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National Myths and Self-Narrations: Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk* and Halide Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*

Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938), the commander-in-chief of the Nationalist Army in the Independence Struggle of Turkey and the first president of the Turkish Republic, delivered his seminal speech entitled *Nutuk* [The speech] in 1927 in Ankara to the Congress of the Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası (Republican People's Party).¹ *Nutuk* was epic in proportion and content. Delivered by Mustafa Kemal over six days for a duration of thirty-six hours and thirty-one minutes (October 15–20, 1927), *Nutuk* described the heroic accounts of the Independence Struggle of Turkey against the Allies (1919–1922), particularly the military leadership of Mustafa Kemal during the Struggle, with much hyperbole. The speech foregrounded the role of its narrator in Turkish history at the expense of defaming or ignoring the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph, the roles of the leading figures in the nationalist struggle and the establishment of the republic. Such figures included former leaders of the Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Progressive Republican Party), the opposition party to the Republican People's Party, such as Kazım Karabekir, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Refet Bele, Caffer Tayyar Eğilmez, Hüseyin Rauf

Orbay, and Dr. Adnan Adıvar. *Nutuk*, a vindication of the closing of the Progressive Republican Party and the establishment of Mustafa Kemal's single-party regime, was also a justification of the acts of the Independence Tribunals, which, in 1926, ordered the arrest and/or execution of former PRP members (and prominent surviving Unionists) after the attempt to assassinate Mustafa Kemal, regardless of whether the accused were plotters or not in the assassination.

Immediately after the delivery of *Nutuk*, a number of letters of defense and alternative autobiographies were written by some of Mustafa Kemal's political opponents, including Kazım Karabekir Paşa, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Dr. Rıza Nur, and Halide Edib Adıvar. After 1925, however, not only the political opposition but also its press was silenced, so that these articles did not enjoy publicity in Turkey. Some of the autobiographies were not published in Turkey until the 1960s, while some were published only recently.² With alternative accounts of the history of the period silenced, for decades *Nutuk* monopolized the writing of the history of the Independence Struggle of Turkey as well as the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

One autobiography written as a response to *Nutuk* was by a prolific woman writer and political figure, who, at the time *Nutuk* was delivered, was, with her second husband Dr. Adnan Adıvar, in self-imposed exile in the United Kingdom. This woman writer, Halide Edib, had been influential in the Turkish nationalism movement a decade before the Independence Struggle. In 1910, Edib, who had embraced Turanism, was called "The Mother of the Turk" among the pan-Turanistic organizations Türk Ocakları (Turkish Homelands). Her early novels—*Raik'in Annesi* [Raik's mother] (1909), *Seviyye Talip* (1912), *Yeni Turan* [New Turan] (1912), *Handan* (1912), *Son Eseri* [His/Her last work] (1913), *Mev'ut Hüküm* [The decree] (1917–1918)—some explicitly narrating her Turanist ideology (*Yeni Turan*), others dealing with different facets of women's issues in Ottoman society, such as polygyny, had been received with wide acclaim.³ At the end of World War I, Edib vouched for the American mandate for the Ottoman Empire, arguing that this was the only solution if the territories held by the Ottoman Empire were not to be compromised. Further, the American protectorate would entail, according to Edib, siding with a stronger power than Europe, which would protect Turkey from the threats of the Christian minorities who were being empowered by the Allies.

In March 1920, Adnan and Edib, convinced that the only solution for

the salvation of the Ottoman Empire lay in armed resistance against the Allies, secretly escaped from Constantinople to Anatolia to join the Nationalist Army.⁴ During the Struggle, Edib worked as public speaker, journalist, translator, writer, editor, nurse, and soldier. As recompense for her services, she was promoted to sergeant-major in the Nationalist Army. In 1922 and 1923 respectively, Edib published two of the most famous Turkish nationalist novels, *Ateşten Gömlek* [The shirt of flame] and *Vurun Kahpeye* [Thrash the whore], relating the struggles of Kuvayi Milliye (Nationalist Army) against the Allies and against the Islamic fundamentalists in Anatolia.

In 1925, Edib was chosen as candidate to be a member in the republican parliament by the Turkish women's organizations. However, republican Turkey did not grant women political suffrage until 1934, and Edib herself was not to become a member of parliament until 1950.⁵ In 1925, when the Progressive Republican Party was closed,⁶ Adivar, one of the founding members of the party, and Edib left Turkey, not to return until 1939.⁷ In 1926, the first volume of her autobiography, *Memoirs of Halide Edib*, was published in London. One year after *Nutuk* was delivered in Ankara, in 1928, the second volume of her autobiography, *The Turkish Ordeal*, which complemented the narration of the national struggle in *Nutuk*, was published.

The Turkish Ordeal, narrating Edib's pivotal role in the nationalism movement and particularly in the Independence Struggle, was a text of self-defense written as a response to *Nutuk*, which dismissed Edib's role in the Independence Struggle entirely and characterized her as "mandacı-traitor"⁸ of the Turkish National Struggle, based on a letter Edib sent Mustafa Kemal in 1919 vouching for the American mandate. *Nutuk* presented the issue of the American mandate not in its historical context, but as a choice Edib had allegedly made over national independence.⁹ As was the case with other political opponents of Mustafa Kemal, Edib's defense did not enjoy much publicity in Turkey. Her articles were not published in Turkey between 1927 and 1935, and it was not until 1962 that *The Turkish Ordeal* was translated into Turkish as *Türk'ün Ateşle İmtihanı* and published with certain modifications. Until recently, she paradoxically remained the writer of the most important works of Turkish nationalist literature, *Ateşten Gömlek* and *Vurun Kahpeye*, but a "mandacı-traitor" of the Turkish nation nonetheless.

