal and external threats, which Bahçeli (2007a) believed threatened to disrupt Turkey's unity, integrity, or even survival. Foreign policy threats brought the MHP closer to the AKP. No BATNA exists for Bahçeli when there is an issue regarding the survival of the state. While Bahçeli

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[168] In parliamentary terms, it stands for an official document submitted to the information or approval of the General Assembly for various reasons. For more information about memorandums, see http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/tbmm-tarihindeki-tezkereler-14656

(2007a) supported fighting terrorism with a supra-party approach, Bahçeli (2012g) said:

> Stressing and criticizing AKP's mistakes in foreign policy is something but it is another thing to take the initiative to protect the Turkish homeland from arms and enmity … The yes vote we gave to *tezkere* in the Assembly is not due to trusting AKP's foreign policy. No matter how much we criticize the AKP, how weak and exhausted their policies are, if the matter is the defense of this country, we will push ourselves more than anyone else and do our part without blinking.

Clearly, when Bahçeli believes that Turkey faces an external threat or the country's security is endangered, then he supports the AKP government, despite having seen them as a threat. For instance, Bahçeli always said that "*Önce ülkem ve milletim, sonra partim*" (first my country, then my party, then myself") (Bahçeli, 2007b), implying his possible tactical change and/or cooperation when he believes that it is needed for the county's survival.

Another pivotal political issue in Turkey was the negotiations with the PKK that the government restarted as *Çözüm Süreci* (Solution Process) in 2013. Again, Bahçeli harshly criticized this opening, reading it as a threat to national disintegration. Bahçeli (2013d) therefore held rallies under the name of *Milli Değerleri Koru ve Yaşat* (Protect National Values) to propagate MHP's slogan of national unity and integrity, and social cohesion and cooperation (Bahçeli, 2013m). While he included all components of Turkish nationalism, less emphasis was now given to the civic component. Each rally was organized around a single theme: *kuruluş* (founding) in Bursa, *bayrak* (the flag) in İzmir, *vatan* (homeland) in Adana, *birlik* (the unity) in Erzurum, *Türkçe* (Turkish language) in Konya, *kardeşlik* (brotherhood) in Elazığ, *demokrasi* (democracy in İstanbul, *kurtuluş* (liberation) in Samsun, and *Türkiye* (Turkey) in Ankara. As their

names suggest, the rallies together emphasized the basic components of nationalism, forming the cornerstones of Bahçeli's strategy for the Solution Process. In a speech at the Parliament MHP Group Meeting on April 30, 2013, Bahçeli went even further by reverting to his party's rhetoric from the 1970s: "We wait for help from Allah, support from our saintly nation, and not leaving the love of *İ'lâ-yi Kelimetullâh* [the idea of exalting and spreading the name of God and realizing its order]. We are a nationalist-idealist movement that pursues the Turkish-Islamic ideal, is burned with the love of the Turkish nation, and does not make any discrimination" (Bahçeli, 2013i).

These rallies were also motivated by the *Gezi* Park protests. Starting from environmental protection, *Gezi* protestors expanded to make human rights their key demand. The *Gezi* movement ultimately became "the biggest mass movement in the history of Turkey since the 1908 Constitutional Revolution in the Ottoman Empire" (Aytekin, 2017: 192). Bahçeli (2013e), too, saw the protests as "a new break for our already damaged democracy." He recognized that "The emergence of Gezi Park protests cannot be explained only by the trees that have been removed, by the construction of the Topçu barracks, and by the construction of the shopping center in Taksim" (Bahçeli (2013j). Rather, the protests were provoked by the Prime Minister's "marginalizing language, refractive attitude, and lack of care for others based on the distinction between 'us' and 'them'" (Bahçeli (2013h). By claiming that "Human dignity is the basis of democracy," Bahçeli emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism. Yet, despite supporting the protests, Bahçeli (2013a) did not mobilize his grassroots to participate in the protests because he believed that the protesters also included sympathizers of the PKK, which he described as the

"separatist terrorist organization." Thus, street politics should not be the way to overthrow the AKP government according to Bahçeli. In any case, Bahçeli had always objected to overthrowing legitimate governments by means of street politics rather than through democratic political means. This approach again demonstrates how, although the MHP foregrounded ethnic or cultural components of Turkish nationalism between 2011 and 2015, Bahçeli's nationalist ideas and practices retained the civic components of Turkish nationalism, albeit with less emphasis.

