

**NATION-BUILDING IN CHINA AND TURKEY: AN
ANALYSIS OF THE THOUGHT OF SUN YAT-SEN AND
MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK IN COMPARATIVE
PERSPECTIVE**

Thesis submitted to
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by

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ABSTRACT

Nation-building in China and Turkey: An Analysis of the Thought of Sun Yat-sen and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Comparative Perspective

Zeyneb Hale Eroğlu

The thesis is about ‘revolutionary’ history of China and Turkey, which orients towards the thoughts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) and Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) on nationalism and socio-political change. Their principles are analyzed through a reading of primary sources, which are the writings, speeches, declarations and letters of these respective leaders.

The thesis searches for mainly three questions that are answered by these two nationalist leaders. Firstly, “how could their ‘nations’ strengthen and ‘modernize’ themselves while preserving their distinctive identity?” Secondly, “how could they inject the consciousness of being a nation to the people that they inherited, and around which values could they ‘unify’ the people from which they attempted to construct a nation?” Thirdly, “what would be the political role of the people after the revolution against the monarch had succeeded,” and “what did they really mean by the principle. ‘people’s sovereignty’ that they had made frequent use in order to legitimize their own role before the eyes of the people?”

Answering these questions particularly, the thesis concludes that although the modernization perspectives of these two respective leaders differ, both of them as the leaders of two ‘nations’, which are ‘orientalized’ by the West, attempted to grant their nations an ‘autonomous voice’. They expected their nations to become equal partners of the nation-state system of the contemporary world.

KISA ÖZET

*Çin’de ve Türkiye’de Ulus-Devlet İnşası: Sun Yat-sen ve Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’ün
Düşüncelerinin Karşılaştırmalı bir İncelemesi*

Zeyneb Hale Erođlu

Mustafa Kemal (1881-1938) ve Sun Yat-sen’in (1866-1925) milliyetçilik ve sosyo-politik deđişim üzerine olan düşünceleri üzerinde yoğunlaşan bu tez genel olarak Çin ve Türkiye ‘devrim’ tarihinin bir karşılaştırmasıdır. Bu inceleme iki liderin yazıları, konuşmaları, bildirimleri ve yazışmalarından oluşan birincil kaynakların okunması ve değerlendirilmesinin bir ürünüdür.

Tez, iki liderin sordukları başlıca üç soruya vermeye çalıştıkları cevapları incelemektedir. İlk soru, “milletlerinin kendi farklı kimliklerini koruyarak nasıl güçlenecekleri ve modernleşecekleri” üzerinedir. İkinci soru, “tasarladıkları ulus-devlet modeli içinde miras aldıkları halkı hangi değerler etrafında birleştirip, bir ulus oldukları bilincini aşılacakları” üzerinedir. Son soru ise, “monarşiye karşı tertip ettikleri devrimler başarıya ulaştıktan sonra halkın politik rolünün ne olacağı” ile ilgilidir. Halkın gözünde meşruiyetlerini sağlayan ve sık sık vurguladıkları ‘halkın egemenliği’ ilkesi söz konusu liderler için gerçekte ne manaya geliyordu?

Bu soruların cevapları verildikten sonra şu sonuca varılmıştır. İki liderin modernleşmeye bakışları farklılık göstermekle beraber, her iki liderin de amacı Batılılar tarafından ‘oryantalize’ edilmiş milletlerine ‘özerk bir ses’ sağlamaktır. Her iki lider de kendi uluslarının yeni ulus-devlet düzeninin eşit üyeleri olmasını umut etmiştir.

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this thesis is to analyze the thought of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) and Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) in a comparative perspective mainly focusing on their efforts at nation-building from the remnants of multi-cultural empires. The reason for the choice of Sun Yat-sen and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk for a comparative analysis lies in the fact that both of them are regarded as the 'father' of their respective nations-China and Turkey- for their struggles to modernize their nations by rescuing them from the economic and political pressure exerted by the Western powers. They were the primary activists and ideologues in the emergence of a Turkish nation-state dominated by a Turkish majority and a Han (ethnically Chinese) dominated Chinese nation-state. They were two important leaders who struggled to remake their own societies in order to make their voice heard within the modern global context. Also, their ideas, inherited by the future generations, still play important roles as different ideological groups make use of them for legitimizing their political views or for controversial reasons in order to deconstruct the established order.

The similarity between the Chinese and Turkish experience within the new world order is also the reason behind my choice of these two respective leaders for comparative reasons. Although they are the products of different social and political conditions -one of a Confucian Chinese and the other an Islamic Ottoman society- both empires' experience of modernization and nation-building in an era when the emergence of a European nation-state system marked the end of traditional imperial systems manifests essential similarities. While it is analyzed under a macro-historical perspective, the similarities that the Chinese and Ottoman societies shared in the global context as they faced common threats influenced the strategies that were

pursued by Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen, and both of them formulated their thoughts under similar circumstances imposed on them. On the other hand, despite the effects of the global economic transformation, these two empires were not directly colonized. However, both of the revolutionary leaders had to struggle with the Orientalist discourse that confined all Eastern countries to the same category of 'backwardness'. Therefore, a very concise summary of the Ottoman and Chinese history will be very helpful to our understanding of the thoughts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Sun Yat-sen as it will provide us with a general picture of the societies from which these two nationalist leaders emerged.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Modern Chinese nationalism, which was led by Sun Yat-sen, cannot be understood without understanding the history of the Qing Empire (1644-1911). Qing was the last dynasty of China that succeeded the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). The Ming dynasty, which overthrew the Yuan dynasty (1279-1644) that was founded by the Mongols, was the last Chinese Empire to be ruled by the Han Chinese. Historians argue that the decline of the Ming dynasty was due to falling tax revenues as a consequence of the flow of silver from the West, which caused inflation and harsh economic conditions that accompanied the financial crises, caused unrest among the population by the end of the sixteenth century. It was not only major uprisings that weakened the Ming authority, but also border penetrations of the northern nomadic tribes which had become much more threatening. A 'barbarian' invasion of China proper became very possible as troop desertions were very common. Finally, a rebel leader named Li Zicheng entered Beijing and brought an end to the Ming dynasty. Those who would re-establish order in China, however, were to be a foreign tribe, namely the Manchus, who were pressing on the borders of China and Korea by the

late sixteenth century. The Manchus were a people of a Jürchen stock, who lived in the Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces of the contemporary north-east China. In the past, the Jürchen tribe had ruled China under the name of the Jin dynasty (1115-1234). When the rebel leader had overthrown the Ming dynasty, the Chinese commander Wu, loyal to the dynasty, was in a desperate situation between two unacceptable alternatives: submitting to the rebel leader or allying with the non-Chinese Manchus to defeat Li Zicheng. As will be explained in the first chapter, the Chinese General would be guided by Confucian civilizational and not by the nationalist concerns of today; and he preferred to ally with the Manchus who, since the time of their ruler Hong Taiji (1592-1643), had partially accepted Chinese customs and traditions against the uneducated and violent bandit. Thus, as the Manchus allied with the Chinese against the rebel leader and defeated him, the Manchu boy emperor was enthroned in the Forbidden City, adopting the Chinese title *Shunzhi*, which showed that the Manchu emperor regarded himself as the 'Son of Heaven' according to the Chinese tradition. "Manchus now formally claimed the mandate of heaven to rule China."¹

While the Manchus were gradually consolidating their power in China during the sixteenth century, the Ottoman dynasty had already consolidated its power in the Ottoman lands and had even started to face the problems caused by the European overseas expeditions. When the Ottoman Empire was at its height of power, it was ruling Anatolia, the Balkans, and most of the Arab world. This territorial expansion was the success of a small principality (*beylik*) among many others that emerged as a result of the breakup of the Seljuk state, which ruled Middle East for three hundred years since the early eleventh century. The Ottoman *beylik* became a state as it

¹ Jonathan D. Spence. 1999. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, pp. 3-33.

expanded in the Rumelian and Balkan regions, ensuring the fealty of the other Turcoman principalities in Anatolia. However, when Mehmet II conquered Istanbul and adopted the title, 'emperor of Rome', the Ottoman state turned into an empire. During the reign of Mehmet II, Ottoman centralization was achieved by ensuring political unity in Anatolia and Rumelia as the power of the notables and powerful families was broken, and the task of governing works was transferred to the servants, mainly of Christian origin, who were totally subservient to the emperor. After Selim I had acceded to the throne, the Ottoman Empire, for the first time, expanded to the east and captured the Arab lands, which had been ruled by the Mamluks. Another important consequence of the military expeditions of the sixteenth century to the Arab lands was that: Ottoman sultans began to bear the titles *Hilafet-i Müslimin* (caliph of the Muslims) and *Hilafet-i Kübra* (greatest caliphate). They also became the servitor of the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina. Meanwhile, the Ottoman state emerged as a world empire, governing a vast territory with a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic population, with its global policies and with its "centralized administrative and sultanate system."²

The first requirement for the Manchus to consolidate their power required the allegiance of the Chinese literati, since the Manchus were a minority group, and without the loyalty of the ethnic Chinese it would be impossible to rule vast Chinese lands. Through the 'examination system' they appointed the Chinese literati to governmental posts; and mainly the Han literati, although there had been exceptions, were content with Manchu rule as the Manchus presented themselves as strict followers of Confucian virtues and principles. The Manchus showed great sensitivity in preserving the balance of power between the Manchu, the non-Manchu

² Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, ed. 2001. *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilization*, vol.I. İstanbul: İrcica, pp. 3-37.

bannermen³, and the Han civilian population. They applied the multi-ethnic diarchy in governmental posts. During the reign of Qianlong (1736-1799), China became a multi-cultural Asian empire, since he invaded and integrated the western territories, Uyghur regions. Now, the Manchus were not only ruling China proper, but also Mongolia, Tibet, and Uyghur regions. Qianlong pursued a policy that enabled the racial minorities to preserve their ethnic identities, and forced the Manchus to preserve their racial consciousness. However, he remained as the emperor transcending racial and cultural identities as the 'Son of Heaven'.⁴

Soon, these multi-cultural empires, one to the east of Europe and the other to the east of Asia, began to face similar problems as European imperialism began to exhibit its first signs by global explorations and aggressive overseas trading, which would open the way to overseas colonization in the years to come. Since the times of the Ming, Chinese had cut their relations with the sea and were not interested in overseas ventures and the gains of foreign trade. Therefore, their encounters with the Western traders and the need to transform their relationship with these foreigners into a new type, totally different from the traditional style of dealing with them, can be regarded as a shock for the Chinese and their traditions. On the other hand, the classical Ottoman relationship with Europeans was very different from the Chinese one. The Ottoman Empire, since its establishment, had been in interaction with Europe. However, now, their encounter was to be with a Europe completely different from the previous centuries. The major European countries, with their new technology, military strength, and the fortune that they had made by their global explorations, had turned all the balances of power all over the world upside down.

³ The banner system was "the method of military organization applied by the Manchus whereby fighting men (and their families) were grouped in divisions identified by different colored banners. See Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. A 47.

⁴ See J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 40-110.

Both the Chinese and Ottoman empires' traditional, political, economic, and social systems began to be threatened as the Western powers struggled to turn the vast territories of these empires into markets for their own products.⁵

As a consequence of the new global power relations and the domestic problems that were partly a consequence of the new power relations, the Ottoman Empire and the Qing Empire entered the nineteenth century burdened with great domestic and international problems. The military weakness of the Ottoman Empire not only caused it to retreat gradually from its European territories, but also caused fiscal crises because of the decreasing tax revenues and increasing war expenditures. The Ottomans also lost their customs revenues as the transit trade from the Ottoman lands came to an end after the Western discovery of new trading routes. On the other hand, the Qing Empire's military campaigns towards the border regions turned out to be a burden as population increase caused the eruption of social unrest as a consequence of land shortages. The Ottoman Empire was also troubled by the same problem of population increase. Both empires also faced administrative corruption as they failed to tackle emerging problems. Meanwhile, domestic uprisings broke out in the respective empires. While during the nineteenth century Greece and Serbia gained their independence after their successful uprisings⁶, the Qing Empire was shackled by the rebellions of Taipings (1851-1864), Nian (1851-1868), and the Muslims (1855-1873)⁷, including the well-known Yakub bey rebellion, which had some Ottoman support as well.⁸ On the other hand, these empires were militarily so

⁵ For the Chinese experience since the late eighteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century, see *ibid*, pp. 117-39. For the Ottoman case, see Erik J. Zürcher, 1998. *Turkey: A Modern History*. I.B. London: Tauris & Co Ltd, pp. 11-50.

⁶ E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 33-7.

⁷ J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 171-91.

⁸ For the Yakub bey rebellion and the support granted by the Ottomans, see A. Rıza Bekin. 1983. "Sultan Abdülhamid'e Sunulan Doğu Türkistan ile İlgili bir Rapor," Ankara Üniversitesi, *Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Doğu Dilleri* Cilt: III. Sayı: 4 den ayrılma. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi. Also see Ahmet Rıza Bekin. 1971. "Yakub Beğ Zamanında Doğu Türkistan'ın Dış

weakened that they could only survive due to the sensitive balance of power between the European states, all of which had ambitions towards the territories of China and the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, both the economies of the Ottomans and the Chinese were already incorporated in the capitalist world system, but not as equal partners. When the USA and other European powers applied protectionist policies in order to defend their economies from Britain, who emerged as the most powerful trading nation in the nineteenth century, Britain looked for new markets in South America and Asia and concluded a number of free-trade agreements with China and the Ottoman Empire through which Britain gained many economic concessions.⁹ China, after the Opium War of the 1840s, was forced to sign the Nanjing Treaty (1842), where the Chinese granted equal status to foreigners who had until then been regarded as barbarian tribute paying states, and also granted them extraterritorial rights in some coastal cities of China.¹⁰ The *Balta Limanı* (1838) agreement between Britain and the Ottoman Empire had similar consequences. It opened up the Ottoman market to British trade and even granted economic concessions to the degree that British traders enjoyed conditions that were more advantageous compared to those of the domestic traders.¹¹

The nineteenth century can be regarded as a period of self-strengthening as the Chinese and Ottoman statesmen realized that they had to initiate reforms in order to save their empires. However, it should be mentioned that self-strengthening started early in the eighteenth century in the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting that in the early periods of strengthening reforms, the elites of both empires suggested that re-strengthening of the empires could be achieved by returning to the traditional classic

İlişkileri,” *Ankara Üniversitesi, Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Doğu Dilleri* Cilt: II. Sayı: 1 den ayrılmış. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi.

⁹ E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 49.

¹⁰ J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 160-2.

¹¹ E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 49-51.

administrative system and social structure of the glorious past. However, they did not doubt that military technology had to be imported either. Thus, the pre-*Tanzimat* reforms (1839)¹² of the late eighteenth century in the Ottoman Empire and the self-strengthening reforms of the *Tongzhi* Restoration¹³ (1860s and 70s), which were initiated mainly by Zeng Guofan and other prominent statesmen, were such reforms that were limited to the importation of Western technological skills to the respective empires. However, as it became evident that importations of military technology were not a sufficient factor for strengthening, the reform attempts expanded to other areas. The *Tanzimat* reforms¹⁴ (1839-1876) were much wider in scope than the Ottoman reforms of the previous era. The *Tanzimat* reforms covered the army, the central bureaucracy, the provincial administration, taxation, education, communication, and the judiciary. Also in the Qing Empire, the adoption of Western methods and science was initiated gradually as solutions to imperial weakness. However, it is important to note that during the nineteenth century, both in China and the Ottoman Empire traditional and modern institutions existed side by side, causing a duality in the empires.

The educational reforms, instigated in order to educate the state elites, who would then be capable of modernizing their empires in order to save their countries' future, also had side effects. As the generation educated in modern schools, reading Western political and scientific books, began to be influenced by the Western ideas especially that of constitutionalism, which they regarded as the only means for the survival of their countries, they started to press for constitutional reforms. In China scholars led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao; and in the Ottoman Empire

¹² *Ibid*, pp. 11-51.