This article aims to revise and historicize Halide Edib's position in Turkish history through an analysis of her autobiography. Concomitantly, the

monopoly of *Nutuk* over the narrative of the Turkish nation will be explored, through which the definition and parameters of national myth in the Turkish context is outlined. The import that *Nutuk*-as-myth held for decades in Turkey implied simultaneously that the autobiographies of the political opponents of Mustafa Kemal were to be banned or ignored. This case illustrates the necessity of an understanding of the significance of the reception of works, particularly the *credibility* and *authority* of texts in the way some texts were valued and given credibility in Turkey, while others, lacking such credibility and authority, were dismissed. An analysis of such autobiographies, however, which lack the same credibility and authority as *Nutuk*, particularly Edib's *The Turkish Ordeal*, will lead us to analyze challenges to *Nutuk*-as-myth and to the monopoly of *Nutuk* as narrative, both structurally and in terms of content.

Taxonomy of Narratives

The respective contents of Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk* and Halide Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* are similar, narrating the writers' accounts of the Ottoman Empire, the history of the Turkish nationalist movement, the Independence Struggle of Turkey and, at a superficial level, the foundation of the Turkish Republic. However, classifying both writers' works according to their content or according to the generic category of memoirs or autobiography would be naive at best. On the one hand, *Nutuk* was produced not only as a political but also a historical document, which, since 1927, has been received as the "sacred text" of the Turkish Republic. The prophet-like qualities of the author (Mustafa Kemal) of this sacred text are eulogized in the preface to the English translation of *Nutuk*: "[*The Speech*] reveals the activity of the speaker from the time when he first felt himself called upon to take the leadership of his nation into his own hands and guide it from shame and threatened ruin to freedom and power."¹⁰

On the other hand, Edib wrote the *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* to record her version of the events of the Turkish nationalist struggle but without the pretense of producing a "historical record [or] a political treatise," rather seeking to make a "human document" about men and women during her lifetime.¹¹ Both the reasons for producing the respective texts of *Nutuk* and *Memoirs/The Turkish Ordeal* and the texts' receptions differed significantly. In contrast to the "sacred text" of the Turkish Republic, *Memoirs* and

The Turkish Ordeal are the memoirs of a woman writer, whose role in Turkish history was the subject of much controversy and whose credibility in the context of Turkey was minimal until recently.

The difference in the particular taxonomy of the works in Turkish history and literature necessitates the consideration of not only the "content" and "genre" of narratives, but also the "claims" narratives make and the way in which the texts "interact with their readers." *Nutuk* and Edib's autobiography can be contextualized with the help of a taxonomy of narratives categorized according to claims made by their narrators and the ways in which those claims are received by their audiences.

Three narratives make truth-claims: *Myth* and *history* are those narratives that have credibility, while *nonfiction* is the term used for a narrative possessing credibility but not to the extent of history and/or myth. Narratives that do not make truth-claims are called *fiction*. It is noteworthy to add that, in the production of the work, even if truth-claims are not made, the audience may give credibility or authority to the narrative. The distinction between myth and history is that myth, as not only a "model of" but also a "model for" reality, is laden with authority in a given society while history is not. Bruce Lincoln explains the authority of myth as "akin to that of revolutionary slogans and ancestral invocations, in that through the recitation of myth, one may effectively mobilize a social grouping." Myth, the essential fabric in the construction of a given society, is also "a discursive act through which actors evoke the sentiments out of which society is actively constructed."¹²

Thus myth establishes and determines the foundations of the very being, system of morality, and values of a particular collectivity or nation. Myth, in the words of George Schöpfung, "creates an intellectual and cognitive monopoly in that it seeks to establish the sole way of ordering the world and defining world views. For the community to exist as a community, this monopoly is vital."¹³ Through this monopoly, myth not only defines a given collectivity but also draws a boundary around that particular collectivity, distinguishing it from any other collectivity.

In general, many scholars draw a strict line between myth and untruth or deception, arguing that myth need not rely on truth because its historical truth/fact is not sought, that myth is altogether separate from historical fact and historiography. However, in the Turkish case, *Nutuk*-as-myth actually makes a claim to history and historiography. Indeed Mustafa Kemal expos-

tulated that his aim in writing *Nutuk* was to facilitate the writing of Turkish history.¹⁴ *Nutuk*'s claim to history was supported by the incorporation of a plethora of historical documents within *Nutuk*, and for decades, the "interpretation" of documents by the narrator of *Nutuk* was taken as synonymous with historical fact.

Thus, a traditional categorization of narratives told from the perspective of the first-person narrator cannot simply be categorized as memoirs or autobiography because reception plays a crucial role in the categorization of narratives. As such, *Nutuk* was and is a very significant part of the Turkish (Kemalist) nationalist myth. Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*, on the other hand, were not translated into Turkish till the 1960s. The Turkish translations, *Mor Salkımlı Ev* and *Türk'ün Ateşle İmtihanı*, would at best be categorized as nonfiction in the context of Turkish society.