As MHP leader, Bahçeli also formed an alliance with the Republican People's Party (CHP), led by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, in the 2014 presidential elections. The two parties jointly nominated Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu[169] as their presidential candidate as someone "who could represent all parties." The two leaders had never been so united against the AKP. The rival candidates were AKP's leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Selahattin Demirtaş, Co-chair of *Halkların Demokratik Partisi* (Peoples' Democratic Party, HDP). Other parties (e.g. BBP, DSP, BTP, and DP) participated also supported Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu. Thus, the MHP, the CHP, and the other parties stood together against their common rival, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. According to Bahçeli, İhsanoğlu, in contrast to Erdoğan, represented "the common roof of the nation," "a person who embraces the whole country in the service of the nation", and who "represents all Turkish and Islamic values (Bahçeli (2014b). Here again, he emphasizes in both discourse and policies the ethnic and cultural components of

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[169] Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu is a Turkish professor of history of science, politician, and diplomat who was Secretary-General of *İslam İşbirliği Teşkilatı* (the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, OIC) from 2004 to 2014. Akyol (2014) says that "In 1977, Deputy Prime Minister Alparslan Türkeş made an official trip to Libya. On this trip, İhsanoğlu was the translator of Türkeş and his consultant on Middle East Issues."

Turkish nationalism. For Bahçeli (2014b), Erdoğan and AKP were dividing the country (particularly through the Kurdish Opening) and were therefore a threat to the country. Bahçeli, therefore, acted in partnership with a political party that the MHP usually opposed, namely the CHP.[170]

Bahçeli also played an influential political role after the 7 June 2015 general elections, which produced an unexpected result for the AKP government as it lost its parliamentary majority, for the first time since the 2002 elections. However, by rejecting to join the CHP-MHP-HDP coalition government to remove the AKP from power, Bahçeli forced early elections on November 1, 2015, in which the AKP regained its parliamentary majority. As Grigoriadis (2016: 43) also noted, the main reason for the three parties' failure to form a coalition government was "the categorical opposition of the … MHP to the HDP," which Bahçeli viewed as an extension of the PKK.

At a Parliamentary Group Meeting on March 17, 2015, HDP Co-Chair, Selahattin Demirtaş, declared: "In this land, we shall not make you [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan] President." This statement, which was one of the most striking in the HDP's campaign for the 7 June elections, meant that Demirtaş and his party would never support Erdoğan's proposal of a presidential system for Turkey. Not unexpectedly, Demirtaş also revealed the HDP's negative attitude towards the possible cooperation with the AKP. After the MHP blocked a coalition with the CHP and the HDP, the AKP and the CHP began negotiations for a possible coalition government that were ultimately unsuccessful. An interim government was then formed and an early election called

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[170] However, this cooperation did not give the expected result since Erdoğan won the elections to become the 12th President of the Republic.

for November 1, 2015. During the difficult five months before the new elections, the PKK abandoned the Solution Process in July 2015 while ISIS and PKK attacks in major cities like Ankara and Istanbul, which killed dozens of people, created severe chaos. Consequently, voters in search of "strong government" (Grigoriadis, 2016) and 'trust' returned the AKP to power with 49.5 % of the votes. While this was a reaction to increasing terrorist attacks, it was also a consequence of Bahçeli's critical decisions after the June 2015 elections.[171]

Having acclimated to changing conditions and conjectures, the MHP has long situated itself in many political contexts with tactical adjustments. Thus, the Party reproduces its political agenda in line with the changing conditions and adopts its emphasis accordingly. Over the course of its political life, the MHP has come to support a multidimensional nationalist ideology that has placed varying degrees of emphasis on ethnicity, culture, and civic notions. Yet, its main principles, particularly the Nine Lights principles, put forward by the founding leader have remained more or less the same thus far. The MHP, Heper (1999) argues, has thus transformed itself in the changing conditions, yet without metamorphosis.

