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The Turkish Identity Politics of Modernisation: Islam and the West

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor

Trondheim, January 2012

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
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***Yedigün,* No 329, June 27, 1939, coverphoto**

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Happy is the one who calls himself a Turk
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 1933

Happy is the one who can call himself a Turk
Ahmet Yildiz, 2001

It is not enough to be a Turk to be happy
Abdurrahman Dilipak, 1991

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Children Aurora, Alberte and Magnus

I thank you all for making this research possible

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Introduction

The thesis is part of the larger research program *Imagining the West—Perceptions of the Western Other in Modern and Contemporary Eastern Europe and Turkey*, with the objective of understanding the construction of Eastern "selves" and Western "others".[1]

The aim and claim of this dissertation is to show that the Turkish identity politics of modernization did not construe the West as Turkey's "other". The image of the West was as multifaceted as the West itself, ranging from totalitarianism to democracy, while the "Turkish self" varied from Muslim reformism to westernized liberalism. Thus the Turkish identity politics granted historicity to the concept of the West and resisted a simplistic characterization of early republican history as that of an East-West divide.

These images of Turkey and the West were articulated by public intellectuals. Journalist and foreign correspondent Hüseyin Cahit argued in favor of keeping the Caliphate on the basis of democracy, reporting from a totalitarian Europe. Minister of Justice and Muslim scholar Seyyid Bey claimed Islam to be a promoter of progress, finding the Caliphate to be an anachronism in the age of nationalism. Novelist and journalist Sadri Ertem as well as Muslim thinker Iskilipli Atif protested against imitation of the West as false modernity. Publisher and Editor Sedat Simavi domesticated modernity through the lifestyle magazine *Yedigün*. Peyami Safa, author, translator and bestselling novelist, brought existentialism to fiction. These public intellectuals have spoken with multiple voices of modernity from the non-West.

Based on the selection and exploration of source material covering the fields of political, social and cultural history, four ultimate questions are asked and answered: Is Islam compatible with modernity? Yes. Does modernization equal westernization? No. Can modernity be domesticated? Yes. And is authenticity possible in modernity? No.

The answers might differ, but the questions are of equal relevance today.

[1] György Péteri, *Imagining the West – Perceptions of the Western Other in Modern Contemporary Eastern Europe and Turkey,* project description, Norwegian University of Technology and Science, 2005

Presentation of the articles

Writing a PhD in history as a collection of articles rather than a monograph is still untraditional, although this is becoming more and more common in the humanistic sciences. Three reasons influenced my choice, all of which were related to motivation:

- The possibility of feedback from the international academic world during the process of research: assurance that the work is of an international standard provides an unsurpassed impetus to move forward.
- The psychological effect of reaching milestones: writing a dissertation is a long way to travel, while measuring progress makes the destination seem closer.
- The possibility of attracting a readership: Journals make research accessible to a larger audience.

The four articles that constitute this dissertation are all centered on the common theme of Turkish identity.

Article I: *The Caravan Moved On—and We Were Left Behind at the Mountain: The Abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924.* Islam was held responsible for Turkey's backwardness by President Mustafa Kemal's regime, which equated modernity with the West. The Caliphate, the very symbol of the collective identity between the state and society, was willingly sacrificed to "catch up with contemporary civilization" (i.e. the West). Abolishing the Caliphate rendered the Muslim society secular by constitution. The article discusses the legitimacy of the abolishment, its consequences, and the potential for things to have been otherwise: ultimately a question of Islam's compatibility with modernity understood as democracy.

Article II: *Kemalism on the Catwalk: the Turkish Hat Law of 1925.* Once the old identity had been displaced, the provisions of the republican revolution were almost all related to diminishing the social and political role of Islam in favor of wholesale westernization, including the passage of the Hat Law. The law required that traditional headgear, the fez, be replaced by the western hat. In subsequent days, more than 800 people were arrested for violating the law, nearly 60 of whom were executed. By this legislation, the individual head became a political site of identity construction. The article maps multiple reactions to the

legislation and gives voice to rival and contrasting interpretations of modernity from within the Muslim and westernized establishment alike.

Article III: *Domesticating Modernity—the Turkish Magazine Yedigün 1933–1939* takes a leap 10 years forward, to a time when the Muslim voices had been effectively silenced but alternative voices from within the westernized elite were still audible through the columns of *Yedigün*. *Yedigün,* a primary source hitherto unexploited in historical research, proved a unique site for investigating the domestication of modernity in Turkey through appropriation and conversion. By dissociating modernity from a crumbling Europe and a totalitarian Kemalism, *Yedigün* broadened the criteria for identification with modernity.

Article IV: *The Fact of Fiction and Turkish Modernity: Peyami Safa's novel "It was an Evening", (Bir Akşamdı) from 1924*. The article presents a twofold discussion: how, in times of momentous change, novelists and intellectuals produced works that fictionalized the state of the nation, as well as an exploration of the novel itself as a cultural artifact of Turkish modernity, addressing concerns of inferiority, belatedness and authenticity. Through an allegorical reading of Safa's novel, depicting the fate of the nation as a ménage à trois with Turkey caught in a polygamous relationship with the Orient and the Occident, multiple Turkish selves and western others are given voices that ultimately drown in the wave of modernity.

Publication status

Article I: *The Caravan Moved on—and We Were Left behind at the Mountain: The Abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924* is currently being reviewed for publication in *International Journal of Islamic studies.*

Article II: *Kemalism on the Catwalk: the Turkish Hat Law of 1925* has been published in *Journal of Social History: Societies & Cultures,* volume 44, number 3, spring 2011, pp. 707–729.

Article III: *Domesticating Modernity—The Turkish Magazine Yedigün 1933–1939* has been accepted for publication in *Journal of Contemporary History,* to be published in July 2012.

Article IV: *The Fact of Fiction and Turkish Modernity: Peyami Safa's novel "It was an Evening", (Bir Akşamdı) from 1924* is currently being reviewed for publication in *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies.*

Scope and demarcation

Within the grand narrative on the emergence of modern Turkey[2] and the passing of traditional society[3], the proclamation of the republic in 1923 and the death of President Mustafa Kemal in 1938 constitute the dominant periodisation—possibly the most studied period in Turkish history. As early as 1991, Erik Jan Zürcher noted the general feeling that "all that is worth saying has been said."[4] Still, the period continues to represent the formative years with respect to defining what should be the new Turkish identity. And originality continues to be the PhD candidate's obligation. How then, to generate new knowledge of the Turkish identity politics of modernization?

This attempt to fulfill the requirement consists of choosing a thematically rather than chronologically ordering principle; selecting and exploring sources such as Parliament protocols, scholarly work, media and literature; and combining perspectives as well as analyzing the interrelationship between the fields of political, social and cultural history.

The first article describes how the old identity was displaced; the second article how the new identity was approached as a matter of external imitation through sartorial westernization. Domestication of modernity in social life is the subject of Article III, while Article IV describes the final stage of modernity as intrinsic to the trajectory of individual lives. However, the interrelation of the articles' subjects is not one of consecutive stages in a chronological development of Turkish modernization: the first and the last of the articles are both concerned with events that took place in 1924. Thus stages must rather be understood in the theatrical sense, with multiple actors of modernity performing on the political, social and cultural stages of the early Turkish republic. The interrelation of the articles is further discussed in the section *Synthesizing the analysis…,* which concludes this chapter.

[2] Bernhard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey,* Oxford University Press, 1961
[3] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East,* New York, 1958
[4] Erik Jan Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the early Turkish Republic-the Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925*, Leiden, 1991, page 2.

Perceptions and images generated in different societal fields were compared at the cost of comparing variation within each field. The constitution of 1924 could have been compared with the constitutions of 1908, 1961 and 1981, mapping the development of democracy over time. The dress code regulations imposed in Turkey in 1925 could have been compared with the similar secularization program launched by Reza Shah in Iran[5] or the situation "of the Muslim minorities in Bulgaria".[6] The weekly magazine *Yedigün* could have been compared with other Turkish magazines or with the Turkish press as such, showing how the press was crucial to the working out of questions of continuities and breaks between empire and republic.[7] Finally, it would have been very interesting to compare Peyami Safa's book *It was an evening* from 1924 with Sartre's *Nausea* from 1938, as both brought existentialism to fiction in their answer to the search for identity and the loss of traditional values caused by the societal upheaval of war, nationalism, and modernity.

The aim of this dissertation however has been to demonstrate the richness and complexity of Turkish history. A history accessible only through the Turkish language. My own experience from learning Turkish as a foreign language is in line with Tor Andræ's beautiful metaphor of a garden surrounded by a high fence. Once you get over the fence, you can pick whatever flowers you like.[8] The fence was the Arabic language, and the garden the Sufi garden of myrtles; in my case, the Turkish language and the Ottoman garden of tulips. Whether the tulips were there before I climbed the fence is beyond the scope of this dissertation to prove.

[5] Toruaj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher (editors), Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah, New York, 2004
[6] Mary Neuburger, *The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Moderen Bulgaria,* Cornell University press, 2004
[7] Gavin D. Brockett, *How happy to call oneself a Turk: Provincial newspapers and the negotiation of a Muslim National Identity,* University of Texas, 2011
[8] Tor Andræ, I myrtenträdgården: Studier i sufisk mystik, Stockholm, 1947

Related work

The *Türkischer Geschichtskalender* by Gotthard Jäschke was the point of departure for the literary research conducted for my dissertation.[9] Jäschke (1894–1983), an expert on modern Turkish law and politics, received his diploma in Turkish at the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen in Berlin 1914, and was part of the German Orientalist milieu—that is, Orientalist in its proper sense, with reference to academics who study Islam and the Ottoman Empire—an Orientalism that "helped to destroy Western self-satisfaction".[10] An academic interest in the modern Islamic world coincided with a pro-Islamic German foreign policy toying with the thought of a German–inspired Holy War "as a powerful weapon against the colonial powers…"[11] Jäschke's works are an invaluable source to any scholar interested in the early Turkish republic, and acclaimed as an "unrivalled authority on the Turkish independence movement" by Erik Jan Zürcher, author of *Turkey: A Modern History*.[12] The book was first published in 1993. Described by a reviewer as "comprehensive, reliable and fast-moving", the book has been reprinted eight times, with revised editions in 1997 and 2004.[13] Today a widely used textbook in universities in the USA, the UK, the Netherlands and Turkey—translated into Turkish, Dutch, Greek, Italian, Arabic, and Indonesian—it is now the standard English-language account of modern Turkish history.

Cautious not to fall victim to applying "an essentially positivistic view of historiography", however, I immediately acknowledge my choice as biased in spite of its status as a standard reference, as is of course the book in question.[14] First of all, the book has a political emphasis, thus downplaying the importance of social and cultural themes to an understanding of the historical development of modern Turkey. More importantly, the book has a strong bias toward focusing on continuity rather than change, noted as "a rather unusual assessment of

[9] Gotthard Jäschke: Das osmanische Sceinkalifat von 1922, in Die Welt des Islams, New Series, Volume 1, Issue 3, 1955, pp 195-228, Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege- Türkischer Geschichtskalender für 1918-1928, in *Die Welt des Islams,* Volume 10, 1927-29, pp 1-154, Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege -Türkischer Geschichtskalender für 1931-1932, in *Die Welt des Islams,* Volume 15, 1933, pp 1-33, Der Islam in der neuen Türkei, eine Rechtsgeschichtliche Untersuchung, in *Die Welt des Islams,* New Series, Volume 1, 1951, pp 1-174
[10] Suzanne Marchand, German Orientalism and the Decline of the West, in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* Volume 145, Number 4. December 2001, pp 465-473, page 465.
[11] Gottfried Hagen, German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies, in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* Volume 24 Number 2, 2004, pp 145-162 , p 149
[12] Erik Jan Zürcher, The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism, in *International Journal of the Sociology of Science*, Volume 137, 1999, pp. 81-92, p. 81
[13] Daniel Pipes, review of "Turkey: A Modern History", in the *Middle East Quarterly,* June 1995, p 381.
[14] For a discussion of the phrase originally coined by John H. Goldthorpe, see Ian S. Lustick, 'History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias', in *The American Political Science Review,* Vol. 90, No. 3 (Sep., 1996), pp 605-618, page 608

the historical development of Turkey…" by Frank Tachau in his review of the book for *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*.[15] The emphasis on continuity is evident from the very structuring of the book. The proclamation of the republic in 1923, and the death of Mustafa Kemal in 1938, which is the dominant periodisation applied in Turkish historiography, is not applied by Zürcher. Instead, he divides his modern history of Turkey into three: 1789–1908, 1908–1950 and 1950–1991. The periodisation itself an expression of his critical stance to the Kemalist regime's effort to establish 1923 as a point zero in time from which the new Turkey could be built, freed from its Ottoman past.

Donald Quartet's review for the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* and Daniel Pipes' for the *Middle East Quarterly* exemplify how the appreciation of Zürcher's book is consistent with the author's own hypothesis and evaluations of what shaped modern Turkish history.[16] While Quartet admires Zürcher's critical assessment of the early Turkish republic, and finds "the treatment of the Kemalist one-party state, 'dictatorship', stimulating", Pipes finds Zürcher's text a reflection of "the anti-Turkish biases regretfully so prevalent among Europeans". Pipes expresses his wish that the author had rather "celebrated the Republic of Turkey as a success story and as a model for the Muslim world to emulate", because "The Turks need that boost; and the outside world very much needs for them to succeed in their bold, Atatürkist experiment."

But Quartet laments Zürcher's implicit treatment of the Turkish republic as an inevitable outcome of the Ottoman Empire and its dissolution: "an already-too-prevalent assumption among Balkan and Middle Eastern specialists and the readers of their works—namely, that the Ottoman Empire really was just a Turkish empire after all… ". In Quartet's eyes, this makes him complicit, albeit unwillingly, in a "trivialization of the Ottoman past". This topic is further elaborated by L. Carl Brown, who questions the Turkishness of the Ottoman experience by examining the perceptions and parallels of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkan and the Middle East.[17]

[15] Review of Turkey: A Modern History, by Frank Tachau in *International Journal of Middle East Studies ,* Vol. 27., no 2, May 1995, 253-255.
[16]Review of Turkey: A Modern History by Erik J. Zürcher, London 1993, by Donald Quartet in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 22, No 1/2, (1995), pp 190-192, review by Daniel Pipes in the *Middle East Quarterly,* June 1995, p 381.
[17] L. Carl Brown, *Imperial Legacy, The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East,* New York, 1996.

Zürcher does not however omit the importance of the Balkans to the identity of the Ottoman Empire or Turkey as its successor state. Re-situating Turkey in the Balkans as a European province of the Muslim world is the topic in Brian Silverstein's outline of the genealogy of the Turkish present.[18] Enlisting the similarity in state traditions, skepticism toward liberalism and the desire to "harness the social to political projects", Anna Frangoudaki and Caglar Keyder's book *Ways to modernity in Greece and Turkey – Encounters with Europe 1850-1950* points out the similarities and convergences in the response to modernization between Greece and Turkey.[19] Questioning the Turkishness of the Turkish experience, Silverstein and Frangoudaki/Caglar can thus be read as a strengthening of Zürcher's argument of continuity between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish republic with respect to "European-ness" as modernization.

Zürcher's balanced account is in my opinion an admirable and highly inspirational achievement in making the complexity of modern Turkish history readable without reducing its linguistic riches. Regarding my choice of Zürcher's book as "the narrative from above" informing all the articles in the dissertation, I find his emphasis on continuity the most relevant framework in my effort to evoke the historicity of modern Turkey.

Evoking the historicity of modern Turkey is ultimately an assessment of the potential for things to have been otherwise. Abolishing the Caliphate was the first step in the top-down secularization policy of the Kemalist regime, regarded as necessary to modernize Turkey and "catch up with contemporary civilization". The constitutional change stripped Islam of its constitutional backing and reciprocally stripped the state of backing from its Muslim constituency. Islam's conception of democracy through constitutionalism is the topic of the volume edited by Said Arjomand, *Constitutional Politics in the Middle East-With Special Reference to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan*.[20] Mehmet Fevzi Bilgin's essay in this volume, *Constitution, Legitimacy and Democracy in Turkey*, which focused on the democratization of the post-coup Constitution of 1982, was most helpful both to broaden my

[18] Brian Silverstein, Islam and Modernity in Turkey: Power, Tradition and Historicity in the Europeans Provinces of the Muslim World, in *Anthropological Quarterly,* Volume 76, Number 3, Summer 2003, pp. 497-517, p 502.
[19] Anna Frangoudaki and Caglar Keyder (editors) *Ways to modernity in Greece and Turkey – Encounters with Europe 1850-1950,* Tauris, New York, 2007
[20] Said Arjomand (ed), *Constitutional Politics in the Middle East-With Special Reference to Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan,* Hart publishing, Oxford and Portland Oregon, 2008

analysis of the constitutional change in 1924 and in offering a constructive conceptual framework.

Noah Feldman's book *The fall and rise of the Islamic state* examines the balance of power in the classical Islamic constitution, and how Muslims were provided political and legal justice within this system.[21] His primary concern is the intersection of religion and politics in the present-day Middle East. In his search for a viable historical model to support those voices within the Muslim establishment who seek to strike a balance between Islam and democracy, he provides a thorough history of the Caliphate. As to the consequences of its abolishment, Feldman argues that the cosmopolitan Ottoman identity thus stripped of its constitutional backing, paved the way for ethnic nationalism.

It is exactly this development of a Turkish national identity, from religious through secularism to ethnic and racist motives, which is the topic presented by Ahmet Yildiz in his book *Happy is the one who can call himself a Turk: the ethno-secular boundaries of Turkish National Identity*.[22] The title of the book is already a clue to the author's critical stance toward the identity politics of the Kemalist regime: based on the proverb coined by Mustafa Kemal himself, "Happy is the one who calls himself a Turk", Yildiz highlights the limited access to claiming Turkishness and makes an important contribution to the new anti-nationalistic trend in Turkish historiography. Yildiz's argument is nuanced if not contradicted by Soner Cagaptay, who claims that religion continued to play a role in defining Turkishness: a definition that made it possible for the non-Turkish Muslims to become Turkish, thus impossible for Kurds to be recognized as a distinct ethnic group with minority rights.[23] While this argument makes sense in promoting an understanding of how the Kemalist regime legitimized the assimilation policy toward the Kurds, the pro-Islamic "extra canon" of Turkish historiography does not support Cagaptay's claim that Islam molded Kemalist nationalism.

Modern professional historical scholarship grew up alongside the nation-state, "with a civic mission to teach citizens to contain their experience within nation-centered narratives", and

[21] Noah Feldman, *The fall and rise of the Islamic state,* Princeton, 2008. Feldman is professor of law at Harvard Law School, and a senior adjunct fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, USA.
[22] Yildiz, Ahmet: *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene – Türk Ulusal Kimliginin Etno-Seküler Sinirlari 1919–1938,* [Happy is the one who can call himself a Turk: The Ethno-Secular Borders of Turkish National Identity, 1919–1938], İletişim Yayinlari, 2001, Istanbul, page 13
[23] Soner Cagaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey,* Routledge, New York, 2006

Turkish historiography was no exception.[24] Its commitment to the nation state, as defined by the Kemalist regime, disinherited Turkey from its Ottoman past, first and foremost the traditions and institutions of Islam. Between 1923 and 1946, hardly any works on Islamic subjects were published, apart from official publications by the Ministry for Religious Affairs. The major change occurred after the military coup in 1980; when the military regime launched its Turkish-Islam synthesis, the renewed interest in the Ottoman past enabled Islamist writers to publish their works. Tolerance and freedom of expression reached a climax during the liberal presidency of Turgut Özal, an important result of which "(ironically, since most Turkish intellectuals despise Özal and all he stood for) was a virtual renaissance in the historiography of the Turkish Republic." [25] Following the so-called renaissance in Turkish historiography, the humanities that had been left uncovered or deemed unimportant in comparison with political and socioeconomic developments were opened up and included in the field of history.[26] Today, the very concept of Turkish culture is being scrutinized and multiculturalism has become a legitimate focus.[27]

Tracing the genealogy of contemporary Islam in Turkey, writers such as Sadık Albayrak, Hüseyin Hasan Ceylan, Ismail Kara and Kadir Mısıroğlu have provided scholarly publications on the "forgotten" subject of Islam. Silverstein notes how Islamist writers "intend their work to be a continuation of the project of modernist Islamic critique that [these] scholars active at the demise of the Ottoman empire were engaged in… fully conscious that these late Ottoman writers were deeply influenced by their own social and political environment..." including western European intellectual currents.[28] Simultaneously, concerned with "methodological debates about the nature of sources and interpretation", these Turkish intellectuals are echoed in the writings of Tariq Ramadan, in his effort to develop a "conception of how Muslims should balance their Islamic and their European commitments" by suggesting a new

[24] David Thelen, The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History, in *The Journal of American History,* Volume 86, No. 3, A special Issue, Dec. 1999, pp. 965-975.
[25] Howard Eissenstat, History and Historiography: Politics and Memory in the Turkish Republic, in *Contemporary European History*, Volume 12, Number 1, 2003, pp. 93-105, p. 100
[26] Deniz Kandiyoti and Ayşe Saktanber (editors), *Fragments of Culture – The Everyday of Modern Turkey,* New York, 2003
[27] Ahmet Ö. Evin, Origins and Development of The Turkish Novel, Bibliotheca Islamica, Minneapolis, 1983, Catharina Dufft (ed.), *Turkish Literature and Cultural memory – 'Multiculturalism' as a literary theme after 1980,* Harrassowitz, 2009
[28] Brian Silverstein, Islamist Critique in Modern Turkey: Hermeneutics, Tradition, Genealogy, in *Comparative studies in Society and History,* Volume 47, Issue 1, 2005, pp- 134-160 Sadık Albayrak, *Türkiye'de Din Kavgası,* Araştırma yayınları, Istanbul, 1990, Hüseyin Hasan Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi - Din/Devlet İlişkileri,* Rehber Yayınevi, Ankara 1990, Ismail Kara, *Türkiye'de İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, Kitabevi. Istanbul, 1997, Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform – Islamic Ethics and Liberation,* Oxford, 2009, Kadir Mısıroğlu, Kurtuluş Savaşında Sarıklı Mücahitler, Sebil Yayinevi, Istanbul, 1990

methodology that makes it possible for scholars in religion and the natural sciences to work together. [29]

The Turkish works have been of great value to this dissertation, not least because of the transliterations and translations into modern Turkish (from Ottoman script), and the inclusion of original archival material in facsimile, while Ramadan's book *Radical Reform* provided valuable insight into the a posteriori approach of the Hanafi School that inspired the advocates of Islam and modernity as a democratic combination in the early Turkish republic.

The publishing house İletişim Yayınları was founded with an outspoken democratic mission, in the aftermath of the 1980 military coup by Murat Belge.[30] In 2001-2007 İletişim published a nine volume treatise on political currents in Turkey: *Modern Türkiye'de Siyası Düşünce*. Edited by Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, the work covers "the Ottoman heritage of the Turkish republic", "Kemalism", "Modernization and Westernism", "Nationalism", "Conservatism", "Islamism" "Liberalism", "The Left", and finally "Times and Qualities", written by top-league Turkish scholars. [31] In an interview with the newspaper *Radikal*, the publishers, Ömer Laçiner and Ahmet İnsel, explained their motivation and ambition. Finding that the presentation of Turkish political currents was "incomplete, a Western replica", they set out to "track the genealogy of [Turkish] present day political currents from their historical origin, focusing both on the Turkish historicity of these currents and their reciprocal influence, as well as their contextual framing…"[32] *Modern Türkiye'de Siyası Düşünce* is as comprehensive and multifaceted as Turkish history itself. I chose to use the edition as a reference tool, an encyclopedia of excellence, to which I turned throughout the work on my dissertation.

One should however be careful not to overestimate the level of academic freedom to approach present-day political questions critically. In her preface to *Late Ottoman Society – The Intellectual Legacy*, the editor, Elisabeth Özdalga asks "why has the voice of the Turkish

[29] Andrew F. March, Reading Tariq Ramadan: Political Liberalism, Islam and "Overlapping Consensus", in *Ethics & International Affairs,* Volume 21, Issue 4, pages 399–413, Winter 2007, pp 399-413, p 412

[30] Murat Belge, doctorate in literature from Istanbul University, arrested during the military coup in 1971, nephew of author and diplomat Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu.

[31] Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, *Modern Türkiye'de Siyası Düşünce,* Volume 1, Cumhuriyet'e Devreden Düşünce Mirası: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi, Volume 2, Kemalizm, Volume 3, Modernleşme ve Baticilik, Volume 4, Milliyetçilik, Volume 5, Muhafazakârlık, volume 6, İslamcılık, Volume 7, Liberalizm, Volume 8, Sol Düşünce, Volume 9, Dönemler ve Karakteristikler, İletişim Yayınları, Istanbul, 2004

[32] Interview with publishers Ömer Laçiner and Ahmet İnsel in the newspaper Radikal, internet version, 29th July, 2001, see http://www.radikal.com.tr/ek_haber.php?ek=r2&haberno=276

intellectuals been so relatively weak?"[33] Addressing the intellectual legacy of Ottoman society, the book is an attempt to provide today's intellectual with role models who opposed dictatorship and sought liberal constitutional reforms.

The historical interest in politics and the political interest in history are evident also in the rulings of Turkey's pro-Islamic government, informing their foreign policy as well as their policy toward the minority communities within: the term Neo-Ottomanism comes to mind.

Theoretical touchstones

"Historians are a skeptical lot. They tend to feel that one should trust one's nose, like a hunting dog. They are afraid that if they once let themselves be distracted by theory they will spend their days wandering in a cognitive labyrinth from which they will find no way to depart" David Harlan[34]

Modernity is the common denominator in all the four topics addressed by the articles in this dissertation, and various interpretations and conceptualizations of modernity and modernization theory have been consulted throughout. The case of Turkey relates to modernization theory in fundamental ways. By exploring Islam's compatibility with modernity, the contrasting voices of modernity, the domestication of modernity and modernity in terms of authenticity, we arrive at the ultimate question: Is Turkey to be understood as part of the West, or is genuine/indigenous modernity also to be found in the non-West?

The claim to universalism of Western modernization is embedded in the way the rise of modernity is understood. Charles Taylor speaks of "two different 'takes' on what makes our contemporary society different from its forebears": a cultural or an acultural approach.[35] The acultural approach, of which Daniel Lerner's *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* from 1958 is representative, holds that modernization is principally a conversion, based on a secular evolution toward the common end result: a western society. [36] As the result of a development toward rationality and reason, the West equated with universal, modernity within this theory is viewed as culture-neutral. The

[33] Elisabeth Özdalga (ed), *Late Ottoman Society – The Intellectual Legacy,* New York, 2005, p. xvi
[34] David Harlan, Intellectual History and the Return to Literature, in *American Historical Review,* Vol. 94, No. 3, 1989, pp. 581- 609, p 583
[35] Charles Taylor, Two Theories of Modernity, in The Hastings Center Report, Volume 25, Number 2, March/April, 1995, pp 24-33, p 24
[36] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East,* New York, 1958

alternative cultural approach questions and refutes the evolutionary perspective of modernization as a progressive "coming to see the hard facts of human reality". The differences between present-day society and the past are seen as those of different civilizations, with different constellations of background understandings. Taylor favors the cultural approach, since "exclusive reliance on an acultural theory locks us into an ethnocentric prison, condemned to project our own forms onto everyone else and blissfully unaware of what we are doing." [37]

Accepting the cultural narrative of modernity, the binary opposition between the pre-modern and modern is challenged and the question of defining modernity is reopened. This includes a reevaluation of modernity's most consistently claimed characteristic: its ontological status as disenchanted. The term was coined by Max Weber in 1917, in his description of the modern world as a place where "…no mysterious incalculable forces (that) come into play—but rather that one can in principle master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted."[38] Michael Saler's historiographic review analyzes how the interrelationship of modernity and enchantment has been presented by historians in one of three ways: the binary either/or logic, the dialectical either/or logic versus, and the antinomial both/and logic.[39]

The binary discourse that defined enchantment as "the other" of modernity has been the most prevalent, also in Turkey. Not only the Kemalist secularists but even the Muslim modernists argued in a similar vein, against superstition in favor of reason. In the Parliament discussion on the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924, Muslim scholar and Minister of Justice Seyyid Bey argued that: "The reason for the inappropriate mentality of today originates from ignorance… True Islam is the greatest enemy of superstition and false thoughts… True Islam is logical and natural" [40] And in the debate concerning the Turkish Hat Law, in 1925 Muslim scholar and Member of Parliament Rasih Bey reminded the assembly that: "In Islam there is only one thing that matters; reason *[İslamiyet'te tek bir şey vardır O da akıldır*]…"[41]

[37] Taylor, 1995, p. 28
[38] Max Weber, Science as Vocation, in *Daedalus,* Volume 87, Number 1, 1958, pp 111-134, p. 117
[39] Michael Saler, Modernity and Enchantment: A historiographic review, in *American Historical Review,* 2006, pp 692-716
[40] Article 1, this dissertation, page 5
[41] Article 2, this dissertation, page 18

In contrast, the dialectical discourse presents modernity as "dangerously oppressive and inhumane…its universal promises exposed as self-interested ideology, false consciousness, and bad faith"; modernity is as enchanted as the pre-modern world, Janus-faced with its faith in reason and rationality.[42] In his book *Modernity and Self-Identity,* Giddens explores how personal meaninglessness becomes a characteristic of late modernity. "We should understand this phenomenon in terms of a repression of moral questions which day-to-day life poses, but which are denied answers..."[43] The promise of self-actualization embedded in modernity cannot be fulfilled because of modernity's lack of moral meaning.
The modern state however offered its citizens an escape from their individual loneliness: the collective identity of nationalism.

Nationalism as the function of modernity was framed by Ernst Gellner, understood as a distinctive form of social organization and culture, answering a need for impersonal, context-free communication and a high degree of cultural standardization.[44] The period covered in this dissertation, 1924–1939, is the time when nationalism found its ideological expression as nationalism. The modernization policy of the Kemalist regime, with its hallmarks of secularization, rejection of the past, the embrace of science, and the definition of a national identity based on language and ethnicity, is a schoolbook example of modernization theory put into practice: modernity expressed as nationalism was a contemporary experience in Turkey and the West.