It is noteworthy to add that reception is a concept that should not be reified, but instead analyzed over different time periods and within particular social and cultural contexts. For instance, *Nutuk*, whose status as myth and history was widely accepted during the 1920s and 1930s in Turkey, is challenged by scholars today. Likewise, Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* gained more credibility in Turkey with the revision of Edib's position in Turkish history and literature. The social and cultural contexts of the works are also important. In a given time, a text may be contextualized and received differently by two different societies or cultures. Such was the case with *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*, which were received as historical documents within the United Kingdom,¹⁵ but denied reception in Turkey.

Nutuk As Plethoric Myth

Nutuk is the self-narrative of the "new individual," who represented the history of his life by inscribing it in the narrative of the nation. In the Ottoman context, the new individual was a Napoleonic figure, with the aim of bringing his nation to the zenith of "(European) civilization" and "progress." The first example of this heroic Ottoman "new individual" was Reşid Paşa, minister of foreign affairs under Sultan Abdülmecid, who brought the *Tanzimat* (reorganization reforms) in 1839. Şinasi's *kasides* (commemorative poem) in *Divan-ı Şinasi* honored Reşid Paşa like a prophet; the bible of his religion was the *kanun* (law), that is, the reforms he brought with the *Tanzimat*.¹⁶

A new concept to the Ottoman literati in the nineteenth century, the "new

individual" has many antecedents in the male autobiographies produced in the Western autobiographical tradition. Within this tradition, the writing of history and narrative, the representation of the growth of nations, temper of the times, political and cultural zeitgeist, and the "exemplary man" all form a mutually reinforcing network of identity. All judged progress by the "making of it" that was profoundly self-centered—a tradition of self-aggrandizement in men's autobiography that could be called "The Lives of Famous Men," exemplified in such works as Rousseau's *Confessions* and Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Hence, the man in these texts is the mirror of his times, and history could be told as the story of this self.¹⁷

Structurally, *Nutuk* differs from the Western autobiographical tradition that began in the eighteenth century. In the eighteenth-century Western context, human reality was seen to be profoundly historical, which necessitated an analysis of the self as an analysis of how the self became what it was. Often, history was associated with a story of progress; the self experienced a "development or Bildung," moving from childhood or naïveté to gradual maturation.¹⁸

Nutuk, on the other hand, is a linear, progressive account of historical events beginning in 1919, but not the narrative of a self experiencing an evolutionary process toward maturation or development. Rather *Nutuk* is a cyclical and repetitive account of a self with a prophetlike calling to rescue the nation. This self's others, the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph and the political opponents of Mustafa Kemal, are likewise denied development or maturation and remain unchanged as the self's others throughout *Nutuk*. The self of *Nutuk* had a priori knowledge on how history would unravel—that is, the fact that the nationalist struggle would end with victory and "the self" would establish a republic in 1923—even before historical events took place. The transcendent, unchanging self of *Nutuk* is prior to and above history and does not undergo linear historical development during the 1919–27 period *Nutuk* narrates.

The transcendent, unchanging self of *Nutuk* points to one of the most foregrounded myths in *Nutuk*, the myth of the narrator of *Nutuk* as the unique/sole hero or secular prophet in Turkish history. Besides this particular myth, *Nutuk* is a composite of several others, such as the myth of *Nutuk*-as-history discussed earlier in this essay, the myth of rebirth, the myth of military success, the myth of sacred territory, and the myth of nation-as-family and shared descent.

As a myth of rebirth, *Nutuk* is a foundational myth in which the Independence Struggle is depicted not as a struggle to claim parts of the Ottoman Empire but as a struggle to establish the Turkish Republic.¹⁹ This myth of rebirth takes its zero-point or naissance not as Mustafa Kemal's biological birth in 1881 but as May 19, 1919, the day Mustafa Kemal set foot on Anatolian soil, in the city of Samsun, and started working for the national cause. Hence, the famous first line of *Nutuk*: "I landed in Samsun on the nineteenth day of May 1919."²⁰ In *Nutuk*, in May 1919, the naissance of the unified and atomistic self of Mustafa Kemal is conjoined with a unified depiction of the nation—a depiction not only anachronistic but also paradoxical, considering that *Nutuk* starts with a description of the lack of ideological and strategic consensus among the variety of organizations throughout Anatolia and Constantinople trying to defend their territorial rights from the Allies and establish political rule. This unified nation and the unified self are presented in *Nutuk* as interchangeable and intertwined; in general, the nation is denied an autonomous existence extricated from the I of the narrative. Thus the self of *Nutuk* could more accurately be termed the "I-nation." The I-nation's naissance in May 1919 comes at the expense of the historical significance and existence of the Ottoman Empire. In *Nutuk*, the more the I-nation is praised for the victory in the Independence Struggle and success in securing political autonomy, the more the I-nation is separated from the Ottoman Empire as its legacy and sultans are debunked. Thus, the day that the I-nation was born in Samsun, he was presented as distinct from the historical conditions that came into being before the zero-point of Turkish history.