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[171] All in all, although Bahçeli perceived the AKP as a threat, especially due to the Solution Process, he played a vital role in returning that party to power. Both Bahçeli's anti-coalition attitude after the 7 June elections and the abandonment of the Solution Process brought the AKP and the MHP closer. The effects of this rapprochement continue today. The new AKP-MHP alliance was rooted in the MHP's support of the government in the 2017 constitutional referendum and the local elections on June 24, 2018. It is not yet clear whether this change will survive as it is still very recent and the process is ongoing. The causes and consequences of this alliance may be the subject of future research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

> "As to the point as to whether the Nationalist Movement has changed, I would like to remind people to consider ... whether or not nationalism completed its mission. Strong movements always maintain their existence and privilege. They don't change; rather, they thrive."
>
> – Devlet BAHÇELİ, the Sixth Congress

5.1. An Evolutionary Understanding of the "Re-imagining" the MHP's Nationalism

Each nationalism has varying degrees and different forms of ethnic, cultural, and civic components; sometimes, the civic components are dominant, while at other times, ethnic and cultural components are emphasized. The separation of nationalism into a number of components is merely an analytical tool; it does not serve the political scientist to separate nationalisms; the boundary between these components is often a matter of emphasis, rather than a sharp distinction.

In this dissertation, I argue that within the context of nationalism, three major conceptual/analytical tools —the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of

nationalism— have displayed varying levels of impact in the making up of the MHP's nationalist ideology. Based on the assumption that nationalism is a multidimensional concept, in this dissertation, the ethnic component refers to the perception of common descent or origin; the cultural component is made up of common symbols, values, and beliefs, norms, and material culture, including technology, such as language, traditions and customs, rituals, religion, myths, and memories (a common history); and the civic component consists of elements such as citizenship, basic rights and liberties, equality before the law, democracy, and territory. Due to the multidimensionality of nationalism, its components are not mutually exclusive, and nationalist movements or nationalisms combine some or all of these components to varying degrees.

This dissertation argues that while the nationalist ideas and practices of Türkeş and Bahçeli persist in the foundational claims of the MHP, their ideologies nevertheless evolved over time, in that they placed varying degrees of emphasis on the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism, in line with the party's tactical needs, corresponding to perceived threats arising in the historical context in question. Although different components of Turkish nationalism came to the forefront in different contexts, the other components nevertheless persisted in the party leaders' nationalist ideas and practices, despite the reduced emphasis. The political backbone of the party has always been shaped by Turkish nationalism, even as it has shifted its emphasis on the various components.

Türkeş and Bahçeli preserved the foundational claims of the MHP (what later came to be called the 'Nine Lights' doctrine) while shifting emphasis on particular

aspects of the ideology according to the context-bound perceptions of threats. The party has not changed in essence, yet has constantly changed its certain aspects based on the enemies that were perceived to threaten the existence of Turkey and the Turkish people. After drawing attention to certain threats to national unity and the survival of the state, both Türkeş and Bahçeli constructed discourses by using the image of an 'enemy.' The MHP has claimed that its enemies are the Turkish state's enemies, and MHP grassroots organizations did not hesitate to engage in armed conflicts with such groups.

To put this idea into context, Türkeş was strongly anti-communist during the Cold War in the 1960s and 1970s, while espousing a process of massification with regard to Islamic values in the 1970s. His Islamic rhetoric was intended to increase resistance to 'communism,' a danger which was further identified with hostility to religion, a tenet which appeared as a cultural response of the MHP base, one sociologically provincial in its origin. Under Türkeş's leadership, the MHP thus mobilized against communism, which it considered being a threat to the state's survival, and changed its emphasis on its components of nationalism in line with the tactical needs of the period.