Zygmunt Baumann developed the argument of modernity's connectedness with nationalism further, as a quest for order. Modernization and the rise of the nation state were mutually dependent, the one being inconceivable without the other: "…for the duration of the modern era, now two centuries old, nationalism without the state has been as flawed and ultimately impotent as state without nationalism…"[45] The connectedness of the quest for order, nationalism and the nation state even explained the Holocaust as a result of modernity rather than a regression to pre-modern barbarism.[46] This echoes the words of Peyami Safa, who in 1933 attributed the persecution of the Jews in Europe as a result of the Jews' lack of national belonging:

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[42] Saler, 2006, p. 698
[43] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity, Self and Society in the Late Modern Age,* Polity Press, Cambridge, 2009, page 7
[44] Ernst Gellner, *Thought and Change,* 1974, and *Nations and Nationalism,* 1995
[45] Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence,* Oxford, 2004, page 64
[46] Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust,* New York, 1989

> "… the Jew is the most international (beynelmilel) kind of human being… a cosmopolitan (cihan) who can speak any language, smile to any nation and play the sazon on any strings… [But] The mentality of the twentieth century is only capable of understanding the concept of nationalism; the concept of humanity is inconceivable. Therefore the Jews present 'a categorical intentional nervous disease', they can't be assimilated within the boundaries of any nation. When the world asks them: Where do you come from? And the answer is 'from everywhere' the answer cannot be endured….The Jew who is being slaughtered as he confronts the feelings of nationalism is a member of the most human tribe."[47]

Safa's article was published by the liberal magazine *Yedigün*, the publication that more than any other contributed to the development of a Habermasian "bourgeois public sphere" in early republican Turkey.[48] This provided space for the exchange of individual opinions on political as well as matters of everyday life, ultimately restraining the instrumental rationality pursued by the regime through their modernization policy. The cosmopolitan outlook expressed in the columns of *Yedigün* was not favored within the Kemalist conception of nationalism. Language being a defining feature of Turkish identity, a special "Citizen, speak Turkish!" campaign was launched as part of the Turkification policy. The campaign not only addressed the non-Muslim minorities, Jews, Armenians and Greeks, but especially targeted "cosmopolitan Turks": "those who deserve the greatest censure as far as the question of language is concerned are those Turks who speak a language other than their own just to show off. Any Turk who, rather than rebuffing the salesperson in a Beyoglu shop for addressing him in language other than Turkish, answers in the same language, should be held responsible for committing a crime against Turkishness."[49]

Literally and in reality, multiple voices of modernity were not wanted within the early Turkish republic, proof of a common understanding of modernity between the Kemalist and other European regimes in the 1920s and 1930s. The binary either/or logic of the modernist discourse was dominant until it was challenged by late modern and postcolonial scholarship

[47] Peyami Safa, Of what is the Jew guilty (Yahudin Sucu ne?), in *Yedigün,* number 5, 12th April 1933, , page 3,
[48] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society,* Massachusetts, 1991
[49] Ahmet Emin Yalman, Tan, March 4, 1937, reprinted as appendix in Ayhan Aktar, 'Turkification' Policies in the Early Republican Era, in Catharina Dufft (ed), *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory – 'Multiculturalism' as a Literary Theme after 1980,* Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009, p 55

in the 1990s, allowing the disenchanted modernity to be united with its antinomial self; enchanted modernity, i.e. modernity defined by opposites and contradictions.[50] "Although its originators looked for certainties to replace pre-established dogmas, modernity effectively involves the institutionalization of doubt".[51] Endorsing the centrality of reflexivity in modernity, Anthony Giddens explains how mature modernity rather than opposing traditionalism turns against its own institutions due to its inherent circularity.

In *Consequences of Modernity,* Giddens explicitly addresses the question of modernity being a Western project. His answer is yes and no: The two distinct organizational complexes, the nation state and capitalism, are rooted in European history and the life forms fostered by these two powerful agencies are distinctively a Western project. But then again, modernity's inherent circularity appears, since: "One of the fundamental consequences of modernity (…) is globalisation…which is a process of uneven development that fragments as it coordinates—introduces new forms of world interdependence, in which, once again, there are no 'others'."[52] Becoming universal through globalization, the binary either/or logic, the "universal" distinction between modernity and tradition, does not hold up anymore and the historian's attention is redirected "from theoretical models to the competing conceptions of 'modernity' propounded by historical subjects themselves, whose 'alternative modernities' have legitimate claim to our attention."[53] What Giddens holds as true for the globalized world, Shmuel Eisenstadt finds to be a fact of reality since modernity began. [54] Eisenstadt's notion of "multiple modernities" goes against the binary either/or logic, and refutes the claim of conversion embedded in traditional modernization theory. The structural differentiation ignited by the original Western modernity project gave rise to a variety of institutional and ideological patterns shaped by specific premises: cultural, historical, and traditional. Accepting the existence of different values and rationalities "One of the most important implications of the term 'multiple modernities' is that modernity and Westernization are not identical; Western patterns of modernity are not the only 'authentic' modernities…"[55]

Though ardent supporters of the traditional modernization theory are still to be found, the willingness to take up the challenge and rediscover modernity in its many-faceted forms is

[50] Saler, 2006, p. 699
[51] Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity,* Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 176
[52] Anthony Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity,* 1995, p. 175
[53] Saler, 2006, p. 700
[54] S. N. Eisenstadt, Multiple Modernities, in *Daedalus,* Volume 129, Number 1, Winter, 2000, pp. 1-29, p.1- 2
[55] Eisenstadt, p. 3

dominant among scholars today.[56] "Multiple modernities" are challenging both the West's essentialist vision of the non-West and the West's own self-image, an image which is "over-simplified and artificially homogenized… which suppresses its internal differences and obfuscates the many areas of Western life that simply do not conform with this idealized vision of its nature."[57] Nilüfer Göle welcomes the divorce of modernity from the West, observing that "…focusing on non-Western modernities can be a creative twist in considering modernity".[58]

As a methodological approach, Göle introduces four postulates: Decentering the West, replacing the perspective of "lack" with "extra" modernity, dissonant traditions, and introducing coeval time.[59] Decentering the West does not entail an anti-Western ideology; the intention is to appreciate modernity in the non-West as an indigenous practice, intrinsic to local historical experiences. "Extra" modernity is a term coined to counter notions of the non-Western countries as lacking or deficient in relation to a Western model. Instead, the thesis of "extra modernity" claims that "in some respects and domains the non-Western countries can be more 'advanced' and more 'central' in their proximity to the values of modernity", than the West.[60]

What is implied by the concept of "dissonant traditions" can be exemplified by Turkey, where traditions were considered an obstacle to the modernization policies of the Kemalist regime, thus not to be continued. As evidenced by this dissertation, there were multiple voices of modernity in Turkey as well, but the uprooting of traditions and the rupture with the past had severe negative consequences for the development of a viable democracy.

"Coeval time" is opposed to linear sequential time embedded in the hierarchical conception of the West and the non-West in a cultural binary either/or logic approach to modernity: the ideal of progress as the West's universalistic claim of modernity left the rest of the world behind, following in the footsteps of the West, struggling to catch up. This doctrine was

[56] For a critical assessment of 'multiple modernities' see Volker H. Schmidt , Modernity and diversity: reflections on the controversy between modernization theory and multiple modernists, in *Social Science Information*, Volume 49, Number 4, 2010, pp. 511-538
[57] David Morley, *Media, Modernity and Technology, The Geography of the New,* Routledge, 2007, p. 188
[58] Nilüfer Göle, Global Expectations, Local Experiences – Non-Western Modernities, in Will Arts (ed.), *Through a Glass, Darkly – Blurred images of cultural tradition and modernity over distance and time,* Brill, Leiden, 2000, pp 40-55, p. 40
[59] Göle, p. 45
[60] Göle, page 51

challenged as early as the 1970s by Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory, which explicitly criticized the assumption that all countries can and will follow a single evolutionary path, seeing it as incompatible with the inherent logic of capitalist world economy.[61]

Göle emphasizes how the denial of coeval time was not the exclusive concern of Western social scientists, but was often found reproduced in an even more accentuated form by non-Western countries. Turkey is a prime example of this phenomenon, where the call to "catch up with contemporary civilization" was frequently voiced. Also reflected in the assessment of Turkish literature, as elaborated in this dissertation, the sense of belatedness, of having been "left behind at the mountain as the caravan moved on", was a widespread inferiority complex articulated by Turkish public intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s.[62] In fact this temporal construction of modernity was strongly echoed in the pro-European campaigns in Turkey in 2002, [63] and voiced again by the Turkish president Abdüllah Gül in his speech to the National Security Council in June 2010: "There have been deep-rooted changes in our country, from politics and economy to commerce and law. The real target of these transformations is to keep up with the times and not lag behind the necessities of the age".[64]

"Multiple", "alternative" and "local" modernities are new conceptualizations exploring modernity as an "open-ended social adventure which oscillates between borrowing, blending, and hybridization on the one hand, and affirmation of authenticity of culture on the other". [65] In the words of Habermas: modernization can be regarded as "a learning process that affects and changes religious and worldly mentalities by forcing the tradition of the Enlightenment as well as the religious doctrines to reflect on their respective limits".[66]

The articles in this dissertation explore how the challenge of modernity was taken up in the Turkish context by the Kemalist regime adhering to the binary either/or logic of acultural modernity, but also by alternative voices of modernity from within the Westernized as well as

[61] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century,* New York, 1976, and: *The capitalist world-economy. Essays by Immanuel Wallerstein,* Cambridge, 1979
[62] Article 4, this dissertation
[63] Ahiska Meltem, Occidentalism: The Historical Fantasy of the Modern, in *The South Atlantic Quarterly,* Volume 102, Number 2/3, Spring/Summer, 2003, pp. 351-379, p.
[64] Quoted in the Turkish newspaper *Zaman,* June 25, 2010
[65] Göle, page 43
[66] Jürgen Habermas, Equal Treatment of Cultures and the Limits of Postmodern Liberalism, in *The Journal of Political Philosophy,* Volume 13, Number 1, 2005, pp. 1-28, p. 28

the Muslim establishment. This is a process by which the binary either/or logic is replaced by a binary both/and logic where modernity and tradition are mutually dependent entities, which together sustain the plurality necessary to any viable democracy.

Method and matter

Primary sources

The main research objective of this dissertation is to evoke the historicity and communicate the complexity of the identity politics of modernization in the early Turkish republic. To answer questions of Islam's compatibility with democracy (Article I), to map the contrasting definitions of modernity (Article II), to analyze the domestication of modernity (Article III), and to assess the experience of modern life (Article IV), primary sources generated in different societal fields were selected. Some of the most important were:

- Parliament protocols: Minutes from the Turkish Great National Assembly ((Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, TBMM) concerning: The Abolishment of the Caliphate, recorded in TBMM Zabit Ceridesi, Devre II, İçtima Senesi 1, Cilt 7, 3 March, 1924, The Hat Law, recorded in: TBMM Zabit Ceridesi, Devre II, İçtima Senesi 3, Cilt 19, 25 November, 1925, and The Adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, recorded in: TBMM Zabit Ceridesi, Devre I, Cilt 1, 17 February, 1926. These recordings are easily accessible at the Turkish Great National Assembly Library and Documentation Center, in Ankara.

- The Italian scientific journal *Oriente Moderno: rivista mensile d'informazione e di studi per la diffusione della conoscenza dell'Oriente, sopra tutto musulmano,* a monthly periodical published by the Institute for Oriental Studies at the University of Rome, since 1921. The Institute had its own Istanbul office, which covered the local press and conveyed relevant news from the Ottoman Empire/Turkey. The issues studied for this dissertation includes the volumes from 1921 to 1925. The University Library at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, has a complete selection from 1921-2001.

- The Turkish weekly magazine *Yedigün,* established in 1933 by Sedat Semavi. All issues of all volumes from 1933 to 1939 were selected for this dissertation. Included in

the analysis were columns (all issues, all volumes), and illustrated feature stories (two issues of each volume, all volumes). The magazine ran until 1951 and was the most popular magazine in Turkey during the whole period of its existence, with a maximum circulation of 54 000.[67] *Yedigün* proved to be a unique site for investigating domestication, not only because of its consecutive order and consistent character, but above all as a primary source that to my knowledge is hitherto unexplored, apart from the occasional reference, in any historical research on the early Turkish republic.

- The novel *It was an Evening,* by Peyami Safa, from 1924 and the short story collection by Sadri Ertem, *The Peasant with the Top Hat,* from 1933 were also used as primary source material. Ertem's book was one of the first books devoted to the harsh living conditions of workers and farmers.[68] Safa's *It was an Evening* has remained popular over the nearly one hundred years since its first publication in 1924. Eleven new editions, the latest in 2002, speak of its continued relevance to Turkish readers and to the historian who wants to assess the experience of the past.

The main methodological approach, then, was to bring together these fragments of political, social and cultural history, and interpret the variation and interrelations between them. Subsequently, analytical perspectives from a variety of methods ranging from discourse analysis and literary theory to statistics and domestication theory were eclectically applied to explore these sources, providing concepts to organize and structure my analysis.

Discourse analysis

Ambivalence is a proper concept to describe the historian's relationship to discourse analysis. Its non-essentialist emphasis on context fits well with the hermeneutic tradition in history and the historian's call to evoke the historicity and complexity of a given phenomenon. However, it is difficult to accept its reductionist approach to agency, and its view of individual actors as

1. Inugur, Nuri, *Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gazeteciler Cemiyeti Yayinlari, 37, Istanbul 1992, page 116, and Topuz, Hifzi, *100 soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gerçek yayinevi, 1973, page 213.
Gökmen, Muzaffer, *Sedat Simavi Hayatı ve Eserleri*, Apa Ofset Basımevi, Istanbul, 1970, page 56.
From 1933 to 1938, *Yedigün* competed with 10 other magazines with similar profiles or audiences, these were: *Kadro, Çığır, Fikir Hareketleri, Yeni Adam, Varlık, Yücel, Ayda bir, Akbaba, Köroğlu and Uyanış;* see Topuz, Hifzi, 100 soruda Türk basın tarihi, Gerçek Yayınevi, 1973, page 94.
[68] Otto Spies, Die türkische Prosaliteratur der Gegenwart, in *Die Welt des Islams,* volume 25, number 1/3, 1943, pp. 1–120, page 88–90.

mere "cultural parrots, trapped in the discourse".[69] Methodologically there are two distinct ways to proceed in a discourse analysis: a micro perspective and a macro perspective. The former is concerned with analyzing concrete texts or speech, mapping patterns and rules for the communication as such. The latter is less attached to individual texts but describes the societal rules for what to talk about in a certain way, in a certain society, at a certain time in history. Common to these approaches, the textual and the societal, is the understanding that language is our only access to reality and that this reality is in fact constituted through the language by which it is accessed.

The Parliament discussion concerning the abolishment of the Caliphate, explored in Article I, is an example of a discourse in the societal sense, the Muslim discourse. It is described by Talal Asad as a tradition that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.[70] This can be applied to the case at hand:

1. The conceptual relation to the past: when the Caliphate was instituted and from which the knowledge of its point and proper performance has been transmitted
2. The desired future: how the point of that practice can best be secured in the short or long term or why it should be modified or abandoned, i.e. how a strong Turkey can fulfill its primary obligation to protect Islam
3. The contextual present: how it is linked to other practices, institutions and social conditions: the Caliphate's loss of reason versus a strengthened need for the Caliphate in the age of nationalism.

Reading the discussion in light of Asad generated insight into a Muslim tradition that involved conflict, doubts, and reason as a *modus operandi*: His view that homogeneity is the result of the development and control of communication techniques particular to modern societies echoes the Turkish reality where traditions were considered an obstacle to modernization, in spite of the many counter proofs articulated during the Parliament discussion.[71]

[69] Bøje Larsen and Kristine Munkgård Pedersen (editors), *Diskursanalysen til debat: Kritiske perspektiver på en populær teoriretning,* København, 2002, page 8
[70] Talal Asad, *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity*, Stanford, 2003, page 14
[71] Asad, page 16

In contrast, the interpretation of Mustafa Kemal's Kastamonu speech in Article II was inspired more by the text-oriented approach in discourse analysis, supported by Erik Jan Zürcher's eminent studies of key concepts in the vocabulary of Muslim nationalism as well as the core terminology of Kemalism.[72]

Literary theory

The two main sources of inspiration used to explore the fictional works selected for this dissertation were *Türk romanına eleştirel bir bakış* (The Turkish novel: A critical view) by the Turkish literary scholar Berna Moran and *Third-World Literature in the era of Multinational Capitalism* by the American Marxist literary scholar Frederic Jameson.[73] Both emphasize the novel as a site to explore the East-West divide through allegorical reading.

Moran divides Turkish novels up to 1950 into two categories: 1) novels concerned with societal questions, in which the main conflict is between Eastern and Western values, and where the characters and events are used to concretize that conflict, and 2) novels concerned with human psychology, with the private life of the individual as governed by the East-West conflict. Jameson's theory is that all third-world (i.e. non-Western) texts, "even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic—necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society."[74]

Jeremy Tambling notes how, in spite of the obvious allegorical implications in texts such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, reading for allegory was until recently "regarded as getting in the way of an immediate response to a text, missing out on its vital literal sense". However that is of no concern to the

[72] Erik Jan Zürcher, The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism, in *International Journal of the Sociology of Science,* volume 137, 1999, pp. 81-92, and Erik Jan Zürcher, The core terminology of Kemalism: Mefkure, milli, muasır, medeni, in Francois Georgeon (editor), *Les mots de politique de l'Empire Ottoman a la Turquie kemaliste,* Paris, 2000, pp. 55-64.

[73] Berna Moran, *Türk romanına eleştirel bir bakış, I, Ahmet Mithat'tan A. H. Tanpınar'a,* İletişim Yayinlari, Istanbul, 2004 (first edition 1983), Fredric Jameson, Third-World Literature in the era of Multinational Capitalism, in *Social Text*, 15, pp 65–88, 1986.

[74] Fredric Jameson, Third-World Literature in the era of Multinational Capitalism, in *Social Text*, 15, pp 65-88, 1986, p 67.

historian, whose interest is to exhume the social reality embedded in literature, rather than to assess its aesthetic qualities.[75]

Statistics

The definition of "hard" versus "soft" sciences and the validity and utility of this distinction are questions neither asked nor answered in this dissertation. There are ample examples of historians who apply quantitative method in their research, represented here by the impressive work of Frederick W. Frey, "*The Turkish Political Elite*", which includes comprehensive statistics on background variables of all MPs in the Turkish Parliaments from 1918 to1960.[76] The benefit of applying quantitative methods in historical research is described and argued by Jarausch and Hardy, who list three overlapping reasons for using statistics[77]:

- Statistics extend the historian's ability to handle mass data
- Statistics provide a formalized and precise description of the past
- Statistics make it possible to evaluate causative connections
- Statistics is helpful in presenting and making findings accessible to the readers in an organized manner

In this dissertation, statistics were used in Article III, *Domesticating modernity—The Turkish Magazine Yedigün 1933-1939*, for these very reasons. The subject of the analysis contained a mass of data (all issues of a weekly magazine for a period of six years) that were otherwise difficult to handle; statistics made it possible to measure and count evidence; finally, statistics made it possible to evaluate the causative connections derived through qualitative methods.

Analyzing the content of the columns involved a first reading of all columns to generate a list of topics that could be used as categories in the statistical analysis. Searching for categories was in itself a very clarifying process: basically, I found what I expected to find. It was not until the actual counting that I discovered "religion" to be almost non-existent in the columns of *Yedigün*. The next step was to apply a coding dimension to the topic clusters. I expected that the majority of the topics would have reference to the West and that this reference would be positive.

[75] Jeremy Tambling, *Allegory,* Routledge, London, 2010, page 1.
[76] Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite,* Cambridge Massachusetts, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1965
[77] Konrad H. Jarausch and Kenneth A. Hardy*, Quantitative methods for historians – A guide to research, data, and statistics,* the University of Carolina Press, 1991

When I applied the chosen dimensions to the empirical material, however, it became obvious that my coding dimensions concerning references to the West were too broad. The columnists had a much more nuanced image of the West and of Turkey. Sometimes Turkey was seen as part of the West, sometimes the reference would be to an individual western country, sometimes the reference would be an individual western person, and sometimes the West *was* seen as a bloc to which Turkey did not (yet) belong. As to the image of the West when reference to the West was made, the dimensions had to be expanded to include those cases where Turkey was evaluated as being on equal terms with the West. This applied when the columnist used individual Western sources and connotations as inside information. The coding dimensions were refined accordingly and then operationalized as nominal variables.

Analyzing the content of the illustrated feature stories, I identified three different prototype individuals who were described by the properties exposed in the feature stories and interviews as well as in quotations and abstracts from novels. I then named the prototypes in accordance with Turkish naming traditions and their normative connotations, and used these names as units in the statistical analysis. Both the analysis of the columns and the feature stories benefited from the use of statistics to handle the data.

Domestication theory

Developed by Roger Silverstone to capture the different processes involved in "domesticating" ICT, domestication theory is of general relevance to any "wild" being that is tamed and any "tamed" being cultivated: "Unfamiliar, exciting, perplexing ideas are brought under control by and on behalf of domestic users. In their ownership and in their appropriation into the culture of family or household and into the routines of everyday life, they are at the same time cultivated. They become familiar, develop and change."[78] In the study of Turkish identity formation, the main stages of domestication—commodification, appropriation and conversion—were useful analytical perspectives to reconstruct the mental landscape of modernization and to fit the factual evidence (the sources) into a purposeful pattern.

Commodification, the part of the domestication process through which objects or technologies emerge in a public space of exchange values, was at work when the Turkish public was

[78] Robin Mansell and Roger Silverstone, (editors), *Communication by design, the politics of information and communication technologies,* Oxford 1996, p. xx.

introduced to modernity through consumption of artifacts such as the European hat, the weekly magazine *Yedigün*, and the novels of Peyami Safa. Through commodification, people were given the chance to buy a share in the fabric of modernity. As explored in Article II, some critics of the Kemalist regime claimed that the regime's modernization policy failed to go beyond the stage of commodification, focusing more on what was on top of the head than within.

Appropriation is the stage in the domestication process through which the new artifact, in this case modernity itself, is re-contextualized through integration. The Parliament discussions, concerning the abolishment of the Caliphate, the Hat Law of 1925, and the adoption of the Swiss civil code in 1926, are all good examples of how the appropriation of modernity was negotiated within the Turkish context.

Conversion is the final stage in domestication, where the need to legitimate one's claim to participate and belong is displayed in the public sphere as competence and ownership.[79] It is also the phase where the "consumer" speaks back to the producer, in this case a Turkish display of its aptness to be included among the nations of the "civilized, contemporary world". But also, and more importantly, conversion took place in the shape of a Turkish interpretation of modernity dissociated from the West, in accordance with the thesis of "multiple-alternative-local and extra modernities" as discussed in the section *Theoretical touchstones* above.

Synthesizing the analysis:
The Turkish Identity Politics of Modernization: Islam and the West

The myth of Occident and Orient is not a juxtaposition of civilization with barbarism but rather of one civilization with another
Agnes Heller[80]

From the emotional fabric of belatedness, dislocation and existential doubt, two patterns appeared fit to design the future Turkey: To interpret and adapt Turkish identity to suit modernity, or to interpret and adapt modernity to suit Turkish identity. While the former

[79]Mansell and Silverstone, p. 65
[80] Agnes Heller, Europe: An Epilogue, in Brian Nelson, David Roberts, and Walter Veit (editors), *The Idea of Europe, Problems of National and Transnational Identity*, New York/Oxford, 1992, p. 14

category depended on a prior definition of modernity, in the image of which the adaptation of Turkish identity was to be achieved the latter category depended on a prior definition of Turkish identity.

The four articles that constitute this dissertation can be divided accordingly. Articles I and II are both political top-down decisions to adapt Turkish identity to fit the demands of modernity, as understood by the ruling elite: Altering the Turkish constitution by abolishing the Caliphate, and imposing dress code regulations that made the wearing of traditional Turkish headgear illegal. Both these measures were however met by an opposition arguing from the perspective of the other category; that modernity should be adjusted to fit the Turkish identity. The prime example of this second category is Article III, which explores how the modernity initially imported from the west was domesticated to fit the Turkish identity. Article IV, however, shows that both attempts were futile. The effort to adapt Turkish identity to suit modernity was depicted as the result of an inferiority complex, while the second option, to interpret modernity to fit Turkish identity, was a contradiction in terms: Modernity supports no (national) identity, but harbors universal existential doubt.

The title of the first article, *The Caravan Moved On—and We Were Left Behind at the Mountain: The Abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924* is inspired by a poem by the Sufi mystic Yunus Emre (1240–1321). It was quoted by Minister of Justice Seyyid Bey during the Parliament discussion concerning the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924, reflecting the sense of belatedness that dominated the Turkish identity discourse.

Equating modernity with the West, and finding Islam to be the one important factor separating Turkey from the West, the Kemalist regime held Islam responsible for Turkey's backwardness. As several of the MPs enacting the law and other public intellectuals addressing the question were professionally officials of Islam, it was interesting to focus on their arguments in the perspective of Islam as "the other" of modernity, asking if they contributed or hampered this "othering". Analysis of the Parliament discussion revealed that both proponents and opponents of the proposed abolishment argued in favor of modernization from within an Islamic discourse. But while the proponents of the abolishment claimed the Caliphate to be an outdated institution, in times of (Turkish) nationalism, the opponents saw the importance of securing the Caliphate as the very symbol of the collective identity between the state and its citizens.

Westernization as such was not put forward as a solution. In fact direct references to the West were few, but the ones that did occur were in general positive and related to individual countries rather than to the West as a block/Europe as a unity. When describing the past glory of Islamic cities like Samarkand, Bukhara and Baghdad, Seyyid Bey compared them to Paris and London. France was used as an example to be followed with respect to the division of religion from politics. However, the superiority of the West was interpreted as historical rather than civilizational, the science and art of England, as a continuation of the Arabic civilization in Andalusia. Modernization was not equated with Westernization; the West having once benefitted from the Islamic civilization in Andalusia, it was now time for Turkey to benefit from the progress of the West. Modernity was defined as democracy and the ultimate question of Islam's compatibility with modernity was answered in the affirmative.

Abolishing the Caliphate rendered the Muslim society secular by constitution, a constitutional change without public access or consent. Stripping Islam of its constitutional backing reciprocally stripped the state of backing from its Muslim constituency, so that the state became "the other" of its citizens. Had Islam been allowed to continue as a determinant of Turkish national identity, the bonds of solidarity between Turks and Kurds could have been sustained, and loyalty between the state and its citizens could have been secured. However, the opportunity to modernize Turkish society based on an identity of inclusion rather than exclusion was missed. The Caliphate was sacrificed by the Kemalist regime to "catch up with contemporary civilization" (i.e. the West), and eliminate any rival source of political power: the Muslim citizens were left behind at the mountain once again. The regime embarked on a op-down secularization policy, thus paving the way for a national identity based on ethnicity: adapting Turkish identity to suit their definition of modernity.

Having displaced the old constitution, the provisions of the republican revolution were almost all related to adapting the Turkish identity to suit modernity: by diminishing the social and political role of Islam in favor of wholesale westernization including the passage of the Hat Law that is the topic in article II: *Kemalism on the catwalk: the Turkish Hat Law of 1925.* The Law required that traditional headgear, the fez, be replaced by the western hat. In subsequent days, more than eight hundred people were arrested for violating the law, nearly sixty of whom were executed. By this legislation the individual head became a political site of identity construction: Rather than being a matter of individual choice, firmly within the boundaries of

personal integrity and protected by constitutional law, what to wear was of high political concern as an expression of values and mentality, of defining the boundaries between religion and politics.

Venturing into the topics of modernity and imitation through the lens of dress made it possible to analyze the main tendencies of identity formation, a process that went beyond and above a dichotomous Orientalist discourse of East versus West. Based on an interpretation of Turkish identity as compatible with modernity, the opposition from within the Muslim and the westernized establishment alike challenged the regime's modernization project by questioning the Kemalist definition of modernity as such. This ranged from equating modernization with democratization to arguing that modernization did not equal westernization. The critical voices interpreted the Kemalist modernization project as a non-liberal identity project, founded on neglecting the basic rules of democracy, sacrificing the authenticity of values and traditions, misunderstanding the principles of true westernization, lacking a sense of social responsibility, and jeopardizing national unity. Together these voices gave several answers to the overall question of what is modernity, highlighting the concept's relational character, while the modernizing agents from within the Muslim establishment demonstrated the multifaceted character of the "traditional" "other". According to the opposition, modernity could and should be interpreted to fit the Turkish identity, not vice versa.

The Hat Law was enacted while the Law on the Maintenance of Order was in force, authorizing the government to "prohibit on its own initiative and by administrative measure" all initiatives, publications or provocations that could disturb the social order or "incite to commit reactionary acts of subversion". The law was further supported by the High Treason Law that had been amended in 1925 to include the political use of religion. Thus the Muslim voices were effectively silenced. The voices from within the westernized modernizing elite, however, could not be written off as reactionary. By founding the Turkish magazine *Yedigün*, the editor Sedat Semavi gave space to public intellectuals, journalists and writers who took it upon themselves to provide informed guidance to the citizens of the new Turkish republic: Domesticating modernity to make it fit the Turkish identity is the topic of Article III, *Domesticating Modernity: The Turkish Magazine Yedigün 1933–1939***.**

As a result of the top-down modernization process enforced by the Kemalist regime, the citizens of the new Turkish republic were dislocated, in need of informative guidance,

much like tourists travelling abroad. Semavi was an independent publisher who took it upon himself to provide such guidance. The magazine's success was due to his ability to meet needs of the population, those who lacked the necessary knowledge and motivation to appropriate modernity, and those who were in the process of reevaluating their prior commitment to the modernization project. *Yedigün* soon became the leading lifestyle magazine, read and related to by a large audience. We will explore how Yedigün facilitated the appropriation and conversion of modernity by assessing the feature stories, photographs, and the columns:

- Yedigün shaped modernity to fit the existing body of values, routines and social dynamics, facilitating its appropriation by the agency of culturally matched role models.
- Yedigün reconnected Turkey to the outside world. While the original reason for appropriation was the wish to become European, the functional outcome was a strengthening of Turkish self-confidence: modernity conversed.

Yedigün provided its readers with the necessary social coordinates to locate themselves in the new terrain of modern Turkey. By dissociating modernity from a crumbling Europe and a totalitarian Kemalism, neither present nor past had to be sacrificed to participate in the realization of *Yedigün's* optimistic vision for the future of Turkey: modernity was adapted to fit the Turkish identity.

Broadening the criteria for identification with modernity, however, the individuals were forced "to negotiate their lifestyle choices among a diversity of options": responsibility was individualized and doubt permeated into everyday life as modernity was internalized.[81] Article IV, *The fact of fiction and Turkish modernity—Peyami Safa's novel" It was an Evening"* from 1924, presents a twofold discussion concerned with how, in times of momentous change, novelists and intellectuals produced works that fictionalized the state of the nation, as well as exploring the novel itself as a cultural artifact of Turkish modernity, addressing concerns of inferiority, belatedness and authenticity. The writing is from a perspective where Turkish identity could not be adapted to fit modernity, and modernity could not be adapted to fit Turkish identity. Unlike the many authors who acted as semi-official

[81] Giddens, 2009, page 6.

novelists, helping the Kemalist regime in a mental mapping of the new Turkey, Safa chose to stand apart from the political establishment. His works of fiction portrayed the young nation's struggle, reflecting the anxiety of striking a balance between the Ottoman past and the Western future.

Framing the story of national identity crisis as a love story, Safa invited his readers to take sides in a ménage à trois, Turkey caught in a polygamous relationship with the Orient and the Occident. But his intention was far more complex than a simplistic characterization of an East-West divide: Multiple Turkish selves and Western others are given voice in the narrative, representing possible identities that could be adopted by the readers themselves, along with strategies to pursue in a time of upheaval, confusion and uncertainty. Instead of setting either of them as an example to be followed, however, Safa invested his characters with loneliness as their primary and common feature. Through an allegorical reading, the characters were stripped of their literary flesh and blood, revealing their allegorical bones. In this case, the bones told the story of an intriguing chapter of modern Turkish history: the complicated fortunes of a culture that in its embrace of modernity became unmoored from the cultural continuum that was a guarantor of its identity. But modernity offered no common ideology or moral to replace the old values and certainties. Being Turkish or becoming western was not the answer; the modern self had no nation, but was alone.

The Turkish identity politics of modernization were informed by multiple images of the Turkish "self", together with an image of the West as multifaceted as the West itself: Europe was never construed as Turkey's "other".

Article I

The Caravan Moved On—and We Were Left Behind at the Mountain: The Abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924

Introduction

On 12 September 2010, a constitutional reform package prepared by the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK parti) was submitted to popular vote. A majority of 58% voted in favor of the amendments, which are a further step toward a democratization of the Turkish constitution that was framed by the Turkish Armed Forces following the military coup in 1980. Without sufficient resonance in the society it rules, a constitution will fail to draw the consent and support of the citizens. "Constitutions provide a blueprint for a country's political organization, establish normative and legal frameworks for basic institutions and embody an implicit or explicit ideology that governs the course of public life".[1] The identity of the state is laid down in its constitution. If the citizens are to identify themselves with the identity of their state, there has to be consent to the moral and social values and principles thus defined. The question of constitutional legitimacy has been a continuous challenge throughout the history of the Turkish republic. In this article, I will focus on its point of origin: the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924.