¹³ John King Fairbank. 1992. *China: A New History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp.212-214.

¹⁴ For the *Tanzimat* reforms, see İlber Ortaylı. 1987. *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı*. İstanbul: Hil, pp. 71-207.

intellectuals led by the Young Ottomans and, later, the constitutionalist opposition of the Young Turks demanded constitutional rule that would be applied in a Western style. While in the Ottoman Empire, the constitutionalists managed to force the sultan to reactivate the 1876 constitution in 1908, the intentions of the Qing court to promulgate a constitution based on the Japanese model of 1889 at the very beginning of the twentieth century failed due to another movement that existed in China.¹⁵ This force was the anti-Manchu Chinese revolutionists who regarded any such proposed imperial constitution as the last resort of an alien tribe to preserve their status. The anti-Manchu revolutionaries, led by Sun Yat-sen, were devoted to the ideal of republicanism. They did not separate anti-imperialism from anti-Manchism and regarded the overthrow of the Manchus as the first step for the survival of China. Despite the reforms initiated by the Manchu court towards the establishment of a constitutional rule, the upheavals organized by the anti-Manchu revolutionaries finally managed to overthrow the Manchu dynasty in 1911, and the revolutionaries proclaimed the establishment of the Chinese Republic.

In the early twentieth century, the Turkish constitutionalists, who were organized as the Committee of Union and Progress, ruled Turkey until the disastrous outcome of the First World War that finally dismembered the Ottoman Empire in 1918. Most of the members of the Committee, who were graduates of modern schools, were positivists, and they were more radical than the reformers of the previous era in their application of the reforms. Although it cannot be argued that the duality of the *Tanzimat* era completely disappeared during the CUP era, the educational and judicial systems were further secularized. Most of the traditional institutions were brought under the authority of the secular institutions, such as the

¹⁵ For the Chinese constitutionalist efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 223-29 and pp. 241-53. For the Turkish experience of constitutionalism, see E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 97-131.

religious courts, which were brought under the control of the secular Ministry of Justice and the traditional religious schools which were brought under the control of the secular Ministry of Education; and the religious authority was also curbed as the *Şeyhülislam*, the highest religious authority, was removed from the cabinet in 1916.¹⁶

As the last decade of the Qing Empire was a period when different solutions clashed with each other, ranging from anti-Manchu republicanism to constitutional monarchism, the last decades of the Ottoman Empire was also a period when ideologies that were proposed as solutions clashed with each other. One of the ideological debates had revolved around the question of finding a criterion of loyalty to the Ottoman state. Although the official ideology had remained as Ottomanism since the era of *Tanzimat*, after the Balkan wars (1912-13), Islamism and Turkism gained ground. Ottomanism aimed to assure the loyalty of the people in the Ottoman territory around the criterion of a state constructed on Ottoman citizenship. However, the result of the Balkan wars was disastrous, since all the European territories of the Empire were lost. The loss of non-Muslim territories meant the further weakening of this possibility and the necessity of an Ottomanist policy. When the Ottoman Empire joined in the First World War in alliance with the Central powers against the Entente powers, its population was largely Muslim dominated. Therefore, while some intellectuals offered a Turkist policy where the criterion of loyalty would be Turkish culture, the others offered an Islamist policy as they believed that the loyalty of the Muslim population could be ensured by an emphasis on the Islamic character of the state. When Turkish nationalists embarked on their struggle for national

¹⁶ E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp.125-6.

independence after the World War, Islamism and Turkism were still the ideologies that dominated the minds of the nationalists as alternative solutions.¹⁷

Ultimately, the main question that concerned Chinese and Ottoman reformists and the nationalists have centered around was the problem of ‘westernization’. The question was whether westernization was desirable or not. If it was desirable, to what extent? Although in both countries there were those who favored westernization *in toto*, or those who were against any degree of westernization, most of the Chinese as well as Ottoman intellectuals were advocating a hybrid solution. The question was: how to bring a synthesis of European elements with Muslim Ottoman or Chinese-Confucian civilizations; in other words, “how to become modern while remaining oneself?”¹⁸

We should remember that in 1911 the Chinese, and in 1923 the Turkish nationalists achieved their immediate political aims. The Chinese revolutionaries overthrew the Manchus and established a republic on their territories which they inherited from the Qing, and the Turkish nationalists rescued most of the land they delineated in the National Pact in 1919 which was Anatolia and Eastern Thrace and established a republic in 1923. However, the questions that had troubled the minds of earlier reformers continued to trouble the minds of these new nationalists even after the establishment of both republics. Similarly, in both the Chinese and Turkish cases, the questions all along have continued to be how to modernize the country while remaining oneself, and how to reintegrate the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural people of their territories around a criterion of cohesion.

There are very few studies which compare Chinese history and Turkish-Ottoman history. One of these comparative studies is presented in 2001, in a volume

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 131-7.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 133.

of the *Journal of Early Modern History*.¹⁹ In the journal, scholars dealt with late Ottoman and Chinese histories comparatively in order to show that these empires' experience of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries cannot be reduced to a discourse of 'decline' as it is assumed that the West was in an uninterrupted process of progress. The scholars read the late history of the two empires in a new light by challenging the existing conventional scholarship which excluded the empires' experience from the process of modernization but limited their late experience to their relation to the 'dominant' West. Other studies deal with the issue in a more specific way. The article of Fong Ching Chen presents us a comparative analysis of the May Fourth movement and the Atatürk revolution.²⁰ Another article deals directly with the same topic that I have dealt in this thesis is the article of Arif Dirlik. The article, named "Third World Identification: Atatürk, Sun Yat-sen and the Problem of Modernity,"²¹ analyses the thoughts of these leaders and places them in the category of Third World modernizers who challenged Euro-American hegemony. Another study that deals with Turkish and Chinese history at the same time is the last chapter of the book of Rebecca Karl, named *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. In the last chapter, which is entitled "Re-Creating China's World," Karl analyzes the interpretation of the Young Turk revolution of 1908 by Chinese nationalists.²²

¹⁹ *The Journal of Early Modern History* 5\4. Leiden, 2001.

²⁰ Chen Fang-zhen. 2001. "Lun qimeng yu fan-chuantong --- wusi yundong yu Kaimoer geming de bijiao", in "Qingzhu Wang Yuanhua jiaoshou bashi shui shengri lunwenji" Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe. pp. 278-286. (Chen, Fong Ching. *On Enlightenment and Anti-Traditionalism- A Comparative Study of the May Fourth Movement and the Atatürk Revolution*)

²¹ Arif Dirlik. "Third World Identification: Atatürk, Sun Yat-sen and the Problem of Modernity, 1860-1949" *Unpublished Article presented in the International Conference on the Modernization in China..*

²² Rebecca Karl. 2002. *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 179-93.

Therefore, this thesis follows up on these first attempts to study Chinese and Turkish history in a comparative perspective. The emphasis is on the social, intellectual, and political solutions proposed by Sun Yat-sen and Mustafa Kemal to the problems of modernization and nation-building with emphasis on the question of incorporating the minorities that both the Chinese nationalists and the Turkish nationalists inherited from their similar past of imperial decline through a reading of the speeches, writings, telegrams, and letters of these two leaders in original languages as well as in English translations. With this objective in mind, significant secondary works about the modernization experience of China and Turkey constitute the supportive material for the study.

Accordingly, the first chapter of the first part covers a discussion on the earlier forms of identifications that were utilized by the Ottomans and Manchus in order to rule their multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities. I have attempted to analyze the *millet*²³ system of the Ottomans which is preceded by a concise discussion about how Islam defined the 'self' and the 'other'. I have compared the Islamic 'self' and 'other' with the Confucian definition of 'self' and the 'other'. The Confucian definition of the 'self' is very important for our understanding of how the Manchus, being an alien race, were able to rule China and ethnic Chinese for hundreds of years without any trouble until the late nineteenth century. As will be explained in the first chapter, the answer to this question is the 'sinification' thesis, which proposes that the Manchus were assimilated by the Han Chinese as they accepted the Confucian principles and Confucian virtues which were the main elements that constituted the Han culture. However, if the 'sinification' thesis is accepted, there remains a very important question concerning our study of Sun Yat-

²³ The meaning of *millet* in modern Turkish is 'nation'. However, during the Ottoman period *millet* denoted the religious communities rather than ethnic communities.

sen's early thought: anti-Manchuism. If the Manchus were absorbed within Han culture and lost their own distinctive identities as claimed for the eighteenth century, then, how can we explain the emergence of an anti-Manchu thought during the late nineteenth century, which asserted that an alien race usurped the sovereignty of the Chinese and discriminated against the Han Chinese by privileging the ethnic Manchus? Therefore, in the first chapter, I have attempted to understand to what extent the Manchus were assimilated, and to what extent they preserved their racial consciousness. Without an answer to this question, it is impossible for us either to understand anti-Manchu thought or the ideas of Sun Yat-sen that were shaped by anti-Manchuism. On the other hand, an understanding of the Turkish nationalism that was re-formulated by Mustafa Kemal will be lacking without understanding the Ottoman *millet* system of the classical period, and also the nineteenth century solutions of Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism because Mustafa Kemal frequently utilized the earlier forms of identifications for his political purposes.

I believe that an analysis of Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen also requires a precise evaluation of the thoughts of the intellectuals that preceded themselves. I have chosen the Young Ottoman thought in the Ottoman Empire and the thought of the constitutional monarchists in China for introductory reasons: to understand what kind of solutions were proposed before Atatürk and Sun Yat-sen in terms of the questions of nation-building.

In the third and fourth chapters, after two long introductory chapters that pave the way for the analyses of the revolutionary thoughts, I finally proceed to a discussion of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in terms of his biography, ideas, and policies. Since a discursive study on a person's system of thought cannot be separated from the life-time experience of that personality, I have presented a biography of Mustafa

Kemal in the first chapter of the second part. Later, in the second chapter, I have begun to analyze his system of thought through a reading of *Söylev ve Demeçler* which is a three volume collection of his speeches and declarations; a reading of *Atatürk'ün Tamim Telgraf ve Beyannameleri* which are the circulars, telegrams and declarations of Atatürk; and *Nutuk* which is the speech of Atatürk that he presented to parliament in 1927 as a historical record of the Turkish Republic; and other writings of his that I found in Afet İnan's edited works. In this chapter, I have analyzed the principles of populism and republicanism in Atatürk's thought, and also I tried to find out what westernization, Islam and secularism meant for him.

In the third part, I have applied the same methodology for Sun Yat-sen. After a detailed biography of Sun Yat-sen, I attempted to depict his thought through a reading of his major works: *Three Principles of the People* (1924), *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary: A Programme of National Reconstruction of China* (1918), and *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* (1924), and other materials that I obtained from various edited books that included selected works of Sun Yat-sen. Related with his thought, I examined his anti-Manchuism through a reading of primary sources as an early component of his thought. Later, I examined his post-Republican ideas which were aimed at constructing a powerful, centralized China which was still threatened by domestic and international enemies; such as imperialism and warlordism. In that sense, I have tried to find out what he understood by a strong China, and how he envisaged the method of constructing that powerful modern China through analyzing his thought by the same method as he followed in the *Three Principles of the People*: the principle of nationalism, the principle of democracy, and the principle of the people's livelihood. In this chapter,

since I had analyzed Atatürk's thought in the previous chapter, I presented a comparison between Sun's and Atatürk's ideas on certain occasions.

The last two chapters cover a comparison of Sun's and Atatürk's ideas on the issue of nationalism. As the principle of nationalism in Atatürk's thought is a very important component, it deserves special attention. The last chapter is also composed of mainly two parts. The first part focuses on the external aspect of Mustafa Kemal's and Sun's nationalisms. How did they present their struggle against Western powers? What did imperialism mean for them? Did they regard their struggle as anti-imperialist? In the second part, I focused on the domestic aspects of their nationalisms which can be regarded as the nation-building process. I attempted to understand the concepts and methods that they utilized in order to incorporate the minorities they inherited from their respective empires and around which criteria of coherence they tried to construct their nation states.

Since Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen were not ideologues but activists who aimed at immediate political results, their ideological points of view fluctuated at times. Being aware of these shifts, I attempted to follow their ideas within the process, without omitting ideas of theirs that dominated only a particular period. Therefore, I believe this work is not only an analysis of their thought that is officially accepted as the last version and the most correct one, but also an analysis that enables one to follow the shifts and changes in their ideas due to the changing circumstances and conditions.

PART I-Chapter I

EARLIER FORMS OF IDENTIFICATIONS: CULTURALISM COMPARED TO THE *MILLET* SYSTEM

During the late imperial period, the Qing and Ottoman empires observed that imperial forms of identifications, designed to hold subject people together, were under threat. While the *Tanzimat* reforms of the Ottoman elite put an end to the *millet* system of the classical period that was no longer relevant to the existing conditions, the Qing Empire had experienced the greatest challenge from the Han people both on popular and on intellectual levels in the late nineteenth century.

This chapter analyses the pre-modern identification of the Chinese people in order to question whether Han consciousness, which became apparent in the modern period, is a novel form of identity construction. Our understanding of the self-perception of the Chinese in the pre-modern period is important for two reasons. Firstly, this is directly linked to the minority rule question which will inevitably lead us to the policies of the Qing court to rule its multi-cultural empire without any serious challenge from the Han majority until the Taiping rebellion (1850-1864). Secondly, it will help us to see Chinese nationalism as a relational identity between historical identities and the modern nation-state system. In Duara's words "the shape and content of national identities in the modern era are a product of negotiation with historical identities within the framework of a modern nation-state system."²⁴ On certain occasions, a comparison with the Ottoman Empire's policy of ruling different ethnic and religious groups is presented in order for us to understand the multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of the society.

²⁴ P.Duara.1993. "De-constructing the Chinese Nation," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*30, p.11.

AN ANALYSIS OF CONFUCIAN AND ISLAMIC PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY

The paradigm that governs Chinese studies in terms of identity can be summarized as the ‘culturalism-nationalism theses’. This was first formulated by Levenson as a “heuristic device” not as a real duality in order to explain the transition from culturalism to nationalism.²⁵ According to Levenson, in the late imperial period, intellectuals, facing the threat of imperialism and the increasing intrusion of Western ideas to the Confucian world, abandoned their previous belief in culturalism by denying culture as the unit of comparison. They consequently replaced it with ‘nation’ in the late nineteenth century.²⁶

Confucian culturalism, which is said to dominate the Chinese self-perception until the end of the nineteenth century, is based on a distinction between *hua xia* and *yi* which is translated into English as ‘civilized’ for *hua xia* and ‘barbarian’ for *yi*. This kind of distinction is based on *Chun Qiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals). In *Chun Qiu*, Confucius categorized people according to their cultural identity in which ethics is the dominant determinant. The core principle of Confucian ethics was *ren*, reciprocity. This was the principle which governed the relations between individuals and groups, and it was a universal and cosmopolitan law. The racial identity of a person, his birthplace, and his mother language were not important in the realization of this virtue. Confucius believed that what made the Chinese people civilized was their moral conduct, so anybody who accepted Confucian ethics would become civilized. Confucius, also, believed that the moral superiority of the *hua xia* would one day transform the barbarians into civilized people.²⁷ As Mencius once said, “I have heard of men using the doctrine of our great land (*xia*) to change barbarians

²⁵ J.R. Levenson. 1968. *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 98-100.

²⁷ Tsung-I Dow. 1982. “The Confucian Concept of a Nation and Its Historical Practice,” *Asian Profile* 10\4, pp.347-61.