In the developmental period of the MHP—starting with the establishment of the CKMP, until the formation of the MHP in the Adana Congress (1965-1969)—Türkeş emphasized the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism via the Nine Lights doctrine, but also espoused other components of Turkish nationalism (cultural and civic), albeit to a lesser extent. In this period, the battle against Communism was fought at the ideological level. The Nine Lights doctrine, written by Türkeş in 1965, is

the MHP's main ideological roadmap and has provided both a doctrinal and spiritual motivation to the idealist movement and has constituted the backbone of the party programmes of the MHP since 1969. The doctrine emphasized the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism in descending order of importance. One of the main arguments of this dissertation is that while the emphasis on 'Turkishness' and Islam (or the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism) has varied in Türkeş's and Bahçeli's ideas and practices in different contexts, both 'Turkishness' and Islam have been supported since the formulation of the Nine Lights.

Türkeş's emphasis on Islam gradually increased, until the end of the 1980s. As a result of the deaths of idealist youth supporters in violent clashes, the idealist movement gained a religious/mystical character in the 1970s, and the bloody armed struggle between rightists and leftists in a sense lent Islamic elements to the MHP, which considered Islam to be a practical and ideological tool. During the Cold War, Turkish idealists engaged in violent altercations with communists, and between 1969 and 1977, Türkeş drew equal attention to the ethnic (Turkishness) and cultural (Islam) components of Turkish nationalism. As earlier noted, Türkeş's (1969a) slogan "*Tanrı Dağı kadar Türk, Hira Dağı kadar Müslümanız*" (We are as Turkish as Mount Tengri/Tian Shan, and as Muslim as Mount Hira) was later reconfigured as a "Turkish-Islamic synthesis," and illustrated Türkeş's belief in the need to unite these two components of nationalism. Another version of the synthesis was the slogan "*Türklük bedenimiz, İslamiyet ruhumuz*" ('Turkishness' [is] our body, Islam [is] our spirit) continued to dominate Türkeş's discourse on Islamic identity towards the end of the 1970s.

Following the introduction of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, Islam took on a central role as the cultural component of Turkish nationalism, complementing the ethnic component of Turkism, but it constituted only one of the components of the Nine Lights doctrine, as a secondary component of national identity. This change in ideology could have been a tactical, short-term maneuver to bolster support in the communist-idealist political violence, but it did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. One could argue that the boundaries of these concepts are not rigid but rather transitive (sometimes even blurred), and the Turkish-Islamic boundary made it easier for people from different ethnic backgrounds to move to the MHP's base; in other words, the Turkish-Islamic ideology laid the groundwork for a broader understanding of nationalism within the party. This could be considered a sign of the evolution of nationalism from the CKMP to the MHP with the more inclusive ideological reconfiguration of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

Between 1977 and 1980, Türkeş sometimes even prioritized Islam more than 'Turkishness,' within the framework of laicism. The violence between Turkish rightists and leftists reached its peak in 1977, resulting in a large number of deaths, which had a deep psychological impact on the idealists. The appearance of the deceased comrade Grey Wolf as a martyr sanctified idealists' movement. Slogans that placed additional emphasis on Islam became prominent at this time, such as "*Ya Allah Bismillah Allâhü Ekber*"/"*Kanımız aksa da zafer İslâm'ın*" (Allah is the greatest/Even if our blood spills, victory will belong to Islam) and "*Türküz, Müslümanız, İslam'ın eriyiz*" (We are Turks, Muslims, and soldiers of Islam) (Öznur, 1999b: 437). Türkeş's rhetoric also changed at this time. In his earlier publications, Türkeş was more cautious about Islam, referring to *Tanrı* (a non-Islamic Turkish term for God), rather

than *Allah* (an Islamic Turkish term for God) (Türkeş, 1967b, 1975c), in this way, Türkeş (1975c) was saying "*Tanrı Türk'ü korusun ve yüceltsin*" (May God bless and glorify the Turk), rather than "*Allah Türk'ü Korusun ve Yüceltsin*" (May *Allah* bless and glorify the Turk).

This changing discourse in 1977 was essentially a reflection of the changing motive behind the movement. The idealist movement, which was previously only fighting against communism on the street, came to see itself as locked in a struggle for the *nizam-alem* (global order), and that the Turks had a mission to contribute to the global. This was an adaptation of Islamic teaching, *i'lâ-yi kelimetullâh* (exalting the name and word of God), and with this ideological reconfiguration, the grey wolves became *alperen* (both warrior and religious). Türkeş even went on a pilgrimage to Mecca during this period, performing a practical expression of his increasing emphasis on religion.

