Modernist Nationalism: Statism and National Identity in Turkey

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Introduction: The Puzzle of Turkish National Identity

A few years ago, the New York Times featured an article on the ancient city of Antioch and its modern-day inhabitants. Having lost its ancient grandeur a long time ago, Antioch (Antakya) is described as today a place that "even most Turks consider ... [to be] remote and undistinguished." The article features interviews with two members of the same family: the 110-year-old Ali Baklaci and his 20-year-old grandson Hasan Negruz. An old-timer who lived through the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, subsequent French mandate and eventual incorporation into Turkey in 1939, Ali Baklaci is unequivocal regarding his identity. In a matter-of-fact manner, he declares, "We cannot forget our origins. We are Arab people." The grandson, Hasan Negruz, however, has a different view. While Negruz is "one of many local youths who have taken advantage of Syria's offer of free education," the article informs us, "the experience did not turn him into a pan-Arabist." Instead, Negruz formulates his identity in a way that is remarkably different from his grandfather's: "I am an Arab who is also a citizen of Turkey, and that's fine. I like being Turkish because this country is more modern than the Arab countries."

Hasan Negruz's statement is a good illustration of the puzzle that Turkish national identity presents: how can an ethnic Arab from a remote province in Turkey identify himself as "Turkish"? Had the circumstances of Negruz's utterance been different, perhaps his self-identification as "Turkish" would not be so puzzling: had Negruz belonged to the rising urban upper-middle class, or had he been the graduate of one of the prestigious institutions of higher learning in Turkey, or had he been a migrant in a new and hostile territory trying to blend in, then perhaps we would have a more straightforward explanation. But Negruz is from a modest provincial background, received his education in Syria and is not a migrant who is pressured to renounce his ethnic origins: neither family background, nor indoctrination through schooling, nor vested economic interest seems to account for his self-identification as Turkish. What, then, explains the puzzle of Negruz's self-identification as "Turkish"?

I suggest that the answer to the puzzle is the modernist character of Turkish national identity. In the Turkish experience, national identity was grounded not in an assertion of ethnic or racial purity, but in a modernist agenda of social and political transformation. On the whole, national identity was subservient to the project of

rising to the level of modern civilization. The modernist substance of Turkish national identity project makes Negruz's self-identification as "Turkish" possible.

In the rest of this paper, I will first explain the concept of "modernist nationalism" and locate it analytically in relation to the categories of ethnic and civic nationalism. My discussion aims at modifying the dominant typology of nationalisms by introducing the ideal-typical construct of modernist nationalism. Introducing this new category will mitigate against the restrictiveness and exclusiveness of the paradigmatic dichotomy of civic versus ethnic forms of nationalism. Next, I will present the historical and substantive grounding for the category of modernist nationalism. I will argue that under certain historical conditions (most notably, in the absence of colonial rule), the dilemma of choosing between authenticity and modernization (which is considered to be an attribute of non-European nationalisms in general) does not arise. When the dilemma is not pressing, the emerging nationalisms tend to be modernist rather than ethnic in character. In my discussion of the dilemma, I will try to establish the social and historical conditions for the possibility of the category of modernist nationalism. In particular, I will argue that the modernist identity project becomes available and relevant for nationalisms in the non-European world when there is no prolonged and severe colonial domination to generate an acute dilemma of choosing between modernization and cultural authenticity. By highlighting a tendency in the literature to equate the category of "non-European" with "colonial," I will argue that the category of modernist nationalism needs to be employed in order to account for the nationalisms of those non-European cases that did not emerge out of an experience of direct colonial rule. In my exposition, I will concentrate on Turkish nationalism as a strong instance of the understudied category of modernist nationalism.

Ethnic versus Civic Nationalism: Problematizing the Dichotomy

At the heart of a critical, self-reflexive comparative social science lies the ability and willingness to question and rethink the theoretical boundaries and dichotomies that provide the foundations for comparative analysis. By using the process of Turkish national identity formation, this paper attempts to problematize the canonical dichotomization of nationalisms as either civic or ethnic. The analysis of the Turkish case suggests that we need to supplant the paradigmatic dichotomy of ethnic versus civic nationalism with a third category: modernist nationalism.

The dichotomy of civic versus ethnic has been central to the scholarship on nationalism. It has been cast (and canonized) through many different terms: Western versus Eastern, territorial versus genealogical, political versus cultural, progressive versus regressive, rational versus romantic, liberal versus authoritarian, good versus bad, *etc.*² According to the established view, ethnic nationalism emphasizes the commonality of race, culture and language, is driven by a concern with cultural authenticity and distinctiveness and embodies an organic view of the nation, while

civic nationalism is characterized by territorialism, participation, citizenship and civic education.³ Ethnic nationalism makes substantive claims regarding the ethnoracial make up of the "nation." It bases solidarity and national identity on the homogeneity and ethnic purity of the population. Civic nationalism, on the other hand, is more procedural than substantive: it claims to unite people around a common political "idea." "What held the new nation together was an idea, the idea of liberty under law as expressed in the Constitution." Solidarity and national identity derive from participation in a common polity. In contrast to ethnic nationalism, which embraces the criteria of homogeneity, civic nationalism defends the criteria of "shared ideas" regarding how to live together as crucial in the constitution of the "nation."

Like ethnic nationalism, modernist nationalism grounds itself with substantive claims regarding the identity of the members constituting the nation. In contrast to ethnic nationalism, however, modernist nationalism avoids adopting an ethnic or racial criterion for its substantiation. Modernist nationalism postulates a different kind of commonality of its members than ethnic nationalism: a commonality that is derived from a selectively constructed cultural model of the "West." Modernist nationalism generates solidarity through the project of cultural transformation. As in the Turkish case, the project of cultural transformation can sometimes be so extreme as to call for a complete "civilizational conversion."

Modernist nationalism differs from civic nationalism mainly by its suspicion of, and restrictions on, popular participation. Rather than regarding popular participation as a prerequisite of a nation defined by common political ideals and institutions (the civic model), or seeing it as part of the process of popular, vernacular mobilization of ethnicity (which is indispensable in ethnic nationalism), modernist nationalism finds the issue of democratic participation precarious and risky: for modernist nationalists participation by masses is suspect because dissidents may thwart the project of Westernization. To the extent that modernist nationalism requires conformity to its modernist schema of identities, it tends to restrict political and even cultural expression of non-conforming, traditional, religious or local identities.

Figure 1 schematically represents the idea types of ethic, civic and modernist nationalism. The figure is composed to emphasize the differences rather than similarities among these ideal types for the heuristic purpose of making the contrast as sharp and as clear as possible. One should keep in mind, however, that actual historical experience is far more complicated and impure than these idea types. One cannot help but agree with Smith that "every nationalism contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and different forms." Yet, in an attempt to analytically define and position these categories *vis-a-vis* one another, one is forced to accentuate the differences rather than similarities between them. This is also motivated by a concern to take into account the rhetorical distinctiveness and ideological self-articulations of these types of nationalism by paying attention to how they choose to present themselves. The attempt to reach analytical rigor in distinguishing among

	Ethnic Nationalism	Civic Nationalism	Modernist Nationalism
Source of National Identity	Ethnic ancestry	Shared political ideals and institutions	Project of modernity that demands a "civilizational conversion"
Form of National Identity	Homogeneous, ethnic community with vernacular culture	Politically united community with a common civic culture	Modern, secular community with imported, Western culture
Unity	Unity derives from common ancestry of the members of the nation	Unity derives from present consent of the members of the nation	Unity derives from future commonality of the members of the nation as modern, secular subjects
Membership	Closed: Inherited (Jus snaguinis)	Open: Chosen (Jus soli)	Transformative: Conditional on assimilation into the Western Cultural Model
Role of Popular Participation	Necessary: Frequently required as part of the process of vernacular mobilization	Fundamental: A normatively sanctioned aspect of national identity	Suspect: Risky for the project of modernity; limited and controlled by state elites
Mode of Defining the Nation	Substantive and Genealogical	Procedural and Territorial	Substantive and Territorial
Focus of the Nationalist Project	Ethnic Focused: Promoting and enhancing the inherited cultural identity	State Focused (Bottom-up): Producing an agreed upon/ negotiated political identity	State-Driven (Top-bottom): State-imposition of a modernist cultural identity
Legitimation of the Nationalist Project	Past-oriented: Ethnic descent, past glories of the nation	Present-oriented: Nation as a daily plebiscite	Future-oriented: Nation as the container of the project for the attainment of "modern civilization"

FIGURE 1. An ideal-typical representation of three types of nationalism

these types of nationalism should neither lead us to fetishize them in our historical research nor to normatively endorse one type of nationalism over the others. Ideal types such as modernist nationalism are heuristic devices that can help our understanding of historical phenomena. However, when pushed beyond their capacity to aid our understanding and used instead as a kind of absolute criteria, however, they can become a hindrance to our research by suppressing the complexity of actual historical processes. Therefore, in making comparisons based on the ideal types of nationalism, one should be aware of the risks involved in using them in a simplistic and reductionist manner.