The War of Independence had been won and the first Grand National Assembly of Turkey had been constituted in 1921 through extensive appeal to Islamic sentiments and symbols, including use of the title *Gaz*" (victorious fighter for the Islamic faith) by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) himself. In contrast, the provisions of the republican revolution were almost all related to diminishing the social and political role of Islam. To the Kemalist regime, Islam and modernity were the constituting elements of the single most important bipolarity in terms of which the new identity of Turkey was to be defined. Islam and modernity were placed at the opposite ends of an axis between past and future, continuity and change, heterogeneity and homogeneity, faith and reason. The Kemalist regime equated modernity with westernization. Islam, being the most obvious marker of difference between Turkey and the West, became subject to a process of "othering".

[1] Bilgin, Mehmet Fevzi: Constitution, Legitimacy and Democracy in Turkey, in Arjomand, Said Amid (ed) *Constitutional Politics in the Middle East – With special reference to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan,* Hart publishing, Oxford and Portland Oregon, 2008, page 123

Ahmet Yildiz (2001) maps and divides the development of a Turkish national identity in three periods: 1919-1923, the War of Independence period; 1924-1929, the republican period, and 1929-1938, the ethno-secular period.[2] During these periods, the national identity changed from religious motives through secularism to ethno and racist motives (secularism here understood as laicism). In the words of Noah Feldman,

> "Turkey developed a form of nationalism, familiar from European models, in which the state's legitimacy derived precisely from the fact that it represented a coherent national group, namely the Turks. The cosmopolitan Ottoman identity – any speaker of the Ottoman Turkish language could be an Ottoman, regardless of ethnicity – gave way to ethnic nationalism…"[3]

Secularism was the tool necessary to achieve the intended identity transformation, a secularism described by Tariq Ramadan (2009) as an "outright religion with undisputable truths, sacred spaces and a polarized discourse distinguishing the elect from the reprobate".[4] To this end, nothing could be more significant than to abolish the Caliphate, which disinherited Turkey from its imperial legacy. This made it possible to implement the principle of laicism (albeit marketed as secularism) and thus paved the way for a national identity based on ethnicity. The Caliphate as the very symbol of the collective identity between the state and society was willingly sacrificed to reach the Kemalist future: A modernization project based on an essentialist view of religion embedded in an equally essentialist concept of modernity. As such, this was an excellent example of "firm modernity" as described by Zygmunt Bauman (2004) modernity as a quest for order, a modernity concept related solely to the future.[5]

Islam was held responsible for the backwardness and feeling of belatedness that was dominant in Turkey at the time of the reform. Abolishing the Caliphate was the first step in a major identity switch, a constitutional change that made possible the top-down secularization program of the Kemalist regime, reassessing Turkey's collective values and principles. The ultimate question was that of Islam's compatibility with modernity. The Kemalist view was

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[2] Yildiz, Ahmet: *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene – Türk Ulusal Kimliginin Etno-Seküler Sinirlari 1919–1938,* (Happy is the one who can call himself a Turk - The Ethno-Secular Borders of Turkish National Identity, 1919–1938), İletişim Yayinlari, 2001, Istanbul, page 13

[3] Feldman, Noah, The fall and rise of the Islamic state, Princeton, 2008, page 86

[4] Ramadan, Tariq, *Radical Reform, Islamic Ethics and Liberation,* Oxford, 2009, page 263

[5] Bauman, Zygmunt, *Modernity and Ambivalence,* Oxford, 2004, page 4

challenged by modernizing voices from within the Muslim establishment. Trying to strike a balance between Islam and modernity, the Minister of Justice and Muslim scholar Seyyid Bey—speaking in favor of abolishing the Caliphate—expressed the general feeling of belatedness, interpreting the lack of progress as contrary to true Islam:

> The whole world is striding with giant steps on the road to progress. We are like orphans left behind, watching them… The caravan has moved on, but we were left behind at the mountain (*Göçtü kervan, kaldık dağlar başında*)… What a shame! Islam being such a progressive (*terakkiperver*) and sublime (*ali*) religion… The reason for the inappropriate mentality of today originates from ignorance… True Islam is the greatest enemy of superstition and false thoughts… True Islam is logical and natural." [6]

The Parliament debate on abolishing the Caliphate is, I believe, a good example of a Islamic Hanafi School discourse: confronting human realities and seeking concrete answers to the requirements of the place, customs and common good: an *a posteriori* rather than an *a priori* approach to identifying and understanding how to act in accordance with the Kuran and the Prophetic tradition in a temporal context.[7]

Abolishing the Caliphate rendered the Muslim society secular by constitution.
Mapping the different subject positions voiced in the Istanbul press and the Ankara parliament, it is the aim of this article to discuss its legitimacy, its consequences and the potential for things to have been otherwise.

- Did the public have access to the formation of the new constitution and was there consent with respect to its content?
- Did stripping Islam of its constitutional backing reciprocally strip the state of backing from its Muslim constituency, so that the state became "the other" of its citizens?
- Was an opportunity missed to modernize the Turkish society based on an identity of inclusion rather than exclusion?

[6] "The caravan moved on, but we were left behind at the mountain" is a metaphor of belatedness from a poem by Sufi mystic Yunus Emre (1240-1321). Minister of Justice Seyyid Bey, TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, devre II, Cilt 7, İçtima senesi: 1, 1340 (1924), page 60
[7] Ramadan, Tariq, *Radical Reform, Islamic Ethics and Liberation,* Oxford, 2009, page 49 – 58

The legitimacy of the process: the public's access to the formation of the new constitution

The democratic aspects of a constitution are manifest both in its content and its creation. To produce a democratic constitution, Bilgin defines three aspects of its creation process. First: the credentials and authority of its creators, who must represent the interests of the relevant public. Second: that the process should be open to deliberation and the stakeholders should be informed not only of the text itself but also of its significance. Third, that the constitution should be enacted by a democratic body and ratified in a democratic fashion such as a national referendum. In the case of abolishing the Caliphate, all these aspects came to the fore, voiced by the opposition.

The decision to keep and protect the office of the Caliphate and the appointment of Abdülmecit, who had supported the Nationalists during the War of Independence, as the first Caliph of the Turkish republic was enacted by the Turkish parliament in November 1922.[8] Less than a year later, however, rumors, gossip and speculations concerning the fate of the Caliphate started to circulate. The Istanbul press delivered passionate arguments in favor of keeping the Caliphate, even giving voice to Caliph Abdülmecit himself. In the Caliph's declaration, published in the newspaper *Vatan* on November 9, 1923, he stated that the national government was the basis of the office of the Caliphate (*Halifelik makamının dayanağı olan Milli Hükümet*), that his only concern was to protect the religious duties of Islam, and that he had no relation to or interest in politics.[9] The debate continued, however; just as the Young Turks had worked to limit the absolute powers of Sultan Abdülhamid II by strengthening the Caliphate's position in the constitution of 1876, [10] it was now felt that the Caliph was "the only possible counterweight to Mustafa Kemal's dominance on the political scene".[11] The day after the publication of Caliph Abdülmecit's declaration, Lütfi Fikri, a lawyer who had graduated from the Law Faculty at Sorbonne, Paris in 1893, President of the Istanbul Bar, and former MP of the Ottoman Parliament, wrote an open letter to and in favor

[8] Abdülmecit was born in 1868, son of sultan Abdülaziz, and cousin of the sultans Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), Mehmet V (1909-1918) and Mehmet VI Vahdettin (1918-1922). Since his father was forced to abdicate in 1876, Abdülmecit had lived a quiet life in the palace. He spoke six foreign languages, among them Arabic, Persian and French, he painted, read philosophy and wrote books (including a 12 volume work on Ottoman history) Became heir to the throne in 1919 as his cousin Vahdettin became sultan. He was appointed Caliph by the Great National Assembly of Turkey in 1922.

[9] Halife Abdülmecit, *Vatan,* November 9th 1923, in Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Din-Devlet İlişkileri,* cilt I, Rehber Yayıncılık, Ankara, 1991, page 136–7

[10] Jäschke, Gotthard: Das osmanische Sceinkalifat von 1922, in *Die Welt des Islams,* New. Ser.Vol. 1, Issue 3, pages 195 – 228, page 197

[11] Zürcher, Erik J., Turkey – a modern history, I. B. Tauris & co, London, 2007, page 167

of the Caliph, published on November 10, 1923, in the newspaper *Tanin,* known for its independent views.

Hüseyin Cahit (Yalçın) 1875–1957, co-founder and editorial writer of *Tanin,* also published several articles where he argued that abolishing the Caliphate would be an illegitimate and immoral execution of power. Indicating that the republic had been proclaimed without the consent and knowledge of the Great National Assembly, Cahit claimed that they were once more confronted with a prearranged decision (*arka arkaya verilmiş kararlar karşısındayız*), and continued to express his concern versus the Assembly, which had become nothing but a registration office (*tescile*) for decisions already taken somewhere else.[12]

The foreign press also kept a keen eye on the development of domestic affairs in Turkey. Established in 1920, the Italian information office in Istanbul, Oriente Moderno, supported the Kemalist decision to abolish the Caliphate. It saw the conflict as one of political rivalry: The Turkish parliament being afraid that "the conservatives—which are much more numerous than the ruling dictatorial regime is willing to admit, are about to form a coalition centered on the Caliphate, and act against the interest of the new republic."[13] So controversial was the proposal that before presenting it to the Turkish parliament, Mustafa Kemal made sure he had the support of the military forces. He spent almost two months with the Chief of the General and other key military leaders during winter war games in Izmir, eventually summoning the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defense as well.[14]

The argumentation from the Istanbul press was also reflected in the Parliament discussions.[15] Dadaylı Halid Bey, war hero and deputy of Kastamonu, was the only Party member who spoke against the proposed abolishment. He reminded the deputies of the law proposed by the Party and accepted by the Parliament in November 1922: While abolishing the Sultanate it was laid down as an unchangeable principle that the Grand National Assembly of Turkey was the foundation of the Caliphate. He found it politically very difficult to support the proposal.

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[12] Hüseyin Cahit, Simdi de Halifelik Meselesi, *Tanin,* November 11, 1923
[13] Rossi, Ettore, tittel på artikkel, in Oriente Moderno, årstall, page 138
[14] Harris, George S., The role of the military in Turkish politics, in *The Middle East Journal* (Middle East Institute), 1965, volume 19, Issue 1, pages 54-66, page 57
[15] Extracts of the Parliament discussions are given in Jäschke, Gotthard, Das osmanische Scheinkalifat von 1922, in *Die Welt des Islams,* New Series, Vol. 1, Issue 3 (1951), pp. 195-228

> "In order to abolish such a historical entity as the Caliphate, I think we have to give it thorough consideration. Friends, we all know that during the proclamation of the Liberation War we focused on people's devoutness to the Caliphate and we were all inspired (*telkin atta*) by [slogans like] *Let us save the Caliphate!* We even brought several *ulema* as representatives in the first Grand National Assembly. This was done out of respect for the people's feelings (*halkın hissiyatına hürmet*). Earlier, my friends, (when) I found myself in the middle of the war, all the soldiers, all the friends were inspired by this. Together with the whole country we shall save the Caliphate, we used to say. I am not saying that the Caliphate should stay in the (Ottoman) dynasty. I say that this elevated office should be kept as the spiritual structure of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey."[16]

Halid Bey reflected the sentiments of the resistance movement from the Turkish War of Independence, where "… Muslim identity predominated to such an extent that we can indeed speak of "Muslim Nationalism."[17]

The only other MP speaking in favor of keeping the Caliphate was Gümüşhane Zeki Bey, the only non-party member in the Parliament. He launched his argumentation by reminding the Assembly members of the underlying principles governing the conduct of the Assembly and the individual MP, as acting on behalf of the population, submitting to the principles of honor and integrity, and enjoying freedom of expression from the parliament's podium. He was immediately interrupted by Ragib (deputy from Kütahya) shouting that "There is no relevance for you in those principles". Zeki continued:

> "I am a member of the nation, not of the party (*ben milletin efradındanım, fırkanın değilim*).With the various challenges facing our population today, of economic, political, domestic and agricultural character, is this (abolishing the Caliphate) the one thing remaining to be done (interruption of noise)? In my view the time has not yet come (interruption; it has long since passed… Friends, I am also a defender of the republic (noise)… I am an MP like you. I speak from this podium with sincerity, I fear no one…

[16] TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, devre II, Cilt 7, İçtima senesi: 1, page 35
[17] Erik Jan Zürcher, The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism, in International Journal of the Sociology of science, 137, 1999, pages 81 -92, page 89

> (Interruptions; you are the friend of Ferid Pasha, you are a spy, one of those worthless people who inform Ferid Pasha). [18]

Zeki Bey then continued, saying that he did not feel that the Parliament had sufficient authority to pass the proposed law, based on public sentiment.

> "Either we must organize a general referendum or opt for a new parliament election (interruptions of noise, step down cries, and the suggestion to make him a son-in-law of the Sultan)… maybe the people's will is being subordinated to the will of the Parliament (*kendi arzu ettiklerimizi doğrudan doğruya halka kabul mu ettireceğiz…*)…Does the government belong unconditionally (bilakaydüşart) to the nation/people, or to the Parliament members? In my opinion it belongs to the nation. … The republic in its present manner is on its way to becoming a Sultanate (Cumhuriyet, devam ettiği halde, saltanata doğru yürüyor)".[19]

To warn against the ascent of Mustafa Kemal as a new Sultan was a great provocation. People started shouting and banging their tables, the president of the Assembly intervening to calm them down. To question whether or not the parliament members were acting as representatives of the people brought constitutional legitimacy to the fore of the discussions. It was felt by the opposition that the public were without any say in the process, and that such an important measure could not be justified without the consent of the citizens.

The Minister of Justice, Seyyid Bey, a graduate from the Law Faculty at Istanbul University, professor in Islamic law and dean of the Theological Faculty, "solved" the question of legitimacy by arguing that abolishing the Caliphate was not only permissible but actually recommendable on the basis of a true interpretation of Islam. The people would not agree to the abolishment simply because they lacked informed opinion and thought Islam would be endangered:

> … Gentlemen, the population does not understand this truth, they do not know it, and they are not to blame for that, because the responsibility is ours. It is our duty to explain

[18] TBMM, page 31. Ferid Pahsa was the son-in-law of the last sultan, Sultan Mehmet Vahdettin, his name was on the 150 persona non grata list, presented and accepted at the Lausanne peach conference.
[19] TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, devre II, Cilt 7, İçtima senesi: 1, page 33

> and teach/and make them know. I will tell them, warn them, guide and enlighten them, and then I will make them progress (interruption of bravo).[20]

The matter of abolishing the Caliphate suffered from a lack of public support, and revealed the lack of credentials of the MPs as representative of the public. Bilgin argues that "the most saliently observed political aspect of constitutions manifests in the process of constitution-making".[21] Read as a manifestation of the new political paradigm, the process around the abolishment of the Caliphate speaks of a democratic deficiency: a constitutional change without legitimacy.

Legitimacy with respect to content

The process of creation is but one of the two areas by which a constitution's legitimacy can be measured; of equal importance is the public's level of consent and support of the moral and sociological principles it contains. In retrospect it is easy to see how abolishing the Caliphate was the first step in a top-down secularization policy that paved the way for a Turkish national identity based on ethnicity. Islam, the provider of a collective identity not only between Muslim Turks and other Muslims in Turkey, but even more importantly between the state and its citizens, was marginalized. "In this demarche against religion, secularism stripped the Turkish Muslims of their predominant collective identity".[22]

In Turkey today, much Islamist writing "departs from a diagnosis of a problematic present, and the most common interpretation that one encounters in these works is that the problem is one of identity: Turks do not know who they are". [23] Until the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924, however, they knew: Turkey's identity and the identity of Turks were firmly based on religion, as laid down by the Ottoman millet system where the population was defined by religious affiliation. In the population exchange between Turkey and Greece religious criteria were applied, and in the Lausanne Treaty, minorities were defined according to religious affiliation. Turkish-speaking Armenians living in Anatolia were thus considered a minority, while Armenian-speaking Muslims were considered Turks. Being Turkish was identical with

[20] TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, devre II, Cilt 7, İçtima senesi: 1, 1340 (1924), page 60
[21] Bilgin, 2008, page 129
[22] Cagaptay, Soner: *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey – Who is a Turk?* Routledge, London and New York, 2009, page 52
[23] Silverstein, Brian, Islamist *Critique in Modern Turkey: Hermeneutics, Tradition, Genealogy, in Comparative* Studies in Society and History, Cambridge Journals, 2005/1, volume 47, pp 134-160, page 146

being Muslim. This had also been the basis for the multiethnic coalition behind the War of Independence, which saw the Caliphate and Islam as the most important source of sociopolitical legitimacy.

The proposal to abolish the Caliphate was considered a threat to this unity of Turkish and Muslim identity. Lütfi Fikri made an explicit link between Islam and Turkish national identity. He argued that not only would the resignation of the Caliph be a great loss for Turkey, the end of the Ottoman Dynasty and the destruction of Islamic unity, but it would be a disaster for the people, "we will have become our own enemy, … it is a heartfelt wish that the issue of resignation must be buried forever, it would be a world catastrophe (*felaket*) …" He then continued to express his amazement and distress concerning the fact that the abolishment of the Caliphate was a proposal made by the Turks themselves: "It is the suicide of Turkishness".[24] Fikri's view was supported and brought forward in the Turkish Parliament as well, by Dadaylı Halid Bey, who saw the Caliphate's existence as a security symbol providing a common identity/public spirit (*hamiyet*) to the Turkish population. Gümüşhane Zeki Bey, the only non-party member in the Parliament, argued that:

> ... Friends, I am a liberal who (at the same time) firmly belongs to the union of Islam (*ittihadı İslam taraftarıyım*) (interruption; speak Turkish!)… And I want to see this historical greatness (the Caliphate) within my own nation. That is my goal. So, let us not in the name of foreign or domestic politics of the present situation abolish the Caliphate and throw this important strength into the lap of our enemies or of other governments… (Interruptions; what strength is that? The best example of its strength is the degree of opposition against it!).[25]

Being in favor of the proposed abolishment, Vasıf Bey, Minister of Education and deputy of Saruhan, argued that the Turks should get their strength from within their own nation, and that the politics of the past had been a rotten policy exemplified by how the Caliph had joined forces with the enemy, with the Greek army against the Turkish nation. "The greatest threat to the TBMM is not the Sultanate but the Caliphate". He made several references to Zeki Bey's speech, accusing him of soiling the spirit of the revolution, planting doubt in the mind of the nation, influencing their hearts. He was interrupted by Zeki Bey strongly objecting to these

[24] Lütfi Fikri Bey, Huzur-u Hazret-i Hilafetpenahi'ye, *Tanin,* November 10th 1923, Prof. Zeynep Korkmaz, Bugünkü dille nutuk, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, www.atam.gov.tr
[25] TBMM, page 31

accusations. Most importantly, Vasıf Bey was eager to prevent the opposition from monopolizing Islam, arguing all the MPs were Muslims, and thus difference in opinion about the Caliphate question should not be interpreted as a division between true Muslims or "rhetorical" Muslims.

> "Friends, the traditions and nature of Islam are not only manifest in the mind and feelings of Zeki Bey. They are also manifest in the mind and feelings of the three hundred friends who constitute the Grand Assembly and who have rescued the nation from the most dangerous of dangers… Friends, we are all Muslims, We have no need to learn from Zeki Bey about the Muslim religion or Muslim traditions. Friends, also during the Ottoman Empire, these feelings were exploited … sacred ideas (*mukaddes fikirler*) were used as a tool to achieve personal ambitions. We must reject (*çekinmeliyiz*) this." [26]

Cabinet secretary Prime Minister Ismet Inönü also tried to assure the congregation of Turkey's continued respect for Islam, and that this loyalty would be better secured without the Caliphate:

> "Respected gentlemen: The decision about the abolishment of the Caliphate will not cause any harm to the protection and performance of Islam, to this all the MPs agree, those in favor and those against the proposition. …In the Turkish republic there will be no deficiency with respect to religious performance (*Islamiyenin icrasında*), treatment (*muamelat*) or decisions (*ahkam*) …"[27]

Acknowledging the sensitivity of the issue, Minister of Justice Seyyid Bey used his authority as a Muslim scholar to persuade the congregation by decoupling the unity of Islam and the Caliphate. [28] Speaking as an expert in Islamic law, he furthermore strengthened his argument by referring to the special relationship between Turks and Islam as one of scholarly knowledge; "in the Islamic civilization no one (other intellectuals) has been more dutiful than the Turks with respect to knowledge… Among the Turks there are great philosophers, technological scientists, and great experts in Islamic law.

[26] TBMM, page 37
[27] TBMM, page 62
[28] For a comprehensive analyzes of Seyyid's argumentation, see Guida, Michelangelo: Seyyid Bey and the Abolition of the Caliphate, in *Middle Eastern Studies,* 44/2, 2008, pages 275-289

> "… I have for several years' undertaken serious research (in the matter) and I would like to present some of my findings with respect to the subject. Last year I published a book about the Caliphate and national sovereignty… We are bringing about a great revolution in the history of Islam. A greater revolution cannot be done. The greatness of the revolution is such that it involves/affects/occupies the mind/intellect. Our hearts are in a state of anxiety (*endişe*) and doubt (*tereddüt*). All of us need both conscience and intelligence to make the matter completely visible/manifest. The importance of the matter makes it obligatory to uncover all intellectual doubts. The question must be solved knowingly. Both the political and the religious aspects must be made clear. When we know this we will be able to make a decision."[29]

Seyyid argued that the Caliphate was merely a matter of politics, not part of the Islamic doctrine or rooted in the Koran or the Sunna.

> "But because of some superstitious nonsense and untrue thoughts such a connection has been proposed... I will now explain the original and essential (*asil mahiyeti*) character of the Caliphate question in accordance with the true way of religion. Before everything else I want to say that Caliphate means government. From start to end a national matter related to time and context."[30]

His speech was focused on the juridical aspects of the matter, discussing in great detail and with plentiful references to the Holy Scriptures how the question of the Caliphate was to be understood.

> "… Respected sirs, if you look in the Koran which is the original law of religion, you will not find a single verse about the Caliphate, but it gives us two rules (*düstur*) about the government of society: 1…. True rules must build on consultation/conference. This means that the Muslims must solve the task between themselves. This is based on the way the population of Medina solved their affairs between themselves in a very gentle and good manner. This was applauded by the Holy Koran. Thus consultation among the population is the

[29] TBMM, page 40
[30] TBMM, page 41

> prescribed method of governance in the Koran, for the benefit of the soundness of society. 2. The second rule is that you shall show obedience (*itaat ediniz*) to those in power of command, chosen among you…"[31]

Thus in spite of his intentions "he probably sincerely believed that the Turkish Great National Assembly was the best Islamic form of rule according to his reinterpretations of the sources" [32] Seyyid Bey, Minister of Justice and professor of Islamic law provided religious justification for the radical secularization policy of the Kemalists.

Evaluating the legitimacy of the constitutional change with respect to content, it is important to note that both sides in the debate referred to "people's feelings", "their hearts in a state of anxiety" and so on. While those speaking in favor of abolishment interpreted the peoples' feelings as a result of them not being able to understand the true way of religion, however, the opposition opted for the question to be decided by a public referendum: "to respect the people's will". Add to this the importance of the Caliphate during the Turkish War of Independence and the legacy of the Ottoman millet system equating Turkish identity with Muslim identity: the question of legitimacy with respect to public consent to a change that stripped Islam of its constitutional backing must then be answered in the negative.

Consequences

Abolishing the Caliphate had both immediate and long-term consequences, personally and politically. Caliph Abdülmecit was deported immediately following the enactment of the abolishment in March 1924. [33] There was a high price to be paid for the few who voiced their opposition, but an even higher price to be paid for the many who were made to suffer from "the brutal collision between the Islamic reality and the secular institution" of the Turkish state.[34] The journalists Fikri and Cahit were arrested and stood trial before the newly established Independence Tribunals accused of high treason, and the final verdicts were given on January 2, 1924.[35] According to some sources, the prosecutor, Ihsan Bey, was met at the

[31] TBMM, page 41
[32] Guida, Michelangelo: Seyyid Bey and the Abolition of the Caliphate, in Middle Eastern Studies, 44/2, 2008, pages 275-289, page 286
[33] He settled down in Paris, where he died in 1944. Abdülmecit never showed any sign of political ambitions, neither before or during the Liberation war, nor during his office as Caliph, or after his deportation. In his will he expressed a strong wish to be buried in Turkey, but this was denied. In 1954, his corpse was taken to Medina and buried there.
[34] Oriente Moderno, page 141
[35] Ahmed Cevdet, Velid Ebüzziya Ekrem Bey and Abdülkadir Kemali were also arrested.

train station by Ismet Inönü urging him to make sure that Hüseyin Cahit would hang.[36] Hüseyin Cahit made an incendiary defense speech in favor of the republic:

> "This republic is not resting on a few, five to ten esteemed individuals. The pillars of this republic are truth and justice, the law. No matter what the source might be, it detests (*nefret*) injustice (*zulüm*) and despotism (*istibdat*). My intentions (*niyetim*) are the best, as I work to strengthen these foundations of the republic. It is my duty as a citizen and journalist to speak my opinion even though it causes some enmity towards me. I am not a traitor. I don't ask for either compassion or lenience, all I ask for is justice"[37]

At this point the large crowd of people which had gathered at the gallery started shouting in favor of his innocence.

Lütfi Fikri admitted in his defense speech that he was in favor of the Caliphate and that in his opinion the motive for abolishing it was based on a wish to divide the population. He also reminded the court that the continuation of the Caliphate had been decided and that the present Caliph had been appointed by the Great National Assembly of Turkey in 1922. So how could it be illegal to support an institution which was in itself legitimate according to Turkish law? [38] Fikri was sentenced to five years of hard labor; Cahit was acquitted.[39] The day after the enactment of the abolishment, several newspapers were closed down: *Tevhidi Efkar* (Unity of Thoughts), *Son Telgraf* (The Latest Telegram)*, İstiklal* (The Independent), and *Sebilürresad* (Path of Righteousness). Within two months another eight newspapers were closed, among them the *Tanin* (Echo) and *Vatan* (Fatherland).[40]

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[36] Kandemir, Siyasi dargınlıklar, cilt 11, page 102, i Topuz, Hıfzı, *100 Soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul (1973) 1996, page 81

[37] Hıfzı Topuz, *100 Soruda Başlangıçtan Günümüze Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul, (1973) 1996, page 80–81

[38] Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Din-Devlet İlişkileri,* cilt I, Rehber Yayıncılık, Ankara, 1991, page 152- 53

[39] Cahit was arrested again in 1925, accused of not writing about politics (!), and sentenced to exile for life in Corum in North Eastern Anatolia. After the death of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), Ismet Inönü lifted his exile and invited him back to politics. He was elected MP for the Republican Peoples Party 1939–1954. He faced his final arrest in 1954 at the age of 79, for writing articles critical toward the ruling Democrat Party. In 1936, Hüseyin Cahit commented on the challenges of journalism, acting as editorial writer in the weekly newspaper Yedigün: "To be able to realize the freedom of thought, the journalist works hard, surrounded by the smell of wet ink from the press, sometimes confronted with some serious dangers, and with thousands of impressions and influences in the air, like a captive strapped in iron chains… You must be willing to make sacrifices, social life, rest, advancement, money and even your life sometimes." Hüseyin Cahit, Gazeteciliğin içyüzü, *Yedigün,* December 31th, 1936, page 26,27

[40] Topuz, Hıfzı, *100 Soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul (1973) 1996, page 83

Within the Great National Assembly of Turkey, the abolishment of the Caliphate, especially the way it was abolished, and the harsh reactions toward those in favor of keeping it, strengthened the opposition against Mustafa Kemal. The opposition was based on anti-republican feelings, voiced by prominent members of the National Assembly such as Hüseyin Rauf, Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), Adnan (Adivar) Refet (Bele) and Kazım (Karabekir), who happened not to be in Ankara at the time of the republic's proclamation.[41] Oriente Moderno noted how these people who had been vital in the Nationalist movement and the Turkish War of Independence, who had secured an impressive diplomatic triumph for Turkey in the Lausanne Peace Treaty and had been of great service to Mustafa Kemal, were now being dismissed as conservative traditionalists counterproductive to the Turkish revolution. [42] Thus the division lines in the Caliphate question did not run parallel to the division line between modernists and Islamists; on the contrary, the discussions revealed the existence of an alliance between Islamists and modernists, modernists who were more conservative than the Kemalists, spiritual adherents of the millet system though far more westernized and secular in their daily lives. Confronted with this alliance

> "…which would have killed all possibility of radical reform, [Mustafa Kemal) decided to abolish the Caliphate…this act and the radical program of reform that followed cut the state's formal ties with Islam and the Muslim world…?"[43]

An opposition party, the Progressive Republican Party (PRP), was established in November 1924. Among the constituting articles of the PRP's party program, there were significant expressions of what the opposition found lacking in the ruling Republican People's Party of Mustafa Kemal: Article 2, "Liberalism and democracy form the basis for the party's actions" and Article 6 stating that "The party respects religious beliefs and convictions". Halid Bey and Zeki Bey both joined the party, which was closed down by cabinet declaration in June 1925.[44] After the PRP was closed down, Halid Bey continued his electoral period as an independent MP. Due to his opposition, he was not nominated in the next election and left politics. He retired with the rank of colonel in 1929. Zeki Bey was accused of participating in

[41] *Turkey a Modern History,* New York, Tauris, 2007, page 167
[42] Oriente Moderno, page 138
[43] Ahmad, Feroz: Politics and Islam in Modern Turkey, in *Middle Eastern Studies* (London: Frank Cass), volume 27, issue 1, 1991, pages 3-21, page 6
[44] Tunaya, Tarik Zafer, *İslamcılık Akimi*, Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, (1962), 2003, page 143–149 and Zürcher, Erik Jan, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic, The Progressive Republican Party, 1924–1925,* Leiden, 1991, page 34

an assassination attempt on Mustafa Kemal in 1926: he was acquitted but forced to leave politics. He then became subject to civil police surveillance, making it very difficult for him to conduct his daily life and make a living.[45]

Abolishing the Caliphate made possible the implementation of the Kemalist secularization program, the consequence of which was to alienate the population from the state. Stripping Islam of state backing reciprocally stripped the state of backing from its Muslim constituency. The following quote from a conversation between Ahmet Hamdi Başar, member of the Free Republican Party, and Reşit Galip in 1930, gives an accurate picture of a widespread opinion:

> "In Islam, to separate religion from the world means to abolish religion. All our actions will be actions against religion, and the one who performs these actions will be an infidel. If people believe in religion they can't believe in the state and the law. People will become either without state or without religion."[46]

In Turkey at the beginning of the 20th century, Islam was the most significant constituent of the Turkish collective identity. Coercion, rather than social learning or preference, was the method by which the population was made to comply.[47] Without the Caliphate, there remained no constitutional platform from which to voice an opposition,

> "Official Islam could jeopardize the new regime, potentially activating popular Islam. The Caliphate, the stronghold of official Islam presented a major threat for upcoming reforms…The Caliphate represented the link between Islam and the past. Its abolition crippled the entrenched Islamic orthodoxy, once the very base of public life. Now the Kemalists were ready to eradicate the shards of the Islamic civil, criminal and constitutional law."[48]

Zürcher divides Mustafa Kemal's legislative secularization policy into three areas, first: secularization of the state (education and law, and abolishment of institutionalized Islam);

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[45] İz, Mahir, *Yılların İzi,* Kitabevi, Istanbul, 1990, page 323–333

[46] Ahmet Hamdi Başar was a former MP of the 1st Turkish National Assembly, member of the Free Republican Party that existed between August and November 1930, and later MP of the Democrat Party. Reşit Galip was MP for the Republican People's Party from 1925, and became Minister of Education in 1932. Quoted in Ismail Kara, Diyanet İsleri Başkanlığı, in Modern Türkiye'de Siyası Düşünce, Volume 6, Istanbul 2004, page 178.