(*yi*), but I have never heard of any being changed by barbarians (*yi*).”²⁸ Similarly when Confucius decided to live among barbarians, to those who contested this idea he replied, “If a superior man dwelt among them, what rudeness would there be.”²⁹

Therefore, Chinese culturalism, based on the above-mentioned criteria, was a belief in the superiority of China as a cultural community whose boundaries were determined according to the moral values expressed by the Confucian elite tradition. China was the center of the world (*zhongguo*). It was the true civilization, but this civilization was not exclusivist. The requirement for the admission was a commitment to the universal Confucian principles. This could be achieved through education and imitation. This rule was also applicable to the rulers; the requirement for the emperor was his command of these universal principles. The ethnic background of the emperor was not important.³⁰

Compared to Confucianism, Islam, which was the basic principle guiding the Ottoman *millet* system,³¹ also, divides humanity into two categories, but in this case the basic differentiation line is between the ‘believer’ and ‘unbeliever’. The moral values and Confucian principles in culturalism are replaced by a belief in God and the Prophet, and one is required to live according to the principles God prescribed for Muslims. As in Confucianism, Islam is not exclusivist, and the requirement for the inferior unbeliever to become equal with those Muslims in the hierarchical order was to convert to Islam.

While the non-exclusivist character of culturalism³² and Islam lead one to believe that these pre-modern forms of identifications are far more broadly defined

²⁸ Cited in *ibid*, p.358.

²⁹ Cited in *ibid*, p.358.

³⁰ J, Townsend. 1992. “Chinese Nationalism,” *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 27. p. 110.

³¹ B. Lewis and B. Braude, eds. 1982. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society, vol.1*. London: Holmes&Meier, pp.1-33.

³² Because of this non-exclusivist character of culturalism, it is also named as ‘Chinese universalism’. This is because China was the *tien xia* (all under universe), and anybody, who accepted to live in

than ethnic nationalisms, Duara argues that “culturalism is not significantly different from ethnicity, because, like ethnic groups, it defines the distinguishing marks and boundaries of a community. The difference lies in the criterion of admissibility; ethnocentric conception refused to accept as part of the political community anyone not born into the community; despite their educability into Chinese values, whereas the cultural conception did.”³³ However such a comment may mislead us because ethnic origin is something which cannot be changed, and one is born into. Whereas in Islam and culturalism, the criteria for admissibility depend on one’s will (concerning Islam) or one’s ability (concerning culturalism).

As mentioned previously, Levenson argued that the principle of culturalism gave way to nationalism when cultural values required legitimization in the face of the challenge posed by the Western ‘other’. This threat challenged the idea of cultural superiority which, in the absence of threat, required no defense, but during China’s long history such barbarian threats emerged on several occasions, and in facing that threat, some Confucian literati abandoned their culturalist vision and proposed an exclusivist strategy concerning the barbarian ‘other’.³⁴ Mark Elliot locates ethnocentrism to a reading of Confucian separation of *hua* and *yi*. He argues that such an exclusivist ethno-centrist attitude predate the creation of the first Chinese empire in the third century BC. The Chinese accepted non-*hua* as essentially different and incapable of self-improvement.³⁵ Another scholar, who derives some incompatible racist views from the Classics, is Dikötter.³⁶ He attempts to demonstrate that an embryonic form of racism existed long before the arrival of

accordance with the principles and moral values of this universe, which was Confucianism, was recognized as a member of this universe.

³³ P.Duara, “De-constructing the Chinese Nation,” p.6.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p.2.

³⁵ M.Elliot. 2001. *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.22.

³⁶ F.Dikötter. 1992. *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*. Stanford.

Western racism in a Social Darwinist form in China. An environmental and biological determinism existed in ancient and pre-modern Chinese thought concerning the issue of race. A prejudice against Africans due to their skin colour and against the Europeans due to their different physical appearance had existed.³⁷ Also, the names of the barbarians living around the Chinese cultural ecumene were written in characters having animal radicals. This was a habit that existed until the 1930s.³⁸ The most important statement that was used for the exclusivists was from *Zuozhuan* (587 BC), a feudal chronicle: "If they are not the same race of us, their minds will be different."³⁹

Ethnocentric arguments flourished in the periods when barbarian tribes posed a great challenge to China by penetrating to the Chinese heartland and posed a threat to the dynasty. Such a threat first emerged in the early twentieth century against the Song dynasty and was posed by the Jürchen Empire of the Jin. While the Song retreated to the south, they had to promote a realist foreign policy rather than the classical tribute system based on a culturalist notion of China as the *tien xia* (all under heaven) and the other states as vassals who had to pay tribute to the 'Son of Heaven', the Chinese emperor. China was reunified in 1279 not by the Chinese but by the Mongols. They ruled the country until 1368. Although many Confucian literati were summoned to serve in the dynasty, Song loyalists refused to serve the barbarian Mongols.⁴⁰

The best known of these ethnocentric discourses emerged after the Qing conquest of China. The harshest critic of Manchu rule was Wang Fuzhi (1619-92)

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.13-17.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.4.

³⁹ Tsung-I Dow, "The Confucian Concept of a Nation," p.353. But Dow in his interpretation of this statement argues that, the word "*xin*" in the second part of the sentence can be rendered as expressing one's point of view, and culture. But despite this argument, it is clear that in a world where the admissibility criterion is culture, those other races, because their ethnic identities have different culture, and lose their chances to be included into the Chinese ecumene.

⁴⁰ Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*, pp. 20-25

who preferred to live in seclusion after he took part in an anti-Manchu movement to support the Ming dynasty's remnants. Despite his written works, he was not well known until anti-Manchuism had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. Wang Fuzhi's attack on the Manchus was environmentally determined. He stated that "the barbarians, with respect to the Chinese, are born in alien lands. As their lands are alien, so their vital forces are alien. As their vital forces are alien, their customs are alien, and as their customs are alien, so their behavior is entirely alien."⁴¹ He also believed that the boundaries between races should be preserved.

If man does not mark himself off from the things, then the principle of heaven is violated. If Chinese do not mark themselves off from barbarians, then the principles of earth is violated....If men do not mark themselves off and preserve an absolute distinction between societies then the principle of man is violated.⁴²

It is important to note that these anti-Manchu feelings, which appeared during the early conquest period, surfaced in the revolutionary period of the twentieth century. According to Duara, the boundaries of these historical ethnocentrism were "hardened" and "acquired new meaning" during the revolutionary period. As nationalism "selects", re-narrates, "adapts" these earlier identifications, it is also "a product of negotiation" with them within the new nation-state system.⁴³ Therefore, as revolutionaries revived and recreated the earlier anti-Manchu discourse, constitutionalists reformulated culturalism by trying to make it fit the new nation-state system. This re-narration process will be examined in the coming chapters.

⁴¹ J.D.Langlois. 1980. "Chinese Culturalism and the Yüan Analogy: Seventeenth-Century Perspectives," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*40\2. p.364.

⁴² Kauko Laitinen.1990. *Chinese Nationalism in the Late Qing Dynasty: Zhang Binglin as an Anti-Manchu Propogandist*. Curzon Press, p.25.

⁴³ Duara, "De-constructing the Chinese Nation," p.11.

SINO-CENTRISM AND ITS PROBLEMS

Despite the existence of an anti-Manchu literature during the early conquest period, a considerable number of the Ming elite preferred to be loyal to the Qing dynasty. The support of the literati elite was very important for Manchu legitimacy. However, the question still remains because one should understand how the barbarian northerners could gain legitimacy in the eyes of the Han elite, and also whether legitimacy in the eyes of the elite is a sufficient factor for preserving stability for 200 years.

The most common answer for the above-mentioned minority-rule question is that, firstly, by sponsoring neo-Confucian norms of government and personally following Confucian rituals through a study of the Classics, Manchu rulers gained the sympathy of the Confucian literati who were guided by Confucian culturalism. Another argument very much related to this is that the Manchus gradually adopted Chinese ways, and so became assimilated.⁴⁴ As a consequence of the sinicization of the Manchus, the Qing Empire became another Chinese empire. The above-mentioned two arguments are intermingled, since the main reason for sinicization was the adaptation of Confucian ethics. In the words of Ping-Ti Ho who is an ardent supporter of sinicization,

The Manchu court carried a policy of systematic sinicization, with the implementation of the *Ch'eng-Chu* Neo-Confucian orthodoxy as its core, which not only facilitated the metamorphosis of the Manchu tribal-banner state into a unitary centralized empire, but also won the allegiance and dedication of the Confucian elite who saved the "alien" dynasty by eventually wiping out the ethnic Chinese Taiping rebels in fourteen years (1851-64) of life-and-death struggle.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Here in this text, I take the concept 'assimilation' as one ethnic or religious groups' loss of consciousness of their distinctive identity.

⁴⁵ Ping-Ti Ho. 1998. "In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's "Reenvisioning the Qing"," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57(1), p.124.

It is a fact that the Manchus adopted Chinese political organizations and Confucian orthodoxy. Without doubt, this endowed them with legitimacy, and so they were accepted by most of the Chinese as the ‘sons of heaven’. Even most of the Ming elite preferred to surrender to the Manchus who were more Confucian than the rebellious bandit Li Zicheng who posed a great threat to the Ming status quo.⁴⁶

However, in recent years, there have emerged many studies on the Qing period, questioning the validity of the sinicization thesis. The most apparent question is related to the late nineteenth century emergence of anti-Manchu sentiment. If the Manchus were assimilated, how, then, at the end of nineteenth century, did Chinese people think that there was a separate Manchu population governing them, and how did the Manchus perceive themselves as distinct from the Han population of the Empire?

One of the theses proposed against the theory of sinicization is the Manchu ability to balance between the “cosmopolitanism of the universal empire and the narrow defensiveness of the ethnic minority.”⁴⁷ During the Qing period universal emperorship was not only confined to the Confucian image of the emperor. According to Rawski, “the archival materials strongly support the argument that the Manchus disseminated different images of rulership to the different subject peoples of the Empire.”⁴⁸ While the Mongols called the Qing emperor “Great Khan”, the Qing emperors are “depicted as an intrinsic part of the whole Tibetan Buddhist system and an appropriate object of worship.”⁴⁹ Lamas decreed the Qing emperor as an incarnation of the Buddha of Wisdom.⁵⁰ Through the Qing policy Beijing became

⁴⁶ J.K.Fairbank. 1989. *China: Tradition and Transformation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, p.216.

⁴⁷ M.Elliot, *The Manchu Way*, p.5

⁴⁸ E.Rawski. 1996. “Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55/4, p. 835.

⁴⁹ H. Harrison. 2001. *Inventing the Nation: China*. London: Arnold , p.40.

⁵⁰ J.T.Dreyer. 1976. *China's Forty Millions*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p.10.

a center for Tibetan Buddhism although Tibetan Buddhism was not so much revered in China proper as in Central Asia, especially among the Mongols.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Emperor Qianlong (1736-1799) dismissed the idea of the absoluteness of civilization. His father the Emperor Yongzheng (1723-1735) tried to “efface” the boundaries separating the cultures. He tried to create a Confucian morality that would become the only true world. He started a countrywide moral indoctrination program by preparing lectures that would be delivered by local scholars twice a month right down to the village level. He thought such indoctrination would “improve people’s thoughts and behavior, and intensify their loyalty to the state.”⁵¹ However, for Qianlong, “the clarification of cultural differences and subsequent proof of the universal competence of emperorship is the mission of the ruler.”⁵² Culture came to be perceived as a fixed ideal identity. It was gained by descent and geography, but the emperor would remain ‘null’, transcending all cultures. According to Crossley, Qianlong, through his universal emperorship, “brought reality and meaning to all cultures,” especially through “commissioning of literature, architecture, painting and portraiture,” and all these separate peoples were “given documentary institutionalization and political status,” and so were “historicized.”⁵³ These separate identities were unified through their submission to the emperor personally since the “Qianlong emperor’s universalistic ideology was distinctly centred upon himself, as the sole point where all species were articulated.”⁵⁴

The important point is that these identities that were historicized in Qing China were limited to five peoples: the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Uyghurs, and

⁵¹ J.Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp.91-2.

⁵² O.K.Crossley. 1999. *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.270.

⁵³ *Ibid*, pp.221-2

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.221

Chinese. The languages of these five peoples were officially accepted. The edicts, diaries, and monuments were written in more than one language, at least in Manchu and Chinese, but commonly in Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian. Also, after the middle of the eighteenth century, Arabic script of Uyghur and Tibetan writing were also included.⁵⁵ This concept of the ‘five people of China’ was also inherited by the reformist and revolutionary nationalists.

*THE QING ‘FIVE PEOPLE’ STATE TRADITION COMPARED TO THE
OTTOMAN MILLET SYSTEM*

Qianlong method of rule resembles the imperial policy of the Ottomans, namely the *millet* system that identifies the minority policy of the Empire until the nineteenth century, according to which the people of the Ottoman Empire were separated from each other. However, in the Ottoman Empire identity was not fixed according to descent and geography. Religion rather than ethnicity was the determinant. While all Muslims regardless of their ethnicity belonged to the Muslim *millet*, the non-Muslims were divided according to their religions and sects. Every *millet* had a certain kind of autonomy in some of their internal affairs, especially those related to the administration of the *millet* and those legal issues related to the private realm, such as family law. The “house of *Osman*” materialized in the “patrimonial authority” of the sultanate was the transcending position, where all these separate identities submitted their loyalties. Since the Ottoman Empire was a hierarchical society where the dominant *millet* was the Muslim *millet*, the balancing factor of the concept of sultanate between the different ethnic and religious groups of the Empire was important. The “temporal and religious” authority was implemented

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.11. We should remember that the most important official language in the Qing court was Chinese. On the other hand, during the Qing period the ethnicities living in south and southwest China were aimed to be sinicized by the Qing court.

in the combination of the concepts of sultanate and caliphate.⁵⁶ If Sharia (Islamic Law) was for the Muslims, *kanuns* (dynastic administrative law) was for both the Muslims and non-Muslims.⁵⁷ “The main legitimation of the ruler in Ottoman political thinking was justice,”⁵⁸ and the “House of Osman” provided justice and prosperity to all its subjects within the framework of *kanun*.

As in the Qing case, in the Ottoman Empire as well, the titles and the attributes of the emperors were a means for them to gain legitimacy in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural empire, since the titles and the attributes were derived from different traditions, dominantly from Islamic, Persian and Turkish traditions. While the titles, *Padişah* and *Hüdavendigâr* were derived from Persian tradition, the title of *Hakan* was derived from the Turkish past, which implied that Ottoman emperors inherited their Central Asian tradition of government. After the conquest of Istanbul, Mehmed II adopted the title of *Kayser-i Rum* which was an attempt to gain legitimacy in the eyes of Greek residents of the Empire and in the eyes of Christian states as the successor of Augustus and of Constantine because Ottomans perceived themselves as the inheritors of the Roman Empire. The adoption of this title enabled him to be referred to as *Basileus*⁵⁹ by contemporary Byzantine chroniclers. The conquest of Egypt and Syria, and appropriation of the title ‘caliph’, and the attribute of ‘Guardian and Protector of the Holy cities’ not only marks the assertion of the supremacy of the Ottoman sultan among the other Muslim rulers, but also marks a turning point for the legitimacy of the Ottoman sultans in the eyes of Muslims all over the world. It was Süleyman the Magnificent who adopted all these titles at

⁵⁶ Niyazi Berkes. 1998. *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. London: Hurst&Compony, p.9.

⁵⁷ Metin Kunt. 1995. “State and Sultan up to the Age of Süleyman: Frontier Principality to World Empire,” in M. Kunt & C. Woodhead, eds. *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*. London: Longman, p.28.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ The title used by the Greeks for the Great King of Ancient Persia and later for the Roman and Byzantine emperors. For this definition and a further explanation of the titles of Ottoman sultans, see R. B. Merriman. 1944. *Suleiman the Magnificent: 1520-1566*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

once.⁶⁰ He was also the Ottoman sultan who claimed a universal⁶¹ emperorship as “the master of all lands and the shadow of God over all nations.”⁶² This imperial tradition of the assertion of universality can be observed also in the Qing imperial perception of the concept of *tien xia* which implies that China was ‘all under heaven’. While the Ottoman sultan was the ‘shadow of God over all nations’, the Qing emperor was the ‘son of heaven’.