In *Nutuk*, this myth of rebirth is linked with the narrative of discontinuity, a narrative of distinct separation from the Ottoman Empire. This narrative of discontinuity distanced the Turkish Republic from the Ottoman Empire on several different levels. First and foremost, the Sultanate and the Caliphate are presented as useless and backward institutions that cannot be reconciled with modernization.²¹ The argument for the abolition of both the Sultanate and the Caliphate (in 1922 and 1924, respectively) was made through the individual acts of treachery of Sultan Vahdeddin, who vouched for the British mandate and, during the Independence Struggle, actively struggled against the nationalist forces in Anatolia. In *Nutuk*, not only the last Ottoman Sultan Vahdeddin but all Ottoman Sultans are degraded as "a bunch of madmen," "moronic and ignorant" "animals."²²

The narrative of discontinuity also promotes, in lieu of the multiethnic configuration of the Ottoman Empire, a strictly ethnic nationalism.²³ Ethnic nationalism was reinforced with the aid of the myth of the nation-as-family that was to become a significant part of the Kemalist national myth in the 1930s.²⁴ Thus, the Turkish nation was seen as one family, whose father was Mustafa Kemal. This paternal role was underscored in 1934 when Mustafa Kemal instigated the "Last Name Law," whereby all Turkish citizens had to take last names, and claimed the name of *Atatürk*, which literally meant the "Father of the Turk," for himself.²⁵ The descendants of the "Father of the Turk/Atatürk" were the Turkish youth; *Nutuk* ends thus with Mustafa Kemal's inheritance passed on to the future generations of the Turkish nation-family.²⁶

It should be noted that *Nutuk's* I-nation is, as transcendent construct, prior to language, which means that it is above the problematics of narrative representation. Thus, the I-nation of *Nutuk* is conjoined with the historical self of Mustafa Kemal, presenting a certain I-nation speaking without the artifice of fiction. This one-on-one correlation between the I-nation of *Nutuk* and the historical self of Kemal was imposed after *Nutuk's* delivery. The "book," "man," and "nation" trinity came to bear on logocentric authority, which was secured on the grounds that they shared the same proper name, "Father Turk." Thus the proper name of the author conjoined the text and the self, so that the untouchable status of the author dictated the untouchable status of the book. In this sense, *Nutuk* was doubly untouchable, since in the context of *Nutuk*, who touched the man touched the book and touched the nation, where the unified I-nation united the self of Kemal with the unified nation or the recently and painstakingly reclaimed "sacred land" of Turkey, whose borders, claimed in the Treaty of Lausanne in 1924, were inviolable and whose various ethnic groups were united under the roof of ethnic/Turkish nationalism. The myth of sacred territory and the myth of nation-as-family were intertwined in the presentation of Anatolia as the motherland of the Turks and the Independence Struggle as synonymous with the quest for the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

Consequently, the self of *Nutuk* sought credibility by justifying the credibility of his story with the biographical fact of Mustafa Kemal's success. The fact that Mustafa Kemal, as commander-in-chief of the Nationalist Army, was victorious in the Independence Struggle and became *Halâşkar Gazi*

(the savior and conqueror),²⁷ the fact that he became president and his political opponents and the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph were eradicated from the annals of Turkish history, meant that this I-nation was the sole hero who had foreseen particular historical events and how history was to shape itself, while the enemies of the I-nation had been proven wrong and treacherous (the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph, Mustafa Kemal's political opponents). The I-nation then is not only prior to language but also prior to history, which in *Nutuk* is a narrative serving the I-nation's ends, unraveling only to prove the accuracy of Kemal's judgment and decision making. Further, *Nutuk* dictates that the I-nation's position of transcendence (over language and history) be accepted as historical fact. Consequently, because of the logocentric authority invested in the man-book-nation trinity through the 1990s in Turkey, mainly due to the authority and prestige of the author, it has been difficult to analyze *Nutuk* and the way it narrates its "objects of contemplation" as a nexus of history and fiction, rather than as direct unmediated historical fact.

Halide Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*: The Self/Selves Inscription of the "Mandacı-Traitor"

The two separate volumes of Halide Edib's autobiography, *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal*, show remarkable differences in terms of content. *Memoirs* narrates Edib's childhood years during the Ottoman Empire. Underscored in the account are reminiscences of the multiethnic, multireligious character of the empire and the different phases of Turkish nationalism before 1918. The second volume of Edib's autobiography, *The Turkish Ordeal* exclusively narrates the events of the Independence Struggle of Turkey, foreshadowing the early years of the Turkish Republic, 1923–27. *The Turkish Ordeal*, I argue, was written as a response to the narration of the self and the nation in *Nutuk*. Thus, I focus on *The Turkish Ordeal*, with sporadic references to the *Memoirs*.