Concurrently with the peak of the conflict between Turkish rightists and leftists, the process of Islamization in the MHP grassroots, the rise of political Islam in Turkey, and the MHP's Islamic coalition partners, Islam was now at the forefront of the MHP's approach to nationalism. This change in the ideology of the MHP might have been a tactical, short-term maneuver to deal with the increasing religiosity of the party's grassroots, the rise of political Islam, and the MHP's Islamic coalition partners, but it did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. On the basis of Shelef's (2010) argument that "partners in alliance move towards each other," the MHP's Islamic coalition partners might have been an important factor in the selection and prioritization of one of the ideological components of the MHP—Islam. The MHP's coalition with the AP and MSP parties could be considered an evolutionary

dynamic since the added emphasis on Islam might have been necessary to preserve the coalition and protect the religious public against the perceived threats of communism and the CHP—despite the parties' ongoing disagreement about the extent to which Islam defines Turkey's national identity.

After the 1980 coup, Türkeş became more cautious about his politics, and in 1988, when he re-appeared in the political arena after his imprisonment and the removal of the political ban following the coup, Türkeş started to relatively emphasize the civic component of Turkish nationalism for the first time in his political life, and continued to do so until his death in 1997. The 1988 Programme of the party contained strong messages in support of democracy. This change in the party's ideology could have been a tactical, short-term action adopted in response to the traumatizing effect of the coup and the rise in neo-liberalism, and not signify any fundamental ideological deviation.

In the early 1990s, the struggle against Communism faded in prominence as the Cold War ended, and in the eyes of Türkeş, the major threat facing Turkey was now the PKK, together with political Islam. In the face of escalating PKK attacks and political Islam being declared a threat to the Turkish state, Türkeş adopted a state-centered approach and reshaped his policies accordingly. In the period 1988-1997, which can be characterized by the slogan *"Türk-Kürt kardeştir, PKK kalleştir"* (Turks and Kurds are brothers, the PKK is treacherous), Türkeş continued to relatively underscore the civic component of Turkish nationalism in line with the formal state ideology of nationalism, while also addressing the other components of idealism.

Moreover, Türkeş cooperated with leftists and social democrats (specifically, the support he gave to the DYP-SHP coalition in 1991) for what he called "the

overarching interest of the country." This supports Shelef's (2010: 12-13) approach

to the multidimensionality of nationalism, which asserts that "even if movements

disagree on, for example, the extent of the homeland and the national mission, their

shared idea of the nation's membership criteria makes cooperation possible."

Similarly, this cooperation with leftists can be considered as evolving nationalism,

from the bloody conflict with leftists in the 1960s and 1970s to cooperation against

the threat posed by the PKK. While Türkeş remained anti-PKK, by this time, his

nationalism had evolved from emphasizing the ethnic component in the 1960s to the

inclusive civic component in the 1990s.

The notion of a nation's membership criteria enabled the added emphasis on

the civic component of Turkish nationalism. Many nationalist movements or

nationalisms combine some or all of the various components of nationalism to

differing extents or forms, and therefore the new emphasis on the civic component

does not mean that the MHP had become a liberal party, but that it was seen as a

tool to serve the cause of national unity and the survival of the state —the issue that

the MHP claims to be the purpose of its existence. Due to the multidimensionality of

nationalism, the idea of national membership enabled this variation in the MHP's

ideology, even while the other components remained constant.

Taking on board the past legacy of Türkeş, in the early years of his leadership,

Bahçeli continued to emphasize the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish

nationalism, along with the Turkish-Islamic synthesis that took place between 1997

and 2000. This synthesis emphasized Gökalp's Turkism, while Islam also came to

occupy a central role in defining 'Turkishness' or the MHP's nationalism, to the extent

that it became as important as the ethnic component of Turkish nationalism. This equal emphasis was a tactical, short-term maneuver that catered to the contemporary needs and situations, but did not signify a fundamental ideological deviation. Bahçeli also emphasized that under his leadership, the MHP was abiding by Türkeş's heritage. As the new leader, Bahçeli wanted to make it clear to the party's grassroots that he was essentially protecting the legacy of Türkeş; he once said that the MHP was "a gate between the past and the present" (Bahçeli, 1997a: 12).