In recent years, the canonical dichotomy of ethnic versus civic nationalism has become the focus of a heated debate. While some scholars mount a strong attack against it,⁶ others insist on the continuing validity and indispensability of these concepts. Michael Ignatieff, for example, suggests that, instead of finding fault with nationalism in general, one needs to look at different forms of nationalism to render judgment. Echoing Plamenatz's warning that nationalism is not evil or illiberal in itself,⁷ Ignatieff argues that "the only reliable antidote to ethnic nationalism turns out to be civic nationalism." According to him, civic nationalism is informed by, and hence is compatible with, Enlightenment values such as rationality, political rights and individualism while ethnic nationalism is informed by the romantic reaction to these and tends to be illiberal, authoritarian and essentialist. Ignatieff reasons that because it is futile to expect nationalism to whither away in the foreseeable future, adopting and promoting civic nationalism as a bulwark against ethnic nationalism is the most salient political strategy.

Other scholars question both the possibility of making such a sharp distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism and its normative implications. Bernard Yack, for example, challenges the dichotomy of ethnic/civic nationalism on two related grounds. First, there is the question of whether civic nationalism is indeed superior to ethnic nationalism: does civic nationalism necessarily promote a liberal democratic regime while ethnic nationalism does the opposite? The second issue that Yack raises is whether a purely civic nationalism is possible: does civic nationalism presuppose not only political, rational and universal principles but cultural, emotional and particular attachments as well?

With respect to the alleged normative superiority of the civic model of the nation, Yack argues that "the possibility of intolerance and paranoia in a truly 'civic' nation is far from academic or hypothetical. After all, American citizens have been denounced and persecuted for clinging to un-American political principles as well as for their foreign backgrounds." Kymlicka concurs with Yack and argues that the claim for civic nationalism promoting democratic regimes is unfounded. Kymlicka attacks those who "misinterpret the relation between nationalism and democracy" by claiming that civic nationalism is necessarily democratic, since it vests sovereignty in all of the people. He asks us to "consider virtually any country in Latin America. Most of these countries have a strong sense of national identity that is non-

ethnic ... Yet, there is nothing 'necessarily democratic' about them. Civic nations can be military dictatorships as easily as liberal democracies." Both Yack and Kymlicka agree that the ideological use to which the ethnic/civic dichotomy is put (and which equates civic with liberal and ethnic with authoritarian nationalism) is untenable.

The other major issue revolves around the question of whether the concept of a purely civic nation is a myth. Or, to put it slightly differently, whether there can be a civic nation without a shared cultural matrix to undergird the civic political ideals and institutions. Yack argues that the idea of a civic nation "misrepresents political reality as surely as the ethnonationalist myths it is designed to combat." His point is that behind the façade of a "purely political" attachment that civic nationalism propagates, there are implicit cultural parameters that are the preconditions of such "purely political" unions. Yack argues that "an attachment to certain political principles may be a necessary condition of loyalty to the national community for many citizens of contemporary liberal democracies; they are very far from a sufficient condition of that loyalty." Not taking into account the shared cultural doxa of national identity will lead to a misinterpretation and mythologization of the role played by political ideals such as citizenship, participation, democracy and political rights. These ideals will appear to provide the basis of nationhood all by themselves.

Kymlicka offers a similar critique of the civic/ethnic dichotomy. The problem, for Kymlicka, is that many in the ranks of politicians and academics alike mistakenly "equate ethnic nationalism with cultural nationalism" and overlook the fact that "civic nationalism has a cultural component." 16 Yet, neither Kymlicka nor Yack deny that there are politically and historically salient differences between ethnic and civic forms of nationalism. Rather, they insist that both varieties of nationalism are predicated upon an implicit, shared cultural substratum without which a purely civic or political nationalism would be impossible to sustain. In other words, rather than categorically refusing the dichotomy of ethnic and civic nationalism, Kymlicka wants to draw our attention to the unacknowledged preconditions of both types of nationalism. Insisting that "both ethnic and civic nationalisms have a cultural component" does not lead Kymlicka to suggest collapsing these two varieties into one or dispensing with them altogether. Instead, Kymlicka is well aware that "some nations define their culture in ethnic and religious terms, others do not. These variations are crucial to understanding why some nationalisms are peaceful, liberal and democratic, while others are xenophobic, authoritarian and expansionist." Similarly, Yack admits that "it may be reasonable to contrast nations whose distinctive cultural inheritance centers on political symbols and political stories with nations whose cultural inheritance centers on language and stories about ethnic origins." His point, however, is that "it is unreasonable and unrealistic to interpret this contrast as a distinction between the rational attachment to principle and the emotional celebration of inherited culture." ¹⁹ Therefore, taking into account the critical (but unacknowledged) role played by a shared cultural substratum need not lead us to discard the dichotomy of civic and ethnic forms of nationalism.

In this paper, rather than problematizing the dichotomy of civic versus ethnic directly from the inside, I suggest dissolving the dichotomy by adding a third term to the debate: "modernist nationalism." This does not mean that I accept the categories of ethnic and civic to be non-problematic; as the arguments outlined above indicate, there are good reasons to approach the ethnic/civic dichotomy critically. That, however, is not the same as dispensing with the categories of that dichotomy altogether. Neither Kymlicka nor Yack argues that the civic/ethnic dichotomy is irrelevant; their objection centers on the idealization of the former and demonization of the latter as if they are completely opposite models of the nation with nothing in common. In other words, what they object to is the uncritical, ideological use to which the ethnic/civic dichotomy is put rather than the analytical benefits that can follow a careful use of that dichotomy.

My aim in introducing a third category is to approach the issue from a different angle and problematize the exclusive and restrictive character of the canonical dichotomy of ethnic versus civic nationalism by creating a new space within which the experience of some non-European societies can be conceptualized. Introducing a third space can break up this dichotomy's self-enclosed conceptual economy. The critique of the civic versus ethnic dichotomy from the outside supplements critiques that confront it immanently by questioning the very terms on which the dichotomy is predicated.

It may be useful at this point to differentiate the terms "modernizing" and "modernist" in terms of their implications for nationalism. Ethnic nationalism can be modernizing in so far as it advocates the development of the country by means of modern science and technology, rational administration, and industrialization. Roughly, this constitutes the well-known ideology of developmentalism which had such an immense impact in the twentieth century. Modern science and industry can be, and indeed have been, appropriated as instruments in the service of ethnically motivated nationalisms. By contrast, modernist nationalism internalizes the "West" not only instrumentally and pragmatically but also "ideologically" by proclaiming the categories of its identity structure as universal and progressive. 20 The aim of the modernist Turkish nationalists, for example, was not limited to industrialization and economic development, but included the desire to create "civilized," Westernized, modern subjects.21 Modernist nationalism encompasses modernization, but requires more: it entails the appropriation of a cultural model that presents an identity schema that is compiled mainly from the experience of advanced industrial European societies. It is in this particular sense that modernism requires a more extensive commitment than modernization: while the latter is a matter of practical and historical exigency, the former contains a fundamentalist project of providing a new, progressive, secular and rational identity.

But what gives rise to a modernist form of nationalism in the first place? Should the modernist character of Turkish national identity be considered an anomaly in the chronicles of nationalism? Or is there perhaps a historical pattern (ignored by many histories of nationalism) that we can uncover by studying the national identity formation in Turkey? I would like to suggest that the Turkish case gives us a chance to reconsider the broader issue of the double disenfranchisement of non-colonized, non-European societies.

Nationalisms of the "Third World:" The Dilemma

By most accounts, nationalisms of the "Third World" are problematic phenomena. The historical conditions that give rise to them also impose an internal contradiction upon them: it is argued that nationalism in the non-European world is forced to embrace simultaneously the conflicting agendas of cultural authenticity on the one hand, and modernization on the other.²² Ernest Gellner characterizes the dilemma that was initially experienced by the nationalists in Eastern Europe (a dilemma that later became the hallmark of Third World nationalisms in general) as an opposition between the prerogatives of Westernization and populism:

Most underdeveloped societies, confronted suddenly with an irritating and humiliating technical economic superiority on the part of some outsiders, face two options that might be expressed this way: we can imitate them so that we will be as strong as they are and can send them back where they belong, or we can reaffirm our own values.²³

In other words, nationalist elites face the challenge of implementing reforms for modernizing their country and at the same time confirming the authenticity of their national culture. While the first prerogative leads to the acceptance of Western institutions, norms and technology, the second leads toward the opposite direction: the valorization of the local, particular, religious, traditional and authentic. In his depiction of two types of nationalism John Plamenatz similarly argues that "Eastern" nationalism experienced the dilemma of either modernizing (which involves acceptance of an alien culture) or remaining loyal to the local, authentic culture at the cost of continued submission to a Western power. Thus, in Plamenatz's view, Eastern nationalism is deeply contradictory: it is both imitative and, at the same time, hostile to the model it imitates.²⁴

Partha Chatterjee, for his part, also picks up on this dilemma and uses it to argue that nationalism in the non-European world is a derivative discourse that embodies an enduring uneven relationship of power between the newly independent colony and the colonial power it sought to get rid of. He asks,

Why is it that non-European colonial countries have no historical alternative but to try to approximate the given attributes of modernity when that very process of approximation means their continued subjection under a world order which only sets their tasks for them and over which they have no control?²⁵

Arguing that "it is not just military might or industrial strength, but thought itself, which [has the power to] ... dominate and subjugate," atterjee tries to write the genealogy of nationalistic thought in the non-European world, to locate it within the dialectic of culture and colonial power and to expose its implicatedness in continuing forms of domination. In short, there is general agreement that the dilemma of modernization versus authenticity is symptomatic of all Third World nationalisms.