As the Ottoman elite preferred to rule the periphery, despite its central structure, by depending on the local elite of the periphery regions through drawing these “Muslim inhabitants of the provincial cities” into the system of government,⁶³ and by granting a limited autonomy to the non-Muslims as well,⁶⁴ the Qing policy towards the periphery regions, especially towards those with the powerful peoples of the west and the north, depended on the already existing hereditary groups who were integrated into the system. The office responsible for dealing with these powerful non-Han people was *Lifanyuan* which was established in 1638 by Hong Taiji. While

⁶⁰ In 1538, in the inscription of Benderhe, Sultan Süleyman declared that “I am a slave of God and I am the master in this world....God’s virtue and Muhammad’s miracles are my companions. I am Süleyman and my name is being read in the prayers in the holy cities of Islam. I launched fleets in the Mediterranean on the part of Franks in Maghreb as well as in Indian Ocean. I am the Shah of Baghdad and Iraq, Caesar of the Roman lands and the Sultan of Egypt. I took the land and crown of the Hungarian king and granted to one of my humble slaves.” See in H. İnalcık. 1993. *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University, p.79.

⁶¹ It is important to note that this kind of a pre-modern universality of the imperial systems is different from the modern form of universalism which is also globalism. Both the Chinese and Ottoman emperors had a transcendental view of their role in this world. They believed their emperorship to be central and transcendental, and the other rulers and peoples who were living off of their domains as the people who had to recognize their transcendental role in this world. Even, economic transactions with the people of the inferior domain were not realized on an equal footing. Ottoman and Chinese emperors only granted concessions to those ‘others’ who recognized their emperorship and superiority over them. However, despite the claim of the Chinese and Ottoman emperors to universality, it was not ‘global’ as it is used in the modern sense. Their universalistic image was effective as far as their power could be effective. That’s why, while the universal image of the Chinese emperor had something to do with the Koreans, it did not mean anything for the North African people, who were out of the sphere of the Chinese ‘world’. On the other hand, despite the universal claim of the Chinese and the Ottoman emperors, their universalism did not mean cultural homogeneity as it means in today’s terminological usage.

⁶² Written in the inscription on the main gate of the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul. See in H. İnalcık, *The Middle East and the Balkans*, p. 78.

⁶³ See A. Hourani. 1991. *A History of the Arab Peoples*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

⁶⁴ See, Ş. Mardin. 1995. *Türkiye’de Toplum ve Siyaset*. İstanbul: İletişim, pp.37-9.

the Chinese term means, 'ministry ruling the barbarians', the Manchu title for the office was 'ministry ruling the outer provinces'. As the conceptual difference indicates, during the Qing period, this bureau preferred the preservation of the separate political structures and cultures of these non-Han regions rather than cultural assimilation. These hereditary groups were granted imperial noble titles. The most important of them were the Mongol *jasak*, the hereditary Mongol chiefs. Their status was equal to those of the Qing princes, and they were linked to the dynasty by marriages. A special legal code was also promulgated for the Mongols which was in Mongolian and based on the traditional Mongolian understanding of justice. Similarly, in Tibet the temporal and spiritual rule of the Dalai Lama was recognized, and he became the political authority in Tibet.⁶⁵

BANNER SYSTEM AND THE SINICIZATION THESIS

Some other scholars, who oppose sinicization thesis, argue that the institution that prevented the assimilation of the Manchus to the Han population was the banner system.⁶⁶ The banner system was established by Nurhaci (1559-1626) who was the ancestor of all the Qing emperors. The founding members of the banners were the Jürchen people of eastern and northern Manchuria. Hong Taiji (1636-1672) renamed them as Manchu. Later, during Hong Taiji's reign, the Mongols and those Chinese, who had collaborated with the Manchus to occupy Ming territories, were included in the banner system. Banners can be regarded as the conquest army of the Qing. Membership of the banners was hereditary. Banners were not only composed of the banner soldiers but also of their families. These people were known as the banner people (*qiren*). Each ethnic group had its own separate set of eight banners, so totally

⁶⁵ Harrison, *Inventing the Nation: China*, pp.36-42.

⁶⁶ See, Elliot, *The Manchu Way* and Edward Rhoads. 2000. *Manchu & Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928*. London: University of Washington Press.

there were 24 banners in the entire system.⁶⁷ All these banners “would be imbued with similar education, skills, sense of mission, and attachment to the court.”⁶⁸ The court tried to educate all the banners in such a way that they would serve the government. They were educated in Classics in all three languages, Mongolian, Chinese, and Manchu. They were required to know the histories of the Liao, Jin, and Yuen empires which were the foreign nations that ruled China before the Qing. They had to know astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. They were also required to be experts in horsemanship and archery. In a word, they were educated in such a way that they would be the ruling class of China, having both the military and civil skills. They were to be an agent class that would be close to the ruling house.

Similar to the banners, who were arranged to be an agent class loyal to the emperor in Qing Empire, *devşirme* system⁶⁹ of the Ottoman Empire was also arranged to create a ruling class loyal to the emperor. *Devşirmes* were chosen from among the children of the Christian families of the border areas. These children were collected in order to be recruited for the imperial army or the civil service. They were converted to Islam and taught Turkish which remained the official language in the government. The most talented were chosen for the palace school, the *Enderun* and for other elite schools; and the rest would become janissaries. Those *devşirme* students studying in the *Enderun* would become the ruling elite of the Empire. One of them would become the grand vizier. Just like the Manchu banners, they had to be proficient in many languages, in this case Turkish, Arabic, and Persian. They were required to know classical Arabic and calligraphy. They also studied Islamic law, and they were taught civil law that included the *kanuns* which were issued by the sultan. They studied history, mathematics, geography, and geometry. Besides all

⁶⁷ Rhoads, *Manchu & Han*, p.8 and p.19.

⁶⁸ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, p.286.

⁶⁹ See G. Goodwin. 1997. *Janissaries*. Saqi Books.

these similarities with the Manchu banners, there was a very important difference concerning the issue of descent, since the descent of the *devşirme* was not important. Because *devşirmes* were children, who were separated from their families in their childhood, they had no bonds with their families, and their loyalty was towards their corps and to the sultan and his household. Their lives and all their possessions were at the disposal of the sultan. This was in order “to prevent the formation of a hereditary caste of rulers.”⁷⁰ But as previously mentioned, banners were not only composed of banner soldiers. Family and descent had a very special meaning in the banner system.

The creation of a banner class in China was something more than an attempt to create an agent ruling class loyal to the emperor. The question of the identity of the banners is a complex one. One can define the banners as the “institution, which unified the Manchu people and defined Manchu identity.”⁷¹ Banners are also regarded as the institution that made apparent the discrimination between the Han and the Manchus. This point makes us understand the emergence of an anti-Manchu sentiment in the twentieth century. Does the revolutionary hatred against Manchus have no base⁷², or can the causes be predated to the prosperous Qing period?⁷³

Despite the heterogeneous identity of the banners, the banners were called the Manchu banners. Banners were not strict ethnic categories, because there could be Han and Mongol in the Manchu banners; but still many historians prefer to regard banners as Manchu, and legal, economic, and political discrimination between the banners and civilians is accepted as discrimination between the Manchu and the Han.

⁷⁰ See Bernard Lewis. 1963. *Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, p.60.

⁷¹ Rhoads, *Manchu & Han*, p.18.

⁷² See, Mary Wright. 1962. *The Last Stance of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862-1874*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.51.

⁷³ For this argument, see Rhoads, *Manchu & Han*.

⁷⁴ One of the main reasons for this was the fact that the Manchus were the largest group in the banners, despite their low population ratio in the Qing society. Also, every Manchu family was a member of the banners, and every Manchu was a member of the banners. In the hierarchic structure of the banner institution, Chinese banners were the lowest in status. Manchu banners outranked Mongols, and Mongols outranked Chinese.⁷⁵

According to Elliot,

That the category “banner people” came to signify “Manchus” and not the other way around was a consequence of two things: that the Eight Banners was essentially a Manchu institution and that court concern for the banners was dominated in the end by an emphasis on those in the banners classified as Manchu. From the outside, Han Chinese saw the advantages enjoyed by those in the banners as “Manchu” privileges unavailable to them; from the inside, Manchus, Mongols, and Han bannermen also tended to see these privileges as specifically “Manchu,” with the difference that they shared in them to greater (in the Mongol case) or lesser (in the case of Han bannermen) degrees. With the gradual strengthening of the banner system as a bulwark of Manchu

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, pp.286-7.

⁷⁵ Rhoads, *Manchu & Han*, p. 20. In Chinese society there was a separation between the banners and the civilians. This differentiation could be taken as similar to the Ottoman distinction of *reaya* (tax paying subjects) from *askeri* (military subjects). *Reaya* was composed of farmers, artisans and merchants who were taxed, and the *askeri* were, scholars, bureaucrats and soldiers who were not taxed. The Ottoman system was based on the preservation of this distinction. Everybody was required to preserve his place in the social hierarchy. The circle of justice necessitated this distinction because the power of the sultan was dependent on military power, and military power was dependent on the treasury which required the taxation of the peasants. Finally, the increase in the tax revenues was provided by justice. Peasants had to be treated with justice. In the Ottoman society, both *askeri* and *reaya* tended to be a close group. No one was allowed to perform others' functions". Bernard Lewis emphasized that *askeri* denoted caste rather than function, since “it included retired or unemployed *askeris*, manumitted slaves of the sultan and of the *askeris*, the wives and children of *askeris* and also the holders of religious offices at the sultan's court.” In theory *askeris* were not a hereditary class, they had no aristocratic privilege, since their right to fief, office or status could be withdrawn by the sultan. However, those who become the members of the *askeri* class by grants of fief, status or office, with little exception, were the sons of *askeris*. While in the early periods of the Ottoman Empire, it was very rare for a person of *reaya* origin to become *askeri*, or an *askeri* to be reduced to *reaya* status, in the later periods, especially in the eighteenth century, it was frequently observed. Many chroniclers had claimed that the violation of the borders between the *reaya* and *askeri* was a cause of imperial decline. See Berkes, *The Development of Secularism*, p. 12 and also see B. Lewis. 1963. *Istanbul and Civilization of the Ottoman Empire*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, p.52, and also see S. Faroqhi. 2002. “16. Yüzyıl sonlarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Siyaset ve Sosyo-Ekonomik Değişim,” in M. Kunt and C. Woodhead, eds. *Kanuni ve Çağı: Yeniçağda Osmanlı Dünyası*. TVYY, p. 106. For the description of the ‘circle of justice’, see H. İnalçık. 2000. *Osmanlı'da Devlet, Hukuk ve Adalet*. Eren, p. 46.

identity in the eighteenth century, the perception of Manchus as “banner people” became more common.⁷⁶

That’s because, to see the bannermen as Manchu is somewhat a problem of self-perception. After the 1911 revolution, Manchus sensitive to the racist environment of the day created for themselves the name, *qiren*⁷⁷ (banner people). And after the foundation of the Peoples’ Republic of China in 1949, although the name *qiren* did not find widespread use, regardless of ethnic origin, those who managed to show that they were the descendents of the banner people were registered as Manchu.⁷⁸

In addition to the above-mentioned reasons that caused the scholars to refer to the banners as the Manchu banners were the policies of Qianlong concerning the banners, since in the Qianlong era Manchu history and culture were documented in order to demonstrate the genealogical and geographical origins of the Manchus as different from Han people. As Crossley shows, Qianlong era research of Manchu origin, and its documentation of the history and the culture of the Manchu people was a major step in the creation of the Manchu race. The documentation of Manchu history was followed by the efforts of the Qianlong court to recreate the Manchu people according to the original Manchu culture that was then clarified. It was the fear of being assimilated among the Han majority that alarmed Emperor Qianlong . According to Qianlong, the fears of Hong Taiji⁷⁹, who urged the Manchu people

⁷⁶ Elliot, *The Manchu Way*, p. 15

⁷⁷ P.K.Crossley. 1990. “Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China,” *Late Imperial China* 11\1. p.10.

⁷⁸ Elliot, *The Manchu Way*, p.15.

⁷⁹ Hong Taiji, in the very early years of Manchu occupation of Chinese territories, stated that “I have heard that among the nations that have accepted Heaven’s charge and founded an enterprise (i.e., established a dynasty for ruling China), none has abandoned their own language and turned instead to use the language of another nation. No nations that have abandoned their own language and taken up another nation’s language have prospered.” Two years later in 1636, he told to a group of princes and advisers that “what I fear is this: that the children and grandchildren of later generations will abandon

about the risk of assimilation to the culture of the conquered people, was about to come true. In order to prevent Manchus from disappearing, Qianlong led many reforms in the banners, mainly through a great emphasis on military skills among the Manchus and the Manchu language. As Crossley concludes, through the Qianlong reforms the previous policy of balancing military skills with civil skills was removed, and “the idea of bannermen as a liberally educated governing class was replaced by an increasingly specialized understanding of who Manchus were and what they were expected to do.”⁸⁰

The legal, economic, and political discrimination between the banner people and the civilians were thus perceived as discrimination between the Manchus as banner people and the Han as the civilians. This enabled the Manchus, who were all banner people, to be outside of Chinese civil jurisdiction. There was a ban on intermarriage between the banner people and the civilians; this was meant to be a ban on intermarriage between the Manchus and the Han people. Apart from this, the Manchus always held the top positions in bureaucracy. However, despite the insistence of the Manchu court on preserving the Manchu bannermen’s distinctiveness, Manchus faced a great degree of sinicization⁸¹ in terms of their life style. The Manchu monarchs had accepted Confucianism and they based the entire examination system on the Confucian canon. They patronised Chinese art and literature. Among the Manchu people, despite the efforts to revive Manchu ways and

the “Old Way”, neglect shooting and riding, and enter into the Chinese way.” Quoted in Elliot, *The Manchu Way*, p. 9.

⁸⁰ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, p.307.

⁸¹ Crossley, who admits that Qianlong period policies on Manchu self-identification was not successful and Manchus, through years, lost most of their self attributes, claims that the concept of “sinicization” to define that process is misleading. According to Crossley, “to be “sinicized” was to become “like the Chinese,” who were only those who had been previously sinicized. This is self-evidently counter historical in the sense that Chinese culture, the character of which is at issue in “sinicization,” has been an uninterrupted process of mutation due in part to the challenging and differentiating effects of aboriginal, border, and heterodox cultures. The barest implications of “sinicization” were that Chinese culture was somehow autochthonous, rigid and exclusive, and in contact with other worlds either obliterated or was obliterated.” Crossley, “Thinking about Ethnicity,” p.2.

the Manchu language, the Manchu language lost its attractiveness, and performance of military skills and hunting, which were privileged as the essential features of Manchu lifestyle, became nostalgic acts for remembering the old ways. As military technology developed, banner soldiers were gradually replaced by other armies and finally in 1865, most of the discriminations separating banners and civilians were removed through an act recognizing the right of Manchus “to register in Chinese village registers, to take the same examinations as Chinese, to enrol in the regular Chinese forces, to cultivate land and to engage in trade,”⁸² which had previously been forbidden. Such a certain degree of assimilation into Han culture did not necessarily mean that Manchus lost their consciousness of their distinctive ethnicity. This issue of the effect of relative assimilation on the self-perception of the Manchus is not very clear but as the developments of the nineteenth century make clear, there always remained an area of Han and Manchu distinctiveness that could resurface through a re-narration in a period of ethnic nationalism.