Bahçeli particularly emphasized the civic component of Turkish nationalism, which he believed could be a unifying factor to address the critical issues of globalization, the integration process of Turkey into the EU, and the escalating conflict between the PKK and the Turkish state during the first decade of the 2000s. He was vocal about the matter between 2000 and 2011, when he adopted a generally centrist line; at this time, he softened his advocacy for the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism, only occasionally referring to the Nine Lights doctrine and/or Turkish-Islamic synthesis. This approach was a sign of evolving nationalism from an emphasis on the ethnic/cultural components of Turkish nationalism in the 1960s and the 1970s to an emphasis on its more inclusive civic component towards the end of the 1990s.

Between 2011 and 2015, Bahçeli emphasized the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism equally to combat the perceived threats of *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party, the AKP), which had become stronger following the country's 2011 elections, and the escalating PKK conflict. Although the MHP foregrounded the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism at this time, the civic component of its nationalism remained part of the

repertoire. This ideological change could have been a tactical, short-term maneuver in response to the rising of the AKP and the escalating PKK conflict, rather than a fundamental ideological deviation. At the time, the AKP's growing dominance of Turkish politics and its institutional apparatus was considered to pose a serious threat to the Turkish state by the MHP, and the MHP might well have tactically emphasized the Turkish-Islamic synthesis to work against the increasing role of religion in the public sphere.

Throughout his political career, Bahçeli has emphasized the cultural components of Turkish nationalism and especially the Turkish-Islamic synthesis as a unifying factor in Turkey. This goes together with the civic and ethnic elements, since Bahçeli has by definition accepted the Nine Lights doctrine as his guiding political principles. The fundamental idea of Bahçeli can be said to have remained unchanged, even while his emphasis on the individual components of Turkish nationalism has varied.

However, when Bahçeli deemed that Turkey faced a threat that jeopardized its survival, he was prepared to cooperate with those to whom he had previously been hostile. Bahçeli stated that his attitude on these matters could be summarized by the slogan "*Önce ülkem ve milletim, sonra partim*" (First my country, then my party, then myself." For instance, when Bahçeli believes that Turkey faces an external threat or that the country's security is endangered, he supports the AKP government by voting in support of the *tezkere* in parliament (a memorandum for cross-border operation permit in this case), even when he considers the AKP to be fundamentally a threat itself.

The two leaders' personal characteristics and leadership styles may also have an influence on their ideas and practices, in addition to political contexts. Türkeş's military career and Bahçeli's academic background are likely to have influenced their leadership styles. Türkeş's military career might have made him a somewhat tougher leader, and Bahçeli's academic career may have led him to espouse education-focused policies while reforming his party. Unlike Türkeş's commando camps, Bahçeli opened schools of politics and leadership under the auspices of the MHP headquarters aimed at the party's grassroots.

5.2.   Theoretical and Empirical Contributions

This thesis has documented extensive empirical support for the claim that the *content* but not the *form* of the MHP has changed over time; the predominant culture in the MHP, its strong hierarchy, the cult of the leader, the ways in which Türkeş and Bahçeli have operationalized themes and formulated concepts such as the "other," and the role and sanctity of the Turkish state [the essence of the MHP] have remained more or less unchanged. Nevertheless, the application of these ideas did vary in practice, depending on the changing political context. Türkeş, for instance, pursued policies that legitimized violence against perceived internal threats before 1980, while Bahçeli pursued milder courses of action in the period of this study. Differently to the 1960s and 1970s, Türkeş's discourse in the 1980s was much less favorable towards violence, as he came to relatively moderate his policies. Among the most important empirical findings of this thesis are the attempts to attune their ideologies in different contexts by placing varying degrees of emphasis on the different

components of Turkish nationalism so as to be able to survive in the changing political context.