Linking Colonialism, Resistance²⁷ and Modernist Nationalism

Rather than disputing this account of the dilemma of non-European nationalisms directly, I would like to argue that there is a distinctive historical relationship that has to hold in order for the dilemma outlined above to emerge and shape the particular nationalism of a country. It appears that the stronger a country is vis-à-vis the colonial powers, the more modernist it can afford to be in its nationalism. Or, inversely, the more forcefully a society is subjugated by a colonial power, the more strongly it tends to generate an ethnic type of nationalism. In the former case, modernist elites tend to focus their efforts on pushing the reforms needed to restructure their society in the image of the "West," whereas in the latter case the elites are more concerned with the project of articulating and expressing cultural authenticity and national distinctiveness. The dilemma attributed to all non-European nationalisms is most relevant for societies that had the most traumatic colonial experience, and less relevant for societies that were able to avoid direct colonial rule. When the dilemma is strong, nationalism tends to be ethnic, whereas when the dilemma is weak (or more manageable), nationalism tends to be modernist or, in some cases, civic. In contrast to the former case, in which the assertion of ethnic and cultural difference is central, the latter case is characterized by a relative lack of pressure to assert ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. Consequently, in those societies where the dilemma is not strongly felt, modernity can be embraced not just instrumentally and pragmatically, but ideologically as well: instead of being an instrument in the service of an ethnically conceived nation, modernity then becomes a goal, underlying the self-definition of the members of the nation.

There is something surprising about the proposed relationship between absence or presence of colonial rule and the kind of nationalism it tends to generate: one would perhaps expect that the stronger a country is in resisting direct colonial domination, the stronger it would be in repelling modernism (which would be dismissed as an ideological extension of colonialism). But the opposite seems to be true: the more successful a society is in resisting direct colonial rule, the less problematic it finds the adoption of a Westernist project of modernization. The more pervasive the subjugation of a society to a colonial power is, more vigorously it tends to seek its authenticity and the stronger it pushes for modernization. It is because these two potentially conflictual aims are sought *simultaneously* that the dilemma becomes so profound and tormenting. Yet nationalists who seek modernization may not necess-

arily be modernists: although they may be willing and, indeed, eager to adopt modern science, industry and technology, they may not aspire to impose upon themselves a modernist identity schema. They may espouse Westernization instrumentally and pragmatically, while refusing to commit themselves ideologically and culturally.

At this point, it may be necessary to register a peculiar reduction that pervades most accounts of nationalism, including Chatterjee's. Throughout his review of the literature on nationalism, as well as in his theoretical pronouncements, Chatterjee tends to equate "non-European" with the "colonial." His casual equation of these two terms, however, creates a disenfranchisement for those non-European countries (mostly ex-empires themselves) which were not directly subjugated under colonial rule. The Ottoman Empire, Russia and China come to mind as examples. All of these powers were threatened by European hegemony, and were obliged to suffer modifications of their sovereignty, without, however, being systematically colonized. It is because the category of non-European cannot be collapsed into the category of ex-colony that one needs a different vocabulary to talk about these other experiences. Modernist nationalism is a category that can help us to conceptualize nationalism in non-colonized, non-European societies. In these cases which puncture the reductionist equation of the non-European world with the colonized societies, the dilemma (taken to be universal for non-European nationalisms) loses both its historical centrality and its conceptual privilege.

Because they fall outside of two canonical dichotomies *simultaneously*, the non-colonized, non-European societies suffer a double disenfranchisement: they fall outside of the dichotomy of ethnic versus civic nationalism, on the one hand, and the dichotomy of colonial power versus colonized society, on the other. Having been imperial powers themselves (subjugating various peoples and imposing their versions of imperial order with varying degrees of success and durability), these countries were able to resist direct or prolonged colonial subjugation. Hence, their historical experience differs markedly from the ex-colonies. The common tendency to equate non-European with the colonial obliterates the space within which these cases can be conceptualized. The significance of the category of "modernist nationalism" is that it provides a space within which the historical experience of non-European and non-colonized societies can be articulated.

In the rest of this paper, I will try to make a case for modernist national identity by focusing on the genesis and implications of modernist national identity in Turkey.

Statism and Self-Inflicted Modernization in Turkey

Rather than aspiring to be an ethnocentric project of authenticity, Turkish national identity was a modernist project of total cultural transformation. Hasan Negruz's story, which was narrated at the beginning of this article, is a striking illustration of the primacy that the concern to be modern had in the constitution of Turkish national identity. In the preceding section, I argued that the absence of direct colonial

domination is the primary factor that accounts for the modernist character of Turkish national identity. But that absence itself needs an explanation. In this section I will argue that Turkish nationalism was formulated without the trauma of a direct colonial presence largely because of aggressively pursued policies of defensive modernization. The statism of the dominant social actors in Ottoman and (until recently) Turkish history was the driving force behind the process of self-inflicted modernization. The progressively radicalizing waves of self-inflicted reforms were directly motivated by the elites' desire to save the state from extinction.

There is general agreement on the idea that the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic are both characterized by a strong "state tradition." It has been argued that the Ottoman Empire was "a country with a long tradition of a dominant state controlling the social fabric of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic empire." The traditional Ottoman social order of the classical period (1450–1600) was based on the idea of the Circle of Justice on the one hand and the Millet system on the other. The Circle of Justice constituted the core of the official Ottoman ideology for state legitimation. The Millet system, for its part, provided a specific blueprint for the organization and integration of different social and ethnic groups in the Empire.

The Circle of Justice posits effective state power as the most fundamental precondition for justice in society. In this understanding, society is regarded as incapable of regulating itself without state's guardianship. The Circle of Justice's primary goal was not to achieve consensus among the subjects but to create a harmonious social order. Whereas consensus implies the articulation and negotiation of autonomous societal interests, harmony is a systemic property that is generated by the emasculation and subordination of these autonomous interests to the higher interest of the social order whose guardian is the state. As Inalcik notes, "harmony among men living in society was achieved only by statecraft, which kept each individual in his proper place." Society, in its actual diversity, is regarded as being incapable of regulating itself without the state's guardianship. Because society cannot reproduce itself with self-generated rules and regulations (*i.e.* through civic consensus), it has to be prescribed and enforced on order from above. Thus the state is given the crucial role to regulate social groups whose otherwise potentially chaotic and conflictual interests would be ruinous for social order.

The Millet system provided the organizational schema that brought the ideology of the Circle of Justice to life. Various ethno-religious communities coexisted side by side in the Millet system, integrated by their vertical relationship to the Ottoman state. The ordinary subjects who constituted these ethno-religious communities (Millets) were called Reaya.³⁴ The "upper layer" of society, on the other hand, was called the Askeri class and, in turn, was divided into military and civil-bureaucratic segments. In order to prevent conflicts between the different communities of Reaya, Millets were subjected to an exclusive, vertical integration with the state. "The chief concern of the medieval government was to maintain the general order while keeping each 'order' within its traditional boundaries both spatially and socially." The

state's position above the Reaya gave it the role of a regulator whose particular interests did not correspond to the interests of any of the Millets. Instead, the state's vested interest was in the maintenance of the Millet system that guaranteed its dominance. In short, classical Ottoman political conception was highly state-centric: justice was envisioned as the product of an unchanging order of Millets whose guardian was the state.

The Circle of Justice model, which envisioned order and stability within a basically unchanging social structure, underwent an important transformation with the onset of the modernization effort. Whereas the classical age was characterized by an emphasis on the durability of the established sociopolitical order, modernization efforts created a vision of *order-in-progress*. As the Ottomans were faced with a serious challenge from the West, the state's traditional importance and indispensability acquired a new dimension: both order *and* progress became indispensable for securing the state's survival. "In the mind set of Tanzimat intellectuals, progress replaced order" as the overriding concern. In addition to the conception of state as a "benevolent father," there now emerged the modernizer state fighting against backwardness of the country and striving to "educate" its people.