Both volumes of Edib's autobiography closely follow the Western autobiographical tradition. Edib's autobiography narrates the development of a "self" moving from *childhood* or *naïveté* to *gradual maturation* with particular sensitivity to different phases of being of the self as the self matures. The difference between the mainstream Western autobiographical tradition and Edib's autobiography lies in her persistent exploration of interpersonal

identity.²⁸ This is such a prominent trait in *The Turkish Ordeal* that the volume could equally and simultaneously be categorized as Edib's autobiography and a biography of Mustafa Kemal. *The Turkish Ordeal* is an attempt to inscribe Edib's involvement in the Independence Struggle into Turkish history and literature while expounding on Kemal's involvement and position in the Struggle. In this respect, the text concentrates almost equally on Edib's and Kemal's roles in the Struggle.²⁹

Nevertheless, *The Turkish Ordeal* does not concentrate solely on Kemal and Edib. Even when *The Turkish Ordeal* asserts individuality and tries to foreground the roles of Edib, Kemal, and other leaders of the Struggle, it simultaneously denies the concept of individuality in its attempt to give agency to the people of Anatolia. From the point of Edib's Sultan Ahmet speech (June 6, 1919) to the end of the Struggle (1922), when the Nationalist Army marched into Izmir, Edib strips herself of the individuality of the I: "I suddenly ceased to exist as an individual: I worked, wrote, and lived as a unit of that magnificent national madness."³⁰

This "national madness" entailed the foregrounding of a collaborative effort in lieu of particular individuals leading the effort. *The Turkish Ordeal* depicts negatively all characters who tried to foreground their roles in the Struggle, Kemal chief among them. This interpersonal depiction of character entails interdependence. For instance, *The Turkish Ordeal* underscores the fact that the nationalist movement in Anatolia began not with Kemal but under the leadership of Kazım Karabekir in the East³¹ with the collaborative efforts of the Karakol organization, Kara Vasıf Bey, and Major Kemaleddin.³²

Although the zero-point of Turkish nationalist history according to *Nutuk* is underlined in *The Turkish Ordeal* as a turning point in the nationalist movement, it was not a turning point prepared solely by Mustafa Kemal but rather was staged concomitantly by the leadership and strategic planning of Ali Fuad Pasha, Kazım Karabekir Pasha, Rauf Bey, Colonel Refet, and Colonel M. Arif.³³ According to *The Turkish Ordeal*, the early phases of the nationalist movement in Anatolia were spearheaded by the sagacious Kazım Karabekir Pasha, who possessed "vision and the ability to act promptly." It was Kazım Karabekir Pasha who assembled the Erzurum Congress in July 1919 for a "more legal pretext to pass into action." It was yet again Kazım Karabekir Pasha who appointed Mustafa Kemal Pasha as leader of the nationalist movement.³⁴

The Turkish Ordeal's account of the Sivas Congress held in September 1919 empowers the names *Nutuk* tried to dismiss. For instance, Halis Turgut Bey is presented in *The Turkish Ordeal* as the most able and enthusiastic supporter of the representative body at the Sivas Congress, endangering his life by supporting the representative body and breaking from the government in Istanbul.³⁵

Drawing on names integral to the Nationalist Struggle in Anatolia and depicting their importance and collaboration, *The Turkish Ordeal* emphasizes the network of identities, the interdependence of leaders and people in the Struggle. Such a depiction of interdependence contrasts with the myth of the sole hero, the prophet of the republic, instead describing the Struggle as a collaborative effort. In this contrast, the impermeable boundaries between the atomistic I-nation of Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk* and the I-nation's others, particularly the political opponents of Mustafa Kemal (1923–26) become blurred.

This method of delineating characters and the Struggle interpersonally does not entail merging characters or denying the importance or role of one character at the expense of another. Rather, in Edib's work, the self is not interchangeable with the nation as was the case in *Nutuk*. The "I" in *The Turkish Ordeal* was separated from the "nation/people" even though during the Struggle, their goals were the same. The "narrating self" in Edib's autobiography manifests the permeability of its ego boundaries as it tries to give existence to other selves in its description of her self. For example, before Edib gave her nationalist speech in Fatih in 1918, she realized that she shared the same goals as the people: "I realized that *their* supreme demand was identical with *mine*. We all longed for hope, for absolute belief in our rights and in our own strength, and I gave them what *they* wanted."³⁶ In the particular example of the Fatih speech, as well as in the narrative overall, Edib makes a constant attempt to give agency to the "people."

This determination to give agency to the people is most evident in the separation of Mustafa Kemal from the nation and the national cause. What was most indicative of this split was the dialogue that took place between Kemal and Edib during the Struggle—a dialogue that motivated Edib to start writing her memoirs:

"What I mean is this: I want everyone to do as I wish and command."

"Have they not done so already in everything that is fundamental and for the good of the Turkish cause?"

He swept my question aside and continued in the same brutally frank manner.

"I don't want any consideration, criticism, or advice. I will have only my own way. All shall do as I command."

"Me too, Pasham [my Pasha]?"

"You too."

His absolute sincerity deserved a reciprocal frankness.

"I will obey you and do as you wish as long as I believe that you are serving the cause."

"You shall obey me and do as I wish," he repeated, ignoring the condition.