In the Ottoman Empire a similar kind of legal, economic, social, and political discrimination had also existed between the non-Muslims and the Muslims. Although non-Muslims were given a limited autonomy on certain issues, they were not equal to Muslims in society. This inequality emanated from the very basic principle of Islam determining the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. The non-Muslims, who accepted living within the jurisdiction of the Empire and those who were engaging in commerce with Muslims, were granted protection under Islamic law. However, as evident from this Islamic principle, they were not the members of the socio-political Islamic community of the Empire. Therefore, they did not belong to the dominant and superior *millet* of Islam, but they were the inhabitants of the Empire whose life and property were granted protection, and whose religious liberty

⁸² Wright, *The Last Stance of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862-1874*, p. 54.

was recognized. As a result of this different and subordinate positioning of non-Muslims in society, they were not appointed to top government posts, they had to pay taxes (*haraç* and *cizye*) which were different from the taxes Muslims paid, non-Muslim witnesses were not recognized in court cases against Muslims and non-Muslims were not allowed to wear Muslim dress and behave like Muslims. Although many other cases can be listed, the above-mentioned examples are sufficient to manifest the inferiority of non-Muslims in Ottoman society until the *Tanzimat* reforms which tried to create a new understanding of equal citizenship without concerning ones' ethnicity or religion.

Although in some cases the boundaries between the religions and ethnicities could be blurred, as a general argument, it can be said that in the Ottoman Empire there was no classification of the people according to the criterion of ethnicity, as it had existed in Qing China, especially by the Qianlong era, and neither of the ethnicities were privileged over the other. The only criterion that determined the hierarchical status within the society had been religion until the *Tanzimat* era of the mid-nineteenth century.

In this section, it is analysed that the emergence of an anti-Manchu feeling in the late nineteenth century was not a total creation but a product of a re-narration, re-interpretation of historical conditions of the past. Firstly, although a culturalist perception dominated the minds of the Chinese until the modern ages, as analysed in the previous pages, an embryonic form of ethnicism had emerged on certain occasions in the distant past. This traditional ethnicism was re-narrated by anti-Manchu nationalists as I will analyze in the following chapters. On the other hand, Qing rule of its various ethnicities had an effect on the emergence of anti-Manchu nationalism. Its role in preserving the distinction between the Manchu ethnicity and

Han ethnicity through the banner institution is an important factor that enabled the anti-Manchu revolutionaries led by Sun Yat-sen to claim that Manchus discriminated against the Han. For the Ottoman case, I have described the *millet* policy of the Ottomans. *Millet* system and the lack of discrimination in Ottoman society concerning the criterion of race is a very important element that will enable one to follow the experience of the Turkish nation-state building process.

PART I-Chapter II

PRE-REPUBLICAN ATTEMPTS TO CONSTRUCT A 'NATION'

The aim of this section is to understand the reactions, attitudes and projects of the oppositionist and constitutionalist intellectual elites of the respective empires in order to save the empires from dismemberment, which were under foreign and domestic threat. The focus is on their ideas concerning the question of 'nation' that was evaluated within the territorial limits of the Empire. Any solution that had the potential to undermine territorial integrity of the Empire was avoided by these constitutionalists. These were the intellectuals who introduced the understanding of 'territorial nationalism' and the concept of 'citizenship' to their countries' political literature.

One of the threats that troubled the intellectuals in the late nineteenth century was that of ethnic separatism. In the context of China, minority separatism did not reach to the extent it had in the Ottoman Empire. In China, the major force behind the nineteenth century rebellions was not ethnicity. Although population growth, which caused scarcity in resources and land, was the main cause of the rebellions, still in many of them "an intense community or sub-consciousness, sharpened by the heterogeneous origins of the bordering region populations and often reinforced by linguistic differences,"⁸³ could ignite the rebellion. In particular, the fight over scarce resources between different ethnic groups is very evident in the Muslim rebellion which started in 1855 in Yunnan. Han people who were living in Yunnan, the area of greatest Muslim concentration, exhausted their own gold and silver mines, and tried to oust Muslims from their own mines. And the struggle started between the two different ethnic groups of Yunnan who were also under a great tax burden, and extra

⁸³ J.K.Fairbank & D. Twitchett, eds.1978. *The Cambridge History of China: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, vol.10, part.1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 132.

levies were imposed by the central government.⁸⁴ Also, during the great peasant rebellion of Taiping, which was led by a mystic Christian convert, a very harsh anti-Manchu rhetoric developed.⁸⁵ During the Taiping rebellion, anti-Manchuism was not restricted to mere rhetoric. Taipings carried out terrible massacres against the Manchus in order to banish the “devils” from China’s face forever.⁸⁶ Despite the obvious fact that a kind of ethnic separatism existed in the minds of Chinese ethnicities,⁸⁷ nationalism in China, especially for the constitutionalists, was the means to strengthen the people of the Empire, uniting them with a political consciousness and preparing them for the struggle against the Western economic and military threat rather than an ideology to prevent ethnic separatism.

In the Ottoman context, ethnic separatism was much more apparent but not the only factor. Discontent was highest in the Balkan provinces which were very important for the economic survival of the Empire. The tax revenues collected from the Balkans contributed the lion’s share.⁸⁸ However, by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire began to lose these territories as a consequence of peasant rebellions led by nationalist leaders who had been educated in foreign countries and who had engaged in trade relations with European countries or other Slavic countries. It is important to note that in the Ottoman Empire, although the apparent cause of the peasant rebellions was separatism, most of the archive studies show that peasant discontent as a consequence of peasant exploitation by the

⁸⁴ J. Spence. 1990. *The Search for Modern China*. New York, p.187.

⁸⁵ For Taiping declarations concerning the Manchus, see Mark Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*, pp. 23-4

⁸⁶ See Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. 175.

⁸⁷ Ethnic minorities until the Qing dismemberment of 1911 did not pose a great separatist threat, but after 1911 these groups did not equate Qing to China (*Zhongguo*) and also as a consequence of the racist arguments of the revolutionaries, ethnic minorities began struggling for national independence.

⁸⁸ D. Quataert. 1994. “The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914,” in H. İnalcık and D. Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1600-1914*. Cambridge, p.847.

landholders in Balkan areas was the major reason.⁸⁹ But in the Ottoman context, the minority problem became a very complicated issue, since the Western powers intervened in the matter both by pressing the Ottoman government to reform its *millet* system by granting equal rights to its Christian subjects and also by supporting the rebels. The Greeks achieved to gain their independence in 1829 with the support of Russia, England and France.⁹⁰ Therefore, peasant discontent could be transformed into rebellions. The nationalist separatists inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution gave ideological shape to these rebellions, and they were protected and supported by the Western powers. To such a threatening situation, both the Ottoman state and the oppositionist intellectuals responded by inventing and proposing a new transcending identity that would comprise all the Ottoman people regardless of ethnicity and religion. It is important to note that *Tanzimat* reforms were aimed at deconstructing the *millet* boundaries in order to create a new Ottoman citizenship which comprised any Ottoman resident without applying ethnic and religious discrimination. The process started by the *Tanzimat* edict of 1839, which recognized “the equality before the law of all subjects, whatever their religion.”⁹¹

In China, the perception of foreign threat reached its highest point after the Sino-Japanese War, which ended by the Treaty of Shimonoseki in April 1895. China had to cede southern Manchuria and Taiwan to Japan and had to recognize the independence of Korea which became a protectorate. They were also given economic rights in the treaty ports.⁹² The event was embarrassing for China. Japan was a small country, which had always been under the “Chinese cultural area, the area most

⁸⁹ See H.İnalçık. 1992. *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*. İstanbul, and also P. Pinson. 1975. “Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period-The Revolts of Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850),” *The Journal of Middle East Studies* 2 . Durham.

⁹⁰ E.Zürcher. *Modern Türkiye'nin Doğuşu*. İletişim, pp.56-58.

⁹¹ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 53.

⁹² Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p.222.

influenced by the civilization of ancient China,” and also a country, which for brief periods had been in the “Sinic zone”. This zone, according to Chinese hierarchical foreign relations, included those “most nearby and culturally similar tributaries.”⁹³ But after the Sino-Japanese War it was soon realized that Japan had joined the ranks of imperialists and had entered into the world of competition. This created a feeling of urgency among Chinese intellectuals, who struggled for the strengthening of China.

MODERNIZATION AND THE REINVENTION OF TRADITION

Kang Youwei (1858-1927), an eminent Confucian scholar of Late Qing, who remained outside the imperial bureaucracy, tried to develop ideas within the Confucian tradition to re-strengthen the country. Kang was not a nationalist in an ethnic sense, but he was a culturalist, who redefined culturalism according to the needs of the age. He reinterpreted Confucianism in a manner that he legitimized many Western institutions and political ideals. Kang transformed Confucianism into a “rationale for comprehensive political reform,”⁹⁴ which would in the end strengthen the country, just like Japan. For Kang, Confucianism was misread after the death of Confucius, and those who misread it were responsible for China’s current weakness. He called for a return to the authentic Confucianism. For Liang Qichao, who was under Kang’s influence from 1895 to 1897, the elimination of the school of Mencius, which had developed the ideal of practical statesmanship, was also another factor for the degeneration of Confucianism.⁹⁵ Kang Youwei claimed

⁹³ J.K.Fairbank, ed. 1968. *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*. Cambridge, pp.1-2. The other two zones were the Inner Asian zone, consisting of tributary nomadic states of Inner Asia, and the outer zone that included those outer barbarians who were at a distance by land or sea. Sometimes Japan was included into the concept of outer zone.

⁹⁴ Anne Cheng. 1997. “Nationalism, Citizenship, and Old Text/New Text Controversy in Late Nineteenth century China,” in Fogel, J. and Peter Zarrow, eds. *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship 1890-1920*. East Gate Book, New York .

⁹⁵ Hao Chang.1971. *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp.74-5.

that 'practical statesmanship' was one of the core principles of Confucianism.⁹⁶ In 1897, Kang published a book named *A Study of Confucius as a Reformer*. In this book Kang developed the above-mentioned ideas, claiming that in the original texts of Confucius, before they had been adulterated, there had been a belief in change, development, and institutional reform.⁹⁷ What Kang understood from change was towards a development modeled by the Western political institutions, especially constitutionalism and Western technology.

As in the Ottoman Empire, in China, too, the adoption of Western technological and military skills began much earlier than the constitutionalist demands for European technological innovations and political institutions emerged. In the Ottoman Empire, reforms aimed at the development of military technology hastened the era of Selim III (1761-1808) and Mahmut II (1785-1839) by the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. In China, the most important self-strengthening effort, known as the *Tongzhi* Restoration (1862-1874), was introduced by some provincial officials and some grand councilors. The most important among them was Zeng Guofan, who was an eclectic Confucianist. These self-strengtheners proposed that Western learning could be made use of in issues concerning function (*yong*), and Chinese learning would continue to dominate those spheres concerning essence (*ti*); so Western learning would be permitted to enter China with its practical conclusions, such as military technology, in order to preserve the Chinese essence.⁹⁸ According to Levenson, what differentiated the reformers of the late nineteenth century from the *Tongzhi* self-strengtheners was their avoidance of making any distinction between *ti* and *yong*. Instead of saying like the *ti-yong*

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p.49

⁹⁷ J. D. Spence. 1982. *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution*. Penguin Books, p.33.

⁹⁸ For a detailed analysis of *Tongzhi* restoration, see Mary Wright, 1962. *The Last Stance of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862-1874*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

formulators that Chinese essence should be supplemented by Western values, which are related to function, the late nineteenth century reformers, especially Kang and Liang said that Western values could be found in authentic Confucianism.⁹⁹ Only if these authentic values that had been distorted and suppressed resurfaced again, could China regain its 'Golden Age' strength. Liang's analyses of democracy obviously manifested that effort. He believes that although China did not have democratic institutions, it had the idea of democracy. He quotes some passages from Mencius to prove his arguments. Mencius said,

When all those about you say, "This man deserves death," don't listen to them. When all your great officers say, "This man deserves death," don't listen to them. When all the people say, "This man deserves death," put him to death....You must act in this way in order to be the parent of the people.¹⁰⁰

Liang concludes that Western parliamentary democracy is in conformity with Mencian principles, but China had severed its own links.¹⁰¹

In the Ottoman Empire, the Young Ottoman thought could be argued to have the same reasoning. Young Ottomans were among the first intellectuals who utilized "media of mass communication" in order to criticize the existing political elite and publicize their own ideas. Their publications, mainly their newspapers, helped the creation of a modern public sphere. The Ottoman constitutionalists' mission of publicizing their ideas and criticisms through mass media was comparable to Liang Qichao's mission of creating a new consciousness among the Chinese through publishing newspapers. Both Liang Qichao and dominant figures of the Young

⁹⁹ J. R. Levenson. 1968. *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.77-8

¹⁰⁰ Translation of Mencius is from J. Legge. 1895. *The Chinese Classics 2*. Oxford, pp. 165-6, quoted in J. R. Levenson. 1959. *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p.42.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.44.

Ottomans, as Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi used a simplified form of the written language which was the major reason behind the emergence of a modern public sphere. Although oppositionist Young Ottomans were not a homogenous intellectual group, they shared a common anxiety about the gradual dismemberment of the Empire. They tried to fill the “ideological vacuum”¹⁰² created by the *Tanzimat* elite through a re-narration of Islam. According to Mardin, this ideological vacuum, which was a result of degrading Islam to the private sphere, was caused by an urgent need to save the country during the *Tanzimat* period. On the other hand, foreign involvement in Ottoman domestic issues with the pretext of minority nationalities sharpened the dilemma of the *Tanzimat* policy makers. This ideological vacuum resulted in a dual structure in the Empire in many spheres, such as education and legal system.

The Young Ottomans, just like Kang Youwei and his disciple Liang Qichao did for Confucianism, tried to re-inject Islam into the Ottoman political and social life. However, as in China, the Young Ottomans’ interpretation of Islam deviated from classical interpretations of Islam. What the Young Ottomans did was a selective re-narration of Islam. They were eclectic in their readings. They could depend on various sources in order to legitimize their ideas. However, they were very much influenced by the *Selefi* School of their time. The *Selefis* were purists who wanted to return to the original sources. As the Confucian constitutionalists had the idea of a golden age, *Selefis*, just like all other Muslims, had the idea of *asr-ı saadet* (the age of happiness and prosperity). They were modernist Islamists¹⁰³ who derived their legitimacy for the modern requirements from the primary sources. Their reasoning in

¹⁰² Ş.Mardin. 2000. *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas*. Syracuse University Press, p. 118.

¹⁰³ For a discussion on the emergence of Islamism, see Mümtazer Türköne. 1994. *Siyasi İdeoloji Olarak İslamcılığın Doğuşu*, İstanbul: İletişim.

their application to the original and primary sources is a result of a greater chance of a more flexible reading. When we observe that classical Islam of the Middle Ages is another form of interpretation that was suitable for its own ages, Islamists' claim of interpreting original sources is reasonable because it would be easier for them to interpret these sources according to the needs of the modern age as they perceived them to be. It would also be more legitimate to blame those unacceptable features prevalent in Islamic countries and those accepted as embodied in Islam by claiming that they are not present in original Islam, and they only emerged as a degenerated interpretation of Islam. The Young Ottomans blamed the Mongols for the ills of the Ottoman Empire, especially for the despotic character of Ottoman polity and claimed that many Mongol institutions that were adopted by the Ottomans, such as the right of the sultan to issue laws, caused degeneration of Islam in the Empire.¹⁰⁴ Now, the Young Ottomans had the tools to re-narrate Islam in accordance with the European political products of the Enlightenment. They re-interpreted many Islamic concepts that they derived from various sources, such as *meşveret*, *şura*, *biat*. They interpreted *meşveret* in such a way that they equated it with democracy. *Şura* was equated with parliament; and the requirement of the approval of the ruler by the *ehl-i hallu akd* was interpreted to include all people. Therefore, *ehl-i hallu akd* turned out to be the modern public sphere. It is not totally unreasonable for the Young Ottomans to use these concepts against despotic Islamic regimes. After the death of the Prophet, a *şura* gathered for the election of *Halife*, who would succeed the Prophet, and the method of *meşveret* was applied. They argued that there are also verses in Quran¹⁰⁵ which justified them. However, what matters is that these non-Western modernizing elites, who tried to formulate a synthesis of Western and Eastern

¹⁰⁴ See Mardin, *The Genesis*, p.104.