This has also provided support for the evolutionary nature of nationalism theory. When Shelef's (2010) typology of change in nationalist discourse is applied to the MHP's nationalism, it becomes apparent that the leaders of the MHP in Turkey might have attuned their ideology as a short-term tactic in order to survive in difficult circumstances so as to be able to continue pursuing their main nationalist mission. As the two leaders were able to successfully modify their nationalist approach (practicing inclusivity, while shifting their emphasis to particular ethnic, civic, and cultural components of Turkish nationalism), they bolstered their ability to pursue their political goals, even as their dependency on the official view of Turkish national 'membership' grew. Türkeş's increasing emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism toward the end of 1980s, his declining emphasis on its cultural component (Islam) during the 1990s (approaching to political center), and Bahçeli's increased emphasis on the civic component of Turkish nationalism during the 2000s (and tacit support for other components) are cases in point.

This tactical ability of the idealist movement under Türkeş to adjust its foundational claims (as evolutionary theory posits) stands in contrast to the argument in the literature that the systemic/environmental shock of the 1980 coup d'état acted as a "cognitive punch" that diverted his path from one of an otherwise steady nationalist ideologue to create an incentive to change (as rational adaptation posits). Although the civic component of Turkish nationalism came to the fore between 1988 and 1997 with a contextually changing emphasis after the coup, the

ethnic and cultural components persisted in Türkeş's discourse and practices, albeit with relatively less emphasis. This being so, the systemic/environmental shock of the 1980 coup d'état did not act as a "cognitive punch" that diverted his path from an otherwise steady nationalist ideology.

Having based my analysis on the theory of evolving nationalism, both Türkeş and Bahçeli appear to be "consensus builders" that supported adjustments in their ideological claims. If asked about these changes, the leaders have tended to reply that a tactical change is just a short-term maneuver that not only does not deviate the party from its fundamental ideals, but is instead a useful tactic to realize unmet targets. That is to say, the two leaders portrayed their ideological modulations as little more than short term-tactics designed to preserve the MHP's original ideology, rather than to modify it. This perspective might explain why Türkeş's and Bahçeli's fundamental claims have remained more or less unchanged; when a short-term change appeared to have taken place, it occurs in the form of a shift in the emphasis on the components of Turkish nationalism, in line with their perception of which enemies are currently threatening the existence of Turkey and the Turks. In this way, the MHP's leaders retained loyalty to the party's original ideology, which can again be espoused in full, if political circumstances again allowed. The nationalist ideas and practices of Bahçeli and Türkeş can be considered to be an evolving nationalism that places varying degrees of emphasis on the ethnic, cultural, and civic components of Turkish nationalism, in line with the party's tactical needs, corresponding to the perceived threat of the historical context in question. Against this background, the idealist movement can be said to have made tactical adjustments to its foundational claims.

At first glance, the MHP might seem like an unlikely party in which to investigate how changes in nationalist ideologies can occur. Usually, like other nationalist parties, the MHP claims to be immutable, and as for other nationalist parties, the MHP's claims are similarly questionable. The MHP continues to advocate the ethnic and cultural components of Turkish nationalism. On its own, such a finding might be formulated as follows: "On the axis of types of nationalism, no change has taken place," but this interpretation would be misleading in that it does not deal with "variation" in other components of the party's nationalist ideology. This variation—the fact that the MHP has preserved its foundational claims, while also shifting its emphasis on the various components of Turkish nationalism—supports the analytical significance of the multidimensionality of the nationalist ideology. Arguments about types of nationalism frequently miss part of the whole picture, both conceptually and empirically, and the absence of change in the foundational claims of the MHP probably reflects its particularity in this field, rather than a characteristic of nationalism.

The findings of this Ph.D. dissertation contribute evidence that theories and arguments based on types of nationalism have, at least in the Turkish case, little empirical traction. The MHP is one case through which political scientists can identify "a change in the emphasis on different variants of the nationalist ideology" over time, thus revealing an evolution in nationalist discourse. More importantly, these findings could lead us to think beyond normative connotations of ethnic and of civic "types" of nationalisms.

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