[47] Checkel, Jeffrey T.: Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change, in *International Organization,* 55/3, 2001, pp 553 - 588

[48] Köker, Tolga: The establishment of Kemalist Secularism in Turkey, in *Middle East Law and Governance,* (Leiden: Brill), volume 2, Issue 1, 2010, pages 17-42, page 30

second: "the attack on religious symbols and their replacement by the symbols of European civilization"; and third, the secularization of social life.[49] They all aimed to diminish the public role of religion, culminating in "secularism" being implemented as one of the six founding principles of the Turkish constitution. An overview is presented in Table 1, where I have differentiated between abolitions, replacement of abolished institution with western counterparts, and innovations. [50]

Table 1: Kemalist' secularization policy through legislation

Year	Abolitions	Replacements	Innovations
1924	Constitution of 1921 Caliphate Religious schools Religious courts Ottoman Ministry of religious affairs	New constitution prepared by RPP	 Presidency of religious affairs Unified national education system
1925	Religious orders Shrines Traditional headgear	European hat	High Treason Law amended, including political use of religion as treasonable Law on the Maintenance of Order Establishment of Tribunal courts
1926	Muslim calendar Religious marriages Polygamy	Gregorian calendar Adoption of the Italian Penal Code Adoption of the Swiss Civil Code	
1928	Use of Arabic alphabet forbidden Islam as state religion eliminated from the constitution	Latin alphabet obligatory	
1929	Arabic and Persian removed from curriculum		
1932	Call to prayer in Arabic		Call to prayer in Turkish
1935	Friday weekly holiday Prohibition of wearing religious garb outside mosques/churches	Sunday weekly holiday	
1936			Secularism incorporated in the constitution as founding principle

The reforms motivated widespread popular unrest, conflicts and rebellions. In February 1925 the High Treason Law was amended to include the political use of religion, and in March the

[49] Zürcher, J. Erik, *Turkey: a Modern History,* New York, Tauris, 2007, page 186
[50] The information is gathered from Jäschke, Gotthard, Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege, Türkischer Geschichtskalender für 1918-1928 in *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 10, 1927-29, page 1-154, Jäschke, Gotthard, Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege, Türkischer Geschichtskalender für 1931-1932, in *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 15, 1933, page 1-33, Jäschke, Gotthard, Der Islam in der neuen Türkei, eine Rechtsgeschichtliche Untersuchung, in Die Welt des Islams, New.Ser.Vol. 1, 1951, page 1-174

Law on Maintenance of Order was enacted (remaining in force until 1929), allowing the government to ban by administrative measure any organization or publication that it considered threatening to law and order. The Independence Tribunals were reinstated to deal with the opponents of the Kemalist regime. Nearly 700 people were executed and 7500 arrested under the Law on the Maintenance of Order, including leading journalists from the Istanbul press.[51] "From the promulgation of the Law on the Maintenance of Order in March 1925, Turkey's government was an authoritarian one-party regime and, not to put too fine a point on it, a dictatorship."[52]

The shift from ethnic pluralism and religion to ethnicity and race as the basis for Turkish national identity was of course influenced from abroad, nationalism being Europe's greatest export article of the day, but this was not the only factor, because abroad being Turkish and being Muslim was perceived as the same thing (and still is by many). The rationale behind the regime's secularization program must also be understood in the light of its interpretation of modernization itself, rationality being the creed of the day. Evaluated in 1933 by MacCallum, "Islam in Turkey was thus left not only leaderless but unfashionable. In Constantinople the mosque was largely abandoned to the reactionary, the aged and the ignorant." [53] His words were echoed by Feldman in 2008,

> "In repressing religion, the sharia and the scholars, he [Mustafa Kemal] went further than anyone had gone in thirteen centuries of Islamic civilization. His self-consciously Jacobin program of radical secularism all but severed the connection between state and religion, allowing the alter to exist only as a source of personal faith wholly subordinated to the state…. …Painful as were the changes that he forced upon Turkish society, the complete absence of any reliance on Islamic legitimacy – indeed, the opposite aspiration of relegating Islam to nothing but the backward faith of a few old people."[54]

Turning majority values into minor values of minority belonging and transforming the very notion of belonging into a question of ontology: a question of belonging to a race, a gender or a generation, an essentialist understanding of national identity as a "second nature", to borrow

[51] Tuncay, Mete, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde tek parti yönetiminin kurulması (1923 – 1931), Istanbul, Cem, 1989, page 169
[52] Zürcher, Erik J.: Turkey: A Modern History, New York, 2007, Tauris, page 176
[53] MacCallum, F. Lyman Turkey discovers the Koran, in *The Muslim World,* Volume 23, issue 1, January 1933, pages 24-28.
[54] Feldman, 2008, page 87, 88

a concept from Bhabha, where "…ethnical origins becomes more important than political practices and ethical choices".[55]

Authenticity was at the very heart of the matter, and ethnicity as a criterion for inclusion was the Kemalists' only possible claim to authenticity in the construction of a new Turkish national identity, where Islam had been construed as "the other" of modernity.

The potential for things to have been otherwise

To assess the potential for things to have been otherwise, we shall return once more to the parliament discussion on abolishing the Caliphate. "This event was not the obvious consequence of a process of secularization. On the contrary, it could be interpreted as an attempt to reform the Ottoman Empire by modernist Muslim intellectuals".[56] Seyyid Bey framed the abolishment of the Caliphate as an inevitable part of a necessary and ongoing modernization of Turkey. He argued that contrary to other religions, Islam was not only compatible with but even promoting progress and modernization. He even supported his argument by referring to a book written by a western scholar:

> "A book written by Draper, called "the dispute between science and religion" has recently been published by an American University[57]. It claims that (in general) science and religion cannot exist within the same brain (bir digmada din ile ilim içtima edemez); the scholar is not devoted to religion and the religiously devoted is not a scholar (alim ise mütedeyyin değildir, mütedeyyin ise alim değildir). But he (Draper) makes it clear that his target is not the religion of Islam, it is the other religions, especially the religion of Catholicism. True Islam is (never) not the obstacle to progress in our time…"

The ultimate question was that of Islam's compatibility with modernity. This question was answered in the affirmative by both sides in the parliament discussion: arguing that Turkey and Turks had a special responsibility toward Islam, and that a synthesis between Turkey and Islam was inevitable. Herein lies a very important clue. Islam was perceived and practiced as part of Turkish culture; being Muslim denoted an attachment to Turkey, a perception of a

[55] Bhabha, Homi, K., *The Location of Culture,* London, 2007, page XVII
[56] Guida, Michelangelo: Seyyid Bey and the Abolition of the Caliphate, Middle Eastern Studies, 2008, 44:2, pages 275-289, page 275
[57] The book in question was Draper, John William, *A History of the Conflict between Religion and Science,* New York, 1874

religious identity that signified belonging to a national community with a specific historical background as an empire. Islam, being attached to culture and nation, thus given a particularistic Turkish identity, was also inherently open to change.

On neither side in the debate on abolishing the Caliphate was Islam held responsible for Turkey's backwardness; on the contrary. Ekrem Bey, deputy from Rize, gave voice to the general view of Islam and the matter of Turkey's backwardness, arguing in favor of abolishing the Caliphate:

> "Sirs, I wonder, why have my country and my nation been left behind? When I meet a foreigner and compare my own country to his, I see that his country has railways while my country is lacking roads. When sometimes I am forced to sell even the buttons on my hat to buy a piece of bread, I am embarrassed (yüzüm kızarıyor) when meeting foreigners. So I ask myself what is the reason for this backwardness of the Turkish nation … Is the reason religion? But I immediately see that the Arabic civilization of the past which was based on Islam renders my question impossible…"[58]

Neither was Westernization as such put forward as the solution. In fact, direct references to the West were few, but the ones that do occur are in general positive. Admiration for Europe is expressed when Seyyid Bey describes the past glory of Islamic cities like Samarkand, Bukhara and Baghdad by comparing them to Paris and London. France is used as an example to be followed with respect to the division of religion from politics. But the superiority of the West is interpreted as historical rather than civilizational; the science and art of England is a continuation of the Arabic civilization in Andalusia.

> "… Once upon the time when Europe was in a state of dark ignorance (Zulmeti cehil içinde iken) the oriental civilization was far ahead/much advanced. During that time, the Islamic world was the most progressive on the planet. "

Modernization was not equated with Westernization; the West having benefitted from the Islamic civilization in Andalusia, it was now time for Turkey to benefit from the progress of the West.[59] Thus, contrary to the Kemalist view, these speakers saw no contradiction between

[58] TBMM, page 29,30
[59] Furthermore, there is only one reference to the West as a block, when Seyyid Bey compares the East and the West and notes that a country's law must be in accordance with customs and traditions of that country. All other references are made to individual countries, and the countries mentioned are Belgium, England, France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland.

religion and modernization. Islam was not only deemed compatible with modernization but framed as a proponent of progress and science.

Abolishing the Caliphate rendered the Muslim society secular by constitution. The public did not have access to the formation of this new constitution and there was a considerable lack of consent with respect to its secular content. Stripping Islam of constitutional backing lacked legitimacy, and stripped the state of backing from its Muslim constituency.

Based on an assessment of the arguments put forward in the newspapers and in the Parliament discussion at the time, it is possible to conclude that an opportunity was missed to base the Turkish identity on a concept of inclusion rather than exclusion, sustaining the bonds of solidarity between Turks and Kurds, and securing loyalty between the state and its citizens. Had Islam been allowed to continue as a determinant of Turkish national identity, there would have been less deficiency with respect to democracy and the caravan could have moved on plural paths to modernity without leaving the Turkish public behind at the mountain.

Article II

Kemalism on the Catwalk: the Turkish Hat Law of 1925

Introduction

Fashion as a symbol of civilization, and clothes as means of identity construction as well as markers of identity are common denominators in all human history. Exploited by rulers and governments to define gender, class, occupation, age, religious affiliation and rank, fashion icons and clothing regulations provide an authentic source for the study of identity formation. In Turkey today, the issue of what to wear or not to wear is once more on top of the political agenda. On June 5, 2008, the Constitutional Court ruled that the Turkish Parliament had violated the constitutional principle of secularism by passing an amendment, approved by an overwhelming majority of the Turkish Parliament, to lift the headscarf ban in universities.

This article, however, is concerned with a much earlier chapter in the sartorial biography of Turkey. Considered an important tool by Mustafa Kemal in his attempts to modernize Turkish society and join ranks with the "contemporary civilization" of Europe, the Hat Law of 1925 required the Turkish people to wear western hats and forbade the use of any other headgear.[1] To continue wearing the fez would be interpreted as disobedience towards the government, and was punishable by imprisonment.[2]

The Hat Law was enacted while the Law on the Restoration of Order of March 4, 1925 was in force, authorizing the government to: "…prohibit on its own initiative and by administrative measure (subject to the approval of the President) all organizations, provocations, exhortations, initiatives and publications which cause disturbance of the social structures, law and order and safety and incite to commit reactionary acts and subversion.".[3]

During the two-and-a-half month immediately following enactment of the Hat Law, 808 people were arrested for violations of it. The renowned Islamic intellectual scholar İskilipli

[1] The Hat Law was first passed by the Ministerial Council on September 2nd 1925, making it the duty of all employees of the army and the fleet, the clergy and the courts, to adopt the dress code of the civilized nations of the world, i.e. Western dress. Nearly tree months later, on November 25, 1925, the Hat Law was amended to include the entire population. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (TBMM), Devre II, 3, Cilt 19, 1925 (Minutes from the Great National Assembly of Turkey)

[2] Gotthard Jäschke, 'Der Islam in der neuen Turkei. Eine Rechtsgeschichtliche Untersuchung', in *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 1, ½, 1951, p. 45

[3] Translated by Erik Jan Zürcher, in Zürcher, *Political Opposition…* 1991, p. 160

Atıf was among the 57 who were executed for instigating rebellion against the state in this context. [4]

By this legislation the individual head became a political site of identity construction.[5] Thus the Hat Law can be interpreted as a 'boundary object' a fusion or a bridge point between social and political history.[6]

Self-situated in the dichotomous Orientalist discourse of East vs. West, the Kemalist regime equated modernity with westernization, and disavowed traditional values and religion. During this process, Islam was construed as representing something other than modernity, while at the same time (Kemalist) reason, not belief, was seen as having the right to legislative power in the Turkish Republic. The provisions of the republican revolution were almost all related to diminishing the social and political role of Islam in favor of wholesale westernization: Adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, the Italian Penal Code, the Gregorian calendar, the Latin alphabet, and Sunday as the weekly holiday, all of which incorporated secularism as a constitutional principle. The (arguably absurd) extension of this logic was the passage of the Hat Law.

The Kemalist modernization project was challenged not only by rival interpretations of modernity from within the westernized intellectual elite, but also from voices within the Muslim establishment who sought to strike a balance between modernization and Islam.

A range of literature on modern Turkey, both western and Turkish, has been studied for this paper. However, apart from Orhan Koloğlu's *İslam'da Başlık* (Headgear in Islam), which gives an excellent overview of the matter and has been used as a point of departure for this article, few books deal explicitly with the Hat Law. As far as other secondary sources are concerned, the Hat Law is generally viewed as a mere manifestation of various approaches to:

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[4] Orhan Koloğlu, *İslam'da Başlık, (*Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1978) p. 116

[5] Göle, The Forbidden Modern, Civilization and Veiling (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press 2003) 'The head as political site' was framed by Nilüfer

[6] 'Boundary objects' are objects that inhibit several intersecting worlds "…and satisfy the informational requirements of each of them… They have different meanings in different worlds but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation", see Susan Leigh Star and James R. Greimer, Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907-39, in *Social Studies of Science,* Vol. 19, nr. 3, 1989, p 385-420, SAGE, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi

1. The Kemalist elite's secularization policy (Jäschke, 1951; Rustow, in Frye (ed.), 1955; Kinross, 1964; Brockett, 1998; Tunaya, 2003; Deren in Bora ed., 2004; Zana, 2004; Zürcher, 2005; Altunilik and Tür, 2005; Ilbeyi 2005; Ökcen, 2005; Mardin, 2006)
2. The Kemalist elite's emphasis on making a total break with the past (Toynbee and Kirkwood 1926; Webster, 1939; Baker, 1986)
3. The Kemalist elite's hitherto unprecedented level of state intervention into the private lives of its citizens (Dilipak, 1988; Göle, 2003; Zürcher in Özdalga, 2005), or as propagation of Kemalist nationalism (Poulton, 1997).

These approaches are complementary in that they treat the Hat Law as one of many examples that identify and emphasize different aspects of the Kemalist modernization project, based on political documents as the major source material.

But the motivation for, reactions to, and consequences of the Hat Law were recorded in contemporary political, intellectual and cultural sources as well, which taken together provide a rich perspective. By expanding the range of source material and integrating the images generated in different societal fields, the Hat Law becomes a most useful source for understanding the identity discourse in post-Ottoman Turkey. This approach will hopefully serve to instill some resistance to the sentiment "that all that is worth saying has been said", which according to Erik Jan Zürcher seems to prevail with regard to the 1919-1938 period and its historiography.[7]

The sources selected for this article start with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's Kastamonu speech, in which he addressed the question in public for the first time, and include minutes from the Turkish Parliament; a scholarly book, *Frenk mukallidliği ve şapka* (French imitation and the hat); a newspaper article entitled *Avrupa Kafasi* (The European Mentality); and a short story, *Silindir şapka giyen köylü* (The Peasant with the Top Hat). These sources make multiple voices of modernity audible, defining the identity of modern Turkey according to their own fashion. Within the Muslim establishment, three contrasting definitions of modernity were especially important:

- The *Modernization equals democratization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument: What to wear is a matter of individual choice, firmly within the boundaries of personal

[7] Erik Jan Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic - the Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925 (* Leiden: Brill, 1991), p. 2

integrity and protected by constitutional law. National sovereignty is interpreted as something that rests with the people.

- The *Modernization equals secularization* argument: What to wear is not a matter of religious concern. This is a warning against the political usage of religion based on a wrongful interpretation of Islam, rendering to Kemal what was Kemal's.
- The *Modernization does not equal westernization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument*:* What to wear is a matter of political concern. Traditional headgear is interpreted as an expression of authenticity, vital to achieve the true modernization of Turkish society.

Inside the westernized establishment, contrasting definitions of modernity mirrored those of their Muslim counterparts:

- The *Modernization does equal westernization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument. A warning that the construction of a Turkish identity based on superficial Western mimicry was equal to an internalization of inferiority.
- The *Modernization equals democratization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument. This approach points out that the dress code regulations were a masquerade hiding the gap between the ideal, the Westernized elite of urban Istanbul, and the reality, the poor peasants of rural Turkey, thus conflating modernization with social responsibility.

But while the voices from within the westernized establishment were critical *to* the regime, challenging the Kemalist monopoly of knowing how to modernize Turkey, the voices from within the Muslim establishment were critical *of* the regime. These critics seriously undermined Mustafa Kemal's effort to construe a Muslim 'other' as the opposite of progress and civilization, claiming Islam to be compatible with modernization.

Before exploring in greater detail the Kastamonu speech and the contending definitions of the new Turkish identity articulated above, the impact of Ottoman heritage on Turkish identity politics must be briefly presented.[8] The hat was not the only alternative to the fez -- there was another – the turban – and it is in this perspective that the true "otherness" of the fez in relation to the hat can be understood. There was an Ottoman dress rehearsal to Kemal's sartorial westernization.

[8] For an excellent study of the Ottoman impact on modern Turkey, see Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey,* (Walkington: The Eothen Press, 1985). In this book Heper shows how the very concept of state in the Ottoman/Turkish context is a ghazi (warrior) state based on conquest, where the fear of disintegrative influences is a leitmotif, where the ruler based his position on a mixture of power and legitimacy, and where Islam never was an autonomous force.

Sartorial westernization - The Ottoman dress rehearsal

During the late Ottoman period, sartorial regulations were developed as a mean to advertise loyalty and ideological change, emphasizing the linkage between identity discourse and male headgear. [9]

Male headgear as an arbiter of identity was a well-established practice, but as the empire declined both economically and military, the turban came to be a marker of professional status and independent political power rather than a sign of loyalty to the ruler. As the use of the turban was restricted to the military and the religious classes of the empire, the non-Muslim subjects of the empire were excluded from displaying their loyalty or lack of such towards the Ottoman rule. Clothing regulations were an important tool as a means to dismantle the old classes. The fez was to be a homogenizing status marker "that placed the state at the centre of Ottoman life as the sole remaining arbiter of identity".[10] Supporting the regulation was a new bureaucracy and a new elite infantry unit set up with western weapons, training, and uniforms independent of the Janissaries. To secure *popular* support for the new dress code regulations, a strategy for launching the new headgear was created in order to promote respect for it among the population. Islamic teachers and preachers in the mosques were singled out as significant fashion-mongers, special sermons were written to legitimate the fez from a religious point of view, and soldiers were obliged to wear the fez during the five daily prayer sermons. Violation of the law was punishable by decapitation.

The fez as the new official headgear was an effort to create a new Ottoman, an Ottoman loyal to his Sultan and unrestrained by religious or professional affiliations. Thus the Ottoman "we" was expanded to include a broader segment of the population. Having already been in common use in Tunis, Algeria, and Egypt, the fez was also an effective means of demonstrating the imperial bonds between Ottoman rulers and their subjects at a time when France and Britain were making a grab for Ottoman territories in Northern Africa. [11]

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[9] Three Ottoman sultans are of special interest; sultan Selim III (1789-1807), Mahmud II (1808-1839), and Abdülhamid II (1876-1908).

[10] Donald Quataert, 'Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829', in *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 29, No.3, 1997, p. 403

[11] Some British lamented the disappearance of the turban: "The magical effects of a turban are well-known. It gives depth to light eyes, expression to dark eyes, it softens harsh features, relieves delicate ones; it hides misshapen ears, or a 'villainous low forehead'; it adds gravity to a simple countenance, dignity to a simple one." Adolphus Slade, Records of Travels in Turkey, in Patricia Baker, 'The Fez in Turkey a Symbol of Modernization? ', in *Costume: The Journal of the Costume Society,* Vol. 20, 1986, pp. 72-86

Ottomanism as the new ideology proved inadequate in preventing the dissolution of the empire. The common denominator of identity between the Ottoman homeland and the Arab provinces was Islam: All Muslims were subjects of the Sultan Caliph Abdülhamid II (1876-1908) The Sultan's Islamist policies elevated the Caliphate to the level of a major Muslim institution of universal status, equal or even superior to the Turkish Sultanate. This, in turn, encouraged Muslim Arab elites to see and accept Ottomanism as legitimate and beneficial to them, and made them consolidate their political attachment to the Ottoman state.[12] Abdülhamid formulated a pan-Islamic ideology, and explicitly embedded the former non-religious headgear with an Islamic symbolic meaning. The Sultan wore a fez with a near identical circumference of rim and crown. Gradually, the fez ceased to be a symbol of Ottomanism and came to be seen as a symbol of Islam, thus demonstrating the malleability of cultural constructs.[13]

As the demise of the Empire unfolded, the fez became increasingly associated with military, political, and cultural inferiority, and in addition to being a marker of Muslim faith, it became an object of mockery and contempt on the part of Europeans. Originally a trans-ethnic, trans-religious symbol of belonging to the Ottoman Empire, the pride, importance, and status connected to the fez diminished proportionally with the decline of the empire. [14]

Mustafa Kemal himself had experienced the discomfort of this association several times. Once, while traveling to France with his friend Major Selahattin Bey in 1910, Serbian children started to make fun of Selahattin's fez as they waited for a connecting train at the Belgrade train station. A year later, when Mustafa Kemal went to Libya in order to organize troops to oppose the Italians who had occupied the country, he experienced the same thing;

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[12]Kemal Karpat (ed.), *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey,* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 10

[13] The fez and the turban are also useful metaphors in describing the role of the *ulema* (the learned Islamic establishment), and how it changed and split into a conservative versus a progressive group of modern intellectuals in the late Ottoman era.
"This process can be seen as a substitution by the ulema of the turban for the fez, their increasing use of an "intellectual" language, their critical attitude towards classical institutions like the caliphate and their increased acceptance of the teaching-thinking-perception clichés of the time. In short, this change meant an intellectualization, in the modern sense of the word, of the ulema." Ismail Kara, 'The turban and fez: Ulema as opposition', in Elisabeth Özdalga (ed.), *Late Ottoman Society - The Intellectual Legacy,* (London: Routledge–Curzon, 2005), pp. 162-200

[14] İsmail Hakkı (Baltacioğlu), professor in Pedagogy, and later MP, was among the first to interpret and oppose the fez as a symbol of reactionary attitudes. As a climax to one of his public speeches he cut the tassel off his own fez in protest against the malfunctioning Ottoman society. Patricia Baker, 'The Fez in Turkey: A Symbol of Modernization?', in *Costume – The Journal of the Costume Society,* Vol. 20, London, 1986, pp. 72-86

children, Italian this time, made fun of his fez. To some the fez had become a stigma denoting inferiority.[15]

In 1912, an articulate and extreme group of westernizers called *Garbcilar* published a westernization manifesto, of which one point addressed the matter of proper headgear.[16]

> "The fez which had been the national headgear of the Christian Byzantines and has been the reason of other powers' economic power and might will be totally abolished and a new national hat will be adopted.[17]

The manifest constituted a detailed program for transforming Ottoman society into a modern society based on a scientific worldview. In order to protect its authors from public prosecution, it was presented in the form of an account of the author's dream, entitled "A very vigilant sleep." The dream came true during the reign of Mustafa Kemal.

Defining Turkish identity -

The *Modernization equals westernization equals Kemalism* statement

The first time the question of dress code was addressed by Mustafa Kemal in public was during his trip to Kastamonu on August 30, 1925.[18] The newspaper Hakimiyet-i Milliye, considered to be the official newspaper of the new republic, reported on Mustafa Kemal's travel:

> "… Showing great affection, the Ghazi[19] entered the town greeting the people with his panama hat, thus initiating an influential period in the destiny of Turkey. The state has been secularized by bringing forth important legal measures, now the turn has definitely come to save the masses from the fez, perceived as a symbol of religion. As the people of Kastamonu witnessed the Ghazi, bare-headed with his hat in his hand, they immediately removed their fezzes and turbans…" [20]

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[15] Ibid., p. 112
[16] The author was Kiliczade Hakki, and the article was published in the newspaper İctihad, which was the first journal in the Ottoman Empire to openly criticize Islam.
[17] Şükrü Hanioğlu, 'Garbcilar -Their Attitudes toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic', in *Studia Islamica,* No 86, 1997, pp. 133–158
[18] Jäschke, 'Die Turkei seit dem Weltkriege. Geschictskalender 1918-1928', p. 96
[19] The title Ghazi designates a victorious fighter for the Islamic faith, here used to refer to Mustafa Kemal
[20] Hakimiyet-i- Milliye, 23 August 1925, in Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi - Din/Devlet İlişkileri,* Volume II, (Ankara: Rehber Yayıncılık,1990), p. 28

It was the first time Mustafa Kemal had visited Kastamonu. No doubt, his wearing a Western hat on the occasion was intended to reinforce the idea to the inhabitants of Kastamonu that their president was a European.

I have presented several excerpts from Mustafa Kemal's speech below.[21] In order to engage and influence his audience, Kemal used rhetoric designed to affect their feelings, values and understanding of things. The audience on this particular occasion, residents of Kastamonu, was ordinary people, many of whom had never encountered Kemal before, but all of whom had been affected by the Turkish War of Independence in 1919-1922. In this war, religion played an important role in the mobilization of both sides. The people of Kastamonu had chosen Halid Bey (Akmansü), a local hero from this war as their MP. Bey was the only party member and one of only two MPs who had spoken against abolishing the Caliphate in 1924. Kastamonu was considered by the Kemalist elite to be an "unfortunate place of reactionaries" in general.[22] Kemal addressed his audience as honored friends:

> "Honored friends, we have within a short time, very rapidly and very effectively made a political, administrative and social revolution, of which we can speak about with happiness and joy. If it were not for the revolution, our freedom would be at risk. You must believe us that these reforms were a matter of necessity."[23]

The first thing to be noted here is the ambiguous usage of the pronominal "we". While speaking about the revolution, which has rescued "our" freedom, the meaning of "we" seems to encompass the community at large. But then the concept suddenly becomes more exclusive, when "you" are told to believe "us". Kemal uses a rhetoric in which the concept of "we" is applied both to bond and bind the listeners according to their degree of agreement with the Kemalist "I".

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[21] Reference is made to Mustafa Kemal's Kastamonu speech in a number of sources; I have not found any major deviations between the various sources in spite of them representing quiet contrary views on the matter itself. See for instance: Mustafa Selim İmece, *Atatürk'ün Şapka Devriminde Kastamonu ve İnebolu Seyahatleri, (*Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959), Nimet Ünan (ed), *Atatürk'ün söylev ve demeçleri,* II, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959), Baker, 'The Fez in Turkey, Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi - Din/Devlet İlişkileri,* Tarik Zafer Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akımı,*(Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2003)

[22] Naşit Hakkı Uluğ, 'Üç Büyük Devrim', in Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi - Din/Devlet İlişkileri,* p. 27

[23] Ceylan, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi - Din/Devlet İlişkileri*, p.27

The reforms Kemal refers to are the abolitions of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, the proclamation of the Turkish republic, and the unification of the education system and abolishment of the religious schools. The interpretation of these reforms as necessary from the perspective of freedom or independence was probably not self-evident to his audience. But to Mustafa Kemal, the issue of freedom was no longer a foreign political matter, but rather a matter of integrating the Turkish periphery, a periphery containing elements counterproductive to the Kemalist revolutionary program.

> "Would it be permissible to let a Sultan be head of this sovereign nation *[millet]* which belongs to the people? Dear siblings, would it be right for this perceptive nation to give place to those careless, ignorant hypocrites who under the name of the Caliph, claim to be the shadow of Allah and the representative of the Prophet, in our fatherland or in our conscience, I ask you? [Exclamations:]God forbid, by no means!"[24]

Kemal starts by questioning a Sultan's right to rule the nation. He then refers to himself as a brother to his audience, elevating and including, as it were, the people to the "we" of the revolutionary avant-garde. He was also emphatic that the nation (the state) belonged to the people. Having experienced resistance in connection with the abolition the Caliphate (1924), he tries to undermine the status of the Caliphate as something liable to be misused by ignorant hypocrites. And yet there is no direct attack on religion as such; in fact the very word nation, (the Turkish word *millet*), which provided the guiding concept, at the time meant not only nation, but also religion or faith. Thus it was possible, or even inevitable, that by using the concept of *millet* Kemal could provoke religious sentiments as well as national ones.

> "… But I say to you, as your twin brother, your friend and father, when the Turkish people say that they are civilized, they are obliged to prove and display that they actually are civilized in their opinions and mentality. The one who claims to be civilized must show it in his family life and his lifestyle. Briefly, the one who claims to be civilized is obliged to manifest that he actually is so, even in his outward appearance, from top to toe. I want to make my last words completely clear and understood by the whole world. Therefore I ask: Is our

[24] Ibid. p.27

> attire national attire? Is our attire civilized and international? Is there any sense in smearing a valuable ore with mud and then showing it off to the world? If someone does not understand that inside the mud there is something hidden that is very precious, does that serve him? To be able to exhibit the ore, the mud must be removed. To protect something valuable [the ore] must not the protection itself be constructed of valuable materials?" [25]

In this sequence, speaking as the people's twin brother, he argues to make it seem reasonable and natural for the Turkish people to adopt the western dress code; the Turkish Republic is the product of the Turkish civilization, belonging to the Turkish people. "True civilization," is substituted for "western," and true Turkishness is defined as being civilized. Thus it follows by logical necessity that the Turk who is civilized dresses in a civilized and international manner; i.e. according to western fashion.

But this civilization has been covered by mud, and needs to be cleansed for the people to realize how the Turkish people, the true Turkish civilization and the Turkish republic constitute one harmonious unity. The hidden civilization must be displayed, both in lifestyle and appearance. Through this new interpretation of history, Kemal invites his audience to adopt the new "we", a pre-Ottoman "we" that has been "buried under mud" during the Ottoman era, but that is now allowed to blossom again.

> "Our most valuable nation [*millet*] is deserving of civilized and international attire. That is how we shall dress. On our feet, shoes or ankle boots; on our legs, trousers, then waistcoats, shirts, ties and jackets; and in order to complete the outfit, a sheltering headgear. And this I want to express most clearly: the name of this headgear is 'hat'." [26]

Reading his speech in a historical context, it is obvious how he tries to persuade his listeners and to confront anticipated disagreement. A closer look at the sequence in which the various topics are presented makes it possible to discover a hierarchy of values, a ranking where the revolution figures as number one, followed by the nation *(millet)*, the Turkish republic, the civilized Turkish people who wear civilized attire, and, lastly, those Turks who claim to be civilized, and yet who do not don civilized attire. And it is precisely this hierarchy of values

[25] Ibid, p. 28
[26] Ibid, p. 28

that served to legitimize the measures employed to secularize Turkish society, including the enactment of the Hat Law.

Contending identities from within the Muslim establishment

The *Modernization equals democratization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument

The Hat Law was enacted against the single vote of Nurettin Pasha, after a heated discussion among several MPs in favor of the proposal, albeit for very different reasons.