The only way out of this chaos was, as Young Turks saw it, to strengthen the state apparatus and launch a series of cultural and economic reforms to modernize the social and political structure... Thus, Young Turks ended in the dictatorship of a small group which fully utilized the state to achieve those ends. The age-old autocratic traditions were continued on behalf of the state.³⁷

The emphasis, in the modernization era, shifted from the durability of the sociopolitical order to the adaptations required for "catching up" with the West. In short, while the state's traditional role as the guardian of a perennial and just social order waned during the modernization era, its centrality was renewed as the agent of order-in-progress.

In the Ottoman experience, the initial spur for reforms was the need to re-establish military parity with the European powers. The fact that the Ottoman state belonged and operated in the European inter-state system had a crucial impact on Ottoman modernization. The main motive of the Ottoman state elites in initiating reforms from above was to remain competitive in this inter-state system. "Without direct coercion from European states, [modernization was] regarded by the Palace as an inevitable step in the direction of the strengthening of the Ottoman State." Because the increasingly radical waves of reforms were designed to ensure the survival of the state, "the answer to the question 'How can this State be saved?' determined the method and degree of Westernization." Consequently, it is not surprising that first reforms were those that dealt with reforming the military establishment: the formation of new corps, founding of new military schools and academies *etc.* "Even in early 18th century, the issue of bringing West's military institutions and military power to the [Ottoman] Empire has become a major problem of State." Military

reform was followed by administrative reform (establishment of the interior and foreign ministries, new schools for providing the staff to these ministries, forming of permanent diplomatic representation in European capitals, *etc.*), which in turn ushered in a whole array of other cultural and political reforms.⁴¹

The Elite/Counter-Elite Dynamic

The Ottoman modernization movement started with the reforming of the inner sanctum of the Ottoman state: the military and bureaucracy. Reforming these groups necessitated the establishment of new state schools for breeding reformist state elites. "Taking over the French model of 'Grandes Ecoles,' the 19th century Ottoman reformers succeeded in producing a well-trained, knowledgeable bureaucratic elite guided by a view of the 'interests of the state'."42 This resulted in the gradual creation of a new group of elite, different from its predecessor because of its Westernized education. Yet, they were too driven by a sense of deep lovalty to state and a fierce desire to save it. They defended and proposed new reformist measures to further protect the Empire from destruction. The new elites "in time became the servants of the State rather than those of the sultan [representing the old governing elite]... The sultans could now be disposed in the name of the state."43 The establishment of state schools producing a new type of reformist elites, coupled with the perceived need for defensive modernization, led to the generation of an elite/ counter-elite dynamic in which the elites of the center clashed with each other over their opposing views of how to save the state. New counter-elites (i.e. Young Ottomans of the mid nineteenth century and Young Turks of the twentieth century) started to challenge the legitimacy of the governing elite with recourse to the same reformist tradition of which they were the products. This entailed a love/hate relationship with the state and the formulation of conflicting versions of the cultural model to be adopted.

The counter-elites of the Ottomans were authoritarian in their claims to positive knowledge (which they would use to save the state), and their appropriation of the state (to the exclusion of other social groups). A positivist understanding of social engineering provided the basis of the new group's claim to power during the modernization era. Social engineering was part of the Ottoman state tradition because "integration from the top down by imposing regulations had been the general approach behind Ottoman social engineering." Furthermore,

The ideology of loyalty to the state was one which permeated all classes in the Ottoman Empire ... N. Kemal and his friends [statist reformers and counter-elites] were former bureaucrats. It is while they were part of the Ottoman administration that they have been fired with the zeal to awaken "the nation." By the same token, they were determined to save the state.⁴⁵

It is for this reason that "when [for example] Abdulhamit II dismissed the Ottoman parliament indefinitely within a year of its establishment [in 1878], Young Ottomans did not incite one another to revolt. On the contrary, they accepted administrative posts under his despotic rule." They had such a strong loyalty to the state that they at times refused to rebel in the name of "the general interests of the state" (especially during times of foreign problems) despite their hatred of, and relentless attempts to overthrow, the governing elite. As Kushner points out,

The opposition group which sprang up in the 1860's and came to be known as the Young Ottomans, resisted the heavy hand of the Tanzimat leaders and objected to some of their policies, but it was essentially a rivalry within the "family" and most of them eventually made their peace with the Sultan.⁴⁷

They also took refuge, in troubled times, in the state institutions (i.e. the bureaucracy, the state schools, etc.) of which they were the product. After all, the Young Ottomans and Young Turks were made what they were by the state through education in state schools (usually with scholarships) and through employment in the bureaucracy. The state gave them their prestige, their careers and their identity; it gave them their raison d*etre. Consequently, they considered themselves to be the true servants of the state; the only ones who could save it from destruction and to bring it back to its glory days.

The Dualist Reform Tradition

Ottoman reformism resulted in a dualist structure wherein the traditional and modern institutions operated side by side, without interpenetration. Instead of reconstructing and refurbishing old institutions, the dominant tendency of Ottoman reformers was to institute new ones parallel to, yet unconnected with, old ones:

Civil and commercial courts against Shari'ah courts, Darulfunun and various modern schools against the [traditional] Medreses were founded. The method [of Ottoman reformers] is clear: the coexistence of the new alongside the old ... The only exception to this is the Army.⁴⁸

This dualist structure provided the conditions for the possibility of a more radical and total project of reform, culminating, by the first decades of the twentieth century, in demands for a civilizational conversion: the "19th century is a century of cultural dualism [for Ottomans] ... It is this painful situation that lead Young Turks and later Republicans [to] search for successful radical solutions." By hindering the articulation of the local with Western institutions and cultural forms, the dualist reform tradition led to the experience of modernity as imported, inauthentic particularity. The potential modernity of the local and traditional was thereby discouraged. Reduced to an import from the West, modernity experienced problems in developing roots; a cultural model that does not find points of articulation with local dynamics and traditions runs the risk of remaining static and cumbersome. Lacking internal

dynamism or vitality, it owed its continuing existence, in the Turkish case, to imposition of the state from above.

In the political arena, the dualist reform tradition led to an ideological polarization: traditionalists ("reactionaries") on the one hand, and modernists ("progressivists") on the other. The inability to transform tradition from the inside led to the importation of ever new (Western) cultural forms and their imposition from above. New reformist cadres, being raised in the old statist tradition and educated in the new Western-style institutions, initiated increasingly more radical reforms without an obligation to incorporate aspects of the traditional. This, in turn, led to the appropriation of ever larger segments of the West's particular historical experience as a norm to be adopted by Ottoman society and imposed upon its cultural and political practices. The reason behind the gradual marginalization of the Ulema (traditional clergy) and its relegation to a "reactionary" position is to be found in the lack of an internal transformation of tradition, on the one hand, and the lack of an articulation between the newly introduced institutions with more traditional ones, on the other.

Kemalists: Modernizing Statist Elites of the Republic

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic was established in 1923, and a new group of elite, known as Kemalists (named after their leader Kemal Ataturk), came to power. They showed a significant continuation with the Ottoman "reformist tradition," despite the modifications that they introduced with respect to the specific formulation of their cultural model. Basically, they were "heir[s] to the reformist legacy, with reformism widely understood as the successful adoption of Western forms." More specifically, Kemalist elites continued the statist orientation that was characteristic of the Ottoman elites.

The Young Turks and Kemalists, although very different from the traditional Ottoman bureaucrats, since they were trained in secular schools to become adepts of Western ideas, were heirs to the old patrimonial tradition which assumed the dominance of state over civil society and reserved the monopoly of legitimacy and authority to state elites ⁵²

Kemalists shared the progressivist, reformist and positivist ideology of Tanzimat reformers and Young Turks. Their perspective on society was conditioned by a statism that privileged the state the instrument for realizing their modernist reform agenda. As Gole notes, Kemalists' "yearning for development has generally been in accordance with the main ideas of the Young Turks: it envisions change within order." This, in turn, underlines the importance of the state as the agency both to spur change *and* to ensure its "orderliness."

The ranks of Kemalists consisted of military officials, bureaucrats, journalists and intellectuals. As typical "elites of the center," many of them had been pre-eminent in the "affairs of the state" during Ottoman times also. A faction of the former

Ottoman governing elite, Kemalists formulated the reforms that they deemed necessary to raise the country to the "level of contemporary civilizations." The period in which they were most influential was the single-party era during which the Republican People's Party (RPP) reigned uncontested, from 1925 to 1946. The Republican People's Party's privileged hold on power came to an end in 1950 when the Democrat Party won the national elections.