"Is that a threat, Pasham?" I asked, quietly but firmly.³⁷

As is evident in this excerpt, the "Halâskar Gazi of *Nutuk*," whose military leadership is praised in certain sections of *The Turkish Ordeal*, is nonetheless extricated from the "national cause" in Edib's autobiography to illustrate that his interests did not always overlap with those of the "nation." Hence, the less the selves of the nationalist leaders asserted themselves, the more agency was given to the people, leading from the beginning of the Struggle to its victorious end, from the beginning of *The Turkish Ordeal* to its climactic epilogue: "All through the ordeal for independence the Turkish people itself has been the supreme hero."³⁸

Moreover, as *The Turkish Ordeal* incorporates an intersubjective/interpersonal exploration of Kemal, whose goals did not overlap with those of the nation, who was significant, yet one among several leaders of the Struggle, the work relieves the burden that the I-nation in *Nutuk* imposes on the Anatolian people. Whereas the I-nation of *Nutuk* encumbers the people of Anatolia by demanding obedience from them on the grounds that the I-the-Savior-and-Creator-of-the-Nation (*Ben-Halâskar Gazi*)³⁹ served and rescued them from being exterminated by the Allies, *The Turkish Ordeal* empowers them and the leaders of the Struggle by giving recognition to their sufferings and struggles for national liberation.

The Self/Selves Moving through History and History Moving through the Self/Selves

Halide Edib's *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* manifest an awareness of the plethoric reflexive pronoun "I,"⁴⁰ that is, the different moments of being of

the "I" in line with historical change. Edib, in order to record every single instance of the remembering and nonremembering self in her autobiography, delineates the early sections of the *Memoirs*, depicting her childhood as flashes of memory, fragmented in structure. The narrating self gives particular attention to shifts between degrees of consciousness and understanding between the various phases the self went through as her life unraveled. The early phases of Edib's childhood are related referring to the autobiographical self as "she" to record the distance between the writing self and the experiencing self. When the "self" reaches a higher degree of consciousness and understanding of the world and events unraveling around her, the self appropriates the story as the narrator remarks that she decided to pass from writing of herself in the "she" to the "I": "The story of the little girl is my own henceforth."⁴¹

The changing "I" of *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* also serves as a narrative technique to parallel the multiplicity of roles Edib assumed during the Turkish nationalist movement and the Independence Struggle, including public speaker, journalist, writer, editor, nurse, and soldier. As the writing self, she becomes a spectator at times to the variety of roles she enacted. For instance, chapter 8 of *The Turkish Ordeal* begins: "A small figure in a nurse's uniform walked from the Eskişehir Station to the Red Crescent Hospital. It was I."⁴² Likewise, this is how "the writing self" (1926–27) assesses "Corporal Halide" (1921–22): "Corporal Halide is almost a stranger to me now. I often turn her soul inside out and stare at it hard. . . . Where did she find the strength to endure the sights of so much human suffering?"⁴³ Hence, whereas the "unified self" of Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk* was narrated as a continuum of consciousness, a never-forgetting, all-remembering self, which never erred, the "self" in *Memoirs/The Turkish Ordeal*, in an attempt to represent accurately the biographical fact of the "I" at different times, forgets, remembers, and reports the events forgotten as well as the ones remembered in order to enable biographical specificity and historical change to mold narration of the self.

Likewise, *The Turkish Ordeal* presents the prophetlike and unchanging self of *Nutuk* as one undergoing change according to historical exigencies. For instance, at the beginning of *The Turkish Ordeal*, while the nationalist movement is in progress in the East, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, as an influential leader in the army, tries to persuade the sultan to close the parliament to inaugurate a regime of absolutism so that Mustafa Kemal Pasha him-

self can become the minister of war.⁴⁴ The image of Mustafa Kemal in *The Turkish Ordeal* stands in stark contrast to the self of *Nutuk* who has severed all ties with the Ottoman Sultan-Caliphate and has a calling to found the republic as early as 1919.

Further, *Nutuk* controls not only historical memory but also "historical progress," as the temporal hegemony it sets up prioritizing its own history (over the history of the Ottoman Empire) precludes it from imagining a better future. *Nutuk* defines "national liberation," the ultimate goal of the nation, as "a thing of the past," synonymous with reclaiming Anatolia and Constantinople from the Allies and becoming "politically autonomous," and, as such, as goals that have already been achieved. The only mission left for future generations is to preserve this fixed and unchanging entity, the nation and the name of its creator/father, "Atatürk."

In *Nutuk*, the constant, unchanging, static "I" secures his immortality by passing on the republic, its most unique creation, to the youth of Turkey. *Nutuk* ends with the self entrusting the Turkish youth with the mantle of guardianship of the Turkish Republic (alongside the honorable name of the "man" and his "book"): "This holy treasure I lay in the hands of the youth of Turkey. Turkish Youth! Your primary duty is ever to preserve and defend the National Independence, the Turkish Republic. . . . The strength that you will need for this is mighty in the noble blood which flows in your veins."⁴⁵ Whereas *Nutuk* underscores reification and preservation, *Memoirs* and *The Turkish Ordeal* underscore historical progress. Denying the myth of rebirth and the narrative of discontinuity, Edib's autobiography depicts the variegated stages of "Turkish nationalism" as it does the Independence Struggle beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, indicating that Mustafa Kemal's role in the Independence Struggle made up one phase of a roughly seven-decades-long process.

Similarly, *The Turkish Ordeal* emphatically foregrounds "historical progress," which permeates the text as a move toward the gradual attainment of national liberation: "My nation has earned her independence by an ordeal which will stand out as one of the hardest and the noblest in the world's history. But she has another ordeal to pass through . . . called the Ordeal for Freedom. . . . in the unending struggle for freedom there can be no real individual symbol, no dictator."⁴⁶ Liberation in the sense of military victory is achieved, and Edib's autobiography, while criticizing some flaws, underscores Kemal's leadership qualities in the Struggle. However, according to

Edib, the goal of the Turkish nation was not completed with the military victory in the Struggle. Hence the title *The Turkish Ordeal* signifies not only an ordeal of the past—the Independence Struggle—but also one of the future, a process of democratization, which had yet to be achieved in the 1920s in Turkey.