¹⁰⁵ See Quran 3:159 and 2:38.

thought, then went further by claiming that those Western institutions existed in the original forms of their own traditions. Namık Kemal and Suavi even insisted that early Islamic polity was a form of republic; and democracy was already inherent in Islam.¹⁰⁶ Mardin states that there had always been an inconsistency in the Young Ottoman thought that was caused by the impossibility of the selection of the best European political institutions and grafting them on to the Islamic base itself. This was because they failed to see that atomistic individualism was behind these political institutions, and they limited their thought to the state level. However, he argues that for the Young Ottomans this inconsistency did not matter, since the main aim was to save the state.¹⁰⁷

As explained in a comparative perspective, both the Chinese and Ottoman reformists of the late nineteenth century left the previous period's perception of reform, which was limited to the military and technological matters. Now the reformers were struggling to reform their countries according to Western political ideals, such as constitutional democracy. However, they were sensitive on the issue of legitimizing their arguments by tradition. The tradition was re-invented by the reformists who were dedicated to saving their countries by strengthening them through a new kind of politics, so as to find their liberal ideals within tradition itself. The tradition they had embraced was claimed to be the authentic one, which was based on the original texts before they had been deformed in the following centuries. This was the way that the reformists tackled with the issue of tradition so as to make it serve the ideal of strengthening. In the following chapters, the thought of Sun Yat-sen and Mustafa Kemal will be dealt on the issues of tradition and modernity. How

¹⁰⁶ See Mardin, *The Genesis*.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp.398-408

they conceived the role of tradition when they struggled to strengthen their respective countries?

CONSTITUTIONALIST REFORMULATION OF NATION

A very important component of constitutionalist thought in both countries was their redefinition of 'people', in which re-narrated tradition and traditional identifications played a great role. In an age of modern nation-states, the constitutionalist monarchists in China redefined China on the basis of culturalism which is one of the historical narratives discussed before. For Duara, this is an inheritance of a historical narrative of identity and re-reading of it according to the conditions of the day. This was a re-narration of culturalism because Kang "was influenced by modern ideas."¹⁰⁸ As Duara mentions, "all good nationalisms have a transnational vision,"¹⁰⁹ and Kang's culturalism had such a transnational component. Kang and Liang's preoccupation with the strengthening of China, and their belief in the need for wealth and power for China should not lead us to think that they are modern nationalists. Indeed, Kang had an idea of human progress, composed of three stages, and this idea was accepted by Liang. He evaluated his idea in his book *Da Tong Shu* (The Book of Great Unity).¹¹⁰ This was another provocative reading of *Chunqiu* because the idea of progress, as Pusey shows, was not exactly in the Annals, but in a commentary of the *Kung-yang* commentary of the Annals. Because of this ingenious and provocative reading, it is said that Kang was very much influenced by the Enlightenment idea of progress.¹¹¹ But it should be borne in mind that Kang's idea of *Da tong*, which became a slogan among different segments of Chinese

¹⁰⁸ P. Duara. 1995. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 74.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹⁰ See Kang Youwei. 1958. *Ta T'ung Shu: The One World Philosophy of Kang Yu-wei*. L.G. Thompson, trans. London: George Allan.

¹¹¹ James Reeve Pusey. 1983. *China and Charles Darwin*. Harvard University Press, pp. 27-8.

intellectuals, was indeed based on indigenous sources, despite the fact that such progressivist ideas could be found not in the dominant texts, but in the supplementary texts or in the interpretations of the Classics. According to the idea of *Da Tong*, the stages the humans were supposed to pass through were 'The Age of Disorder', 'The Age of Approaching Peace', and the 'Age of Universal Peace', in which all the barriers separating human beings, such as nation, race, and family would disappear. Kang believed that in the 'Age of Universal Peace', the ideal of *jen* (humanity) would prevail. The ideal of *jen* was the Confucian ideal.¹¹² Liang once reminded his teacher that "their preoccupation with a political campaign should not lead them to forget that their ultimate goal is the universalistic ideal of spreading Confucian moral-spiritual teachings and saving the world, rather than the "particularistic" political goal of merely protecting China, the nation."¹¹³ And for Kang, republican democracy could be the form of government during the 'Age of Universal Peace'. While absolute monarchy was the ideal government of the 'Age of Disorder', constitutional monarchy was suitable for the 'Age of Approaching Peace'. The nation state could only be the form of the 'Age of Approaching Peace', but such a nation-state would not be based on 'race' but on 'culture' in China.

The Young Ottomans had a comparable idea of progress. However, their reading of progress did not have a universalistic vision as it did in China. Although the Young Ottoman perception of progress was nurtured by the Enlightenment ideology of progress, it was mostly limited to the aspiration to catch up with Western development. Namık Kemal, influenced by the Enlightenment idea of progress, after his sojourn in Europe, believed that "progress was part of the dynamic move of every

¹¹² Hao Chang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao*, p.7.

¹¹³ Hao Chang, 1987. *Chinese Intellectuals in Crises: Search for Order and Meaning, 1890-1911*. Berkeley, p.10.

society and reflected the natural ability of individuals to progress.”¹¹⁴ For Namık Kemal “progress was irreversible,”¹¹⁵ but his idea of progress was limited to material progress and to a good and just government. The problem whether human progress will result in a universal peace, as in Kang’s model where all boundaries between ethnicities, classes, and sexes would disappear, was not questioned by either Namık Kemal or other members of the Young Ottomans. Despite the lack of such a universalism in their thought, the Young Ottomans, too, had a transnational component in their understanding of nationalism. This was pan-Islamism,¹¹⁶ which emerged as a consequence of an awareness of non-Ottoman Muslims, who were under non-Muslim political and economic threat.¹¹⁷ However, during the period of the Young Ottomans (which is the middle of nineteenth century), an ideology that would reintegrate the populations of the Empire was needed, and the Young Ottomans proposed a new relationship between state and subject, and between Muslim *millet* and non-Muslim *millets* similar to State Ottomanism. As State Ottomanism, theirs was based on an understanding of equal citizenship. Every Ottoman subject would become a citizen of the Ottoman nation. However, Namık Kemal criticized State Ottomanism because it was a product of European intervention.¹¹⁸ As a result of European interventions, the application of the principle

¹¹⁴ Mardin, *The Genesis*, p. 320.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.320.

¹¹⁶ Although pan-Islamism is depicted here as a transnational ideology, it should be kept in mind that if observed from the other side of the coin, it is also a kind of nationalism, which is an attempt to invent a modern Islamic nation from the traditional community of *Ümmet* (the Islamic community). Therefore, here, I don’t propose that pan-Islamism of the period is a universal ideology, it is only a more comprising aspect of the Young Ottoman Ottomanism. It is aimed to create a new identity, which transcends ethnicism and territorial nationalism but is lacking from the point of Kang’s universalism because it limits itself only with the Muslims.

¹¹⁷ Türköne, *İslamcılığın Doğuşu*, pp.145-95

¹¹⁸ While there are discussions on the factor of foreign pressure on the *Tanzimat* reforms, most of the scholars agree on the fact that *Islahat Fermanı* is a consequence of foreign intervention and demand. Because of the factor of foreign intervention, it caused a dilemma in the Ottoman society. While it was an attempt to create an equal Ottoman citizenship, some articles of the *Ferman* assured the preservation and re-organization of the existing *millet* system. See R. Davison. 1963. *Reform in the Ottoman Empire (1856-1876)*. Princeton University Press, p. 114.

of equality had always worked to the benefit of non-Muslims and to the detriment of Muslims. He also believed that such an effort to create an equal Ottoman citizenship, dictated from above, would fail without a constitutional assembly and a unified education because only this institution could guarantee the allegiance of non-Muslims.¹¹⁹ For Kemal, State Ottomanism did not have an ethical basis. This moral vacuum was the reason behind the failure to re-establish the Ottoman state as a just and socially harmonious one. Dispensation of justice that would guarantee social harmony and the principle that would refill the ethical vacuum would be realized by the application of sharia, which in Kemal's interpretation included "sovereignty of the people, representation, constitutionalism, egalitarianism, individual freedom and division, and separation of powers among the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government."¹²⁰

In the thought of post-*Tanzimat* intellectuals, territorial Ottomanism went hand in hand with the idea of *İttihad-ı İslam* (Unity of Islam). The co-existence of these two ideologies inevitably created a dilemma. However, many intellectuals who were simultaneously favoring Ottomanism and Islamism ignored that inconsistency because Ottoman intellectuals, in contrast to Kang Youwei, who had developed an optimistic universalistic philosophy, preferred to react and find solutions to the existing problems of the Muslims. In that sense, pan-Islamism was a means developed by many Muslim intellectuals and policy-makers in order to face the strong pan-Slavist and pan-German movements of that day. Pan-Islamism could also rescue the Ottoman Empire from its inferior position by uniting all Muslims against the West as a power. And finally, after the Balkan wars of the early twentieth century, pan-Islamism would gain a new momentum as a result of the loss of most of

¹¹⁹ J. G. Rahme. 1999. "Namık Kemal's Constitutional Ottomanism and Non-Muslims," in *Islam and Christian Relations* 10/1, p.34.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 32.

the non-Muslim territories of the Empire. Now, the Ottoman Empire was a mostly Muslim populated empire, and to promote a pan-Islamist ideology would be no longer advantageous and pragmatic for many intellectuals.

THE SOCIAL DARWINIST DISCOURSE AND ANTI-IMPERIALISM

The Confucian universalist rhetoric and the perception of culture as the unit of comparison between the West and China were totally abandoned, especially after the failure of the 'Hundred Days' Reforms in 1898 initiated by the reform minded Emperor Guangxu based on the proposals of Kang as a consequence of the *coup d'état*, led by the Empress Dowager Cixi. Instead, a Social Darwinist belief in progress began to dominate the minds of Chinese intellectuals. This progress would be achieved as a consequence of struggle, a competition between nation-states. According to Levenson, this was a consequence of the alienation of Chinese intellectuals from tradition. By replacing the unit of culture with the unit of nation they dispensed with the dilemma, which was attempted to be solved by reformists by justifying the Chinese tradition in its relation to European philosophy and institutions.¹²¹ As the unit of culture was dispensed with, they did not have the burden of turning to tradition as a place of justification. Now, the problem was survival in the war of races. The aim was not to preserve the Chinese culture but the Chinese race which had come to the edge of extinction; and the means of survival would not be derived from tradition.

Liang Qichao, inspired by Yen Fu, who was the first Social Darwinist in China, was the leading figure who introduced Social Darwinist discourse to China. He was the intellectual who had turned his back on Confucianism, and until 1915 he never attempted to legitimize his thought by arguments derived from Confucianism. Despite his rejection of an anti-Manchu attitude, he was among those who equipped

¹²¹ See Levenson, *Confucian China*, p.98.

the anti-Manchus with racist arguments. Liang Qichao's abrupt change in opinion was a consequence of China's miserable conditions both in the domestic and international arena.¹²² Although the solutions developed by Ottoman intellectuals and the Chinese ones were very different, both were motivated by an urgent need to save their countries. That is why while Liang abandoned his universalism as defined in Kang's thought, Namık Kemal "did not believe in an internationalism which consisted in loving humanity as a whole at a time when nations were in arms and one's fatherland was in danger."¹²³

When Liang perceived the world stage as an arena of Social Darwinist struggle, he not only abandoned the universalist arguments narrated by Kang Youwei but also historical Sino-centrism. The Sino-centric view had led the Chinese to develop an idea of *tien xia* (all under heaven, universe) but not a *guo* (nation/country/state). The Chinese viewed the world as composed of themselves and their appendages, so they did not develop any idea of struggling with the foreign powers. This was also the existing attitude against the Western imperialists when they first started to enter the Chinese sphere. The Chinese traditional elite thought them as the tribute giving barbarians of the past. If they were allowed peacefully to conduct commerce with China, they were not thought to pose a greater threat. And even as in the past, if they had managed to conquer China, they would be absorbed into the Chinese cultural ecumene through assimilation. Therefore, even if China was politically threatened, China would never face a threat in the sphere of 'culture'. According to Liang, this perception of China regarding foreigners that was based on harmony and not struggle was one of the most important ills of China. These were also ideas, which prevented the Chinese from being patriotic. He says, "China has for

¹²² The effect of Hundred Days Reforms in domestic sphere and the shock of Sino-Japanese war are mentioned in the paper as a turning point in the ideas of the nationalists.

¹²³ Mardin, *The Genesis*, p. 330.

four thousand years remained in an uninterrupted isolation. When our people refer to the land, they call it the universe (*tien xia*) rather than a nation (*guo*). With no conception of a nation, how can one talk about patriotic passions.”¹²⁴ The Chinese should be awakened to the fact that world was fragmented, and other important peoples were living around them.¹²⁵ Besides Liang’s criticism of the Sino-centric world order, he criticized any commitment to a universalism in the future foreseen by Kang, on the ground that “today is a crucial time for advancing nationalism, without which no nation-state can be built,”¹²⁶ and an ideal of universal community was a hindrance to the development of China as a nation-state.¹²⁷

Liang Qichao’s shift from Confucianist universalism to Social Darwinism should be understood in the context of struggle against imperialism, and as a consequence of the disapproval aroused by the Sino-Japanese war and reform movement. Both projects were designed to strengthen China in its struggle against the West and to achieve Western strength. While in his first phase, this burden remained on the monarchy through reforming its institutions as real Confucius did in his own time, in the second phase of Liang’s thinking the burden was on the nation. But the nation’s power in the imperialist competition was very much linked to its ‘awakening’ as a nation in the form of *xinmin* (new citizen). New Citizen was the name of the journal; Liang started to publish in his exile years in Japan until 1903. In his writings Liang tried to “deploy” the idea of *guomin* (national people). He blamed the Chinese people for not having a national consciousness. He had written in 1899 that:

¹²⁴ Tang, Xiaobing. 1996. *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.39.

¹²⁵ Also see Levenson, *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and the Mind of Modern China*, pp.111-113. Here Liang compares China and Rome by quoting from Gibbons about why Romans did not have patriotism. According to Gibbon, this was because the allegiance of the Romans was towards the Roman culture instead of Roman nation.

¹²⁶ Tang, *Global Space*, p.76.

¹²⁷ Chang, *Liang Ch’i Ch’ao*, p.157.

The Chinese people do not even know there is such a thing as a national people (*guomin*). After several thousand years, there have been the two words *guo jia*¹²⁸ (state, family), but I have never heard the two words *guo min* (state, people) ever uttered.... *Guojia* is when one family (*jia*) owns the state (*guo*) as private property.... *Guomin* connotes when the state (*guo*) belongs to the people (*min*) as public property.... This *guomin* is then called a national people.¹²⁹

In this period Liang, in contrast to Yen Fu, who proposed reforms imposed from above as the means to gain the people's loyalty and patriotism, "deployed the term *guomin* in a sense that was not conterminous with either *guojia* (state) and *minzu* (ethnos)."¹³⁰ In this period Liang proposed a bottom up revolutionary discourse. It was in this period that he ideologically had a tendency towards the revolutionaries because of their appeal to the people. But even in this period he preserved his cautious attitude towards revolution and only in 1903 after his visit to the United States he became convinced that both a bottom-up nationalism and revolution was not suitable for the present China. Liang compared American society with China, and he was disappointed because the Chinese immigrants were more like "tribesmen than responsible members of a civil society."¹³¹ He concluded that the Americans had long possessed autonomous institutions and political consciousness.¹³² Those were the virtues the Chinese lacked, and they would not be able to gain them through a revolution that occurred in a night. Liang returned to his statism, which would bring order and unity to the country. He abandoned his

¹²⁸ It is important to note that the meaning attributed to *guojia* as the state-family is an interpretation of Liang Qichao. *Guojia* does not necessarily mean 'state' when it is owned by a family. In modern Chinese, nation-states are also called *guojia*.