The presence of a strong state tradition and the lack of direct colonial rule enabled Kemalists to embrace a profoundly modernist national identity project without having to give in to the demands of the periphery. For the statist elites the mobilization of the periphery never presented a compelling necessity. Thus, they chose not to compromise with the periphery by granting it political rights or by institutionally recognizing its cultural, religious and ethnic heterogeneity. In other words, the state elite's formulation of the cultural model of "modern society" and "modern nation" proceeded autonomously, via intra-elite contestation, with little input from the periphery. Consequently, the preoccupation of Turkish elites with the question of authenticity was far milder than it was, for example, in India, where the issue of cultural difference *vis-à-vis* the British colonial rulers was of fundamental importance. While Gandhi was urging elites to speak the language of the people and adopting policies that institutionalized linguistic diversity, elites in Turkey were busy teaching the people how to properly speak the kind of reformed Turkish they were busy producing.⁵⁴

The problem of the cultural specificity of the adopted "Western" cultural model (whose details will be analyzed in the following section) was resolved, at least on the discursive level, by reference to its universality. Although the content of the reforms was borrowed from the "contemporary civilization" of the West, this was not regarded as a problem. It was argued that what was being transferred consisted of the "universal principles of rationality, positive sciences and objective knowledge," which happened to be embodied by Western societies at the time. Kemalists justified their dramatic reforms with recourse to a discourse empowered by the notions of rationality, universality and modernity.

The resistance of significant segments of the population to some of the modernist reforms was dismissed by the Kemalists, who attributed it to the ignorance of the people, who were "neglected" by previous governing elites. It was argued that resistance to reforms caused by this ignorance could be overcome by secular education and positive sciences. Thus, it was argued, the intellectuals had to assume the role of vanguards and fulfill their historic mission to "carry the torch of Enlightenment to the people." The idea of "neglect" is interesting because it not only reveals the humanist discourse of Enlightenment which powered Kemalist thinking, but also indicates their statist orientation: neglect is the result of state's failure to watch after, administer and educate "its" people. The concept of "neglect" implies a "Silent Other" that is inert and passive; an Other that has no agency of its own but rather is acted *upon*, shaped and transformed by the will of the state. Kemalists, like

the Ottoman reformers before them, thought that reforms were good and necessary for the people, even if people resisted the attempts to educate, enlighten and civilize them. In the discourse of "neglect" one finds statism deeply intertwined with the modernist discourse of universality, humanity and rationality.

For modernist elites, state came first, followed by modernization and lastly by nationalism in the hierarchy of concerns. Nationalism was a means to achieve modernization; modernization was a means to save the state. Throughout the nineteenth century, Ottoman reformers pursued their modernist projects without presenting them in a national format. They instead variously tried Ottoman citizenship (a multi-ethnic and multi-religious polity with a constitutional monarchy) and Islam as containers of their reformist projects. It was only with the founding of the Republic in 1923 that a national format was adopted to pursue the modernist effort. "Nationalism [in Turkey] operated as a modernizing ideology and practice." National identity was an "artifice" of the state tradition adapted to the requirements of the prevalent mode of globality at the time, which required the exercise of state sovereignty in the modular nation-state form. In Turkey, the national state emerged without a nation and without any elite attempt to incorporate the local, particular and popular in the making of a nation. It was construed by a state intent on making a nation in the image of a "civilized, Western" society.

In short, the statist orientation of Ottoman/Turkish modernizing elites presents a dynamic separating it from most "Third World" experiences which were shaped by direct colonization. In the Ottoman/Turkish experience the process of modernization-as-Westernization was, by and large, a self-inflicted process. "Rather than being the result of external coercion, Westernization was the product of an internal decision." It progressively radicalized and culminated in an ambitious attempt at wholesale civilizational conversion. Statism and absence of direct colonial rule made possible the construction of a national identity that was primarily modernist in character. The issue of ethnic identity was relegated to a secondary position in the ideology of Republican nationalists: concerns with ethnic identity and nationalism were, by and large, subordinated to the dictates of the overall project of modernity. That project, in turn, was understood as a total civilizational conversion that involved the redefinition of the norms regulating both the formal sphere of institutions and the informal sphere of everyday life practices.

Constructing the "West:" The Selective Articulation of a Cultural Model

In this section, we will elaborate on statism's implications for modernist national identity. Specifically, we will explain what exactly constituted the substance of "modernist identity schema" and how it was generated. In delineating what modernist identity came to include, we will see how the idealized "West" as a cultural model was pieced together in a highly selective fashion. We will dwell on the particular ways and particular biases with which the substance of the modernist national

identity was formulated and review the concrete steps taken to bring this modernist identity to life.

The self-inflicted process of modernization operated with the selective construction of a cultural model of the West: "Turkish elites have constantly measured their achievement according to their resemblance to the European model (or, rather, their image of what it is)." Taking the West as an archetype for reformist projects did not automatically entail a certain, self-evident cultural model. On the contrary, that cultural model had to be constructed gradually and selectively. This was a process of the selective construction of the "West" by its Other, the "West" as it was constructed by a competing culture bent on self-inflicted modernization. Reform movements involved the forceful imposition of a cultural model that was selectively articulated from the experience of Western European societies. Hence, in substance, "Ottoman reform movements [were] identical to Westernization." As Timur argues, Ottoman modernization operated with an a priori model of (modern) society derived from the historical experience of the West:

The process [of modernization] which started with Tanzimat... has not been the product of a spontaneous, internal and autonomous development as it has been in the West. A model of society which was the product of a process under different social conditions and social structure was embraced and implemented in our society. In other words, in Ottoman society, in contradistinction to the West, the starting point [for reform] was an a priori model.⁶⁰

The Ottoman approach to the process of modernization-as-Westernization was initially pragmatic.⁶¹ But what started out as an attempt at limited reform in certain institutions eventually culminated in a much broader movement for total cultural and political overhaul of the Ottoman state and social order. Initially, the "West" was regarded as exemplary only in its material civilization (*i.e.* positive sciences, modern technology and industrial production). But once the modernization process took off with reference to the "West," new counter-elites (especially the new breed of bureaucrats educated in "Westernized" educational institutions of the Empire) began making similar references to the "West" but with strategic modifications that were geared to the legitimation of their particular claims to state power.

The cultural model was gradually expanded to include the "spiritual and intellectual" aspects of Western civilization in addition to its material aspects. This eventually resulted in the rejection of reformist positions that did not go all the way. A prominent reformist of the Young Turk movement, Abdullah Cevdet, gives us a typical example of this view: "There is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization, and it must be imported with both its roses and its thorns." Celal Nuri Bey was equally certain regarding the direction and magnitude of the required reforms:

With the reforms, Turkish society has broken away from Asia and joined Europe. Our program is to unconditionally join European civilization. Our revolution [inkilap] is

not an original revolution. What we do is to adopt a certain civilization and to convert to it. Our duty consist of conversion [ikbas]. With what methods has progressive Europe attained this level of development? Our job is to adopt these tried and proven methods in their entirety.⁶³

The founder of the Republic, Ataturk himself, did not find it problematic to "identify 'civilization' with the culture of Europe, contrasting it to what he said was the backwardness, ignorance, and obscurantism of the common people of Turkey. He actively promoted a 'modern' Turkey that embraced the civilization of Europe as its inspiration and model." Hence, what started out as pragmatic adjustments to the challenges posed by the European inter-state system eventually led to a project of total cultural transformation. The reform movement initiated by Young Ottomans became more and more ambitious throughout the nineteenth century. The Kemalist elites turned the modernist effort "into a large-scale, deliberate attempt to take a whole nation across the frontier from one civilization to another." In other words, the substance of modernist reforms was transformed to include a whole way of life; a civilization in its entirety.

The crucial turning point in the radicalization of the reformist movement came with the establishment of the Republic in 1923. Tekelioglu remarks that "although a strong Westernizing movement had already swept the Empire, it was nevertheless only with the advent of the Turkish Republic that Westernization took the form of a consistent, carefully planned state policy."66 Similarly, Belge draws attention to the changing character of the reformist effort: "The formula until the Republic [is] 'taking the science and technology of the West but retaining our own spirituality [maneviyat] and values'; after the Republic, it gets radicalized and leads to the wholesale adoption of Western civilization."⁶⁷ It is therefore not surprising that the majority of the Republic's reforms targeted the cultural realm (and in particular public symbols and the practices of everyday life) as much as political institutions. In 1924, the Caliphate was abolished along with Islamic schools and religious courts. Sects and religious orders were banned in 1925. The following year, the Swiss civil code and the Italian penal code were adopted. In 1928 the clause referring to Islam as the religion of the Turkish state was removed from the constitution. Reform of calendar (1926), of units of measurement (1928) and, most importantly, of alphabet (1928) took place in short order. The Latin alphabet replaced the Arabic and "it became unlawful to use the Arabic alphabet to write Turkish."68 The Gregorian calendar replaced the Ottoman lunar calendar and the metric system was adopted. The year 1925 witnessed the introduction of a new dress code by which the wearing of religious attire was prohibited (except by authorized religious staff in their houses of worship). Similarly, with the "hat revolution" of 1925, fez and sarik, the traditional headgear, were proscribed as "uncivilized," and the wearing of "Sapka" or Western-style hats became mandatory for men.⁶⁹ In 1932, the Republic ordered the call to prayers [Ezan] to be made in Turkish rather than in Arabic. Sunday, instead of Friday, was made the official day of rest in 1935.