Before describing and analyzing the discussion itself, a few words on the nomination and election of MPs to the Turkish Parliament are in order. First, the election in 1923 occurred under a single-party regime, and Mustafa Kemal, who was party leader as well as president, took a keen interest in the nomination processes from 1923 onwards because "…Greater legislative consensus seemed required for the unpopular measures which were to be forthcoming against established religion and old traditions". [27] And yet despite the fact that the MPs had been "handpicked" by Mustafa Kemal, they were highly literate and articulate people; it was an assembly of public intellectuals, scholars, war heroes and fiction writers, eloquent speakers, and brilliant minds. Therefore the parliamentary discussions are interesting insofar as they reveal the richness of possible interpretations of Kemalism, of modernity, of the Ottoman past, the role of religion, and the many nuances of the contemporary notions of "we" and the "other".[28]

The parliamentary debates as such also had an important public dimension, where convincing other MPs was not the primary concern. The debate itself was public; stenographers recorded every word and the press was present. The riots that followed showed that parliamentary discussions and decisions had an influential effect within days of the enactment, even in the provincial periphery.

MP Refik Bey, a lawyer and graduate of the Istanbul Law Faculty who was later to become one of the founders of the Democratic Party, presented the proposal for the Hat Law to the Turkish Great National Assembly, arguing that:

[27] Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*., p. 430
[28] 70 % of the deputies in the 1923 and 1927 Assemblies had university education. The general literacy rate in the male population, however, was 22 % in 1927, and 40 % in 1935. See Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite,* pp. 45 and 177.

> "Even though the question of headgear as such is of no importance, it has become of particular importance now that Turkey has decided to join the family of civilized nations. It has until now been a symbolic characteristic which differentiates Turkey from the other contemporary civilized nations, and thus the fez must be replaced by the hat, which is the symbol of civilization."[29]

In other words, the Kemalist elite decided that Turkey should join the ranks of other contemporary civilized nations. To demonstrate Turkey's new affiliation and new place in the world it was necessary for Turks to wear the right kind of headgear. Whether deliberately or not, the politics of dress (and headgear) under the Ottoman Empire was not mentioned. This created the impression that legislative intervention with norms for attire was something new – something reflecting the uncompromising and all-pervasive nature of the Kemalist reform program.

Refik Bey was opposed by MP Nurettin Pasha. Nurettin Pasha was a graduate of the Ottoman War Academy and a war hero who had fought in the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, the Balkan Wars, the First World War, and the Turkish War of Independence in 1919-1922. [30] He approached the issue from a different angle, claiming that the proposed law contradicted constitutional rights:

> "The proposed law is against the constitution articles 3 (the sovereignty belongs to the nation/people, 68 (all Turks are born free and live free), 70 (the constitution guarantees the right and protection of personal integrity, conscience, thought, utterance, religious practice, ownership, possessions, etc.) , 71 (security of personal property), 73 (torture, cruelty, and confiscations are forbidden), 74 (No one has the right to force anyone to commit self-sacrifice/self-denial *[hiç bir kimse his bir fedakarlığa icbar edilemez]*, and 103 (no law which violates the principles of the Constitution can be enacted); it thus violates national sovereignty *[milli hakimiyet]* and the integrity of the individual *[kişisel dokunulmazlığa],* and therefore the proposal must be rejected.[31]

[29] TBMM, Devre II, İçtimai Senesi 3, Cilt I9, p. 220
[30] He also served as interim governor of Izmir on two occasions, including the last ten days before the civilian take-over in 1922. During those ten days, the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in Izmir, Chrysostomos, was killed in a lynching.
[31] Ibid, p. 223

Nurettin's speech laid bare some of the challenges the Kemalist reformers had to face. They were reminded that their modernization policies needed to be reconciled with the modern principles of popular and national sovereignty and of the integrity of the individual. Confronted with arguments originating from the discourse of modernity itself, Nurettin's fellow MPs reacted rather too vehemently.

MP Refik Bey stated that Nurettin Pasha had acted against what was accepted by the nation and by all civilized nations, the wearing of the hat, and that Nurettin Pasha's speech was not a reflection of the opinions in his constituency, the generous *(necip)* Bursa population. He went on to state that if they had been aware of Nurettin's opinions in the matter, they would surely not have elected him as their representative. The Hat Law, as well as all the other laws enacted by the Parliament, was intended to secure Turkey's existence and unity. Those opposing the aim of this law, which was to move Turkish society forward on the road to contemporary civilization, were characterized as "troublemakers" *(müfsit),* "malicious liars" *(tezviratlar)*, and "sowers of discord" *(münafiklar).*

On account of his opposition to the bill, Nurettin was accused of ignoring his duties as a representative of his constituency and of threatening the very existence of the nation. Indeed, Kemal and his closest followers regarded all opposition as treason. To this Nurettin Pasha answered that he, by pointing out the anti-constitutional character of the bill, had indeed been faithful to his duty as an MP, and that no power on Earth could keep him from fulfilling his obligations. Upon hearing this, Refik Bey exclaimed that the nation was such a power. Nurettin Pasha replied that yes, there was such a power, and that this power was Allah. But since the matter was of a strictly legal character, he had restricted his petition to the field of law.[32]

Mahmut Esat, Minister of Justice and Doctor of Law from Freiburg University, responded to Nurettin's speech from the perspective of constitutional rights:

> "But how can it be against the constitution's statement that everyone belonging to the Turkish nation is born free and lives free, to adopt the attires of the free and civilized nations? Furthermore, there is always a limitation *(hudut)* on freedom; the limit of personal freedom is the exalted benefit of

[32] Ibid, p. 223

> Turks and the Turkish nation. … Freedom cannot be a toy in the hands of reactionaries *(irticain elinde oyuncak olma)]*.[33]

Esat's argument illustrates how the Kemalist elite asserted that the principles of individual freedom and personal integrity had to yield to the freedom and integrity of the nation itself. This was an argument in complete harmony with the hierarchy of values laid out in Mustafa Kemal's Kastamonu speech.

The *Modernization equals secularization* argument

Up to this point, the question had not been openly addressed from the point of view of religion. It was clear, however, that underneath the universalistic terms along whose lines the discussion had hitherto been pursued, there were fundamental ideological differences dividing the Parliament. Interior Minister Sükrü Kaya Bey, a graduate of the Faculty of Law at Sorbonne, Paris, analyzed the subject of the Hat Law from three perspectives: religion, nation, and law. As to religion, he reminded the congregation that the Parliament already had divided politics and religion, and that the latter belonged in the mosque.

> "…Gentlemen, for centuries the Turkish people *[millet]* have suffered bitter experiences and memories, the people's destiny must no longer be attached to ideas belonging to the seventh and eighth centuries. The only valid aspect of its destiny is the future *[istikbal]*, the future alone. Civilization *[medeniyet]* and nothing but civilization." [34]

Sükrü Kaya Bey's argumentation is interesting, because it reveals the mental mapping of the Kemalist elite in that it locates Islam and the Kemalist project along an axis of time as belonging to the past and the future, respectively. This was a mental map challenged from several voices within the Muslim establishment, which sought to strike a balance between modernization and Islam. Among them was MP Rasih Bey (Kaplan), a graduate of the Egyptian University Al Azar and a hoca (religious teacher) in the Hacibayram mosque in Ankara, who served as MP from 1920 to 1950. Bey stated:

> "In Islam there is only one thing that matters; reason *[İslamiyet'te tek bir şey vardır O da akıldır*]… As you all know, according to the Hadiths by Imam Buharı,

[33] Ibid, p. 224
[34] TBMM, Devre II, İçtimai Senesi 3, Cilt I9, p. 226

> the Prophet accepted and dressed in the clothes presented to him as a gift from the governor of Damascus, without alterations. And when the Prophet was about to perform his ritual ablution he had to take off his jacket, because it was so narrow that it prevented him from rolling up his sleeves. Thus gentlemen, the Prophet did not refuse to wear the clothes presented to him by a Christian… Do the Zoroastrians in India become Muslims because they wear turbans? Do the Jews become Christians because they wear hats? So what is the connection to religion?"[35]

From this he concluded that the matter of clothes had no relation to religion, and that the wearing of the hat was to be accepted. He also warned his fellow MPs against misinforming and deceiving the innocent population *(masum halkın izlal ve iğfal edilmesi)]*. He strongly objected to what he understood as the use of religion in legitimizing actions that had nothing to do with religion.

> "… Consequently, to present something as prohibited which is not prohibited by Allah, is harmful both to religion and to the people *[Binaenaleyh böyle, Allah tarafından tahrim edilmemiş şeyleri haram şeklinde göstermek, bu, hem dine, ve hem de memlekete karşı bir iftira olur]*".[36]

Thus, according to Rasih Bey, arguing from within the religious discourse, the hat was fully acceptable from a religious point of view – essentially, it was not even connected with religion. Rasih Bey was re-elected as an MP eight times, and Frey categorizes him as one of the "tame hocas who were used to make more palatable this bitter but salutary dose of laicism".[37] A different interpretation is that Rasih Bey was a modernizing agent within the religious establishment. He saw modernization as equal to secularization, and understood it as a mutual respect of integrity between politics and religion. This was an interpretation of secularism that was difficult to protect and impossible to reject.[38]

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[35] Ibid, p. 225
[36] Ibid, p. 226
[37] Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite,* p. 126
[38] A view supported by the fact that he played an active part in the debate concerning the opening of a Faculty of Theology at the University of Istanbul in 1924, criticizing the proposed curriculum and arguing in favour of a more independently run Faculty. See, Yasin Aktay and Mehmet Paçacı, '75 years of Higher Religious Education in Modern Turkey', in *The Muslim World,* Vol. 3-4, 1989, pp. 389-413

The *Modernization does not equal westernization thus differs from Kemalism* argument

Although they did not completely embrace Western values and also did not find the old values sufficient, several Muslim intellectuals acted as modernizing agents from within the Islamic establishment. İskilipli Atıf represents this group, and wrote explicitly on authenticity, imitation, and the hat. To intellectuals in opposition, Atif was important as someone who articulated Islam as a universalistic ideology and managed to generalize some of the principles involved in modernization as something other than westernization.

A renowned Islamic scholar, Atıf was born in Corum in 1876 and graduated from the Faculty of Theology at the University of Istanbul in 1905. He then worked as an Arabic teacher at the Kabataş gymnasium, gave lectures in Koran commentary at the Fatih Mosque, and wrote several books. [39] His 1924 book, *Frenk mukallidliği ve şapka* (French imitation and the hat) was used against him as proof of his counterrevolutionary views, even though the book had been published a year and a half before the Hat Law was enacted. He was arrested and brought to the Independence Tribunal of Ankara, sentenced to death and finally executed on February 4, 1926.[40]

> "An imitator *[mukallit])* is someone who copies *[taklit eden]*. To copy, suit and be dependent on someone else's beliefs, words, deeds, world views, and moral practices, [even if] in good faith but without evidence believing it to be true, is not permissible according to the Şeriat. ... Thus to wear [clothes] which symbolize ungodliness and to copy non-Muslims and try to be like them, is prohibited … according to the Glorious Prophet Resul-i Zişan: The one who strives to take after another tribe belongs to that tribe *[Bir kavme benzemeye özenen o kavimdendir]*.[41]

Warning against the Kemalist effort to construe a Turkish identity based on forced self-denial and abandonment of Muslim culture, he then continued with a chapter called "Permissible *(meşru olan)* and non permissible *(meşru olmayan)* aspects of Western civilization, from an Islamic point of view." He began the chapter by explicitly stating that "Western civilization contains both material and spiritual aspects including both constructive and destructive

[39] He was also the chairman of the Association of Teachers *(Müderrisler Cemiyeti)*, which he established together with Mustafa Sabri (the last Şey-ül İslam of the Ottoman Empire), Mustafa Saffet, and Said Nursi, and of its successor organization, the Society for the Rise of Islam (1919).
[40] Sadık Albayrak, *Türkiye'de Din Kavgası,* (Istanbul: Araştırma yayınları, 1990), pp. 210–217
[41] This concept is also translated as "ethnicity" but it would be rather anachronistic in this connection

(zararlı) elements".[42] He argued that Islam commands that people's material and spiritual virtues must be nourished and developed, and thus Islam as religion is most agreeable to human nature. Consequently:

> "All the material aspects of the (western) civilization which are useful inventions for good and permissible deeds are acceptable and should be adopted, because it is an Islamic duty to protect life and secure good health, and the means to achieve this is through scientific education, labor, and appropriation. It is also a duty to have a sufficient enough command of industry, natural sciences, agriculture, and craftsmanship, so that the Islamic civilization does not become dependent on other nations."[43]

He furthermore gives examples of how the Islamic civilization adopted and developed aspects of Egyptian and Greek civilizations and how the Islamic civilization made Europe flourish during the medieval and renaissance Moorish era. And thus it is only in accordance with this historic tradition that Islamic civilization can and should make use of western inventions. In fact, he argued, "in principle the western civilization was born in the east *(... esas itibariyle bati medeniyetinin doğduğu yer doğudur)*.[44]

Iskilipli Atif possessed the necessary qualifications to articulate an informed and intellectual opinion of the Kemalist modernization projects, but his intentions in doing so were not considered constructive by the Kemalists. As a Muslim intellectual and a representative of institutionalized Islam, Atif was a carrier of continuity from the Ottoman Empire, a continuity not appreciated by the ruling elite who saw religion "…as a real impediment in their way. Distrust added to disgust was their attitude towards institutional Islam."[45]

Atif's arrest and execution must also be interpreted in the light of the Sheikh Said rebellion, which had taken place the previous year. This was a rebellion that was symptomatic of the Kemalist elite's failure to integrate the periphery, the population of which good Muslims and peasants felt aggrieved and oppressed.

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[42] İskilipli Mehmet Atıf, *Frenk mukallitliği ve şapka,* Istanbul, Nizam Yayinlari, 1994, pp.11,12, also Kara, İsmail *Türkiye'de İslamcılık Düşüncesi,* cilt 1, (Istanbul: Kitabevi,1997), pp. 332–340.
[43] İskilipli Mehmet Atıf, *Frenk mukallitliği ve şapka,* Istanbul, Nizam Yayinlari, 1994, pp. 15, 16
[44] Ibid, p. 17
[45] Ibid, p. 22

Contending interpretations of modernity from within the westernized elite

The *Modernization equals westernization and thus differs from Kemalism* argument

The arguments from within the Muslim establishment were mirrored by their counterparts, the westernized urban intellectuals, among them the novelist Sadri Ertem. Questioning the Kemalist interpretation of modernity, İskilipli Atıf's quest for authenticity was echoed by Ertem as he warned against the construction of a Turkish identity based on superficial western mimicry. He argued that mimicry would be equal to an internalization of inferiority and emphasized the difference between true Europeans and those who simply dress as Europeans. According to his view, to be truly western was a matter of attitude rather than style.

Ertem was a Turkish novelist, editor, and public intellectual, born in Istanbul in 1900 to a soldier, Colonel Ibrahim Ertem who served as a colonel during the War of Independence, Ertem the younger studied literature at the University of Istanbul. Ertem was a productive columnist and essayist, whose writing engaged in the discussions around Turkish identity in the post-Ottoman era. He was one of several writers who set out to remold and educate people as modern Turks, but not necessarily in line with Kemalist ideology. Following the enactment of the Law on the Maintenance of Order in March 1925, several newspapers were closed down: *Tevhidi Efkar* (Unification of Opinions), *Son Telgraf* (The latest Dispatch) *and İstiklal* (Independence), amongst others.[46] Ertem was arrested and tried by the Independence Tribunal of Elazig. He was accused of inciting the people against the government in connection with the Sheikh Said rebellion. "There were several causes for the Sheikh Said rebellion. Among these were individuals who exploited the freedom of the press to express opinions, based on personal or political intentions, which, intentionally or not, influenced the rebels."[47]

But Ertem was acquitted and continued his career as a writer. He developed his authorship and was eventually considered one of the most influential representatives of social realism in Turkey.[48] After Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's death in 1938, he was invited by Ismet Inönü to take up the gauntlet, and he became one of several fictionists serving as MPs in the Turkish Parliament. Ertem remained an MP until his death in 1943. He also used to wear a hat.

Ertem's works are concerned with the lives of ordinary people: farmers, workers, and poor town dwellers. In the texts selected for this article, *Avrupa Kafasi* (The European Head) and

[46] Hıfzı Topuz, *100 Soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* (Istanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1996), p. 83
[47] Ibid, p. 85
[48] Otto Spies, Die türkische Prosaliteratur der Gegenwart, in *Welt des Islams,* Vol. 25, 1/3, 1943, pp. 1-120

Silindir Sapka giyen Köylü (The Peasant with the Top Hat), clothing, and particularly headgear, assumes a central role as a reflection of the contemporary discourses of identity politics. As is true with so many authors living and writing in Turkey, the genres of biography and fiction are not easily distinguishable in Ertem's works.[49] In a situation where freedom of speech was strictly limited, biographies and fiction became a means of expressing criticism towards the regime. Thus the personal identity of Ertem as an author and his cultural interpretation of Turkish society become political commentaries based on his experience of a gap between the Anatolian topography and the Kemalist map.

The quest for true westernization made Sadri Ertem question the connection between physical appearance and attitudes in a newspaper article entitled *Avrupa Kafasi* (The European Mentality [Head]), written and published in the newspaper *Vakit* in 1929:

> "The European man: Always manicured hands, the girls always dance well, the ladies wear new dresses to every ball, youngsters with sideburns, educated and poker playing, from night till dawn sitting at the bar, stiff collar, bowtie, wearing a top hat to balls […] At the same time we also see very ignorant people. Truly illiterate, wearing turbans, robes, and long sideburns (like the Prophet). They dress according to the theocratic regime of yesterday […] But today is the era of democracy, and Europe is our ideal."[50]

Ertem thus uses masculine appearance and manners as a means to depict several pairs of dualistic concepts, such as educated versus ignorant, theocracy versus democracy, yesterday versus today, and top hat versus turban.[51] However, there is no gender perspective or a discussion of different masculinities as such detectable in Ertem's article. His "man" is just the general "human being", and masculinity does not seem to play any role as "a means to an end" in his depiction of the "new" and the "old" man in Turkey. However, pure mimicry of European dress and behavior will not suffice:

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[49] For example: *Suyu arayan adam,* by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, and *Ankara,* by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, or the authorship of Orhan Pamuk.
[50] Sadri Ertem, 'Avrupa Kafası' (The European Mentality), Vakit, August 8th, 1929
[51] In a very entertaining article on Turkish Humour Magazines of the 1980s and 1990s, Ertuğrul Gökçen Apaydın shows the persistence of these male stereotypes of the traditional, ignorant peripheral "other" and the modern educated, urban "we" in today's Turkey. Ertuğrul Gökçen Apaydın, 'Modernity as Masquerade: Representations of Modernity and Identity in Turkish Humour Magazines', in *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power,* 12, Routledge, 2005

> "The Europeans do play poker, manicure their nails and wear top hats, but… Not everyone who plays poker, manicures his nails, or wears a top hat is a European. Not even in Europe is everyone a European. Therefore we must search for the European inside the head; in the mentality…"

Superficial imitation will thus only emphasize the difference between true Europeans and those who simply dress and act as Europeans. Such mimicry of Western patterns of behavior would be the equivalent to an internalization of inferiority typical for native responses to colonial confrontation, but not befitting the heirs of the Ottoman Empire. To become truly European, the mentality of the Turkish people must change from that of theology and fatalism to a modern scientific outlook. Ertem continues:

> "The European mentality is one that carries positivist science. What is the logic of positivist science: to believe in determinism. Is that all, you might ask, a most easy thing. But I say to you, it is not such a simple thing, to make a new head one must use all one's resources and intelligence. Let me give you some examples: From time to time there are accidents with the tram. Have you ever paid attention to the reasons why? A lot of the accidents happen during rainy weather, why? In order for the tram not to slip off the tracks during rainy weather, boxes of sand have been placed along the rails. This is very simple and its application is a very simple job, but still it is not done. This negligence is this or that, but the point is not to put the blame or responsibility on a specific person or institution. The real cause is that people see the accident as fate, an ill omen, a manifestation of fate, and so on. The true job is to make people believe in determinism, that certain causes give certain consequences. […] The European mentality is the mentality that believes in the determinism of science and truth, and that puts this into practice. It is a matter of psychology. Without making this our psychology, European civilization will only be an utterance."[52]

Ertem gives one more example, in which a lack of logic and a failure to rely on the insights of modern science have fatal consequences.

[52] Durukan, *Türkiye nasıl laikleştirildi,*1998, p.430

> "In Fatih[53] they wanted to set up a garage, and they started working, but one day the structure collapsed and two people were killed. Why? Because they hadn't undertaken the right preparations, they did not believe in the laws of physics and mechanics, and they did not employ an engineer. There are many such incidents, the stories can fill volumes. We have engineers, we have architects, teachers, and doctors, etc., who read works translated from European languages. The physics we read is their physics, the biology we read is universal, but still we do not completely become the owners of European logic. This is not without reason. The theocracy did not limit its influence to matters of politics and administration. It affected our whole psyche where mysterious coincidences and ill-omened destiny held our lives in a vise. "[54]

In both examples there is an emphasis on psychology as part of the new curriculum to explain societal changes. Importing European technology alone will not suffice. This relates to the debate during the late Ottoman era in which the question of technology and material artifacts could be detached from European culture as such and thus be acceptable imports, even from a Muslim religious perspective. In contrast to Iskilipli Atif, Ertem considers the artifacts and mentality of Europe as indivisible: The laws of science simply cannot work without the right mentality. But this mentality is not a possession belonging to Europe as such; it is universal, trans-national, and possible to appropriate.

> "To be a European type, to live in the same way as Europeans, and to interpret oneself as a European, this is the productiveness of culture. Thus Europe no longer refers to a geographic map. Europe means positivist science, the application of positivist science, and to endorse the general ideas about reality."[55]

According to Ertem, being European was not a matter of geographical location but of mental orientation. His own belief in the modern scientific worldview, however, strongly resembles that of a religious belief. Engineering, not divine inspiration, was needed to bridge the gap between Europe and Turkey, a major divide that in Ertem's view was mirrored at a national

[53] Istanbul's old-town area
[54] Durukan, Türkiye nasıl laikleştirildi,1998, p.430
[55] Ibid, p. 429

level, between the ideal, the Westernized elite of urban Istanbul, and the reality, the poor peasants of rural Turkey.

The *Modernization equals democratization differs from Kemalism* argument

Sadri Ertem, like Mustafa Kemal, conceived the fez as an identity marker that set the reactionary, oriental, Muslim, Ottoman "other" apart from the progressive, revolutionary, secular "we" of Turkish nationalism and Western civilization. But with its strong focus on sartorial westernization, Kemalism failed to pay attention to what really mattered, which was improving the living standards of the urban poor and the rural many. Ertem's interpretation of modernity as a democratization of social rights combined with MP Nurettin Pasha's argument that sovereignty rests with the people, made the periphery a centre of attention.

In his 1933 short story *Silindir Şapka Giyen Köylü* (The peasant with the top hat), Sadri Ertem tells a touching tale of the contrast between the urbanized elite and Anatolian peasants, a contrast apparently hidden by the fact that the peasants are wearing top hats.[56]

The story starts off like a travelogue; the protagonists, a small party of urban, upper class, enlightened idealists inspired by Kemalism, take a Sunday tour into the countryside. The protagonists are travelers entering foreign territory, thus we as readers see the countryside through the eye of a superior urban "we". There is no mention of which town or which countryside, neither are the personal identities of the travelers defined. This gives the presentation a universalistic quality, making the story valid as a general description of the dichotomy between the urban and the rural in the early Turkish republic.

After marveling at the quality of the road and interpreting it as the blood veins of civilization *[medeniyetin kan damarı],* the travelers catch sight of a farmer wearing a top hat: "My friend's eyes filled with tears. Look, he said, civilization…" As they came closer to the village, several people appeared, wearing jackets, bowler hats, and top hats. A woman wearing a frock was even carrying a gramophone, and a child had put on a swimsuit on top of his traditional trousers.

> "Civilization, oh what a wonderful thing you are… I swear to God, that only a donkey can deny your power. Having listened to nothing but the squeaking from

[56] Sadri Ertem, *Silindir Şapka Giyen köylü, Küçük Hikâyeler,* (Ankara: Talebe kooperatifi Neşriyatından, 1933), pp. 3–10

their oxcarts, the village people have become interested in entertainment; civilization means life, it means to live…" [57]

Our travelers are filled with joy as the "other", i.e. the peasants, are seemingly similar to them. Only when the travelers step out of their car to chat with the locals, do they realize that none of the farmers wear shoes; they are all barefoot. The woman who is wearing a frock approaches, begging for some bread for her hungry child (the one wearing a swimsuit):

> "The landowner has told us to work hard and not beg. We made this road. Yesterday we went to see the building contractor, to ask for some money, because we haven't been paid for one month. He doesn't always give us money, sometimes we are paid with flour, salt, or cloth. But this time he told us 'I have brought you clothes such as the gentry in Istanbul wear. We are civilized now, so you should wear them too. Try to look a bit like gentlemen' […] that is why we are hungry, and that is why we are walking along the road, trying to sell our clothes to travelers passing by. But so far not even a coin, not even a loaf of bread…"[58]

The story takes a new turn, as the travelers realize the true conditions of rural life. The travelers are not patronizing, but rather self-critical. What started out as a colonial style travelogue is transformed into a sort of post-colonial narrative. The peasants are no longer defined to us by *how* they live, dress, or speak, but on the basis of *why* they live, dress, and speak the way they do. Thus they are still not given agency as individuals, but figure as articulate props in a story of discrepancy between the ideal and the real, the normative assumptions of Kemalism confronted with the actual conditions of the Turkish countryside. This type of divide had been a significant feature of the Ottoman Empire, where "multiple confrontation and integration between the centre and periphery were missing until the nineteenth century."[59] Top-down integration by legal regulations was the general approach adopted by the Kemalist elite, as it had been during the Ottoman Empire. In particular with respect to the peasants, the Kemalists continued the policy established by the Ottoman rulers, which was a theoretical commitment.

> "The Turkish countryside, already suspect as separatist, was not brought closer to the center by the Kemalist policies. Though showing a remarkable ability for

[57] Ibid, p. 7
[58] Ibid, p. 10
[59] Şerif Mardin, 'Centre-Periphery and Social Transformation', in *Religion, Society, and Modernity in Turkey,* New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006), p. 229

small but sustained growth, the periphery could see that it was paying for the prosperity of the cities, that it was being given speeches as consolation but being denied the heaven of its religious culture."[60]

The rebellions of 1925, a matter of mixed hats

Islam was not only the shared identity of the Anatolian population, and the fez symbolized this unity of this society in terms of visual communication. During the Ottoman Empire religion had provided a mediating link between local social forces and the political structure. According to Mardin, the process worked at two levels: "The institution of religion was one where popular structures were linked with the Ottoman ruling institution, and religion provided the cultural fund which shaped ideals of political legitimacy among individuals. For the population at large religion was a moral prop, something to lean on, a source of consolation, a patterning of life; for the ruling elite it was in addition and probably much more, a matter related to the legitimacy of the state."[61] Islam's potential as a source for political mobilization of the masses had been clearly demonstrated during Turkey's War of Independence. Having secured the country's independence with popular support, the Kemalist elite now embarked on a social revolution that antagonized the population rather than being supported by it. [62]

The Hat Law was a highly provocative piece of legislation, and several riots followed in its aftermath. It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate or establish the primary causes of each of these riots. Their leaders came and mobilized supporters from a background of a multiethnic and multicultural society in which "religion was a multi-functional peg on which values, personalities, ideologies and power could be hung".[63] To those who rebelled, the hat

[60] Ibid, p. 312
[61] Şerif Mardin, 'Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution', in *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 2 1971, p. 205
[62] The first serious threat to the Kemalist regime was posed by the Sheikh Said rebellion in February of 1925. Taking place in the south-eastern provinces of Elazig, Diyarbakır, and Dersim, it is generally seen as a rebellion in which Kurdish nationalist and Islamic reactionary aspirations combined. That same month, as a reaction to the revolt, the law against high treason was amended to include the political use of religion. In 1934, this was added to the Penal Code as a new article, article 163 was amended again in 1949, when the principle of secularism was given explicit protection. The revolt was soon suppressed by the Turkish army, whereupon mass arrests and executions followed. Also, fiscal reforms were necessitated by the high costs of striking down the revolt (twenty million Turkish pounds). See, Jan Erik Zürcher, *Political Opposition in The Early Turkish Republic, The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925,*(Leiden: Brill, 1990), p. 80, and Gavin D. Brockett, 'Collective Action and the Turkish Revolution: Towards a Framework for the Social History of the Atatürk Era 1923-1938,', in *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 34, No, 4, 1998, pp. 44-66
[63] Mardin, A., Serif, Ideology and Religion in The Turkish Revolution, in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2, 1971, p 208

represented a break with the past, a symbol of the West, a sign of secularization and jeopardy to national unity, a unity based mainly on Islam as the single most important unifying factor between Kurds and Turks.

> "So rapid, so complete, was the severance from old established national customs, especially in the wearing of the ancient fez, that an aversion on the part of a portion of the population of the north-eastern provinces around Erzurum took a very active form. The rebels followed the custom of sticking up posters on the walls of public buildings, to protest against the wearing of 'Christian' hats, and to manifest in uncomplimentary terms their opposition to any new and, to them, unnecessary reforms…"[64]

On November 22, 1925, in Kayseri, Mekkeli Ahmet Hamdi incited rebellion among a crowd of 45 men by spreading rumors that the government's next step would be to banish the veil and outlaw possession of the Koran. He was arrested and sentenced to death.[65]

On November 25, another riot motivated by a mix of ethnic and religious issues occurred, this time in Rize, resulting in extensive violence as the army suppressed the revolt. The Independence Tribunal concluded that it was part of a larger conspiracy organized by the aforementioned Sheikh Osman Hoca of Erzurum and other prominent opponents of the hat. According to Brockett, however, the primary motivation behind the rebellion was ethnic; the Rize region was home to a large population of non-Turks, the Laz.

On November 26, a treatise posted on a mosque door triggered a protest march in Maras. It condemned the imposition of hats. Following the prayer, a crowd bearing the green mosque flag marched through the streets of Maras, shouting "We don't want hats." In response, local officials ordered soldiers to surround the mosque and arrested some 39 protesters. Two days later, in Erzurum, Sheikh Osman Hoca proceeded to the city hall together with 30 supporters following morning prayers and presented the governor of Erzurum with a petition to allow them to continue to wear the local and traditional headgear because it was better suited to the cold winters. The governor dismissed their request, and had Sheikh Osman Hoca arrested. Outside the building, the crowd had grown large; roughly 3000 men and women shouted

[64] Ibid, pp. 135, and 272-274
[65] Brockett, Collective Action …, 1998, pp. 44-66

"infidel" (in Turkish; *gavur*) at the state officials.[66] Local gendarmes opened fire and approximately 20 protesters were killed.[67]

Popular reception showed how the Hat Law antagonized the predominantly rural and Muslim Turkish and Kurdish masses. The number of rebellions, arrests, imprisonments, and executions in the aftermath of the Hat Law might lead one to conclude that the rationale behind the hat legislation was to oppress and discipline Turkish society by forcing it to make its resistance visible and thus possible to localize and crush. But even though there is a correlation between the two, the contemporary sources chosen for this article do not provide enough evidence to make the leap from observing a correlation to claiming causation.

The death sentences passed for violating the law were considered necessary in order to save the Kemalist revolution from reactionary resistance movements. According to Ağaoğlu Ahmed Bey (the liberal MP), this was acceptable, because the Turkish revolution had achieved great victories:

> "It has for the first time in the East proclaimed itself as a civilized family and to remove any obstacle which might come between the individual members of this family. It has twice separated religion from worldly matters in the East. It has established, for the first time in the East, a democratic republic. It has established, for the first time in the East, the peasant as a gentleman *[efendi diye ilam eden]*."[68]

His words are reminiscent of the hierarchy of values as laid out in Mustafa Kemal's Kastamonu speech, where the revolution was rated as the highest value, far above the average Turk.