¹²⁹ Quoted in R. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, pp.67-8.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p.119.

¹³¹ Tang, *Global Space*, p.140.

¹³² *Ibid*, pp. 131-2.

revolutionary ideas based on a popular movement and turned his face towards a German style constitutional monarchy.¹³³

According to the reading of Rebecca Karl, Liang's changing position towards statism was also a consequence of Liang's observations of the Boer and Filipino struggles and his anxiety about the failure of "the Filipino and Boer struggles as exemplars of a people-centered modernity and nationalism."¹³⁴ Liang Qichao insisted that the Boer struggle against the British was unsuccessful because the Boers lacked a strong state; so that state becomes the most important protector of the nation.¹³⁵ Here, we see Liang's new view on the relationship between citizen and state. Liang not only submits sovereignty to the hands of state but also makes it the "mediator of *minzu* and *guomin*."¹³⁶ It should be held in mind that in neither of his phases did Liang imagine *guomin* as composed of one *minzu*. In contrast to revolutionaries, reformist Liang favored a 'broad nationalism', believing that anti-Manchuism was a sheer propaganda in order to mobilize the masses. He accused revolutionaries of 'narrow nationalism' and believed that revolutionaries, by burdening the Manchus with all the ills of China, escaped from the fact that the problem was a 3000 years lasting old tradition. So in Liang's thought 'nation' is not defined in its relation to ethnicity but in its relation to state.

Liang Qichao, in an age of anti-Manchuism, developed arguments criticizing the racist attitude taken by the revolutionaries in their plan for the future China. However, it is the same Liang Qichao who occasionally referred to Darwinist concepts such as the 'inferior races' and the 'superior races'. It was Liang Qichao who introduced the concept of 'historical' and 'ahistorical' races to China and

¹³³ Chang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao*, pp. 255-7.

¹³⁴ Karl, *Staging the World*, p.144.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p.139.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p.142.

divided the world into five races, namely the whites, yellows, blacks, reds, and browns. The 'ahistorical races' were the black, the red, and the brown. These 'ahistorical races' were not able to form cohesive groups and were soon subjugated by others. 'Historical races', the yellow and the white race, were able to form cohesive groups, and they played important roles in human history. He also divided 'historical races' into two categories, the 'world historical races' which were capable of expanding their original territories, and the 'non-world historical races' which did not have this capacity. Only the whites could be considered a world 'historical race'. It resulted from the inescapable working of the law of evolution.¹³⁷

The above-mentioned dilemma seems to be caused by Liang's interest in Social Darwinism as a means rather than an ideology. Although his thought had hints of Darwinian racism, he was not so much interested in who the inferior was, or who the superior was. What interested him was China's immediate strengthening to resist Western colonialism because he had a firm belief in the Darwinian Theory of the 'survival of the fittest'. He insisted that colonialism could be visible or invisible, and only the conscious nations could resist invisible colonialism, which was conducted by commerce, by having advisors within the government, by building roads, by training one's country's soldiers.¹³⁸

Rebecca Karl is among the scholars who derived a very important component of anti-imperialist discourse from Liang's permanently transforming, sometimes self-contradictory writings. It is important to note that Liang, besides being a traditionally educated Confucian scholar, was among the first journalists of China. But these abundant journal writings also present us with many different positioning of him, sometimes self-contradictory. Also, we are able to observe the day-to-day

¹³⁷ Chang, *Liang Ch'i-Cha'o*, p.160.

¹³⁸ Karl, *Staging the World*, p. 72.

transformations in his ideas. Therefore, although some focus on Liang's racism,¹³⁹ some scholars such as Rebecca Karl were able to resurface another aspect of Liang's thought.

Karl argues that in the late imperial period, among the reformer and the revolutionary circles the concept of race was joined with a "radical understanding of the global historical situation."¹⁴⁰ This is because of the "simultaneous growth of nationalism and a global historical logic in China."¹⁴¹ This emergence of global consciousness and an awareness of an unstable global order among Chinese nationalists helps one to interpret Chinese nationalism not as a modular form of Western nationalisms that selects from European philosophy and political institutions, which are suitable for their own conditions, but as a movement that simultaneously accepts and denies the epistemic and moral sovereignty of the West.¹⁴² This enables one not to reduce non-Western nationalists to "perpetual consumers of modernity"¹⁴³ with nothing remaining to them to 'imagine'. Their thinking, despite the fact that it is derived from 'universalist' assumptions of enlightenment thinking, becomes a struggle not "simply *with* or *against* modernity but *of* modernity."¹⁴⁴ When Darwinist discourse, which is adopted from Western thought, is re-considered within the context of Chinese intellectuals' relation to globality, it is observed that "race often referred not to phenotypical similarities, nor necessarily to historical cultural borrowings, but initially, more commonly and radically, to China's perceived connections to those peoples anywhere in the world

¹³⁹ F. Dikötter. 1992. *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*. Stanford.

¹⁴⁰ Rebecca E. Karl. 1998. "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," in *American Historical Review* 103/4, p. 1101.

¹⁴¹ Karl, *Staging the World*, p.8.

¹⁴² P. Chatterjee, 1996. *Milliyetçi Düşünce ve Sömürge Dünyası*. İstanbul: İletişim, p.33.

¹⁴³ P. Chatterjee. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.5.

¹⁴⁴ Karl, *Staging the World*, pp. 5-6.

who were struggling against various kinds of oppressions.”¹⁴⁵ This establishment of a commonality between the other non-Western oppressed and threatened people of the world is what makes China not only national but also worldly at the same time.¹⁴⁶

It was because of this shared threat of economic subordination and political annihilation in Liang’s writings that the boundaries of races could be frequently reassigned. The Filipinos and Vietnamese, who were generally classified as brown race, could turn out to be real yellows during their struggle against the imperialists. The Vietnamese “would fight the French devils until not one single hirsute, ash-eyed white man remained in their country” and the Filipinos “were portrayed as the spearhead of the yellow race’s fight against the white race during their struggle against the United States in 1898.”¹⁴⁷

On many other occasions this commonality of anti-Western struggle and the threat of being a lost country (*wangguo*) would be expressed by the term *tongzhong* (same type/race), which came to be used in a very inclusive way. To exemplify, it is observed that in the writings of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, “a geographical and topological *tongzhong* relationship” was constructed between China and Turkey as a “product of global modern space, in which hitherto separated places and peoples could be linked in new configurations.”¹⁴⁸ Like China, Turkey was the other ‘sick man of the East’, and for their survival, both of them required an immediate constitution of a constitutional monarchy. Kang, in his treatise submitted to the emperor in 1898, wrote that “Turkey was not only in its internal structure most

¹⁴⁵ Karl, “*Creating Asia*,” p. 1101.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.1099.

¹⁴⁷ Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race*, pp.84-5.

¹⁴⁸ R. Karl.2000. “Staging the World in Late-Qing China: Globe, Nation, and Race in a 1904 Beijing Opera,” *Identities*, vol.6(4), pp. 568-7.

similar to China being an old-style empire but it was also, in its global positioning, of “the same kind” as China (*er wu tongzhong ye*).¹⁴⁹

During the nineteenth century, among Ottoman intellectuals, a proposal for an ethnicity-based nation is not observable. Such an ideology would undermine the very bases of the multi-cultural empire. Even Ali Suavi, who was depicted as the predecessor of the Turkists “because of his repeated use of the term ‘Turk’ and because of the attention he gave to the Central Asiatic problem,”¹⁵⁰ was more interested in the unification of Muslims. He was not interested in ethnic nationalism and attributed it to the West, but the East had the ideal of *Müslümanlık* (being Muslim). Muslims, as the people of same kind, should gather in order not to be annihilated. In his words,

Do our ministers realize that the question of nationalities (*kavmiyet*) is one special to Europeans and that we do not have a nationalities problem? Nationality questions would cause our ruin. To gather Moslems together could at most be a religious question but not a question of national origin.¹⁵¹

Social Darwinism would enter the circles of Ottoman intelligencia during the Young Turk movement as a consequence of the new positivist knowledge that dominated the *Mekteb-i Tıbbiye* (The School of Medicine). A very important proponent of positivism, biological materialism, and Social Darwinism was Doctor Abdullah Cevdet, who was also an important member of the Young Turk movement. He and his colleagues, much influenced by Le Bon, thought that social events could be explained and analyzed by using ‘positive science’ methods. Without ignoring the role of morality in society, they struggled to replace religion as the criterion of moral

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.568.

¹⁵⁰ Mardin, *The Genesis*, pp.371-2.

¹⁵¹ Quoted in *ibid*, p.372.

values by scientific materialism. However, as they struggled for scientific materialism, they did not forget to legitimize their arguments by turning to the original sources of Islam. Islam, for the second time, but this time much less persuasive, appeared as a legitimizer of contemporary Western knowledge.¹⁵²

Although Social Darwinism occupied a very important place in the Young Turk mind, they did not apply it as a means to legitimize their own racist argument. Although Turkism began to trouble the minds of Ottoman intellectuals, still the multi-ethnic structure of the Ottoman Empire did not allow intellectuals to follow a Turkist and racist ideology at the beginning of the twentieth century. Rather the Social Darwinists of the Ottoman Empire used Social Darwinism in order to legitimize an elite rule, or as an analysis to explain why the dynasty was corrupted. Still devoted to Ottomanism, Abdullah Cevdet never accepted Le Bon's stationary classification of races.¹⁵³ He never recognized one among the Ottoman ethnic groups as the superior one. He was sensitive about preserving the balance, and he proposed the preservation of the cultures of these different ethnic groups. However, as a supra-ethnic consciousness, these different communities would gather within the comprising identity of *Osmanlılık* (Ottoman nation).¹⁵⁴ The factor that would assure Ottoman unity was the 'interest of the Ottoman nations' rather than a unifying Ottoman sultan. Cevdet argued that those Ottoman nations, which could gain independence, could easily be swallowed by imperialist powers.¹⁵⁵ For the first time, Ottomanism as a means to save the Ottoman territory from Western imperialists and

¹⁵² See Şükrü Hanioglu.1981. *Bir Siyasi Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*. Üçdal, pp. 129-158.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* p.403.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p.213. When reading such arguments of Cevdet, we should keep in mind that he was a proponent of *adem-i merkeziyet* (decentralization) and a supporter of Prince Sabahattin.

¹⁵⁵ See, Hanioglu, *Doktor Abdullah Cevdet*, pp. 213-5.

the separatist Ottoman nations became an ideology that would also guarantee the destiny of all Ottoman nations.

Approximately within the same period, Liang wrote in 1901 that in the modern period, “China in the world,” would gather with the other Asian peoples for struggle and competition with the West. At the same time, Ottomanism was gaining a new meaning as a unifying and also as an anti-imperialist discourse. Those who did not believe that non-Muslims would not unify with Muslims against the non-Muslim Western powers argued that Islamism had a bigger chance as a unifying ideology, and so as an ideology against the imperialist non-Muslim West.

Although in China, Liang Qichao’s usage of the concept of race differed in a different context, his occasional emphasis of sheer Darwinist racism began to be used by the revolutionary anti-Manchus. As the revolutionaries of China, the Ottoman revolutionaries turned their back on both the idea of pan-Islamism and Ottomanism. The following chapter analyses the revolutionary thinking.

In this chapter, I have analyzed the constitutionalist formulations for saving China by re-inventing the tradition through an analysis of Kang Youwei and the emergence of the perception of ‘nation’ in China by following the thought of Liang Qichao. On the other hand, I tried to glance at the thought of Ottoman constitutionalists in terms of the questions of tradition, modernity, and ‘nation’. In the following chapters, I will analyze the continuing experience of the respective empires in terms of modern nation-building through the thoughts of Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen. The analysis of the reformists thought will enable us to follow the historical continuity and break during the revolutionary era in both China and Turkey. Revolutionary conceptualizations of race, nation, modernity and their

struggle against the Western imperialists will be examined in a comparative perspective.

PART II

NATION-BUILDING IN TURKEY

The Young Turk Revolution, which opened up a new constitutionalist period in July 1908, was a new effort to save the Ottoman Empire with the aim of preserving its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural structure. The Young Turks, most of whom were devoted to a Turkist approach that was nurtured by their belief in Social Darwinism as observed in the thought of Abdullah Cevdet, revived the motto of “liberty, equality, and fraternity” when they acquired the political power in 1908 by putting an end to the three-decade lasting authoritarian Hamidian regime. The reason behind their embracement of Ottomanist discourse and policy of the nineteenth century *Tanzimat* era, despite their intellectual conviction of Turkism, was the political necessity of the era. It was impossible to govern an empire composed of a variety of different ethnic and religious groups by depending on a purely Turkist discourse. Ottomanism would not only serve to prevent the disintegration of the Empire, but it would also be the tool against imperialist aggression, which made use of the discontent among the non-Muslim elements of the Empire.¹⁵⁶

Although Ottomanism was the dominant ideology during the Second Constitutionalist period, it is essential to note that Ottomanism, Turkism, pan-Turkism, and pan-Islamism were used interchangeably as policies of integration. Different policies and discourses were adopted according to the different problems faced. To exemplify, while the CUP officers punished the Muslims in the Balkans when they assaulted Christians verbally and physically to manifest their Ottomanist stance, they could come to terms with the leading figures of the Middle Eastern

¹⁵⁶ See M. Şükrü Hanioglu. 2001. *Preparation for a Revolution*. Oxford.

regions by accepting the demands of the local religious elites for application of Sharia to the non-Muslims living in their regions.¹⁵⁷

Despite the Ottomanist efforts of the Young Turks and the Ottomanist policies of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) governments, they were continuously accused of applying assimilationist and Turkifying policies. The criterion of this accusation was concentrated on the problem of language, and the denial of the demands of non-Muslim minorities and their attempts to organize.¹⁵⁸ In essence, all these policies, claimed to be an attempt to Turkify the other ethnic groups, emerged from the sensitivity of CUP about centralizing the Empire through constructing a new identity of secular Ottoman citizenship. CUP governments recognized the former *millet*s of the Empire not as political but as cultural entities.¹⁵⁹ This was necessary to shift the political loyalty of the non-Muslims from their *millet*s towards the Ottomanist state. On the other hand, although the preservation of Ottoman Turkish as the state language in all public and legal matters, and the imposition of Turkish as the language of middle and higher education was a policy towards centralization, it met with great reaction from non-Turkish communities of the Empire.¹⁶⁰

Ottomanism remained in power until the disaster of the First World War, although most of the non-Muslim regions were lost in the Balkan wars in 1912-1913. However, the post-Balkan war period of Ottomanism (after 1913) was transformed into a new shape by a re-emphasis on Islam, which was a strong power to hold the multi-ethnic Muslim elements of the Empire intact. Turkist and pan-Turkist views accompanied this re-defined Ottomanism, which emphasized Islam as a criterion to

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 298.

¹⁵⁸ Hasan Kayalı. 1998. *Jön Türkler ve Araplar: Osmanlılık, Erken Arap Milliyetçiliği ve İslamcılık (1908-1918)*. Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, p.102 and p. 92.

¹⁵⁹ Niyazi Berkes. 1998. *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. London: Hurst, pp.325-6

¹⁶⁰ Kayalı, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 102-3.

gain the loyalty of the Arabic population.¹⁶¹ As Zürcher states, ideological currents during the Young Turk era “were not mutually exclusive either; many Young Turks rationally supported the idea of Ottomanism, were emotionally attached to a romantic pan-Turkish nationalism and were devout Muslims at the same time.”¹⁶² As mentioned, this ideological shift was caused by disastrous outcome of the Balkan wars. The Ottoman Empire lost more than one third of its territory and one fifth of its population. “These losses, substantial by themselves, were all the more important because Rumelia was involved. For centuries Rumelia had been the heart of the Empire, its provinces being by far the most advanced and the most productive.... Rumelia had given the Empire its multi-national character.”¹⁶³ Now Rumelia was lost and Anatolia replaced it as the heartland of the Empire. The population of the Empire was composed mostly of Anatolian Muslims and the Muslims of the Arabic lands of the Empire. Consequently, these changes had a deep influence on the ideology of the Young Turks. They vacillated between Ottomanism, which mainly borrowed the criteria of Islamism and pan-Turkism, which was accompanied with a totally new discourse of Turkism with an emphasis on Anatolia.