The status of women was another major symbolic as well as practical issue for the Kemalist regime. Women were given the right to vote first in municipal elections (1930) and then in national elections (1934). In 1934, they also became eligible for being elected to the National Assembly. But the Kemalist cultural policy did not aim to achieve merely the formal "emancipation" of women. The granting of civil and political rights was only the legal/ political aspect of reform. The Kemalists zealously promoted the public visibility of women. Women were encouraged to pursue professional careers and institutions of the state (especially educational institutions) were used to increase the number of women in public life. The new regime also promoted the public intermingling of sexes; a policy that sharply contrasted with the traditional Islamic preference for the public segregation of sexes.⁷⁰

Religious and traditional titles and appellations used in the Ottoman system were replaced by the uniform and homogenizing categories of *bay* (Mister) and *bayan* (Missus). The idea of the fundamental equality of citizens, introduced by the French Revolution, ⁷¹ was accepted by the Turkish modernists and used to effect a "uniform incorporation" by which recognition of the ethnic, linguistic and religious heterogeneity of the population was avoided and indeed suppressed. Turkish Republicans were interested in creating a "modern society" in which all the citizens not only would be equal, but would be *equally modern*. The Turkish state's policies of discrimination were primarily directed against cultural differences (most notably generated by Islamic groups) that were discordant with the vision of a secular, modern Republic.

As part of its cultural policy, the Republican regime closed down the Oriental Music Section of the Daru'l-Elhan (the *conservatoire*-like institution) in 1926 and banned the broadcasting of Turkish music on the radio in 1934. The radio ban on Turkish music lasted for 20 months, and was eventually replaced by the comprehensive censorship of the state radio and television agency, TRT. Instead of Turkish music, the public was encouraged to listen to Western classical music: In an effort to teach the people to enjoy polyphony, elegant light examples of Western music were played not only on the radio, but also in other public areas of life, for example on the vessels of the Turkish Maritime Lines and at government-sponsored ballroom dances." In 1935, the Republican regime instituted a Presidential Symphony Orchestra and the following year the State Conservatoire was established. In short, the character of the reform policies strongly suggests that the Republic's orientation was primarily towards wholesale cultural transformation rather than the establishment of a unique identity based on ethnic difference and cultural authenticity.

Secularism was the cornerstone of the Kemalist construction of the cultural model. Islam had a crucial impact on Kemalist elite's negative perception of the Ottoman past. The main axis of Republican nationalists' self-differentiation from the Ottoman past was constituted by the dichotomy of modern (*i.e.* secular) versus traditional (*i.e.* religious). It is difficult to explain the Republic's determination and eagerness to demolish the Islamic elements of the *ancien régime* by reference to ethno-racial

nationalism. In principle, ethno-racial nationalism should easily be able to accommodate such religious elements or relics of the *ancien régime*: as part of the common cultural heritage they could even be used to generate social cohesion. But the new Republican regime was openly hostile to any and all such religious elements and tried very hard both to control⁷⁶ and to repress⁷⁷ them. Consequently, unless the modernist rather than ethno-racial character of the new Republic's nationalism is recognized, it is impossible to explain why the Republican nationalists moved so swiftly and decisively against all things religious. The exceptional hostility of the new regime towards religion becomes intelligible only with reference to the modernist nature of Kemalist nationalism, which regarded religion as the main obstacle to progress, rationality and modern civilization.⁷⁸

The way in which the cultural model of the "West" was constructed led to a strongly modernist definition of the identity of the "nation:" "The [Kemalist] nation ... was imagined as the embodiment of civilized values. Defined in opposition to the Islamic past, it would be a secular and rational nation." Clearly, a project that defines the nation first and foremost as a secular and rational entity privileges a modernist identity schema over concerns with ethnic purity and cultural authenticity. Militant nationalism in the Turkish case involved militant secularism. This vision of a secular and rational nation reveals the modernist character of the project of Turkish national identity which Kemalism pursued.

The Turkish nationalists' self-identification was based on a fundamental rejection of the Ottoman *ancien régime*: Kemalists posited the revolution as an absolute break with the past and adopted policies to eradicate the political and cultural remnants of the past. "What was being attempted by the Republican elite was no less than the annihilation of the past. The new nation and state were born out of this fundamental disavowal ... [the Republic] emerged as *a state without history*." ⁸⁰

The Soviet and Chinese cases offer certain parallels to the Turkish experience so far as the modernist elements in their nationalism are concerned. In the Soviet Union, socialism provided a strongly universalist type of "national ideology." The binary oppositions like capitalist versus socialist, progressive versus backward and revolutionary versus reactionary, which constituted the matrix of socialist thinking, are unmistakable indicators of a modernist understanding. The aspiration to create a common universalist Soviet culture was paramount even though the Soviet Union was founded on the recognition and institutionalization of different ethnic nations into republics. Taylor notes that "the complaint that Marxist-Leninist communism has been an alien imposition on all equally, even on Russia itself." Despite later episodes of Russification, the attempt to create a common, universal (socialist) culture along modernist lines was never quite abandoned.

The Chinese revolution's attack on the vestiges of the Manchu dynasty⁸⁵ is akin to the Turkish and Soviet animosity against, and a desire to break with, their own *ancien régimes*. The most striking similarities between the Turkish and Chinese revolutions were in the cultural realm. In both regimes, symbolism of dress, hair and

headgear was used as the sign of allegiance to the new regime and its reforms. The banning of pigtails and the introduction of a uniform dress code in China were remarkably similar in intent to the banning of fez and of religious attire in Turkey. Similarly, the promotion of women in public life and the glorification of healthy new generations as the guardians of the reforms were other points of similarity.⁸⁶

Modernist Nationalism, Authoritarian Reforms and Participatory Democracy

Most of the Kemalist reforms were concerned with regulating the symbolic vocabulary of everyday life by rigorously monitoring and policing the public sphere. While symbolic elements and life style choices were pre-eminent in the construction of the "Western" cultural model for the Republican elite, democratic rights for the free expression of cultural, political and ethnic differences were repressed. Belge notes that "the Westernist intellectual felt himself to be far ahead of society when he waltzed, but has kept a backward position compared to the West regarding issues such as rights to unionize."87 Democracy and political rights were, however precariously, part of the cultural model: they signified political modernization and, as such, had a place within the overall package of modernization. As Karpat indicates, political "liberalization ... was a step aimed at achieving political Westernization democracy." 88 Yet, in the Turkish experience, the interplay between the cultural model of the West and democracy (which constitutes an integral part of that cultural model) has an inherent tension: the adoption of a specific part of the cultural model (i.e. democracy) can be detrimental to its overall success (i.e. modernity). Therefore, it is not surprising to observe that, while commitment to democracy was maintained as a matter of principle (as a prescription of the cultural model), it was suspended in practice for long periods of time. Although Kemalists "thought that democracy is the best regime, they have nevertheless continued to think that politicians cannot be trusted."89 This also explains the reason why "it was not admitted [by the Kemalists] that popular government was ipso facto legitimate government,"90 despite the fact that Kemalist discourse paid lip service to a populist conception of sovereignty. It was argued that democracy has be to postponed until conditions are ripe for its exercise; until the cultural model is realized and Turkey becomes civilized and modern just like the European nations.

The statist drive behind the construction of the cultural model was in effect the very motivation for the *de facto* bracketing of political rights and democracy. Constantly contested and reformulated, the articulation of this cultural model was never a completed process. Yet, throughout the Republican era, the statist orientation of the modernist elites tended to disregard individualism, on the one hand, and political rights and participation, on the other. The substance of the selectively constructed cultural model of the West came to include positive sciences, modern technology, industrialization, secularism and a "Western" dress code but not necessarily participatory democracy or individual rights. The potential autonomy of civil

society was suspect because it could interfere with the imposition of the project of modernization (especially with respect to its secularist aspect). The "temporal" suspension of democracy was justified primarily with a discourse of the need to enlighten and educate the ignorant masses, who were in their present state unqualified for exercising their democratic rights.

The omission of democratic rights from the cultural model of the West reveals the reluctance of the elites of the center to blend their reformist projects with local dynamics and popular demands; it reveals their lack of a non-repressive engagement with the periphery. "By arguing that the nation and the state are constantly under threat ... [Kemalists] restricted modernization by excluding its emancipatory aspect." Reformist elites found it easier to impose a certain dress code or civil law from above than to recognize the full legitimacy of political rights that would open the polity up to the contestation of various groups comprising the periphery.

This produced a pattern of authoritarian reformism which found the implementation of the cultural model of the West at odds with one of its potential components: democracy. The dialectic of modernity (*i.e.* reforms) versus democracy has to be understood in the light of the statism of the nationalist project of modernity. It is this dynamic which explains the frequency both of the "transition to democracy" (that signifies Kemalist elites' willingness to enter electoral competition) *and* of the "interruptions of democracy" (that signify Kemalist elites' "intolerance to democracy") as was exemplified by the military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980. The unfinished state of the modernist project and the heavy legacy of statism make the tension between modernity and democracy still a crucial dynamic in Turkish society today.