Potential Resistance Unrealized

The narrative of the Turkish nationalism movement and the early years of the republic in *The Turkish Ordeal* is far from unproblematic. The autobiography excludes details of the events after the military victory in 1922, although its epilogue hints at problems in Kemal's rule after 1923. In addition, the reader is left uninformed about the "writing self" of Halide Edib, her political convictions regarding the issue of the Sultanate, the Caliphate, the political beliefs that precluded her and Dr. Adivar from collaborating with Kemal and the Republican People's Party, and the reasons behind her self-imposed exile. Also, without expounding upon the period between 1922 and 1927 and providing particulars about the Kemalist regime, *The Turkish Ordeal* seems to suggest that the personal flaws of Mustafa Kemal the narrator encounters during the Independence Struggle⁴⁷ prepared the scene for the "dictatorship" in the 1920s.⁴⁸

Further, the resistance of Edib's autobiography to the Kemalist national myth should perhaps be recast as "potential resistance," as yet to be realized, not only because the text was translated into Turkish only in the 1960s, but also because the text was modified immensely when it was translated. Instead of criticizing the self of *Nutuk* and the assertions regarding Turkish history writing in *Nutuk*, as was the case in *The Turkish Ordeal*, the translation of the text into Turkish showers the self of *Nutuk* with compliments. The appeal to the ordeal for liberation and democracy is dismissed in the translation; even the title, translated as "Türk'ün Ateşle İmtihanı" [The Turk's ordeal with fire] loses its dual meaning, referring exclusively to the Independence Struggle, an ordeal overcome through the charismatic leadership of Mustafa Kemal during the Independence Struggle. Thus, rather than challenging the Kemalist national myth as expounded in *Nutuk* through strategies employed in *The Turkish Ordeal*, such as the historical and intersubjective exploration of the self and other, *The Turk's Ordeal with Fire* paradoxically endorses the Kemalist national myth.

Notes

- 1 In 1925, after the instigation of *Takriri Sükun* (law on the maintenance of order), which ensued in the closing of the opposition party and the silencing of its press, the Republican People's Party became a "power monopoly" as the Kemalist regime became an authoritarian single-party regime. With the exception of one more experiment with an opposition party, Turkey did not have a legal opposition until after the 1940s. Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (New York: I. B. Tauris and Co., 1998), 184.
- 2 For instance, Kazım Karabekir's autobiography, prepared in 1933, was burned before it was published. In 1960, Kazım Karabekir's *İstiklal Harbimiz* [Our independence war] was published, but the published copies were collected because the autobiography violated the law against defaming Atatürk, and as such, was a serious case of *lese-majesty*. *İstiklal Harbimizin Esasları* [The facts of our independence struggle] was not published in Turkey until the 1990s. Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimizin Esasları* (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2000.)
- 3 Some of Edib's novels received international acclaim, and *Handan* was translated into several languages.
- 4 The first night of the occupation of Istanbul, British soldiers began a search to arrest nationalist leaders, including Dr. Adnan because of his affiliation with the Struggle. Halide Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal: Being the Further Memoirs of Halide Edib* (New York: Century Co., 1928), 67–69.
- 5 In 1950, Edib became MP from İzmir for the Democrat Party led by Adnan Menderes; she resigned from the political arena altogether in 1954, accusing the Democrat Party of tending toward a dictatorship. See Orhan Koloğlu, "Halide Edib, Fevrimler ve Demokrasi" [Halide Edib, revolutions and democracy] *Tarih ve Toplum Dergisi* [Journal of history and society], no. 177 (1998): 181–87.
- 6 The Progressive Republican Party was closed because the Independence Tribunals found the party complicit in the Kurdish rebellion of 1924 and accused the party of using religion for political purposes. Zürcher, *Turkey*, 180.
- 7 Halide Edib visited Turkey briefly in 1935, to see her grandson for the first time.
- 8 *Mandacı* refers to the person who advocates the mandate of a foreign power over national and political autonomy.
- 9 See Gazi Mustafa Kemal, *Nutuk-Söylev*, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1984), 4, 17, 49.
- 10 Mustafa Kemal, *A Speech Delivered by Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, October 1927* (Leipzig: K. F. Koehler, 1929), 1.
- 11 Edib, *Ordeal*, 190.
- 12 Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 24–25.
- 13 George Schöpfung, "The Functions of Myth and Taxonomy of Myths," in *Myths and Nationhood*, ed. Geoffrey Hosking and George Schöpfung (New York: Routledge, 1997), 19.
- 14 Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu, "Doğumunun 100. Yılında Söylev'in 9. Basısı Üzerine" [One hundred years after his birth, on the ninth edition of *The Speech*], in Mustafa Kemal, *Söylev* [The speech], 3 vols. (Istanbul: Can Matbaa, 1988), 30.