Mustafa Kemal's own evaluation of the parliamentary discussion and subsequent rebellions is found in the speech he delivered in Parliament in 1927:

> "… We did that [enacted the Hat Law] while the law for the Restoration of Order was still in force... (And) one can say with complete truth that the

[66] Koloğlu, *İslam'da Başlık,* 1978, p. 96
[67] Brockett, , Collective Action …, 1998, p. 50
[68] Hâkimiyet-i Milliye, October 4th 1926, İstiklal Mahkemelerinin Faaliyeti, in Tunaya, Tarik Zafer Tunaya, *İslamcılık Akimi,* (Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2003), pp. 156–159

existence of this law made the thing much easier for us. As a matter of fact, the application of the Law for the Restoration of Order prevented the morale of the nation from being poisoned to a great extent by reactionaries. It is true that a deputy of Bursa … I say, Nurettin Pasha … asserted that hat-wearing was a 'contradiction of the fundamental rights of the nation's sovereignty and of the principle of the integrity of personal freedom,' and attempted 'on no account to let this measure be forced upon the population.' But the outbreak of fanaticism and reaction which Nurettin Pasha succeeded, from the tribune, in calling forth, merely led to the sentencing of a few reactionaries by the Courts of Independence." [69]

Conclusion

Through this highly provocative piece of legislation, headgear was turned into a contested issue among various groups within the Turkish elites and between the center and the periphery. It caused immediate riots and revealed lines of ideological conflict that continue to scar the modern face of Turkey. The Hat Law was important to Turkish authorities because the fez as the visual communication of Islamic identity was interpreted as "…a sign of ignorance, of fanaticism, of hatred to progress and civilization…" in short, not flattering to the new western face of Turkey.[70]

The reception of this legislation provided an opportunity to articulate various more or less conflicting views as to which criteria and patterns should be applied in the modernization of Turkey, especially with reference to the place of religion in the emerging new social order. Critical voices from within the westernized establishment interpreted Kemalism as a non-liberal identity project. This was a project founded on neglecting the basic rules of democracy, sacrificing the authenticity of values and traditions, misunderstanding the principles of true westernization, lacking a sense of social responsibility and jeopardizing national unity.

[69] *A speech, delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,* translated and published by the Turkish Ministry of Education, 1981 edition, pp. 737-739
[70] *A speech, delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,* translated and published by the Turkish Ministry of Education, 1981 edition, pp. 737-739

Modernizing agents from within the Muslim establishment undermined Mustafa Kemal's effort to construe the traditional, Muslim, oriental "other" as the opposite of progress and civilization. Furthermore, they prevented an essentialist reading of Islam, making it impossible to look to tradition as a source of essentiality or an origin to which you can return. There was no consistent, authentic, original past or traditional "other" hidden by a superficial, modern "we". The traditional "other" was as multifaceted as the modern "we".

Article III

Domesticating Modernity-The Turkish Magazine *Yedigün* 1933-1939

Introduction

Once upon a time, Turkey was a land that was foreign even to its own population: It had a new constitution, new head of state, new capital, a new place for religious worship, a new alphabet, new social laws, new penal code, new dress codes, new education system, new names, new calendar, a new weekly holiday, and new borders. Much like tourists travelling abroad, the citizens of the modern Turkish republic were in need of informative guidance: what to do, how to act, what to wear and how to speak. By publishing the weekly magazine *Yedigün* (yedi: seven, gün: day), Sedat Simavi took it upon himself to manage and supervise their journey through everyday life. *Yedigün* provided its readers with the necessary social coordinates to locate themselves in the new terrain of modern Turkey.[1]

Yedigün's editor and journalists were familiar with the cultural heritage of Turkey and the West, they were multilingual, and mediated cross-cultural communication between the cosmopolitan empire of the past, and the national republic, between the public sphere and private life, between generations and gender. *Yedigün* as a mass media product communicated along two pathways: directly to the individual reader by informing, entertaining and guiding the readers, and through a socially mediated pathway in which "media influences link participants to social networks and community settings [and] provide natural incentives and continued personalized guidance, for desired change".[2]
Yedigün's readers were given meaning, form and continuity to their experiences.

Initially imported from the West, modernity was an alien phenomenon in need of domestication, and had yet to be integrated into the everyday life of the Turkish population.

> "The process of domestication is a taming of the wild and a cultivation of the tame. Unfamiliar, exciting, perplexing ideas are brought under control by and on behalf of

[1] The weekly issues of Yedigün were also published as two annual volumes: each volume including 26 issues, each issue with an average of 36 pages. The analysis of the weekly Yedigün, in this article, is supported by a quantitative content analysis of all volumes, all issues, from March 1933 – August 1939. Included in this analysis are columns (all issues, all volumes), photographic material and feature stories (two issues of each volume, all volumes). Statistic Programming for the Social Sciences, SPSS, was applied for the analysis.
[2] Albert Bandura, 'Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication', in *Mediapsychology,* 3, 3 (August 2001), 265-299.

> domestic users. In their ownership and in their appropriation into the culture of family or household and into the routines of everyday life, they are at the same time cultivated. They become familiar, develop and change. The users want to incorporate the new product into the patterns of their lives. "[3]

However, the Turkish population was not a homogenous group but found itself in different phases of the domestication process. To the Westernized cosmopolitan elite, modernity had already become a part of their personal identity, while the emerging class of bureaucrats and intellectuals was in the process of incorporating modernity into their everyday lives. But to the last and largest group, town dwellers of all trades and migrants from the countryside, the desire to belong made modernity an offer they could not resist.[4]

Freedom of the press, Sedat Simavi and the publication of *Yedigün*

The 1930s was not the best of times for press freedom in Europe, and Turkey was no exception. The press was seen as crucial in helping to change the population from an Islamic-Ottoman mentality to a secular-Turkish mentality. Thus the role of the press was to secure loyalty and adherence to the Kemalist efforts.

And yet, *Yedigün*, with its editor Simavi, grandson of Sultan Abdülhamid II's Grand Vizier Süleyman Pasa and a man firmly tied to the ruling elite of the Ottoman Empire, gave space to multiple voices of modernity.[5] Included among its lead writers were people like Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, who was arrested and found guilty of high treason in 1923, and exiled in 1925, for writing a lead article in the newspaper Tanin, arguing favourably for the continuation of

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[3] Robin Mansell and Roger Silverstone, (eds.), *Communication by design, the politics of information and communication technologies,* (Oxford 1996), xx.

[4] For a most convincing description of the desolate living conditions in the Turkish countryside in the early 1950s, see Mahmut Makal, *Bizim Köy,* (Istanbul, 1952). The living standards of the urban poor were similarly hard.

[5] Sedat Simavi (1896-1953) was closely related to the ruling class of the Ottoman Empire. His grandfather, Süleyman Paşa, served as Grand Vizier during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecit, and his uncle Lütfi Simavi served as chief secretary for two sultans, Sultan Resat and Sultan Vahdettin. Lütfi Simavi wrote his memoirs from his service at the palace; see Lütfi Simavi, Osmanlı sarayının son günleri, (Istanbul) Sedat Simavi's father, Halil Hamdi Bey, was a well known intellectual and a close associate of Midhat Paşa who served as Grand Vizier to Sultan Abdülhamid II. Semavi's mother Aliye Hanım was the granddaughter of another Grand Vizier, Saffet Paşa, who also served as Grand Vizier during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II. Sedat Semavi graduated from the prestigious Galatasaray Lisesi in 1912, fluent in French and already an accomplished caricaturist. Sedat Simavi was well-connected, and had the necessary economic foundation to achieve his goals. Already by the age of 20 he had published his first weekly magazine, the *Hande,* which was followed by the humour magazine *Diken* (The Thorn) and the women's magazine *İnci* (The Pearl). In 1920, his first daily newspaper Dersaadet was published, followed by *Payıhat* (The Capital), *Güleryüz* (The Happy Face) and *Resimli Gazete* (The Illustrated Gazette). He was also a novelist and translator of European literature, see Sedat Simavi, *Eserleri,* (Istanbul 1973), 8.

the caliphate.[6] Other writers included Halide Edip Adıvar, living in self-imposed exile in Britain following the abolishment of Turkey's first opposition party, the Progressive Republican Party in 1926, along with Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, who was condemned for exploiting religion or religious symbols for political purposes, thus violating the Penal Codes paragraph 163.

According to Turkey's Press Law of 1931, it was not necessary to apply for permission to set up a publishing house or to publish a newspaper or a magazine. But only people with higher education were entitled to do so. People thought to have hostile intentions towards the nation, the national struggle, the republic or the revolution, were not allowed to publish. All staff had to be registered by the authorities. Propaganda in favour of the Sultanate, the Caliphate, communism or anarchy was prohibited, and it was also forbidden to publish any articles or writings received from the exiled Sultan's family. Publications that upset or disturbed the country's general political situation could be closed down by an administrative decision. In 1936, however, the Penal Code was amended with three new paragraphs, § 142, 161, 163, all of which had bearing on the freedom of the press. These new sections of the law prohibited propaganda against the official policy of the state, public agitation, and exploitation of religion or religious symbols for political ends. [7]

In his memoirs, Vedat Nedim Tör assessed the limitations on press freedom during his period as General Director of Publication, from 1933 to 1938.[8]

> "In that period there was not direct press censorship, but there was fastidious state control *(titiz bir Devlet murakabesi vardır)*… The interior press was inspected by Sadri Etem… Every day he and his assistants would examine closely all the daily newspapers, magazines and books to see if they were in contradiction with the Press Law or the principles of the revolution. Domestic and foreign news were scrutinized

[6]In March 1925, the Law on the Maintenance of Order was enacted, prohibiting all "initiatives and publications which cause disturbance on the social structure, law and order and safety and incite to reaction and subversion". The day after the law was enacted, several newspapers were closed down; these were Tevhidi Efkar, Son Telgraf, İstiklal, Sebilürresad. And within two months another eight newspapers were closed, among them the Tanin and Vatan. Hıfzı Topuz, *100 Soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* (Istanbul 1996), 83.
[7]Paragraph 142 was adopted from the Italian Penal code and stated that propaganda against the official policy of the state was punishable with 5 to 15 years of imprisonment. Paragraph 161 stated that in times of peace, public agitation was forbidden and punishable with 2 years of imprisonment. And last but not least, paragraph 163, concerning the use of religion or religious symbols for political purposes, was punishable if violated with 5 years imprisonment.
[8] Tör was appointed by Şükrü Kaya, Minister of Internal Affairs.

for any kind of deviation or criticism against the basic principles of Kemalism and the principle of laicism."[9]

The first issue of *Yedigün* was published on March 15, 1933. It was published until 1951 and was the most popular magazine during the whole period of its existence, with a circulation of 54 000.[10] Simavi promoted *Yedigün* as a cinema screen, where you would watch not only fiction and imaginary tales but also true stories from all corners of life. Addressing its readers directly, the magazine made its intended status and cognitive and emotional value clear:

"…imagine that you were the publisher of *Yedigün*, what you would do? The events taking place in your environment, the things making you upset and causing complaints, the enjoyable things in life, and the stories you want to share – these are what you would like to reflect in your publication, aren't they?... *Yedigün* is like a new friend among your friends, a new relative among your relatives…as sincere *(sadık)* to you as your best friend, as close *(yakın)* to you as a relative and as affectionate *(muhabbetli)* to you as a sister… "[11]

In this article the main question to be answered is *how Yedigün* facilitated the domestication of modernity. Domestication is also a very useful analytical perspective from which to understand the mutual relationship between the magazine and its readers. Through this publication, readers were invited to participate in the modernization of Turkey: adapting to modernity and being adapted as it was integrated into the everyday life of the Turkish population. How did this negotiation of modernity take place? How did the editor of *Yedigün* manage to generate popular identification with the elitist Kemalist modernization project? Where was common ground to be found? What perceptions of the Western other and the Turkish self were articulated by the magazine?

It is fair to say that *Yedigün*, with its use of the rhetoric of marketing, construed modernity as a commodity, as an item to be bought and consumed. To attract the 'will buys' and the 'have boughts' of modernity, *Yedigün* framed modernity as a buffet from which the individual could choose the dish most agreeable to his or her own palate: travel, art, beauty, health,

[9] Vedat Nedim Tör, *Yıllar Böyle Geçti,* (Ankara 1976), 29.
10 From 1933 to 1938, Yedigün competed with 10 other magazines with similar profiles or audiences, these were Kadro, Çığır, Fikir Hareketleri, Yeni Adam, Varlık, Yücel, Ayda bir, Akbaba, Köroğlu and Uyanış; see Hifzi Topuz, *100 soruda Türk basın tarihi,* (Istanbul 1996), 94.
[11] Sedat Semavi, *Yedigün*, 1, (March 1933), 15.

relationships, foreign politics, history, education, architecture, serial novels, fashion, housekeeping, poetry, scientific experiments, caricatures, curiosa and advertisements. The magazine was richly illustrated. The selection of topics, it's abundance of photos, its' art deco fonts and its focus on communicating and portraying life stories *Yedigün* was itself a product of modernity.

Through its selection and presentation of photos and feature stories, *Yedigün* aroused the desire of the "will buys', helped them to recognize their needs, and emphasized the personal relevance and importance of the information to its readers. Through its columns, the magazine offered empathy, consolation, advice and reassurance to the 'have boughts'-- who were involved in a kind of post-purchase rationalization, evaluating the promised effect and usability of this new commodity (modernity).

The fact that it was the best selling magazine of its time suggests that the editor's configuration of its readers must have been quiet accurate. *Yedigün* was *the* leading lifestyle magazine, read and related to by a relatively large audience among the general public as well as the modernizing elite community.

Addressing the "will buys" and "have boughts" of modernity

The columns were a regular feature written by the same writer or writers, called columnists. They contained an explicit opinion or point of view. *Yedigün's* columns represented the editorial voice of the magazine. Appearing regularly on page 3, with a specific header called "The number one in *Yedigün*" (*Yedigün'de bir*), the columns gave specially invited writers voice: Ali Ridvan, Turhan Tan, Ercumend Ekrem, Ömer Riza, Mahmud Yesari, Nurullah Ata, Peyami Safa and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın.[12] These contributors inhabited various arenas of politics, literature, education and media, by which *Yedigün* was able to communicate a mix of impulses to a mix of readers. In assessing the columns in terms of the domestication issue, the main question to be answered was how *Yedigün* addressed the needs of the "will buys" and "have-boughts" of modernity. The "have boughts" were the Turks who were in the process of re-evaluating their appropriation of modernity, some of whom were suffering from post-

[12] The number of columns written by each of these writers was as follows: Ali Ridvan, 1, Turhan Tan, 1, Ercumend Ekrem, 2, Ömer Riza, 4, Mahmud Yesari, 5, Nurullah Ata, 10, Peyami Safa, 31, and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, 219. In addition, four columns were simply signed *Yedigün.*

purchase dissonance, or were disappointed, or longing for the past, or impatient to reach the promised results of the modernization process.

The quantitative content analysis of the columns involved a first reading of all columns to generate a list of topics that were discussed. Based on this reading, it was possible to group the topics into the following clusters: Travel, relationship, politics, media, education, values and religion.[13]

- Travel: includes columns written on the basis of the writers' travels in Turkey and to other European countries
- Relationship: includes columns discussing generation gap and gender equality.
- Politics: includes topics such as national identity, economy and foreign politics
- Media: covers columns concerned with press freedom and the use of media for propaganda purposes
- Education: covers all articles related to the education system, language reform and the need to fight illiteracy
- Values: discussion of material versus immaterial values, the need to preserve the positive qualities of the past, the decay of morals, etc.
- Religion: mainly related to religious celebrations/holidays.

Table 1 shows that the dominant dimensions in terms of topic salience were "values" and "politics", with 61 and 60 units each, or 43.8 % out of a total of 276 recorded units.[14] Second in frequency to these was 'travel' with a frequency of 45 units or 16.3 %. The third highest score was for "relationship" and "education/language", with 36 units each, or 26 % of the total. "Media" had a score of 6.9 % followed by "other" with 4.3 % and lastly "religion", with a frequency of 7 units, or 2.5 % of the grand total.

[13] The category "other" will not be commented
[14] Not all the issues of *Yedigün* had a column article, out of a total number of 338 issues, 61 of the issues were without a column.

Table 1: Topic salience, frequency and percentage

	Topic	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Travel	45	16.3
	Relationships	36	13.0
	Politics	60	21.7
	Education	36	13.0
	Media	19	6.9
	Values	61	22.1
	Religion	7	2.5
	Other	12	4.3
Total		**276**	**100**

Many columns in the "values" topic cluster were related to the difficulty and importance of staying Turkish while being a European:

> "… In this war our most important weapon is education and knowledge. Western culture, Western methods, Western technology, but not Western feelings… a difficult but honourable duty is awaiting the young"[15]

The decline of traditional values, along with materialism and the hazards of modern living were other frequently discussed questions in this topic cluster. Columnist Dr. Ali Ridvan lamented the consequences of urbanization, worrying about green fields being transformed into building sites, the unhealthy busy lifestyle with tramways, dark offices and lack of daylight.

> "The modern family enjoys the radio, parties, cars and full wardrobes – but has no place to hang out their clothes for drying… Nervousness is a new and growing illness, an illness which didn't exist in the village… As a consequence of urbanization we are being separated from our inner purification system *(dahili ifraz güddeleri)*… Why is no one questioning the increased use of aspirin?" [16]

[15] Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, 'Bekliyen Vazife', *Yedigün,* 129, (August 1935), 5.
[16] Ali Ridvan, 'Bahcesiz ev – cigersiz adam', *Yedigün,* 54, (March 1935), 3.

Equal in score to "values", by one unit, was "politics". Given the limitations on press freedom in Turkey, the only domestic political topics discussed were of a very general nature, such as social mobility, urban development, and economy. All were framed in a context of social theory or as individual responsibility. The most frequent topic in the "politics" cluster was foreign news, and above all the political developments in Italy, Spain and Germany. Having once been comrades in arms, Turkey's relationship to Germany also had a more specific character. Participating in a ceremony at the Cemetery of Unknown Soldiers from the First World War, Yalçın reflected that:

> "Standing face to face with the martyrs of yesterday we could already taste the suffering of tomorrow's victims *(Dünün kurbanı huzurunda yarının kurbanlarının acısını da simdiden tadıyor gibiyiz.)*" [17]

"Travel" had a relatively high frequency, not least because Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın was *Yedigün*'*s* favoured columnist. Yalçın was *the* most sought after foreign correspondent and foreign news expert in Turkey during the 1930s. "Relationship" also had a substantial score. Two topics were dominant in this topic cluster: gender equality/women's liberation and generation gap. This is particularly notable given the country's past, when a man was entitled to four wives and a woman was the man's slave, separated from her children and exchanged like goods at a slave market. The Kemalist revolution was given credit for women's liberation:

> "To day it is different, woman is the friend and companion of man. She is his right hand. Both the female slave of poverty and the female slave of bourgeoisie have been liberated by Turkish republican politics. To day we are all slaves of democracy." [18]

The equally high score for education/language is symptomatic of the great emphasis put on education as *the* means to establish Turkey firmly on civilized ground, as well as language reform, which focused on purification of the language by replacing Persian, Arabic and French words with "pure" Turkish.

[17]Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, 'Berlin İntibaları', *Yedigün,* 324, (May 1939), 4.
[18] Mahmut Yesari, 'Kulu değil kulu', *Yedigün,* 96, (January 1935), 6.

"Media" scored at 6.9 %, a relatively high number considering how limited this topic was compared to the large clusters of "politics" and "values". This reflects the interest and importance given to the press and radio and the discussion of censorship, propaganda and the responsibilities of journalists and publishers to facts, readers and rulers. All the columns in this cluster were written by Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, who was himself a victim of press censorship.[19] In 1936, Yalçın commented in one of his many *Yedigün* columns on the challenges of journalism:

> "To be able to realize the freedom of thought, the journalist works hard, surrounded by the smell of wet ink from the press, sometimes confronted with some serious dangers, and with thousands of impressions and influences in the air, like a captive strapped in iron chains… You must be willing to make sacrifices, social life, rest, advancement, money and even your life sometimes." [20]

Among the reforms implemented by the Kemalist regime, those concerning religion were beyond a doubt the most controversial. The secularization policies of the Kemalist regime were substantially deficient in democratic principles, but were protected by strong legislation. Both the press law and the penal code included paragraphs that made any open discussion of religion impossible. One was allowed to address religion according to the new secular principles, of course, but this was an opportunity that *Yedigün* declined to seize, however. There was no expression of negative sentiments towards religion, apart from the odd remark about religion being something belonging to the past. With only seven recorded units, "religion" had the lowest score of all topics. Of these seven, one discussed the concept of laicism, one discussed Christmas celebrations, and five columns concerned religious holidays, which were re-framed as traditional "get-togethers" with food and family as core ingredients. With a score of just 2.5 %, the topic analysis leaves no doubt that religion was an 'invisible elephant' in the room. But it was not the only one, even more surprising was to find that

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[19] Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Ahmed Cevdet, Velid Ebüzziya and Lütfi Fikri were all arrested on the December 10, 1923 and accused of high treason. They stood trial before the newly established Independence Tribunals. The case opened five days after their arrest, with the final verdicts given on January 2, 1924. All were acquitted apart from Lütfi Fikri, who was sentenced to five years of hard labour. Hüseyin Cahit was arrested again in 1925, (Ankara tribunal) and was accused of not writing about politics (!); he was sentenced to exile for life in Corum in North Eastern Anatolia. After the death of Mustafa Kemal, (Atatürk) İsmet İnönü lifted his exile and invited him back to politics. He was elected MP for the Republican Peoples Party 1939–1954. He faced his final arrest in 1954 at the age of 79, for writing articles critical of the ruling Democrat Party.

[20] Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, 'Gazeteciliğin içyüzü', *Yedigün,* 31, (December 1936), 26.

references to Mustafa Kemal, Kemalism, the Republican Peoples Party and the Turkish revolution were equally absent.

Mustafa Kemal and Kemalism being the local son and sun of modernity was expected to figure frequently and giving the strict censorship under which the press operated during this period only positive references were expected to occur. "Reference to Kemalism" was applied as a coding dimension to all topic clusters, including references to Mustafa Kemal as an individual, Kemalist politics, The Republican Party and the Turkish revolution. The result of the analysis showed that only 7 recordings, less than 3 %, of the total 275 units had any such reference to Kemalism. The columns with a direct reference to Kemalism, were however of positive character, giving the Turkish revolution or Republican politics credit for women's liberation.

Without having any direct reference to Kemalism, there is however one column that reads well as a criticism of Mustafa Kemal's style of leadership:

> "…I want to point out the difference between a symphony orchestra as compared to the military barracks. The military barrack is like a machinery unit, and the central energy provider must posses the necessary strength to make the wheels turn round…but the competence of the soldiers (who need a strong leader in command) can not be compared to the orchestra members and their relationship to the conductor. Every musician is an internal part of the totality of the orchestra, moved by internal laws finding their balance according to inner rules, in harmony with the other orchestra members. The conductor's directions are not made to make the individual musician bend his neck but to adjust and point out the intended road"[21]

Image of the West

To President Mustafa Kemal and his fellow modernizers, the West was the ideal, the place of tomorrow, the icon of contemporary civilization, an "other" to be joined, thus clearly distinct from Turkey, which was still in need of major transformations both material and spiritual. It was therefore to be expected that a lot of the topics would have reference to the West and that

[21] Peyami Safa, 'Rejisörün paltosu ve şapkası', *Yedigün,* 3, (March 1933), 3.

this reference would be positive. But the columnists in *Yedigün* had a much more nuanced image of the West and of Turkey.

In the analysis of the material "Reference to the West" was operationalized by four nominal variables: reference to the West, the West was seen as a bloc, the West as individual countries, or if reference was made to individual Westerners such as Lloyd George, Napoleon or Hitler. These are significant dimensions in mapping how Turkey positioned itself with respect to Europe. Reference to the West as a bloc was selected when the columnist compared Turkey as an individual country with the West as a bloc, signifying that Turkey in these cases was not included within the boundaries of the West. When the columnist had references to individual Western countries or Western individuals there was no indication whether or not Turkey was seen as an insider belonging to the same social and cultural category, or an outsider of the Western community. The overall impression in these cases is that Turkey and the other Western countries drew on same knowledge resources.

Table 2: Coding dimensions for references to the West

Reference to the West	No = 0	Yes as bloc/unity = 1	Yes as individual country = 2	Yes as individual persons = 3
Image of the West	Positive = 1	Common grounds = 2	Negative = 3	Irrelevant = 9

"Image of the West" describes how the West was evaluated, as positive or negative, or as being on equal terms or common grounds with Turkey. The last applied when the columnist used individual Western sources and connotations as inside information.

Table 3 shows the results of a cross tabulation of topics with reference to the West. The table shows that out of a total of 276 recorded units, eighty-two units, or 29.7 %, had references to individual Western countries, 47 units or 17 % had references to the West as a bloc, and 40 units had references to Western individuals. The high score for topics without any reference to the West, 107, or 38 %, shows that the West as such was not *the* standard reference, or the significant other, as far as the *Yedigün* columnists were concerned.

Table 3: Interrelation of topics and references to the West

Topic * West Cross tabulation							
			West				
			No ref	Bloc	Country	Individual	Total
Topic	Travel	Count	20	6	17	2	45
		% within topic	44.4%	13.3%	37.8%	4.4%	100.0%
	Relationship	Count	26	4	3	3	36
		% within topic	72.2%	11.1%	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%
	Politics	Count	7	15	30	8	60
		% within topic	11.7%	25.0%	50.0%	13.3%	100.0%
	Education	Count	12	6	12	6	36
		% within topic	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	100.0%
	Media	Count	6	3	7	3	19
		% within topic	31.6%	15.8%	36.8%	15.8%	100.0%
	Values	Count	28	12	7	14	61
		% within topic	45.9%	19.7%	11.5%	23.0%	100.0%
	Religion	Count	4	1	2	0	7
		% within topic	57.1%	14.3%	28.6%	.0%	100.0%
	Other	Count	4	0	4	4	12
		% within topic	33.3%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	Total	Count	107	47	82	40	276
		% within topic	38.8%	17.0%	29.7%	14.5%	100.0%

If we look at the differences between the various topic clusters and their references to the West, we find that apart from "religion", the interrelation between the topic "relationship" and reference to the West is the one with the lowest score of 26 units, or 72.2 %, of a total of 36. Given that this topic cluster includes all columns with references to gender, and that all these columnists were arguing in favour of women's liberation and gender equality, this result is somewhat surprising. Feminism and gender equality might have been Western export articles of the time, but they were obviously not imported. The results are unmistakeable: in matters of gender equality, the West was not a source of inspiration to *Yedigün*'s columnists. They would rather refer to Turkish republican politics and pre-Abdülhamid practices:

> "In some districts of Turkey women are still veiled. But this must come to an end, why are women still dressed that way, 11 years after the revolution? Even in the Ottoman days, before Sultan Abdülhamid II, women would show more of their face than they do today. But Abdülhamid put his zeal on the whole population and made them cover up. If women were caught with uncovered hair, their hair would be cut off. But now we have a republic! Women should not stay in the shadow, or be veiled. Turkishness is a sun that penetrates even the darkest shadow!" [22]

The topic with the highest score for reference to the West is the topic cluster "politics". Out of a total of 60 records, only 7 units, or 11.7 %, were without reference to the West. Half of the 60 records had a reference to the West as individual countries; 15 units, or 25 %, had a reference to the West as a bloc; and 8 units, or 13, 3 %, had a reference to the West as Western individuals. Three equally important factors explain this result: discussing domestic politics was sensitive and risky, thus foreign politics was preferred; one of the main writers of the columns was Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, an important foreign news reporter; and thirdly, the development in Europe was of course of general interest.

Having measured to what extent and in interrelation with which topics references to the West were made, the next step was to map these references to the West in terms of the image of the West that was presented. "Image of the West" was operationalized with the nominal values of "the West as positive" (W+), "the West as negative" (W -), or Turkey as part of the Western community – on "common ground" (CG).[23] The results are presented in table 4:

[22] Mahmut Yesari, 'Dağılan gölgeler', *Yedigün,* 94, (December 1934), 18.
[23] Only those records that have a reference to the West are included in this table, a total of 169 recorded units.

Table 4: Interrelation of topic clusters and Image of the West

Topic * Status Cross tabulation						
			Image of the West			
			W +	W -	CG	Total
Topic	Travel	Count	7	12	6	25
		% within topic	28.0%	48.0%	24.0%	100.0%
	Relationships	Count	1	2	7	10
		% within topic	10.0%	20.0%	70.0%	100.0%
	Politics	Count	4	39	10	53
		% within topic	7.5%	73.6%	18.9%	100.0%
	Education	Count	13	0	11	24
		% within topic	54.2%	.0%	45.8%	100.0%
	Media	Count	4	6	3	13
		% within topic	30.8%	46.2%	23.1%	100.0%
	Values	Count	6	11	16	33
		% within topic	18.2%	33.3%	48.5%	100.0%
	Religion	Count	0	0	3	3
		% within topic	0%	0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Other	Count	5	1	2	8
		% within topic	62.5%	12.5%	25.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	40	71	58	169
		% within topic	23.7%	42.0%	34.3%	100.0%

The results show that "the West as negative" got the highest score with 71 units, or 42 %, of the total 169. Turkey and the West on "common ground" scored 34.3, %, while the interrelation with the lowest score was that of "the West as positive".

A column written by Peyami Safa serves as a joint example of "common ground", "the West as positive" and "the West as negative":

> "(The Turkish intellectuals) who only believe in the value of our culture after it has been evaluated and priced at the European cultural market. Andre Gidé has taught us to appreciate Yesil Türbe, Eugene Borel taught us to appreciate Itriyi and Dedeyi, Pierre Loti has taught us to appreciate Turkish tiles, … Western technology, the toys of the

devil, cast a spell on our taste (zekalarımız *büyüledi*), and the material wonders [of the West) made us devalue our own spiritual assets…Foreigners understand us better than the cosmopolitan Turks of Beyoglu." [24]

Through its columns *Yedigün* brought reassurance and helped the readers in their post-purchase rationalization process by applying a two-part strategy. Strategy number one was to address the problems experienced in readers' everyday lives. The columnists:

- Expressed empathy with people suffering from the generation gap
- Reassured impatient individuals that progress takes time and hard work
- Reminded readers that it used to be worse, before the revolution
- Instilled self-confidence by pointing out the value of Turkish culture

Strategy number two was applied in parallel, and had as its main target to dissociate modernity from the West, and in doing so, to keep the modernization project from falling apart when faced with a crumbling Europe. This dissociation was not achieved by strengthening the authority of the Kemalist interpretation of modernity, but by giving space to multiple voices of modernity.

The Beauty, the Optimist and the Pure Hearted

Yedigün's strategy to point out the intended way was by presenting the readers with role models whose life style and personal image was deemed to be in accordance with the new reality of being Turkish. *Yedigün* provided its' readers with travel guides or role models, through richly illustrated feature stories and photographic material, whereby biographical experiences of modernization were articulated. The "cast" included people from both genders all generations, and from different locations in the social hierarchy. These role models were subjects who had successfully experienced the challenges of incorporating modernity as part of their everyday life. As such these role models functioned as 'boundary objects' embodying a dialogue with the past, but also between public and private sphere. [25]

[24] Peyami Safa, 'Alaturka mı? Alafranga mı?' *Yedigün,* 2, (March 1933), 3.
[25] Susan Leigh Star and James R. Greimer, Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907-39, *Social Studies of Science,* 19, 3, (August 1989), 385-420.

Based on a close reading of these photos and the feature stories accompanying many of them, it was possible to construe and identify three different prototype individuals who functioned as boundary objects (or rather boundary subjects) in the magazine. These prototypes were then used to map all individuals featuring in the magazine.

I chose to name the prototypes in accordance with Turkish naming traditions and their normative connotations:

- Dilber Taşbebek

Dilber: beautiful, captivating. Taşbebek: a mere doll, pretty but cold

- Pınar İyimser

Pınar: spring, natural fountain. İyimser: optimist

- Kamil Temizkalplı

Kamil: mature, experienced and good-mannered. Temizkalplı: pure hearted

Dilber and Pınar are women's names, and Kamil is a man's name, but the prototypes that carry these names are not gender specific.