Conclusion

In this paper I have argued that the canonical dichotomy of ethnic versus civic nationalism needs to be supplemented with the category of modernist nationalism. I have demonstrated that the dilemma of choosing between authenticity and modernization which is considered to be a general characteristic of all Third World nationalisms applies only to those cases which underwent direct colonial rule. The experience of non-colonized, non-European countries in general, and the Turkish case in particular, points toward the need to employ a different set of terms to analyze their historical experience. Modernist nationalism, I argue, provides one such crucial term that can help our understanding of these cases.

The paper has concentrated on Turkish nationalism as a strong instance of the understudied category of modernist nationalism. I have argued that the Turkish national identity project was grounded not in an assertion of ethnic or racial purity, but in a modernist agenda of total social and political metamorphosis. In other words, rather than aspiring to be an ethnocentric project of authenticity, Turkish nationalism was a modernist project of total cultural transformation. Turkish national identity

was construed along modernist rather than ethno-racial lines because the ruling elites were first and foremost concerned with saving the state. The self-inflicted nature of modernization and the absence of colonial rule were the main determinants for the emergence of a modernist form of national identity. While there is general agreement in the literature that a strong state tradition is a critical variable to understand Ottoman/Turkish politics, seldom is the link made between the strong state tradition and the character of emergent Turkish nationalism.

I concluded by indicating the source and nature of the historical conflict between Westernization and democracy in Turkey. I have suggested that the problems of democratic participation and political rights are not the results of insufficient Westernization, but rather stem from the top-down imposition of Westernization by state elites for the people and despite the people. Within the context of nation-building, the tension between Westernization and democracy can best be understood as an immanent characteristic of modernist nationalism itself.

NOTES

- S. Kinzer, "Asleep in the City's Dust, Martyrs, Lions and Saints," New York Times, 3
 December 1997, p. 4.
- H. Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (New York: Macmillan, 1944); Nationalism: Its
 Meaning and History (Malabar, FL: Krieger, 1965); J. Plamenatz, "Two Types of
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 (London: Edward Arnold, 1976), pp. 23–37; H. B. Davis, Towards a Marxist Theory of
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 Journeys into the New Nationalism (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1993).
- A. D. Smith, National Identity (Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1991), pp. 116– 118
- 4. Kohn, Nationalism: Its Meaning and History, p. 20
- 5. Smith, National Identity, p. 13
- 6. W. Kymlicka, "Misunderstanding Nationalism," Dissent, Winter 1995, pp. 130-138; B. Yack, "The Myth of the Civic Nation," Critical Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1996, pp. 193-212; E. Foner, The Story of American Freedom (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998); T. Kuzio, "The Myth of the Civic State," paper delivered at the Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, New York, 13-15 April 2000.
- 7. Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism," p. 27
- 8. Ignatieff, Blood and Belonging, p. 185
- 9. Ignatieff, Blood and Belonging, pp. 7-8
- 10. See also T. Narin, "Breakwaters of 2000: From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism," New Left Review, No. 214, 1995 p. 103, on this point.
- 11. Yack, "The Myth of the Civic Nation."
- 12. Ibid., p. 208
- 13. Kymlicka, "Misunderstanding Nationalism," p. 133
- 14. Yack, "The Myth of the Civic Nation," p. 198
- 15. Ibid., p. 197
- 16. Kymlicka, "Misunderstanding Nationalism," p. 131
- 17. *Ibid.*, p. 132

- 18. *Ibid.*, p. 132
- 19. Yack, "The Myth of the Civic Nation," p. 197
- 20. The suggested differentiation of modernism from mere modernization can be met with skepticism. The question could be raised as to whether nationalism is not already a modern phenomenon as such? In other words, one could ask, "What is the use of distinguishing between 'nationalism as a modern phenomenon' and 'modernist nationalism' proper?" The difference between "nationalism as a modern phenomenon" and a specifically modernist form of nationalism is similar to the difference between modern painting and modernist painting. While "modern painting" refers to a whole collection of different styles and understandings united by their epochal boundedness, "modernism" refers to a particular style within modern painting which has its own distinctive stylistic conventions. Nationalism (and specifically "nation-form") mimics the character of "modern painting" in so far as it depicts a certain epoch within which different forms of nationalism flourish. Modernist nationalism, by contrast, is a specific kind of nationalism which, while using the nation-form as the container of its expression, offers a substantially different vision of the "nation" than ethnic or civic nationalisms. In other words, just as modern painting includes different currents like cubism, tribalism, modernism and the like, so does nationalism—as a modern phenomenon—encompass different kinds of nationalisms; ethnic, civic and modernist. Modernism is no more reducible to modernization than modern painting is reducible to modernist painting.
- 21. In the Turkish experience, being a modern subject entailed not only literacy and urbanization but also a militant secularist attitude, a certain dress code, preference for polyphonic Western music, use of the Latin script, incorporation of women into the public sphere by professionalization and a series of interrelated reforms aimed at transforming the cultural fabric of the nation. We will take this up in a later section where the radical reforms that Kemalist nationalists adopted will be discussed.
- 22. P. Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse? (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1986).
- 23. E. Gellner, "The Turkish Option in Comparative Perspective," in S. Bozdogan and R. Kasaba, eds, *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1997), p. 235.
- 24. Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism".
- 25. Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, p. 10
- 26. Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, p. 11
- 27. What is meant by "resistance" here is not the resistance of various groups and individuals to a colonizing state but the resistance of an "indigenous," non-colonized state to colonial powers. In other words, "resistance" here refers to the experience of those countries that avoided direct colonization by a European power.
- 28. The argument presented so far should be qualified with a caveat. Any scholar who is sensitive to the extreme complexity of such a major historical phenomenon as nationalism would be compelled to recognize that the absence of sustained colonial domination is unlikely to be the *sole* factor determining the modernist character of the nationalist identity project. I would like to argue that, while the absence of colonial rule may fall short of providing an exhaustive explanation, it is nonetheless the major dynamic that steers these nationalisms in a modernist direction. To gain a more complete understanding of the situation, the relationship between colonial presence and modernist national identity needs to be supplemented with a consideration of a set of contextually specific factors such as tribal networks, religious solidarity, geostrategic peculiarities, difference in policies adopted by colonial powers, *etc.*

- 29. For example in Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, p. 18
- S. Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" Daedalus, No. 102, 1972, pp. 169-191; H. Inalcik, "Turkey between Europe and the Middle East," Foreign Policy, Vol. 7, 1980, pp. 12-21; A. J. Toynbee, "The Ottoman Empire's Place in World History," in K. Karpat, ed., The Ottoman State and Its Place in World History (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 15-34; M. Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey (Walkington: Eothen Press, 1985); B. Toprak, "The State, Politics, and Religion in Turkey," in M. Heper and A. Evin, eds, State, Democracy and the Military: Turkey in the 1980's (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), pp. 119-137.
- 31. Toprak, "The State, Politics, and Religion in Turkey," p. 119.
- 32. The formula of the Circle of Justice is as follows: the maintenance of the state requires an army, the maintenance of the army requires wealth, wealth is produced by the Reaya (subjects), the Reaya needs justice in order to produce, and justice is sustained by the state (S. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought; A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962). It is important to note here that justice (adalet) includes Kanuns (i.e. secular laws of the ruler) as well as the Shari'ah (i.e. religious law). It is a generic concept that embodies a whole range of principles organizing the social as well as political realm.
- 33. H. Inalcik, "The Nature of the Traditional Society: Turkey," in R. Ward and D. Rustow, eds, *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 3.
- 34. Millets were also characterized by a significant degree of segmentation, with respect to occupation, geographic location, race, ethnicity, etc.
- 35. N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), p. 133.
- 36. C. Meric, "Batilasma," Cumhuriyet Donemi Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1983), p. 237
- 37. K. Karpat, *Turkey's Politics; The Transition to a Multi-party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 443.
- 38. V. Gunyol, "Batililasma," Cumhuriyet Donemi Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1983), p. 256.
- 39. T. Z. Tunaya, "Batililasmada Temel Arastirmalar ve Yaklasimlar," Cumhuriyet Donemi Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1983), p. 238.
- 40. S. Mardin, "Baticilik," Cumhuriyet Donemi Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1983), p. 245.
- 41. The Edicts of Tanzimat (1839) and Islahat (1856) were the two major constitutional reforms that attempted to restructure the political, economic and social life of the Empire in the nineteenth century.
- 42. Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations," p. 302.
- 43. Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey, p. 35.
- 44. Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations," p. 305.
- 45. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, p. 398.
- 46. Ibid
- D. Kushner, The Rise of Turkish Nationalism (1876–1908) (London: Frank Cass, 1977),
 p. 5.
- 48. T. Z. Tunaya, "Osmali-Bati Diyalogu," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Turkiye Ansiklope-disi*, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1985), p. 143. Even the army was not a complete exception to this rule: from the founding of the Nizam-i Cedid corps by Selim III (1792) until the abolition of the Janissaries by Mahmud II (1826), the army displayed a dual