- 15 For instance, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, *The Turkish Ordeal* was described as a "history written by the novelist who helped to make it history." John Murray, "The Turkish Ordeal," *Times Literary Supplement*, November 29, 1928.
- 16 Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Ondokuzuncu Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* [History of nineteenth-century Turkish literature] (Istanbul: Çağlayan Kitabevi, 1988), 200.
- 17 See Leigh Gilmore, "Autobiographics: Women's Autobiography and the Poetics of Identity" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1988), 69.
- 18 Further, in the eighteenth century, the notion of self-conception came to be synonymous with individuality. For instance, according to Goethe, "individuation" was a constant interaction of a maturing self with a changing world configuration. Such "an interlinked coexistence" between the gradually changing self interacting with the gradually changing world was how the self experienced history. Karl Weintraub, *The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 336.
- 19 Zürcher, *Turkey*, 183.
- 20 Kemal, *Nutuk*, 2; my translation.
- 21 See Kemal, *Nutuk*, 21, 1105, 1185.
- 22 Kemal, *Nutuk*, 21, 319, 321.
- 23 For instance, even though the Independence Struggle was a struggle fought by the Muslim community of the Ottoman Empire, namely the Kurds and the Turks, *Nutuk* portrays the struggle as one fought exclusively by Turks. This myth of rebirth and narrative of discontinuity was highly influential in the writing of republican history, especially the distancing of the Ottoman Empire from the Turkish Republic. Republican historians vouched for the "discontinuity thesis" mostly because of the significance of religion in the Ottoman Empire that secular republican intellectuals did not want to embrace and also because of the ethnic heterogeneity of the Empire that was modified with the ethnic nationalism of the Turkish Republic. Büşra Ersanlı, "The Ottoman Empire in the Historiography of the Kemalist Era: A Theory of Fatal Decline," in *The Ottomans and the Balkans*, ed. Fikret Adanır and Suraiya Faruqi (Boston: E. J. Brill, 2002), 135.
- 24 The Kemalist national myth includes *Nutuk* but is not synonymous with *Nutuk* itself. I see the Kemalist national myth as a composite of myths including not just *Nutuk* but also other speeches made by Mustafa Kemal, as well as the "Westernizing" reforms and laws.
- 25 *Ata* also means "ancestor." In vernacular, *ata* is interchangeable with *Atatürk*.
- 26 Even though Atatürk was not a title Mustafa Kemal held in 1927, when *Nutuk* was delivered, his paternal role in the Turkish national family was foreshadowed in the depiction of the "self" of *Nutuk*. In general, the narrator of *Nutuk* and the nation formed one composite entity, but at those exceptional instances when they were separated, it was only because the nation had not matured into the same consciousness as the all-knowing "I/we" of the narrative. For instance, according to the narrator of *Nutuk*, in May 1919, the nation was not at a state of maturity to judge the outdatedness of the institutions of the Sultanate and the Caliphate. Kemal, *Nutuk*, 15. The narrator of *Nutuk* had to lead the nation to this state of maturity. Hence, the "I" of *Nutuk* solved problems that the nation was not prepared for, and as such, acted the role of the protector, the father figure for the nation.

- 27 Gazi was a title Mustafa Kemal inherited from the Ottoman Sultans who, as Gazis, were holy warriors bound to prove their military power against the Christians.
- 28 Transnationally and transhistorically speaking, the interpersonal exploration of identity might be a trait common to women's autobiographies. See *The Female Autograph: Theory and Practice of Autobiography from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Domna Stanton (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
- 29 Thus, *The Turkish Ordeal* could be located at the nexus of autobiography and biography, between Phillippe Lejeune's autobiographical pact (author is/is not the narrator is the protagonist) and the biographical pact (author is/is not the narrator is not the protagonist). Phillippe Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Contract," in *French Literary Theory Today*, ed. Tzvetan Todorov, trans. R. Carter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 204-5.
- 30 Edib, *Ordeal*, 23.
- 31 Ibid., 14.
- 32 Ibid., 20-21.
- 33 Ibid., 42.
- 34 Ibid., 45.
- 35 *The Turkish Ordeal* pointed out that after the establishment of the republic, Halis Turgut Bey supported the opposition to the Republican People's Party and was executed in 1926 although he was not complicit in the assassination attempt. Ibid., 48.
- 36 Ibid., 26-27; emphasis added.
- 37 Ibid., 188.
- 38 Ibid., 407.
- 39 After the victory of the Independence Struggle, Mustafa Kemal had become *Halâskar Gazi* (the savior and conqueror), a title he was determined "to use . . . to consolidate his position in the post-war era." Zürcher, *Turkey*, 166.
- 40 This phrase is borrowed from James Olney's analysis of Samuel Beckett's *Watt*. See James Olney, *Memory and Narrative: The Weave of Life-Writing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 229. I use the phrase to refer to a changing "I" in line with historical change. It may be added that the "I" is not even reflexive because whenever the "I" returns to or refers to itself, it is not or no longer the same "I."
- 41 Halide Edib, *Memoirs* (New York: Century Co., 1926), 32.
- 42 Edib, *Ordeal*, 261.
- 43 Ibid., 311.
- 44 Ibid., 12.
- 45 Kemal, *Söylev*, 724-25.
- 46 Edib, *Ordeal*, 407.
- 47 See *ibid.*, 127, 136, 141, 158, 166, 167-68, 183, 384.
- 48 Ibid., 407.