To describe each of the prototypes, quotations and abstracts from novels, feature stories and interviews from in *Yedigün* that portray individual role models were selected. This section includes some lengthy quotations also intended to demonstrate the strategies and style of the journalists writing for *Yedigün*.

Dilber Taşbebek

This role model represents a femininity dissociated from the traditional gender role of marriage, children and housekeeping. Her main interest was fashion, make-up, travel and shopping. Dilber figured frequently on cover photos, but was also a popular motive in feature stories and as an illustration. On November 10, 1934, *Yedigün* published the first chapter of the novel "Taşbebek" written by Mahmut Yesari. The opening lines of the novel are representative of the public image of this female role.

> "…She was wearing white silk, and her skin was so white that it was impossible to detect where the low-cut neckline and her skin interfaced. If not for the manicure, her hands could be mistaken for jasmines. Her shining auburn hair hanging down

> loose was like sunshine on her body. Her long, curly, dark auburn eyelashes covered her sea green eyes with the sweetest of shadows…"[26]

In the article "Advice on charm and attraction for young girls and women", Dilber Taşbebek is portrayed as an ambitious professional. In an interview with a famous film star, Norma Shearer, the journalist asks how she manages to be so groomed and good looking no matter the place or time of day. Norma answers:

> "Before becoming a film star, I disciplined myself: Every day before leaving home I told myself that today might be the day when you will accidentally run into a stage director or a film producer, and so I prepared for that kind of chance meeting. I would examine myself in front of the mirror and if there was anything lacking with my appearance, clothes or make-up, I would correct it. Every single hair on my head was obliged to obey my regime" [27]

Ranked above all other Taşbebeks was the blonde. In "The Attraction of the Blond", the author explains why a blonde woman is in every man's dream.[28] The writer then offers four explanatory factors: blondes look more fragile and thus arouse the man's instinctive protectiveness, blondes are a minority (if you subtract the false ones), and finally blondes are more challenging to conquer. Marked by the harsh living conditions of their original habitat, the North, they are less prone to excessive emotions, their character is more serene, they are like *"a lake without ripples (dalgasiz bir göle benzerler), now what man can protect himself from such an influence?"*

Yedigün offered its readers the opportunity to participate in the dream of becoming Dilber Taşbebek.

[26] Mahmut Yesari, 'Taşbebek', *Yedigün,* 83, (November 1934), 14.
[27] A. H., 'Advice on charm and attraction for young girls and women', *Yedigün,* 78, (September 1934), 17.
[28] 'Sarısınların Caribesi'*, Yedigün*, 143, (January 1935), 14.

Pınar İyimser

The role model favoured by the editorial voice in the columns was far from the hedonistic self-centred self-image of Dilber Taşbebek.

> "The new way of living that we have embraced presents us with a new kind of young girl. We have in our midst a brand new stereotype for young girls, the working girl *(çalışan genç kız)*. Before the revolution, a working girl was synonymous with being a servant. … But today, even girls from the best of families have entered public life. She instils admiration *(hayret)* and respect (hürmet); she succeeds with courageousness *(cesurluk),* and heroism. In all branches of public life, wherever you look around, behind the typewriter, or doing the accounts, you will find a serious, hard-working young girl or woman. Getting up at early hours in distant districts of the town, withstanding sleep and the temptation of the warm laziness of the bed, putting on make-up in a hurry, throwing on some plain clothes… providing for their mothers, helping their younger brothers with their studies, not trusting anything but their own pay check to keep them warm and safe…"[29]

Pınar İyimser's actual existence was documented through a series of feature stories from various kinds of educational institutions and work places. In January 1935, *Yedigün* paid a visit to the campus at Ege University, and interviewed female law students.

The story starts with a presentation of a dialogue overheard by the journalist upon his arrival.

> "I think the Italian campaigns in Ethiopia will have more influence on the financial situation than on the economic development.
> - I have quite the opposite opinion.
> - Friends, if you ask me, the League of Nations has played a very passive role.
> - What could be done?
> - If you grant the organization any moral authority they should immediately have taken action to prevent war.
> - They could have sent an international armed force against Italy.
> - Good idea, but it is not permitted according to paragraph 16.
> - It is permitted!
> - No it's not.
> - Permitted!

[29] Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, 'Yeni Hayatta Genc Kızlar', *Yedigün,* 117, (June 1935), 5.

- No it's not.
- I'll get the law book and show you.
- Go get it!"

The journalist then asked about their plans for the future, which profession they would choose, and explained that he had to suppress a smile when several of the girls expressed a wish to become diplomats.

"Is this not a profession more suitable for men?
-Most certainly not… women make much better diplomats…"[30]

Kamil Temizkalplı

The Kamil Temizkalplı category is composed of individuals from all walks of life: housewives, doctors, retired army officers, bureaucrats, politicians, musicians, teachers, etc. The common denominator is *how* the journalist presents these people; they are presented as role models not based on what they do, but who they are and how they act. By personalizing these interview objects, *Yedigün* makes it possible for readers to identify equally easily with the doctor, the midwife and the politician.

In March 1934, *Yedigün* journalist Naci Sadullah conducted an interview with Turkey's famous and highly respected doctor Besim Ömer Paşa. A typical setting for interviews for the Kamil Temizkalplı category is someplace private, most often at the interviewee's home. The journalist plunged right into the doctor's private life, asking him why he never married. [31]

"Paşam, why did you never get married?
- What do you mean? I have been married for more than half a century.
- We thought you were a bachelor.
- But I'm married. Happily married, a very affectionate relationship, we never get tired of each other. Days, weeks, months and years pass by, our love grows deeper…
- !!!

[30] Tufan, 'Genç kızlarımızın bucağı: Ege yurdu', *Yedigün,* 143, (January 1935),18.
[31] Naci Sadullah, 'Doktor Besim Ömer paşanın evinde – tip üstadımız Yedigün'e hayatını anlatıyor', *Yedigün,* 52, (March 1934), 7.

- And unlike other wives my wife does not try to hide her age, she is never jealous, and she doesn't spend time on make up, she is like an angel.
- !!!
- You are imagining a woman, a child. Intriguing people…But I'm married to my books, my books! ...
  (Oh, I was relieved. The Paşa was only joking; if he had continued his game a little longer I would start questioning my own memory.)

- But why did you never marry?
- When I was in the proper age to marry, my family suffered a lot of difficulties, we became victims of Abdülhamid's [Sultan Abdülhamid II] tyranny, my father died in exile. Spies were on my back. I had to move on as fast as possible… I couldn't marry, I didn't marry."

Thus, the journalist portrayed Besim Ömer as someone who, in spite of a difficult childhood, being orphaned, managed to create a good life for himself as a doctor. But being Turkey's most famous and recognized doctor did not make Ömer unapproachable; he opened his home and he willingly told his life story to the journalist.

Another highly respected citizen of public standing was Şükrü Saraçoğlu, Minister of Justice. Even though the interview took place in Saraçoğlu's office, it was his private persona that was the focus of the journalist's interest.

> "I have met many modest people in my life. But I seldom came across someone as modest (mütevazi) as Saraçoğlu. He is the true incarnation of 'human'….
> - Sir, I said, apart from this heavy burden of work, how do you spend your time?
> - Let me tell you… I have a small house in Bozda [Mountain village in the eastern province of Ağrı, near the Armenian border]. Every year I manage to go there for about 15 days, it is such a pleasure… It's far away from everything. No documents, no pen and papers, no inspections. I even disconnect my phone when I'm there. As soon as I arrive I put on my old everyday clothes. A cap on my head, drinking coffee in the village… under the enormous plane tree, the coffee is delightful. The villagers: Oh, Saraçoğlu has come. There is no 'Minister', only Saraçoğlu the villager… We speak about the village for a long time."[32]

[32] Hikmet Feridun Eş, 'Şükrü ile bir saat…', *Yedigün,* 190, (January 1936), xx.

This emphasis on Saraçoğlu as a villager was obviously intended to humanize and personalize the Minister of Justice, making it possible for *Yedigün*'s readers to bond with him.

Last but not least is Mrs. Şahin, the midwife, who during her 40 year long career had delivered more than 15000 children. Şahin received the *Yedigün* journalist in her garden.

> "-The first time you delivered a child must have been very exciting?
> Without hesitating for even a second:
> -I will never forget it…Maybe also because I have spoken about it so many times. I smile when I think about it. My mother was also a midwife. [But] One night they called for me. An Italian woman was giving birth. I grabbed my mother's bag and ran to the house of the patient. Standing on the threshold my legs and my whole body were trembling. What if I couldn't manage? As I approached the woman, I felt sicker than her…While she suffered I ran out and prayed to God: Allah please help me! …
> -What is the difference between midwifes today compared with midwifes practicing forty years ago? Without hesitation she answered:
> -No difference at all. I left school forty years ago, having been taught by Besim Ömer Paşa …. It is absolutely necessary for a midwife to have some medical knowledge. When practicing in Anatolia many years ago, people told me to go and use my diploma in Istanbul. What is the value of a diploma? God be praised, when the time has come we must all die… But today there is no one who speaks like that anymore….
> -Do you have any advice to pregnant women?
> -Pregnant women should be careful not to use any medicine that might be dangerous. Abortion is a life danger to the woman… There are also some mothers who want the umbilical cord to be cut long, believing it will make the child's voice stronger. This is wrong; a long umbilical cord becomes a nest of bacteria.
>
> Finally I asked the midwife of 15 000 children my last question:
> -Are you satisfied with your life?
> - Very … the other day one of my sons came by. I consider all the children I have delivered as my children: Mother, he said, my wife is about to give birth…"[33]

[33] N. Okan, '15000'den fazla çocuk doğurtan, ebe Sahin, muharririmize neler anlatıyor', *Yedigün,* 130, (September 1935), 14.

The well-balanced answers, the self confidence, the approval of education, the refuting of superstitious beliefs, the warm-hearted stories of births and babies all contributed to making midwife Şahin a true "Mother Turkey".

Numbers, gender, age and nationality

The role models thus construed, identified and described were then used as categories in the analysis of the photo material and their related feature stories. Age and gender were used as coding dimensions. The age dimension was operationalized with the nominal variables: child, youth, middle age, elderly, and mix or not applicable. A very crude analysis of nationality was also included, with Turkish, Non-Turkish Western, Other and Not applicable as the dimensions. Photos that did not comply with the predefined role model categories were categorized as curiosa or miscellaneous, and the photos that were these two categories will not be commented on further. Table 5 shows the result in terms of category salience:

Table 5: Role model categories, frequency and percentage

Category					
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Dilber	43	16.0	16.0	16.0
	Pınar	46	17.1	17.1	33.1
	Kamil	61	22.7	22.7	55.8
	Cur	30	11.2	11.2	66.9
	Misc	89	33.1	33.1	100.0
	Total	269	100.0	100.0	

The table shows that as many as 150 of 269 recorded units, or 55. 8 % of the total photo material fell within the predefined role model categories. This is a very high score given the rich use of photos throughout the magazine. Among these, "Kamil" had the highest score with 61 recorded units, or 22. 7 % of the total result. "Pınar" was second, with 43 units, or 17.1 %, of the total, followed closely by "Dilber" with 43, or 16 % of the grand total. Table 6 shows the interrelation between the role model categories and gender.

Table 6: Interrelation between category and gender

Category* Gender Cross tabulation								
			Gender					
			Fem	Male	Both	Not defined	Not applicable	Total
Category	Dilber	Count	28	4	11	0	0	43
		% within C	65.1%	9.3%	25.6%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Pınar	Count	9	26	10	0	1	46
		% within C	19.6%	56.5%	21.7%	0%	2.2%	100.0%
	Kamil	Count	12	38	11	0	0	61
		% within C	19.7%	62.3%	18.0%	0%	.0%	100.0%
	Curiosa	% within C	23.3%	23.3%	33.3%	0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Misc	% within C	4.5%	37.1%	31.5%	2.2%	24.7%	100.0%
	Total	Count	60	108	70	2	29	269
		% within Category	22.3%	40.1%	26.0%	7.0 %	10.8%	100.0%

The overall results show that the majority of the photos were photos of men, with 108 recorded units, or 40.1 % of the total 269 recorded units. Twenty six per cent of the photos portrayed men and women, while 22.3 % of the photo material portrayed females only. With a women represented in of 48.3 % of the total photo material, *Yedigün* provided a substantial public space for women, literally unveiling them. When you compare the visibility of women in *Yedigün* with their space in public life as such, it is possible to conclude that *Yedigün* in this respect played a prescriptive rather than descriptive role. Moving down one level, the highest frequency of female role models was in the "Dilber" category with 28 recorded units, or 65.1 % of the 43 recorded units in this category. "Kamil" and "Pınar" had almost identical scores, with 19.7 and 19.6 % of the total.

The significance of the editors' choice of the three role models cannot be measured in frequency alone: "Dilber" was mainly found as caption photo, snapshot, illustration or cover photo, while "Pınar" and "Kamil" each generally consisted of several pages of interviews and

articles. [34] Thus the importance of "Pınar" and "Kamil" as role models as measured in actual space in the magazine is much higher than their frequency suggests. Women were an important symbol of progress.

Women were not the only new group to be given a public face. Table 7 shows the interrelation between category and age.

Table 7: Interrelation of category and age

Category * Age Cross tabulation										
			Age							
			Child	Young	Middle	Elderly	Mix	Hist./dead	N/A	Total
Category	Dilber	Count	0	41	1	0	1	0	0	43
		%	.0%	95.3%	2.3%	.0%	2.3%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Pınar	Count	1	28	4	2	10	0	1	46
		%	2.2%	60.9%	8.7%	4.3%	21.7%	.0%	2.2%	100.0%
	Kamil	Count	1	12	11	14	14	9	0	61
		%	1.6%	19.7%	18.0%	23.0%	23.0%	14.8%	.0%	100.0%
	Cur	%	6.7%	33.3%	10.0%	6.7%	13.3%	3.3%	26.7%	100.0%
	Misc	%	2.2%	23.6%	15.7%	3.4%	21.3%	2.2%	31.5%	100.0%
	Total	Count	6	112	33	21	48	12	37	269
		% within Category	2.2%	41.6%	12.3%	7.8%	17.8%	4.5%	13.8%	100.0%

"Youth" is the dimension with the highest score, with 41.6 % of the grand total, including role models, curiosa and miscellaneous. "Dilber" has the highest interrelation with "youth", with a value of 95.3 %, followed by "Pınar", with 60.9 %. The emphasis on youth is hardly surprising given the context of modernization. Youths also were role models for people who did not belong to this age group themselves. Youth carried connotations of hope, optimism, energy and new beginnings, and thus symbolized the new Turkish republic.

"Kamil" is perhaps the most interesting category with respect to age. The results of the analysis show the scores for "youth", "middle age" and "elderly" are almost equal, with

[34] The cover photo's function is to be an advertisement for the magazine itself. "Dilber" figured as cover photo on 164, or 48.5 % of all 338 issues of *Yedigün.*

19, 7 %, 18 % and 23 % respectively. “Kamil” is also the only category with any significant score on “Historic/dead” with a result of 14.8 %.

Lastly, the material was analyzed for the dimension of nationality. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Interrelation of Category and Nationality

Category * Nationality Cross tabulation							
			Nationality				
			Turkish	Non-Turkish Western	Other	Not applicable	Total
Category	Dilber	Count	10	31	0	2	43
		% within C	23.3%	72.1%	.0%	4.7%	100.0%
	Pınar	Count	38	4	3	1	46
		% within C	82.6%	8.7%	6.5%	2.2%	100.0%
	Kamil	Count	56	3	0	2	61
		% within C	91.8%	4.9%	.0%	3.3%	100.0%

The result shows that of the three categories, only “Dilber” has a majority of non-Turkish Western, with 72.1 %, or 31 recorded units. As we saw Table 6, 65.1 % of the recorded units in the “Dilber” category were women. The stereotyped Western beauty image was imperative for all European “Dilbers” during this period. The cover photo girl was a symbol of the aesthetics of consumer-based modernity as such. And because the blonde was especially favored, the “Dilber” category was more likely to featuring non-Turkish Westerners.

However, there was no need to go abroad in order to cast the role models “Pınar” and “Kamil”. “Kamil” had the largest score in interrelation to Turkish nationality, with 91.8 %, closely followed by “Pınar” with 82.6 %, or 38 recorded units. It was vital for “Pınar” and “Kamil” to be recognizable by the readers; these were real people intended as real role models, supported by the feature stories, these photos served as documentaries of people who had actually made themselves at home in the new republic. Through the extensive use of photographs and feature stories, *Yedigün* reached out to its readers with a personification of modernity, giving each reader a role model with which to identify

The result of the analysis showed that the real people cast in these roles represented a variety of ages, genders, backgrounds and occupations. *Yedigün* journalists framed their life stories and gave them a public image, and in doing so, made them recognizable to readers and created reader identification with the magazine. With dazzling cover photos of "Dilber", *Yedigün* knew how to pique the desire of the "will buys" of modernity. Its portraits of "Pınars" and "Kamils" emphasized the relevance and importance of information in the magazine to its readers. *Yedigün* is easily interpreted as the editor's effort to reconcile the divergent understandings of the past, the present and the future, establishing a modus operandi for the "old" inhabitants of the new Turkish republic.

Once upon a time, Turkey was a land that was foreign even to its own population: there were challenges of language, currency and communication, and citizens were in need of guidance. *Yedigün*'s editors knew how to guide tourists and did their job well. *Yedigün* was a selection of information, varied for different audiences, presented in a simple and precise way that allowed the reader to see and understand. [35]

[35] Adapted from the tourist guide definition by the European Committee for Standardization, CEN

Article IV

The Fact of Fiction and Turkish Modernity:

Peyami Safa's novel *Bir Akşamdı* (It was an Evening) from 1924

Nothing allows us more insightful access into other times and cultures than narratives. The relentless passage of time brings in its wake inevitable surges of amnesia and awakens in human consciousness a sense of irredeemable loss. From the desire to reclaim what is lost or beyond reach spring narratives that connect us to our pasts and to others in webs of intimacy and memory as well as in webs of enmity and error. Such narratives respond to the universal human need for identification…

Azade Seyhan, *Tales of Crossed Destinies*, 2008[1]

Introduction

In his 1924 novel *Bir Akşamdı* (It Was an Evening), Peyami Safa invites readers to take sides in an allegorical ménage à trois: Turkey caught in a polygamous relationship with the modern West and the traditional Anatolia. Kamil, a Turkish soldier, has married two women— Bert, an accomplished Frenchwoman, and Meliha, an innocent Anatolian girl. A national identity crisis is told as a love story; "a marriage between Eros and Polis".[2] The novel has the structure of metafiction, the author moving in and out of the story as an unnamed narrator addressing the readers as readers:

> "Ladies and gentlemen! The game begins. Place your bets. Who do you pity the most? Who do you want to win? Will nationality define the outcome? Who is right, who is wrong? Who is strong, who is helpless? Don't ask me. I am just doing my job: bringing the combatants to the arena, ringing the bell. "[3]

But the author's intention is far more complex than a simplistic characterization of an East-West divide: Multiple Turkish selves and Western others are given voice in the narrative, representing possible identities that could be adopted by the readers themselves, along with strategies to pursue in a time of upheaval, confusion, and uncertainty. Instead of setting any of them as an example to be followed, however, Safa invested his characters with loneliness as their primary and common feature: isolation "not so much a separation of individuals from

[1] Azade Seyhan, Tales of Crossed Destinies, The Modern Turkish Novel in a Comparative Context, New York, 2008, p 1
[2] Doris Sommer, "Love and country in Latin America: An Allegorical Speculation, in *Cultural Critique,* No 16, 1990, pp 109-128, p 113
[3] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 160

others as a separation from the moral resources necessary to live a full and satisfying existence".[4] Echoing Turkey's collective consciousness of anxiety and alienation, the readers are invited to reflect on the plot and the characters in relation to their situation, as disinherited children of the lost Empire in search of a new Turkish identity.

Safa was one of Turkey's most influential intellectuals. First published in 1924, his novel *It was an Evening* has remained popular. Eleven new editions, the latest in 2002, bear witness to the continued relevance of the topic and the novel to Turkish readers.

The article presents a twofold discussion, concerned with how novelists and intellectuals in times of momentous change produced works that fictionalized the state of the nation, as well as with exploring the novel itself as an evidential cultural artefact of Turkish modernity, addressing concerns of inferiority, belatedness and authenticity: a possibility to assess the experience of modern life.

In times of momentous political change—the author and his context

Novelist, essayist and journalist Peyami Safa (1899–1961) was only two years old when he lost his father, the popular poet Ismail Safa. Poverty and illness as a boy caused him to miss out on any formal education, although he later studied French, psychology and pedagogy. Safa was the author of more than one hundred books, both fiction and non-fiction (such as *Türk İnkılabına Bakışlar, "*Perspectives on the Turkish Revolution", in 1938). He was an editor and publisher of newspapers, culture and literary journals (*Kültür haftası*, 1936 and *Türk Düşüncesi* from 1954-1960), a translator (in 1934, he translated Nobel laureate Knut Hamsun's *Hunger* into Turkish), and a newspaper columnist (writing for *Cumhuriyet* and *Tasviri Efkar,* among others). Using the pseudonym Server Bedi, he also wrote several detective stories.

In spite of his importance in Turkish literature, none of his novels has been translated into English. Only three of his novels have ever been translated to any other European languages: two into German (*Fatih Harbiye,* "Zwischen Ost und West", translated by Baxa in 1943, and *Dokuzuncu Hariciye Koğuşu*, "Saal 9 für äussere Krankenheiten", by Gummersbach in 1947),

[4] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity, Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, 2009, page 9

and one into French (*Matmazel Noraliya'nın Koltuğu*, "Le fauteuil de Mademoiselle Noraliya", translated by the Turkish Ministry of Culture in 1996).

Berna Moran (1921–1993), a Turkish professor of literature, divides the Turkish novel up to 1950 into two categories: 1) novels concerned with societal questions, in which the main conflict is between Eastern and Western values, and where the characters and events are used to concretize that conflict, and 2) novels concerned with human psychology, with the private life of the individual as governed by the East-West conflict. According to Moran, Safa's novels were a textbook example. The East–West dichotomy was the central topic, framed as a love story, where the protagonist has to choose between two possible partners: one Western—i.e. living a life in material wealth but morally deprived, and one Eastern—living a life with modest material means but in accordance with the Islamic traditions and love of family and fatherland.

It was an Evening was published in 1924 at a time when Turkey, after ten years of continuous warfare, was "depopulated, impoverished and in ruins to a degree almost unparalleled in modern history".[5] The society had to be rebuilt; the question of defining what should be the new Turkish identity had to be answered. Was it possible to create a civilizational synthesis between Turkey and the West, between the need for continuity and the will to change? During this time of momentous change, several men of letters produced works that fictionalized the state of the nation. Güney describes how, in their capacity as writers, "intellectuals played influential roles in the 'political' and the 'sentimental' education of masses."[6] During the Republican era (1923-1950), a number of the most famous novelists of the time were members of Parliament, including Sadri Ertem, Resat Nuri Güntekin, Memduh Şevket Esendal, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar.[7]

These were authors who, according to Seyhan, "…portrayed with deep insight the young nation's struggle to refashion a new Westernized Turkish identity and its precarious adoption of secular modernity in the shadow of a suppressed but powerful religious tradition."[8] These

[5] These were the Balkan Wars 1912-1913, World War I 1914–1918 and The Turkish War of Independence 1919–1922 (armistice). Zürcher, *Turkey a Modern State,* page 163.
[6] Çimen Güney, Taking up the gauntlet: fictionists in the Turkish parliament, *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, thematic issue No 3, Being a MP in contemporary Turkey, 2005, 37
[7] From 1920 till 2002, 92 poets, journalists, columnist and novelists served as MPs. See Mustafa Özcan, Edebiyat, Siyaset ve Edebiyatçı Milletvekilleri Üzerine, *Hece* 90/91/92, page 578-585, 2004, 581
[8] Azade Seyhan, *Tales of Crossed Destinies, The Modern Turkish Novel in a Comparative Context,* New York, 2008, 5

semi-official novelists helped the Kemalist regime in a mental mapping of the new Turkey, peopling the country with pro-Kemalist protagonists.[9] The works of these authors constituted the literary canon of Kemalist Turkey. The importance of this new Turkish literature increased with the introduction of the alphabet reform in 1928, when Arabic script became prohibited, and the Latin alphabet was adopted in its stead. It was "a dream-come-true for those who wanted to engineer the library of a modern Turkish nation that had severed its links with its Islamic past".[10]

The alphabet reform was part of the harsh secularization policy of the Kemalist regime, which lacked public support and had vocal opponents, also within the modernizing elites. In March 1925, the Law on the Maintenance of Order was enacted prohibiting all "initiatives and publications which cause disturbance on the social structure, law and order and safety and incite to reaction and subversion"[11]. The day after the enactment, several newspapers were closed down: *Tevhidi Efkar, Son Telgraf, İstiklal,* and *Sebilürresad*. Within two months another eight newspapers were closed, among them *Vatan* and *Tanin*, where Peyami Safa was a frequent writer.[12] According to Turkey's Press Law of 1931, it was not necessary to apply for permission to set up a publishing house or to publish a newspaper or a magazine, but only people with a higher education were entitled to do so. People thought to have hostile intentions toward the nation, the national struggle, the republic or the revolution were not allowed to publish. All staff had to be registered with the authorities. Propaganda in favour of the Sultanate, the Caliphate, communism or anarchy was prohibited, and it was also forbidden to publish any articles or writings received from the exiled Sultan's family. Publications that upset or disturbed the country's general political situation could be closed down by an administrative decision. In 1936, however, three new articles—142, 161 and 163—were inserted in the Penal Code, all of which had a bearing on the freedom of the press.

[9] Inspired by Larry Wolff's analysis of the four operations involved in the mental mapping of Eastern Europe, a) *association* at the cost of differences, b) *localization* on an axis between "barbarism" and "civilization", c) *addressing* the region in question as an experimental terrain for Enlightenment "plans of civilization", d) *peopling* Eastern Europe by defining the physical, mental and cultural characteristics of the human populating the region. Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of Enlightenment, Stanford, 1994

[10] Laurent Mignon, "The Literati and the Letters: A Few Words on the Turkish Alphabet Reform", in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Series 3, 20, 1, 2010, pp 11-24, page 22

[11] Translated by Erik Jan Zürcher, in Zürcher, Erik Jan, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic, The Progressive Republican Party, 1924-1925,* Leiden 1991, page 160

[12] Topuz, Hıfzı, *100 Soruda Türk Basın Tarihi,* Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul (1973) 1996, page 83

These articles prohibited propaganda against the official policy of the state, public agitation, and exploitation of religion or religious symbols for political ends.[13]

Safa was among the intellectuals who feared the consequences of disinheriting future generations from the pre-republican literature. In this context of censorship, fictional writing provided a source of (limited) freedom, where political matters could be (ad) dressed as romance. As a public intellectual outside the political establishment, Safa's writings gained the quality of being 'boundary objects', embodying a dialogue with the past. Safa also took part in portraying the young nation's struggle, but his writings reflect the conflict and anxiety involved in striking a balance between the Ottoman past and the Western future, an anxiety that "characterizes almost all of the rival interpretations of Europe and modernity contained within Turkish social and political thought".[14] Thus his works, together with the works of writers such as Nazım Hikmet, Nihat Sami Banarlı, Sevket Süreyya Aydemir and Necip Fazil Kisakürek, constituted the literary extra-canon.[15]

In 2004 the Turkish Ministry of Education published a circular of 100 Fundamental Works to be read in Turkish middle schools. Included in this list were the works of both the canon and the extra-canon of the Kemalist republic. While this speaks of the present-day government's tolerance with respect to how the early republican years and the Ottoman past are allowed to be remembered, it reflects continuity with respect to literature being a means to state education. Assessing the role of literature in today's Turkey, Sagaster concludes that "literature is generally not perceived as an aesthetical pleasure. Instead, the view that the main task of literature is to 'shape' and educate the people, is still widespread among the readers of literature in Turkey".[16] The realism, which was initially what rendered European fiction "so

[13] Article 142 was adopted from the Italian Penal Code and stated that propaganda against the official policy of the state was punishable with 5 to 15 years' imprisonment. Article 161 stated that in times of peace, public agitation was forbidden and punishable with 2 years' imprisonment. Last but not least, Article 163, concerning the use of religion or religious symbols for political purposes, was punishable if violated with 5 years' imprisonment.

[14] Devrim Sezer, "The anxiety of cultural authenticity in Turkish communitarian thought: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar and Peyami Safa on Europe and modernity" in *History of European Ideas,* volume 35, 2010, pp 427 – 437, page 428

[15] The concept of extra-canon is borrowed from Börte Sagaster in Börte Sagaster, Canon, Extra-Canon and Anti-Canon: On literature as a medium of cultural memory in Turkey, in Catharina Dufft (ed.), *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory, 'Multiculturalism' as a literary theme after 1980,* Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009.

[16] Sagaster, p 67

important yet so alien to the Turkish literary tradition" in the last quarter of the 19th century, became the hallmark of Turkish novels during the second quarter of the 20th. [17]

Lamenting the lack of emphasis on literature's aesthetical values, Sagaster echoes the words of Moran, who found that the strong ideological mission so evident among the majority of pre-1950 authors completely ruined the literary value of their works. As to the literary work of Peyami Safa, Moran wrote that his "characters and their actions are like marionettes, completely under the command of the writer, who instrumentally plays out Safa's worldview …Peyami Safa is not a good artist; on the contrary, art becomes the victim of ideology".[18] It is beyond the scope of this article to evaluate the novel's literary/aesthetic qualities; suffice it to say that the historian is not obliged to grant literary works autonomy "from political and ideological influences… nor permitting the claim that aesthetic judgements are largely independent of the critic's cultural context".[19] Safa's narrative voice and choice of literary devices is relevant in so far as they illustrate his merits as a contemporary writer and the novel as a cultural product of its time. Writing allegorically, Safa fulfilled his civic commitment to address the possibility of an East-West synthesis.

Allegorical reading

Reading fictional literature as historians, we are allowed to strip the characters of their literary flesh and blood in order to reveal their allegorical bones. In this case, the bones tell the story of an intriguing chapter of modern Turkish history: the complicated fortunes of a culture that had to take a civilizational leap from a theocratic Empire into a secular republic, which in its embrace of modernity became unmoored from the cultural continuum that was a guarantor of its identity. Allegorically, the novel also reads well as a piece of "history itself ... understood and analyzed as an existential situation," to borrow Kundera's distinction between "novelistic historiography" and the "true novel," which has as its sole raison d'être to say what only the novel can say.[20]

[17] Ahmet Ö. Evin, *Origins and Development of The Turkish Novel,* Bibliotheca Islamica, Minneapolis, 1983, page 19
[18] Berna Moran, 258 The novel in question, *It was an Evening,* is not mentioned explicitly in Moran's assessment, maybe because it was found to be an exception to his rule.
[19] Gordon R. Kelly, Literature and the Historian, in *American Quarterly,* Volume 26, No. 2, 1974, 141 – 159, page 144
[20] Milan Kundera, *The Art of the Novel,* Faber and Faber, London, 2005 (1968),36

Benedict Anderson theorized the relationship of literary production to nation building, showing that in fact the novel and the newspaper "provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the kind of imagined community that is the nation".[21] The possibility of belonging to an imagined community was enhanced by the novel, because it was the basic structure of the novel that gave us a conception of cross-time simultaneity, coeval time, as a new mode of organizing experience. Anderson's argument does not suffice to support a conclusion that "the novel, through its representations of nationhood, made the nation"; surely the Turkish War of Independence was a stronger force in shaping the legitimation of the Turkish nation than any novel.[22] Nevertheless, the novel played an instrumental role as a national narrative. Safa's novel *It was an Evening* is a perfect example of how national difference, the contradiction between loyalty to the past and the desire for the future, is cast as a romance, with the narrative logic of love as its commonality. This is very similar to the Latin American historical romances studied by Doris Sommer:

> "Read together, the novels produce a palimpsest that cannot derive from historical or political differences, but from a common project to build through reconciliations and amalgamations of national sectors cast as lovers destined to desire one another … Whether the plots end happily or not, the romances are invariably about desire in young, chaste heroes, they are about the nations' hopes for productive unions… By assuming a certain kind of translatability between love stories and national development, writers and readers of Latin America's romantic canon have in fact been assuming what amounts to an allegorical relationship between personal and political narratives…"[23]

Fredric Jameson argues that all third-world texts, "even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic—necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society".[24] With its imperial past, and the fact that Turkey never was a colony, it is disputable to place the Turkey of the 1920s as a third-world country. However, the lack of a split between public and private was still a defining feature of the Turkish society—a feature demolished by the harsh secularization policy of the Kemalist regime, which created a separation between state and society that was hitherto unknown in Turkish society.