- structure of the modern versus the traditional; each with its own command and control structure, recruitment policy and field practices.
- 49. L. Ortayli, "Batililasma Sorunu," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Turkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1985), p. 138.
- 50. See S. H. Rudolph and L. Rudolph, *Modernity of Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), for an alternative in the context of the Indian experience.
- 51. C. Keyder, State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development (London: Verso, 1987), p. 141.
- 52. A. Kazancigil, "The Ottoman-Turkish State and Kemalism," in A. Kazancigil and E. Ozbudun, eds, *Ataturk: Founder of a Modern State* (London: C. Hurst, 1981), p. 48.
- 53. N. Gole, Muhendisler ve Ideoloji: Oncu Devrimcilerden Yenilikci Seckinlere (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayınları, 1986), p. 64.
- 54. The Republican regime not only changed the alphabet from Arabic to Latin in 1928 because the latter was more "modern," but also instituted a systematic effort to "reform" the language through the introduction of a newly invented vocabulary. Basically, this entailed an effort to discard "Eastern" (i.e. Arabic and Persian) words and phrases.
- 55. C. Keyder, Ulusal Kalkinmaciligin Iflasi (Istanbul: Metis, 1996), p. 116.
- 56. Ortayli, "Batililasma Sorunu," p. 137.
- 57. One should note that modernist nationalism, while providing the locomotive of Turkish social change, did not preclude experimentation with, and occasional valorization of, a fabricated ethno-racial past. Though invented in a particularly banal and internally inconsistent fashion, elements of ethnic nationalism still found their way into the official discourse and gained a limited, but nonetheless significant, visibility. The fact that they have been less influential than modernism in shaping the direction and substance of reform policies of the Republic is the reason why Turkish nationalism should nonetheless be characterized as a modernist project. Regarding the superficiality and offhandedness in the fabrication of Turkish nationalistic myths, see C. Keyder, "Whither the Project of Modernity? Turkey in 1990s," in S. Bozdogan and R. Kasaba, eds, Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1997), p. 45, and A. Kadioglu, "The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 32, No. 2, 1996, p. 166. The various inconsistencies in the attempt to fabricate ethno-nationalistic myths stem from an attempt to combine ethnic substantiation of identity with the imperatives of territorial nationalism. The narrative of migration of Turkic peoples from Central Asia to Asia Minor, for example, is clearly inconsistent with another narrative that asserts that all previous civilizations in Anatolia (Hittites, Assyrians, Urarts, etc.) were essentially Turkic.
- 58. K. Robins, "Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe," in S. Hall and P. du Gay, eds, *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), pp. 67-68.
- 59. M. A. Kilicbay, "Osmanli Batililasmasi," Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1985), p. 148.
- 60. T. Timur, "Osmanli Batililasmasi," *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Turkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1985), p. 139.
- 61. Ortayli, "Batililasma Sorunu," p. 137
- 62. Cited in D. A. Rustow, *Turkey: America's Forgotten Ally* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1987), p. 14.
- 63. Quoted in Meric, "Batililasma," p. 237.
- 64. E. Hooglund, "The Society and its Environment," in H. C. Metz, ed., *Turkey: A Country Study* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1996), p. 74.

- B. Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968),
 p. 3.
- 66. O. Tekelioglu, "The Rise of Spontaneous Synthesis: The Historical Background of Turkish Popular Music," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 1996, p. 200.
- 67. M. Belge, "Cumhuriyet Doneminde Batililasma," Cumhuriyet Donemi Turkiye Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1983), p. 260.
- 68. Hooglund, "The Society and Its Environment, p. 93.
- 69. S. Mardin, S., "European Culture and the Development of Modern Turkey," in A. Evin and G. Denton, eds, *Turkey and the European Community* (Opladen, Germany: Leske Verlag & Budrich, 1990), p. 20.
- 70. See N. Gole, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Harbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), for an excellent discussion of the issue of women as the touchstone of Westernization in the Ottoman—Turkish context.
- 71. Similarly, in France the complex and hierarchical system of appellations of the old regime was replaced by the simple *citoyen* and *citoyenne*. See W. H. Sewell, "Le Citoyen/La Citoyenne: Activity, Passivity and the Revolutionary Concept of Citizenship," in C. Lucas, ed., *The Political Culture of the French Revolution*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1988), pp. 105–124.
- 72. S. D. Salamone, "The Dialectics of Turkish National Identity: Ethnic Boundary Maintenance and State Ideology (Part I)," East European Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1989, pp. 33–62, and "The Dialectics of Turkish National Identity: Ethnic Boundary Maintenance and State Ideology (Part II)," East European Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1989, pp. 225–249.
- 73. Tekelioglu, "The Rise of Spontaneous Synthesis," p. 195.
- 74. Ibid.
- 75. Ibid., p. 205.
- 76. The Directorate of Religious Affairs and Directorate-General for Pious Foundations were established in 1924 with the aim of instituting state control over religion.
- 77. By eradicating the office of the Seyhulislam (1924), by outlawing religious orders and sects (1925) and by restricting the display of religious symbols in public places.
- 78. In their profound hostility towards religion the Kemalists and Jacobins were quite similar. The Kemalists' abolition of the religious orders and sects and the seizure of their lands and properties is analogous to the Jacobins' confiscation of the lands of the Church and their desire to discredit and dishonor the clergy. Not only were the French and Turkish states ideologically committed to crippling religious organizations and sentiments, they also materially took advantage of them.
- 79. Robins, "Interrupting Identities: Turkey/Europe," p. 70.
- 80. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69. The parallels to the French Revolution are remarkable: "The nation, as it emerged in the French Revolution, was the site and the subject of a radical break in history, one perhaps best symbolized by the new calendar that started time over again with a new Year One that began with the declaration of the French Republic." Sewell, "The French Revolution and the Emergence of the Nation Form," pp. 23-24. One also observes a similar tendency in the Soviet and Chinese experiences.
- 81. While it may be debatable whether French, Soviet or Chinese nationalisms are unequivocally modernist, it is indisputable that modernism constitutes at least a major strand within them. Even when it does not constitute a "pure type," modernist nationalism can still be helpful for our understanding for the experience of nationalism in the non-European world. The purpose of alluding to these cases is to suggest certain parallels among the Turkish, Soviet and Chinese experiences. Due to space limitations, a detailed comparative analysis cannot be attempted here. The following remarks are meant to be suggestive for further study.

- 82. Suny argues that "Soviet Russia was conceived not as an ordinary national state but as the first state in a future multinational socialist edifice ... For communists of the civil war period, internationalism was less the servant of the Soviet state than the Soviet state was the servant of internationalism" (R. G. Suny, The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993], p. 85). This, in turn, rested on the idea that ethnic "nationalism reflected only the interests of the bourgeoisie, that the proletariat's true interests were supranational" (Suny, The Revenge of the Past, p. 87). The ultimate irony here is that, rather than being a melting pot in which ethnic identities would be bracketed and universal, socialist identities would be valorized; "the Soviet Union became the incubator of new nations" (Suny, The Revenge of the Past, p. 87).
- 83. C. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in A. Gutmann, ed., Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 43.
- 84. In addition to the similarities stemming from their modernism, the Soviet and Turkish experiences are also similar in terms of the historical circumstances of their formation during the 1910s and 1920s: neither Soviet nor Turkish statesmen were burdened by the shadow of prolonged colonial rule, even though both faced imminent external threats to their survival. Modernist elites in Turkey waged the War of Independence (1919–1922) against Greece (backed by Britain, France and Italy), while the Soviet Union had to face the military campaign of the counter-revolutionaries supported by the Allies roughly during the same period (1917 to 1922). In addition, both countries were characterized by the heritage of a strong imperial state ruling over multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations. Remarkably, both the Ottoman and Russian Empires embarked on self-inflicted processes of defensive modernization (intensifying in the course of nineteenth century) to counteract the rising power of Western European states.
- 85. Mainly blaming Confucianism, superstition, a highly inegalitarian social stratification and a corrupt imperial bureaucracy for the backwardness of the country.
- 86. Although played out in different ways, language reform was another common concern of the Turkish and Chinese regimes. Simplification of the characters in China and the changing of the script from Arabic to Latin in Turkey were remarkably similar in intent. Overall, despite some moves in the direction of Sinocization, modernism constituted a major streak within the Maoist reforms and consequently had a significant impact in shaping Chinese national identity.
- 87. Belge, "Cumhuriyet Doneminde Batililasma," p. 263.
- 88. Karpat, Turkey's Politics, p. 331.
- 89. Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey, p. 72.
- C. H. Dodd, The Crisis of Turkish Democracy (Beverley, England: Eothen Press, 1983), p. 63.
- 91. Keyder, Ulusal Kalkinmaciligin Iflasi, p. 143.