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[21] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, revised edition, Verso, New York, 2006, page 25
[22] Jonathan Culler, Anderson and the novel, in Diacritics, Volume 29, number 4, Winter 1999, pp 20-39, p 37
[23] Doris Sommer, "Love and country in Latin America: An Allegorical Speculation, in *Cultural Critique,* No 16, 1990, pp 109-128, p 110 and p 120
[24] Fredric Jameson, Third-World Literature in the era of Multinational Capitalism, in *Social Text*, 15, pp 65-88, 1986, p 67

Thus the Turkish novel fits; it has always seen itself as a battleground for social and political questions: "…ranging from the first novels' warnings against excessive westernization to the romantic depiction of the spirit of the Anatolian people in the so called village novels of the early years of the republic, or the criticism of class oppression and state corruption in the social realist novels of the 1950s".[25] Sibel Irzık goes on to document the continued prevalence of politics and allegory in Turkish novels in the late twentieth century and even today: its "tongue in cheek presence" in Oğuz Atay's *The Disconnected* (Tutunmayanlar) from 1972 and its surrealistic and sinister presence in Orhan Pamuk's *Snow* (Kar) from 2002.[26] The Turkish novel was written and thus reads well as a national allegory, expanding the validity of Jameson's theory. *It was an Evening* is a tale of Turkey's challenge—sustaining an authentic Turkish identity at the same time as modernizing itself through westernization. The book is a literary manifestation of a political problem.

Summary of the novel

We are told the story of Meliha, a young girl confined to her home to look after her beloved father, who is dying from pneumonia. The narrative present is sometime during the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923). One night the family is visited by Kamil, a soldier on leave from the army, previously involved in a love affair with Meliha's mother. Meliha elopes with Kamil, only to discover that her new home has more than its fair share of problems and limitations. On her second night away from home, she willingly loses her virginity to Kamil without any promise of marriage from him. Meliha's father dies soon after she has left, and she later blames Kamil for not having done the right thing by asking her father for permission to marry her. Having managed to persuade Kamil to marry her, Kamil's French wife, Bert, returns to Istanbul with their son Selçuk. The introduction of "the other woman," Meliha's rival Bert, is the turning point in the story. After the initial shock, the two women share their experiences with each other, only to discover that they had fallen for the same story of love and deception. Both offer to withdraw their claim on Kamil. His solution, however, is to keep them both, a solution made easier as he rejoins the army to fight the War of Independence. In Kamil's absence, Meliha is seduced by Ferdi, one of Kamil's friends. The relationship soon comes to an end, however, as Ferdi leaves her for another woman, who is also European.

[25]Sibel Irzık, Allegorical Lives: The Public and the Private in the Modern Turkish Novel, in Sibel Irzık and Güven Güzeldere (editors) Relocating the Fault Lines: Turkey beyond the East –West Divide, *The South Atlantic Quarterly,* 102: 2/3, 2003, pp 551 – 566, p 555

[26] Irzık, page 555

Meliha then encounters her childhood friend Sermet, who is dressed in rags and is poor. She listens to his story of childhood abuse by an alcoholic father who eventually committed suicide. Through this encounter, Meliha is given the chance to reclaim her innocence by being true to her compassionate nature, but refrains. Instead, she uses the situation to take her revenge on Kamil. Sermet dies without Meliha granting his last wish: that Meliha should visit him in the hospital. Meanwhile Kamil dies in the battlefields, killed by a Greek bullet, and Meliha returns to Izmit with her mother, to live in the deserted house of her childhood.

The question of identity - a ménage à trois

Read allegorically, this is a ménage à trois where the West represented by Bert and the Orient represented by Meliha are rivals in a love affair with Turkey, the war hero Kamil. This is how Safa chose to pose the question of what should be Turkey's new identity.

Meliha and Bert have quite different backgrounds, physical appearance, and levels of self-efficacy. The etymological meaning of the name Meliha is "gentle and pretty."[27] At the age of 18, she is without any experience of the outside world, a virgin who spends her days looking after her beloved father who is suffering from incurable pneumonia. She possesses a natural beauty, with catlike silvery-green eyes and a beautiful bosom as her foremost characteristics. With only a rudimentary education, she has never had a professional occupation. Her state of mind is frequently described: She is easily influenced and highly emotional. In her desire to break away from her family, to live a life of her own, Meliha is (gradually) willing to compromise all her values, so strong is her wish to fit in with the urban Western lifestyle of Kamil in Istanbul—yet she fails. Her lack of self-confidence and desire to belong leads her to disavow her traditional values. Thus she loses her (authentic) personality and self-respect, no longer living up to her name.

Bert, on the other hand, is a young woman from Paris; she speaks Turkish, she is well-read and used to earning her own living as a shop assistant. With slender hands and neat fingers, she is fashionably dressed in clothes made from exquisite materials, and comes across as the incarnation of elegance. Bert is sketched more through her actions than her feelings, and comes through as a person who is true to herself and keeps her integrity even in the midst of emotional turmoil. Symbolically enough, Bert's relationship with Kamil goes back to the

[27] The names of characters are Turkish versions of Arabic names and have multiple meanings, the explanations of names chosen here is to support the allegorical references.

period before the Turkish War of Independence and has even been consolidated by the birth of a son, Selçuk. As such, she represents both a past and a possible future liaison for Turkey. Now she has returned to Istanbul to take up her life with Kamil, in the house she had already decorated during their first period of cohabitation.

The descriptions of Meliha and Bert are representative of the general understanding of what constituted the main differences between the West and the Orient in Turkey at the beginning of the 20th century: The West as independent, adaptable, rational, smart; the Orient as dependent, traditional, emotional and uneducated. But Safa refrains from depicting the one as superior to the other; both are entitled to respect and admiration.

Kamil, whose name carries the allegorical meaning of 'perfect', is trying to satisfy the needs of Meliha *and* Bert. He is unsuccessful in each alliance and anything but perfect.[28] Kamil represents a Turkey unable to free herself from her military identity. Constantly fighting foreign enemies, he is unable to cope with the demands of civilian life, and cursed by indecisiveness, incapable of commitment. It is impossible for him to live up to the meaning of his name: as a soldier it is impossible to be perfect, and above all it is impossible to be perfect in wedlock with two wives.

Kamil's initial response when confronted by Bert and Meliha in his living room is to persuade them both, individually, of his love and commitment and then to set up a new flat for Bert and Selçuk. Through this urban version of polygamy, he attempts to satisfy his own desires, to avoid having to choose between them, and at the same time to fulfill his obligations and promises to both women. Polygamy and gender equality in general were high on the political agenda; family was considered to be the keystone in the new Turkish masonry. Census data from 1927 showed that there were around 120 000 more married women than men in Turkey.[29] This major step in strengthening women's rights had been preceded by the divorce law of 1915, which granted women the right to sue for divorce under certain circumstances, and the section on family law in the Mecelle (the Ottoman civil code drafted in 1877) of 1917, which curtailed the husband's absolute right to divorce and polygamy.[30] The Swiss civil code

[28] Kamil, meaning perfect, is also one of the ninety nine qualities of Allah.
[29] Bernard Lewis, Turkey - The birth of a nation, 1965, page 202
[30] Seval Yıldırım, Aftermath of a Revolution: A Case Study of Turkish Family Law, in *Pace International Law Review,* volume 17, no 2, Fall 2005, pp 347 – 371, p 354

was adopted in 1926, two years after the publication of the novel, and polygamy was abolished. Addressing the Turkish Parliament on this matter, MP Sükrü Kara Bey stated that:

> "Nations depend on families. The family is the strongest cell in the national body. A nation that deprives women of their legal rights (*hukukundan mahrum eder*) is eliminating half of its own strength. Gentlemen! The Turkish woman has earned her respect and legal rights, through centuries of virtue (*fazilet*) and self-sacrifice (*fedakarlık*). The time for equality between virtuous Turkish women and brave Turkish men is long overdue…" [31]

Tracing the arguments of gender identity, marriage and love through Turkish novels, Sirman contends that "the transformation in desires regarding the meaning and form of marriage amounted to what can be called a new image of the family, and thereby of society."[32] Safa made his view on the institution of polygamy known through the trajectory of Meliha, but also made it function as a twin-valenced element designed to provide a historical perspective.[33] Kamil is married to both Meliha and Bert, and loves them both. "Loving one woman doesn't mean that you can't love another. That's what women don't understand. They say that this is not love. But rest assured that it is; it possesses all the necessary characteristics of love!"[34] But living together under the same roof is impossible. In traveling to and from the two apartments, Kamil (Turkey) is unsuccessful in his effort to find a position between them, and no one is satisfied. Through Kamil, Safa is trying to show how Turkey struggles to bring into existence a synthesis between East and West, portraying the one as complementary yet incompatible with the other.

The story of Bert's relationship with Kamil however turns out to be an exact replica of Meliha's: Bert met Kamil in Paris when she was working as a shop assistant in her father's textile shop, and fell in love against her father's will. She then ran away with Kamil to Istanbul and got married, after which her father died. Thus what could very easily have been used as a symbolic conflict between a Western self and an Oriental "other" turns out to be a

[31] Sükrü Kaya was secretary for the Committee that was set up to draft the new civil code. TBMM, Cilt 1, 17.2.1926, page 231
[32] Nükhet Sirman Constituting the Modern family as the Social in the Transition from Empire to Nation-State, in Anna Frangoudaki, and Caglar Keyder (editors), *Ways to Modernity in Greece and Turkey – Encounters with Europe 1850-1950,* Tauris, New York, 2007, 187
[33] Fredric Jameson, , 2005, p 334
[34] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı*, 149

story of mutual understanding and sympathy. Meliha even asks explicitly if the fact that Kamil was Turkish was the reason why Bert's father fell ill: "Why did he die? He fell ill. Because of you, running away with a Turk?" "Not because he was Turkish, but I shouldn't have run away. I caused his death."[35] According to Safa, "love knows no nationality" *(...aşkın milliyeti yoktur)*.[36]

The two women also share the same guidelines for a relationship; neither can accept living in polygamy with Kamil. What differentiates them is their level of autonomy, independence and self-efficacy. Meliha left her parents and ran off with Kamil as a means of self-actualization, in search for a life of her own, a self-actualization project that soon became victim to romantic love, her self-esteem dependent on confirmation of her position as Kamil's (only) woman. Bert's independence however is not at risk in her relationship with Kamil; he is not a means to but rather a result of her self-actualization project. The course of action they choose underlines these differences: Meliha desperately seeks confirmation from other men, living a self-destructive life of disappointments and moral degradation, culminating in the "murder" represented by leaving her childhood friend Sermet to die alone, as a subaltern revenge against Kamil. Pursuing Kamil with his modern philosophy of life, Meliha is driven to suicide by her personality; having become "the other" of her self. While Meliha loses her authenticity, Bert keeps hers. Crafting a strategy to win Kamil back, she shows a high level of independence and autonomy:

> "Bert endures. Bert will wait. Bert has a strong will. Bert is sure of her victory. Bert doesn't even consider the actions deployed by Meliha, she doesn't want to be a toy for other men, and she wants the opposite. Bert knows the proper time to take revenge. This is the difference between a woman raised in Paris and a woman from Izmit."[37]

Both women lose; whatever their talents or strategies, nationality did not define the outcome, the future is unpredictable; any plan in pursuit of happiness is futile.

[35] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 161
[36] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 153
[37] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 214

Allegory, however, "has the capacity to generate a range of distinct meanings or messages, simultaneously, as the allegorical tenor and vehicle change places": as Kamil is allegorically Turkey itself, Meliha and the other characters (apart from Bert) are also Turkey, giving voice to multiple possible Turkish selves.[38] Thus revealing the complex identity and existential crisis of Turkey at the time of the novel, Safa draws a picture that not only differs from, but even contradicts the official story of a heroic united Turkish nation striding resolutely forward on the road to (Western) civilization. Meliha's initial choice is framed as something much more basic than the conflict between family responsibility and pursuit of romantic love:

> "If you put romantic love on the right-hand scale, and family love on the left-hand scale, it is not a given that the right-hand scale will be the heaviest. But we know very well that Meliha wants to have her own life; this wish is very strong, and when it is put on the right-hand scale, it will be the heavier of the two, without a doubt."[39]

Safa then lets her act on her desire, in spite of the fact that her conduct violates essential social norms for appropriate behavior, such as modesty, respect for family reputation, and the preservation of virginity before marriage. Safa always steps up to defend Meliha's choices, whether she is eloping with Kamil (her opportunity for self-improvement) and leaving her dying father, refusing her mourning mother, having sex before marriage, having sex without any link to reproduction, being unfaithful, and being cruel. All her actions are framed as expressions of her wish to live, in "complete keeping with the principles of the time" *(yaşamak arzusu, asrın düsturu).*

Meliha is like Turkey: raised within the framework of traditional values, she is troubled and uneasy, guilt-ridden, mourning the loss of an imperial past, yet striding forward "without any map or compass." No sacrifice is too great for the chance of a new start.

Meliha's father reads easily as the Turkey of the Ottoman Empire: though worthy of love and respect, he is incurably ill, impossible to bring back to vitality, and the dissolution of his bodily functions is a picture of the disintegration of traditional values through an organic process. The past forever lost, he is defenseless and un-defendable, compassion his only claim. Her mother is like Turkey: too closely linked with the decaying empire (the father), she is doomed to endure her lifetime as a relic from the past.

[38] Jameson, 2005, p 325
[39] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı*, 55

Even Emine, Kamils' housemaid, and Sermet, Meliha's childhood friend, can be interpreted as representing Turkish selves highly recognizable to contemporary readers. The name "Emine" is the Turkish female version of the Arabic name "Amin", meaning dependable and trustworthy, but also free from doubt, strong and firm. Read as an allegory of Turkey, she is Anatolia, the trusting servant and backup forces of Turkey, fighting her enemies to join the West. But Emine is only a maid, and we only learn her basic biographical information, that she has a daughter and that her husband is dead. Emine is a carrier of the continuity characteristic of "small people's" fate, even during great revolutions: The life of a domestic servant is the life of a domestic servant. The origin of the name "Sermet" is the verb *sermek*, which means "to neglect." And Sermet is truly a neglected person: He was a neglected child of an alcoholic father who committed suicide. Sermet is mentally ill, he dresses like a vagabond, is unemployed, without a profession, in a state of complete self-neglect. He is driven out of his mind by Meliha, whose attitude toward him changes from compassionate love to negligence. He then dies. Sermet is a possible future Turkey without any sense of belonging to the past and without the ability to orient himself in the present or to make any plans for the future.

But just as several Turkish selves are depicted by the novel's characters, so are various Western others. Bert is the Turkish Frank (French), admirer of Turkish culture and mentality in general and Kamil in particular. She finds Turkish mentality to be nothing less than a manifestation of unaffectedness (*tabiilik*), sincerity (*samimilik*), calm (*sükutılik*) and dignity (*vakar*) unparalleled by the western male puppets. This image of the Turk is supported not only by every book she has read about Turkey, but also by all the orientalists she has met in France.[40] Bert is self-confident; materially self-sustained, she has already proven her ability to make a home in Turkey. Allegorically this speaks of the West's (self-image of) adaptability; the qualities possessed by Bert/the West make it unproblematic to set up a home in a foreign country. Bert is the Westerner with whom you can establish a relationship, but whom in spite of a strong resemblance and attachment to Turkey will always stand apart in her ability to return to her European homeland if she wishes.

The second Western other presented by Safa is Ferdi, Kamil's friend and Meliha's lover. The etymological meaning of his name is "individual," or "private," and as it turns out Ferdi's

[40] Safa, Bir Akşamdı, page 187

only ideal is himself, the greatest truth is his own existence, and his only desire is to deceive and be deceived. He is a nihilist, oblivious to ordinary human concerns and values. Ferdi is a rich young man, a Western dandy, living in a grand house surrounded by a garden of beautiful flowers imported from Europe. Ferdi is the Frank (French) Turk, inviting Meliha for a ride in his car (i.e. to become his lover). At this point Safa intervenes as the author and presents his protagonist with four different but relevant alternatives, "multiple sources of authority, internally contested and divergent in their implications"[41]: the advice of the traditional (*ananevi*) urging her not to go, the advice of the irresolute (*müteredditi*) telling her that her choice will make no difference, the advice of the contemporary unbelievers (*imansız*) urging her to go with Ferdi, and finally the advice of the contemporary opportunist "Don't go… tread carefully, even in our liberal times a woman cannot make a choice like this without the risk of being tainted…"[42] Ferdi, a ruthless egoist without empathy, willing to sacrifice everything for the pleasure of instant gratification, represents a version of a Turkey that is devoid of values, with moral standards that are neither Eastern nor Western.

The third character representing the West is Kamil, in the eyes of both Meliha and her mother; he is the embodiment of modernity and Meliha's only means to escape her destiny as an obedient daughter. In a situation where trust "by definition (can) no longer be anchored in criteria outside the relationship itself—such as criteria of kinship, social duty or traditional obligation,"[43] Meliha strives in vain to make Kamil commit to their relationship.

To prove to his readers that any pursuit of happiness as freedom from traditional values and moral obligations is futile, he had to give his protagonist Meliha the opportunity to act on her desires. Freed of the obligations of the past, she is willing and forced to accept what awaits her: "Emptiness. The soul shrouded in deep spiritual boredom. The disease of our time *(Derin bir can sıkıntısı ruhu kaplar. Can sıkıntısı, asrın hastalığı)*."[44]

The introduction of boredom as the protagonist's overall emotion could easily have cost her the reader's sympathy. But Safa is quick to legitimize her reactions as something natural, only to be expected from a young girl, the rightful wish for a life of her own: "Meliha wanted a life. Again and again the same wish…. What kind of life? She doesn't know, but she wants to

[41] Giddens, 2009, page 3
[42] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 225–227
[43] Giddens, 2009. page 6
[44] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 102

live…"[45] Investing her with sufficient narrative capital and a high level of self-awareness the author enables Meliha to articulate her thoughts in a language that captures the existential anxiety characteristic of modernity.

Alafranga or Alaturka: French style or Turkish style

Existentialist insights run as a frequently surfacing undercurrent throughout the novel *It was an Evening,* justifying a retrospective labeling of the work as existentialist. Peyami Safa's strong philosophical bent is conveyed in aphoristic asides by himself as the third person narrator of the story, with an explicit presence as the author of the story in the story intervening as a mediator between the readers and the characters. The characters are all facing the conundrums involved in a directionless undertaking, which Safa let Kamil sum up in the frequently repeated remark that "adventure means having neither compass nor map."

But contrary to the atheistic existentialism of Sartre, Safa advocated a religious existentialism, because "Without any norms to guide my choice, without any moral principles, without any priority reason, how am I to choose?"[46] Portraying the characters' inability to make the right choices in a world where no common moral or ideology was to be found, Safa's narrative supports Giddens' description of modernity as

> "… a post-traditional order but not one in which the sureties of tradition and habit have been replaced by certitude of rational knowledge. Doubt, a pervasive feature of modern critical reason permeates into everyday life as well as philosophical consciousness, and forms a general existential dimension of the contemporary world."[47]

The novel's narrative present is during the Turkish War of Independence, and it was published in 1924, the year after the Turkish victory, a time when the matter of defining the new Turkish identity was on top of the political agenda. To let existentialism be the answer to this overall question is both expectable and unexpected. It is to be expected as an reaction to the crisis and depression Turkey was suffering after ten years of war, when individual lives had been sacrificed by the million. Yet it is unexpected because it makes the novel stand out compared to fictional works right until the 1980s: which "…generally deal with this period within the framework of what we might term the 'Turkish War of Independence narrative genre' and are written in a classical historical novel format, transferring the nationalist

[45] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı*, 10
[46] Peyami Safa, Egzistansiyalizm I, Türk Düşüncesi, 34, December I, 1956, page 5, in Direk, page 445
[47] Giddens, 2009, page 3

approach to history into fiction."[48] But instead of using literature as a medium for social mobilization "channelling national energies and raising a patriotic consciousness", Safa's novel carries an anti-nationalist and anti-war message with existentialism as the governing norm.[49] The need to reassert the importance of human individuality and to question the very meaning and value of life and identity as such held priority. To Safa's characters, being Turkish or becoming Western was not the answer to the meaning of life. The modern self had no nation, but was alone.

When Kamil the Turkish war hero dies in the battlefield, the death scene gives Safa an opportunity to demonstrate his positively non-nationalistic stand by humanizing the enemy, the Greek soldier:

> "His name might be Yani, or Kosti or Mihal, something like that, lifting his head towards the sky, trying to distinguish the stars from the lights of the bombshells. After a brief period of safety, he loads his gun, aims at his target and pulls the trigger. Every time he wonders: Where will this bullet go, to a tree or to the earth? If it strikes a human, then what kind of man, and when he cries out will he fall face down or on his back? …death is raining from the sky (*havadan ölüm yağıyor*)… Yani face down in the trench during the explosions, 'Oh, saved again'. In his mind he speaks to his wife: 'Evdoksiya! Evdoksiya! The bullet only brushed my cheek!"[50]

Safa's approach of putting a face on the enemy is a demonstration of humanism: a kind of humanism that was based on the existentialist view that if solidarity is to be regained, every man must take responsibility for creating himself through his actions. In the last chapter, employing a technique that resembles his Italian contemporary Luigi Pirandello in his play "Six characters in search of an author", Safa let all the characters come together to confront each other and their author.[51] Blaming each other for their misfortunes, they "all turned to the unknown man hiding in the corner and asked: Why? Why? Answer! The unknown hiding in the corner was the ghost of the man who wrote this novel…"[52] But the characters' attempt to make the author explain their behavior and free themselves of responsibility is halted by the author:

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[48] Erol Köroğlu, Novel as an Alternative Collective Remembrance Text, in Catharina Dufft, ed., *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory – "Multiculturalism" as a Literary Theme after 1980,* Wiesbaden, 2009, page 165

[49] Ahmet Ö. Evin, *Origins and Development of The Turkish Novel,* Bibliotheca Islamica, Minneapolis, 1983, page 11

[50] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı*, 277–278

[51] Pirandello's play was written in 1921 and translated to French in 1923 (Six personnage en quête d'auteur).

[52] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 295

> [The author:] …because you are part of my dream and thus beyond my control. I might as well ask you: Why did you enter my dream? … And yet I know that you cannot exist in my dream without any roots in reality… I recognize the true identities hiding behind your fantasy selves…"[53]

Safa's heroes were left to fend for themselves at all levels: in the human trajectory of suffering in each of the characters lives, in the allegorical drama of multiple Turkish and Western identities, and in the metafiction of interaction between the characters and their author. Thus, Safa as an existentialist writer erases not only the border between author and reader, but also the border between characters and author, the true and the real, the East and the West.

According to Moran, the very birth of the Turkish novel as a narrative genre was a result of the Westernization process:

> "… We know that our novel [the Turkish novel] did not emerge as a result of a historic development through feudalism, capitalism, the birth of the bourgeoisie and individualism, like it did in the West. It is a part of Turkey's Westernization, born through translations and imitations of European novels."[54]

Furthermore, the characters inhabiting the novels until 1950 did not appear to belong to Turkish culture, and had no credibility in the eyes of Turkish readers.[55] A displaced original will eventually reveal itself as inauthentic, a caricature, and an Alafranga (European [French] style) plot with an Alaturka (Turkish style) cast. Nurdan Gürbilek describes a double bind that has defined the profile of the modern Turkish literary scene to the present day: "…the Turkish novelist is a snob, a parvenu, a dandy, or an unrefined provincialist stuck in the narrow traditional world."[56]

Azade Seyhan notes how the question of whether Turkish novels and Turkish culture are of inferior value as a result of foreign influence and their backwardness has been a continuous

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[53] Safa, *Bir Akşamdı,* 296
[54] Berna Moran, *Türk romanına eleştirel bir bakış, I, Ahmet Mithat'tan A. H. Tanpınar'a,* İletişim Yayinlari, Istanbul, 2004 (1983), 9
[55] Moran, 323
[56] Nurdan Gürbilek, 'Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel, in *The South Atlantic quarterly,* vol. 102, no 2-3, 2003, p 599-628, 603

concern and determinant of their aesthetic and critical worth.[57] Peyami Safa himself addressed this Turkish inferiority complex almost a century ago, in two articles: "Do we have youth?" (*Bizde gençlik var mı?*), and "Alafranga or Alaturka?" *(Alafranga mı? Alaturka mı?):*

> "The title of my article is an expression that I have begun to hate: 'Do we have?' There is no excuse for such doubt: 'Do we have literature?' 'Do we have a public opinion?' 'Do we have youth?' These are the doubts and hesitations of the Ottoman mind; the sick man buried in the ruins of the Empire. Experiencing his last days, confined to bed, the white skull-capped old man might be right in questioning his own existence, a sign of distress caused by his illness, by virtue of his memory being switched off, causing him to forget the glory of the past…We have started to use a question mark as the suffix to all our sentences, questioning instead of confirming…[In my opinion] everyone who asks the question 'do we have' is a rotten misbeliever (*kokmuş zındık*) intoxicated by Ottoman doubt…To doubt existence is a symbol of non-existence (*Varlık şüphesi yokluk alametidir*)…"[58]

Safa was also concerned that even though the Ottoman Empire as such was forever lost, there remained a cultural heritage to protect and develop. Criticizing the Turks for being unable to appreciate their own culture until it had been valued by Europeans, he wrote:

> "Only when Sadi [Persian medieval poet] has been cherished by Victor Hugo, do we cherish him; only when Mevlana [Islamic mystic, 1207 -1273] has been understood by Maurice Barrès [French author, journalist and politician, 1862-1923], are we willing to understand; only after André Gide [French author, Nobel Laureate in Literature 1947] has fallen in love with Yesil Türbe [mausoleum of Sultan Mehmet I, built in 1421, Bursa], are we charmed … only after Eyüp Sultan [mosque, built in 1458] and Turkish ceramics have been admired by Pierre Loti [1850-1923, French novelist and naval officer], do we bestow our admiration".[59]

Safa's worries were also reflected by foreign observers, among them Erich Auerbach, who during his employment as a professor at Istanbul University from 1935-1947 was an

[57] Seyhan, 15
[58] Peyami Safa, Bizde gençlik var mı? (Do we have youth?) *Yedigün* no 1, 15 March, 1933, 3
[59] Peyami Safa, Alaturka mı? Alafranga mı? (Turkish style or European style?) *Yedigün* no 2, 22 March, 1933, 3

eyewitness to the Kemalist modernization project. In a letter to Walter Benjamin in January 1937, he expressed his worries about Kemal Atatürk's "fanatically anti-traditional nationalism: rejection of all existing Mohammedan cultural heritage…" The result of this, he said, was "nationalism in the extreme accompanied by the simultaneous destruction of the historical national character… It is becoming increasingly clear to me that the present international situation is nothing but a ruse of providence, designed to lead us along a bloody and tortuous path to an International of triviality and a culture of Esperanto."[60]

Safa is acknowledged today as one of Turkey's most important existentialist thinkers, an acknowledgement based primarily on his essays on existentialism published in the journal *Türk Düşüncesi* in the late 1950s.[61] Existentialism as an intellectual movement was first introduced in Turkey through translations of works by Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Marcel and Sartre. Safa however was fluent in French and would have been familiar with the works of these authors long before the Turkish translations of their works. The first publication on existentialism by a Turkish scholar was Hilmi Ziya Ülken's articles on Existentialism in the literary journal *Istanbul* in 1946.[62] And then in 1950, German scholar Joachim Ritter, professor at the Philosophy Department at Istanbul University, held a series of conferences on existentialism, *Zum Problem der Existenzphilosophie,* which was later published by the Istanbul University Press. But just like Dostoyevsky and Kafka before him, Safa introduced important existentialist themes through fictional works, long before the concept was coined.

Nandy Ashis speaks of a Western colonialism that colonizes minds in addition to bodies and "… generalize[s] the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. [So that] The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds…" [63] Thus Peyami Safa could be interpreted as a Turkish writer colonized by the West, who through his novel *It Was an Evening* brought this colonization to his readers. Or he could be regarded as a vanguard writer, an indigenous voice of modernity that also defined the psychological make-up of his characters' self-identity.

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[60] Karlheiniz Barck and Anthony Reynolds, Walter Benjamin and Erich Auerbach: Fragments of a Correspondence, in *Diacritics,* Vol. 22, no ¾, commemorating Walter Benjamin, 1992, pp 81-83, 82
[61] Zeynep Direk Türkiye'de 'Varoluşçuluk', in Kocabaşoğlu, Uygur, *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, volume 3, Modernleşme ve Baticilik,* İletişim Yayinlari, Istanbul, 2004, 441
[62] Direk, page 441
[63] Ashis Nandy, *Exiled at home, The intimate enemy,* Oxford, 2002, page VIII

Concluding remarks

Authenticity was at stake as Turkey set out to define what should be the new Turkish identity; authenticity is the critical issue in the assessment of Turkish novels, and authenticity was the focus of Safa's novel *It Was an Evening*. The author skilfully applied symbolic registers through which the birth trauma and the growing pains of a nation encoded the melancholy overlay of the novel. The feeling is of a time when the familiar becomes unfamiliar, and the truth of the past is transformed by the present. :

> "She remembers… It was an evening… The room was dim… Blue light through the latticed window *(kafes delikleri mavi)* … The rooms' belongings receding with the last rays of daylight: the *levhas* [panels with Ottoman calligraphic compositions, often prayers] sink *(batıyorlar)* into the darkness of the walls, the cushions of the divan shrink, the coffee table crumbles and everything gasps for breath as they disappear, lost in the murk. Her father on the divan, unable to sit up straight after his coughing fit, convulsions turning his face the color of his black jacket. Everything covered in leaden mist. Evening. And not a sound. Coughing, her father's cough. Then the sound of footsteps from the outside entrance. Her mother takes a few steps towards the door. A creak. The door opens. A tall shadow on the threshold. A stranger. Who is this?"[1]

A closer look at the wording allows even more allegorical currents to be detected. The latticed window, for example: The Turkish word for latticed window is *kafes*, which is also slang for prison—in this case Meliha's prison, where she is locked away from the outside world with her parents; the prison of Meliha's mother, whose life is confined to being the wife of a sick man; and the imprisonment of Meliha's father in his pneumonia-ridden body. The "*levhas*" sinking into the darkness of the walls: A *levha* is a framed calligraphic composition, a wall panel, most often a prayer or a citation from the Koran, but now these *levhas* are sinking, or in Turkish "*batıyorlar*," the first part of which is "*batı*," which also means West. Thus it is possible to read the sentence in the following way: In the process of Westernization, the prayers of the Ottoman past were lost.

[1] Peyami Safa, It was an Evening, Ötüken Neşriyat, Istanbul, 2002 (1924), 7.

Safa defined modernization as an inevitable transition of time; evoking an atmosphere of ambiguity as the sun sets on shapes of furniture and household artifacts that are blurred, a time when neither East nor West can provide the household any sense of comfort or stability: modernity as a plot set in twilight.