In the post-Balkan war era newly emerging pan-Turkist discourse was widely disseminated by the Turkic migrants to the Empire from Russia. They dispersed the belief that Ottomanism was an illusion, and the only way to compensate the lost lands of the Empire was to seek the union of the Turkic people of the Central Asia and Ottoman territory. They insisted that this was a very possible project, since only Russia would oppose the unification of the Turkic people under one flag.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 236.

¹⁶² E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 133.

¹⁶³ Feroz Ahmed. 1969. *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics 1908-1914*. Oxford, pp. 152-3.

Not all Turkist were also pan-Turkists. There was another current of Turkism, which regarded Anatolia as the Turkish homeland. The conditions of the post-Balkan war era, which shifted the heartland from Rumelia to Anatolia, became more determining as the secessionist movements began to dominate the minds of the Arabic population of the Empire. It should be noted that before 1916, both Turkism and pan-Turkism remained more or less limited to cultural and literary circles¹⁶⁴ as an ideal to be achieved in order to strengthen the Empire. Only when the Arab lands were lost as a consequence of the First World War, the Turkist discourse, especially the one with an emphasis on Anatolia, became one of the important ideologies that dominated the minds of the Turkish nationalists. During this period, the organization named *Halka Doğru* (Towards the People), which was founded in 1917 and which was backed by CUP itself, “concentrated on Anatolia as the Turkish heartland and idealized the culture of the Turkish peasant population.”¹⁶⁵ Finally, Turkism, which was an ideal limited only to Anatolia and Eastern Thrace as the Turkish homeland was to be realized under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

¹⁶⁴ Kayalı, *Jön Türkler*, p.236.

¹⁶⁵ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 135.

Chapter III

THE FOUNDATION OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC AND THE LEADING ROLE OF MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK

THE BIRTH OF A TURKISH NATIONALIST

An understanding of the establishment of the Turkish Republic and the re-interpretation of Turkism during the Republican era requires one to study the emergence of M. Kemal Atatürk as the leader of nationalists and his ideas as the basis of Turkish nationalism.

Mustafa Kemal was born in Salonika, Macedonia, in 1881 to a middle-class family. Salonika, this Balkan city, was a cosmopolitan port of the Empire, where many ethnic- religious groups and foreign merchants lived together. Salonika was also a rapidly westernizing city, where the non-Muslims were the bearers of Western culture. Mustafa Kemal was born at a time of unrest when a circle of non-Muslim intellectuals were striving for independence, the Balkan people were rebelling against the Ottoman state, and when the bordering states had designs on the Ottoman Balkans in order to enlarge their territory. Mustafa Kemal, who later became the modernizer of his country along Western lines, might have learnt the Western way of life in this port city. He had also been an Ottoman patriot ever since his childhood in this city, like the other Turkish population of the regions which were under threat of separation from the Empire.

Mustafa Kemal was an army officer. The officer class in the Empire was the elite of the country. He was educated in the Hamidian schools and academies, which were the source of westernized, liberal minded, constitutionalist elites. These schools

were democratic institutions, in which everybody could rise by ability and merit, no matter which social class he belonged to.¹⁶⁶

Mustafa Kemal received his primary education in a private secular school named Şemsi Efendi, “the first to be opened in Salonika with a modern curriculum.”¹⁶⁷ Later, he attended the Military Secondary School in Salonika, and at the age of fourteen entered the Military Training School in Manastir.¹⁶⁸ It was in Manastir that Mustafa Kemal’s patriotism appeared in the war against Greece in Rumelia, when Greece launched a war of liberation in Crete in 1897. He and a comrade of him volunteered for the army. However, he had to return to the school when he was recognized as a student.¹⁶⁹

Mustafa Kemal, after he graduated from Military Training School in Manastir, attended the Military Academy in Istanbul in 1902. There, he became acquainted with forbidden literature. He secretly began to read the patriotic Namık Kemal. He was also introduced to the Western political philosophers: Rousseau, Voltaire, Comte, Desmoulins, and Montesquieu. As he read, he discovered the problems that the Ottoman state was facing in its government structure, since he was within the circle of newly emerging intellectuals. In his youth, he had twice experienced the ‘authoritarian’ hand of the Hamidian regime on his back. The first time was during his education at the Military Academy when Mustafa Kemal and his friends secretly published a hand-written newspaper on contemporary political issues. Their clandestine act was discovered but the liberal-minded school director tolerated them. The second time was when he graduated from the Academy; he and his comrades gathered at his home to discuss the political problems of the Empire.

¹⁶⁶ Lord Kinross. 1978. *Atatürk: A Biography of Mustafa Kemal, Father of Modern Turkey*. New York: William Morrow Company, p. 15.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p.10.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ Falih Rıfki Atay. 1998. *Çankaya*. İstanbul: Bataş, p.21.

They were informed on by a 'friend' and were held under arrest for several months.¹⁷⁰

After his graduation, Mustafa Kemal was posted to the 5th army at Damascus as a captain in a cavalry regiment.¹⁷¹ In Damascus, he and his two friends established a society, named *Vatan ve Hürriyet* (Fatherland and Freedom).¹⁷² However, this society was later swallowed up by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Mustafa Kemal became a member of the Committee of Union and Progress on 29 October 1907.¹⁷³ In the same year, he was also posted to the 3rd Army in Macedonia.

Mustafa Kemal remained on the periphery of the Committee. He never became a popular hero of the 1908 revolution like Enver who was the most powerful military leader in the army. However, he was a member of the military core that was composed of officers. After the Balkan wars, Mustafa Kemal became alienated from the Committee. The reason was his conflict with Enver, which emerged during the Balkan wars on military matters, and especially when Mustafa Kemal and Fethi (Okyar) opposed the appointment of Enver to a post in the Offices of General Staff for the reason that he would politicize it. They were indeed against the increasing role of Enver. They believed that Enver had dictatorial tendencies. The conflict between Mustafa Kemal and Enver turned to the disadvantage of Mustafa Kemal, since Enver had become the head of all military staff after his appointment as the Minister of War in 1914.¹⁷⁴

Another reason that caused the alienation of Mustafa Kemal from the center of CUP was his insistence on the non-interference of the army in politics. In the

¹⁷⁰ *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, cilt I. 1940. MEB yayınları, p. 720.

¹⁷¹ Kinross. *Atatürk*, p.26.

¹⁷² Şevket Süreyya Aydemir. 2001. *Tek Adam: Mustafa Kemal 1881-1919, vol I*. İstanbul: Remzi, pp.89-90.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, p.90.

¹⁷⁴ Erik Jan Zürcher. 1995. *Milli Mücadelede İttihatçılık*. Ankara: Bağlam, pp. 91-9.

second congress of CUP in 1909, Mustafa Kemal defended his proposal concerning the non-interference of the army in politics.¹⁷⁵ However, it is very doubtful whether Mustafa Kemal himself observed this principle. During the First World War he occasionally, verbally, or by sending telegraphs, criticized the war strategy of the government, where Enver was the Minister of War. He especially criticized the role of the German military mission in Ottoman territory.¹⁷⁶

Mustafa Kemal, after serving in the army in the Tripolis war against the Italians in 1911 and in the Balkan wars of 1912-3, was appointed to Sofia as a military attaché. He was in Sofia when the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War among the Allied powers.¹⁷⁷ During the war, he served in the army at several fronts.

Mustafa Kemal gained prominence within the military as a result of his successful defense of the Gallipoli peninsula of Çanakkale against the combined land and sea assault of the British and their allied forces as a divisional commander in 1915.¹⁷⁸ The Çanakkale War marked a very decisive phase for the Ottoman Empire because if the Entente powers had been able to pass through the Dardanelles, they would have been able to occupy Istanbul at the very beginning of the war, thereby would have been able to reinforce the Russian front before the Russian Revolution of 1917.

After his successful defense of the Dardanelles, he served on the Eastern front against the Russians in 1916 and as a commander on the Palestinian front in 1917. Here, he strongly objected to the defense strategy of the German supreme

¹⁷⁵ Aydemir, *Tek Adam*, vol I, p.136.

¹⁷⁶ See the telegraph sent to the Grand Vizier from the Eastern front on 20. 09. 1917. In this telegraph, Mustafa Kemal totally criticizes the war strategy of the Office of General Staff. *Atatürkün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri IV*. 1991. Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi: Türk Tarih Kurumu, pp.1-12.

¹⁷⁷ Atay, *Çankaya*, pp. 81-2 and Aydemir, *Tek Adam*, vol I, pp. 200-4.

¹⁷⁸ Aydemir, *Tek Adam*, vol I, pp. 214-234.

commander against the British. He objected to the assault decision on the basis that if Turkish soldiers were at the hands of a German commander, who would never consider the interests of the Ottomans, this would result in a total destruction of Turkish forces by the far superior forces of the British. He sent a telegraph to the Grand Vizier proposing that the Ottoman army should retreat from Palestine and establish a new defense front just south of Anatolia, from the Mediterranean to Mosul and Aleppo. In this proposal it is observable that Mustafa Kemal, facing the inevitable consequence of defeat in the Arab lands, emphasizes that the Ottoman government should re-interpret its strategy concerning the defense of the mainly Turkish-populated heartland of Anatolia.¹⁷⁹ This telegraph is among the first sources that demonstrate that Mustafa Kemal was among those, who favoured a 'Turkish homeland in Anatolia'.

When the government did not approve his strategy, he refused to serve the army on the Palestinian front and returned to Istanbul. When he was in Istanbul, he was sent to Germany to accompany the Crown Prince Vahidettin. During this journey, he became acquainted with the last sultan of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁸⁰

It was near the end of the World War when Mustafa Kemal was again posted to the Palestinian front by Sultan Vahidettin. According to Mustafa Kemal's memoirs, this was a cunning move by the Minister of War, Enver Pasha. In fact, Mustafa Kemal was a rebellious commander. Four times he refused to serve in the army he had been appointed to. However, he was never severely punished, and his career progress fitted the general career structure of the army. According to Zürcher, this was not only because he was the 'hero' of the Anafartalar front at Çanakkale, but also because CUP had several factions in its structure and none of the factions,

¹⁷⁹ *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri IV*, pp. 1-12.

¹⁸⁰ Aydemir, *Tek Adam I*, pp. 259-304.

without taking a great risk of struggle, could destabilize the balance by punishing a member of a faction.¹⁸¹

The Armistice of Mudros on 31 October 1918 marked the end of World War for the Ottoman Empire. The result was devastating. All the Arab lands were occupied by the Entente powers. As a result of the provisions of the armistice, the straits would be occupied, all railway and telegraph lines would be controlled by the Entente, Ottoman troops would be demobilized and disarmed, except for small contingents needed to maintain law and order, and all the Entente prisoners would be freed. The most threatening clause was Article 7, which gave the right to the Entente powers to occupy the other places of the Empire if they considered the security in these regions under threat. Also, according to Article 24, the Entente powers could intervene in the 'Armenian provinces' if they observed that security was under threat.¹⁸² As a consequence, on 8 December 1918, the Entente powers occupied certain regions of Istanbul. The French armies occupied the Adana region. British forces occupied some strategic points such as the Dardanelles, Samsun, and Antep. On 29 April 1919, the Italians, according to the secret agreements signed during the World War, occupied Antalya.¹⁸³

The leading CUP leaders, Talat, Enver, and Cemal Pashas, who were held responsible for the devastating outcome, left the country to avoid prosecution on the same day Mustafa Kemal received the text of the armistice in Adana.¹⁸⁴ After the armistice, Mustafa Kemal was ordered to take the command of the army group from Von Sanders at Adana. He was very disturbed by the extremely ambiguous nature of the armistice provisions. His troops were also required to surrender because the

¹⁸¹ Zürcher, *Milli Mücadele'de İttihatçılık*, pp.106-107. Mustafa Kemal seems to belong to the Cemal fraction in CUP.

¹⁸² Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p.138.

¹⁸³ Bernard Lewis. 1998. *Modern Türkiye'nin Doğuşu*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, p.240.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 241.

Entente powers claimed that they were also stationed in Syria. However, Mustafa Kemal objected to the decision, insisting that the Syrian border could not be extended down into the Adana region, including the port of Alexandretta. He emphasized that it should be borne in mind that Alexandretta, Antioch, Katma, and Kilis were populated by Turks, and Arabic-speaking Turkish people populated Halep.¹⁸⁵ However, for the British the port of Alexandretta was a strategic point, and the garrisons had to be surrendered. Mustafa Kemal sent telegraphs to the Grand Vizier Izzet Pasha urging him to insist that the vague provisions be revealed in detail; otherwise, the Entente powers could make use of the ambiguity and extend their ambitious demands to the point where they could even require commanding Turkish troops and appointing Ottoman ministers.¹⁸⁶

However, Istanbul government thought that Mustafa Kemal was creating trouble at such a critical time, which could harm the future diplomatic efforts to regain the lost lands through a policy of appeasement. As a result, Mustafa Kemal's army group was dissolved. At the very end of the war, Mustafa Kemal was very aware of the fact that yielding to every demand of the Entente could not decrease their ambitions. This could, in the end, turn the Ottoman state into a colonial land.

Another important sign of 'Turkism' within the thought of Mustafa Kemal, delineating the borders of the future state to the Turkish-populated areas, seems to appear in this refusal. It is claimed that in 1907 Mustafa Kemal, even before the loss of the Arab lands, and before the Young Turk revolution of 1908, had stressed that a powerful state could not be built on a decaying Ottoman Empire, but on a land with a

¹⁸⁵ See the order given to commanders of 2nd and 7th garrisons on 03.11.1918 in *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p.17.

¹⁸⁶ See the telegraph send by Mustafa Kemal Pasha to the Grand Vizier on 08.11.1918 on the issue of application of the Armistice in *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, pp. 21-2.

Turkish majority.¹⁸⁷ When Mustafa Kemal refused to serve in the Arab lands during the war, and when he refused to surrender his troops because a Turkish majority populated the Adana region, the pre-war idea of Mustafa Kemal Pasha was realized.

His return to Istanbul after the armistice marks the period when he pursued an ‘Istanbul Strategy’.¹⁸⁸ “Istanbul strategy meant preservation of the existing political framework of the Ottoman institutions.... It implied trying to salvage the country’s independence mainly by diplomatic maneuvering.”¹⁸⁹ Many Ottoman diplomats believed that diplomatic maneuvering could work in a time of dispute between the Entente powers. They could exploit these differences against one other. Mustafa Kemal, just before the armistice of Mudros, after learning that the Talat Pasha cabinet had resigned, demanded the appointment of himself as the Minister of War to a cabinet that should be headed by İzzet Pasha who had patriotic views, and who had been against the involvement of the Empire in the War. However, his demand was rejected.¹⁹⁰ After his return to Istanbul, he, although not a high-ranking governing officer, tried to manipulate the political figures and parliamentarians to the cause of the nationalists and worked for the establishment of a cabinet devoted to the nationalist cause. It seems that an “Anatolian strategy,”¹⁹¹ which was the organization of a resistance movement far from and independent of Istanbul, was not clear in the mind of Mustafa Kemal at that time. Because of the ambiguity of the Anatolian strategy in his mind, he several times rejected the proposal to go to Anatolia. Many civil and military nationalists of Mustafa Kemal had left Istanbul before Mustafa Kemal because they believed that a national resistance could only be

¹⁸⁷ Atay, *Çankaya*, p.47.

¹⁸⁸ Dankward A. Rustow. 1991. “Atatürk as an Institution Builder,” in A. Kazancıgil and E. Özbudun, eds. *Atatürk Founder of a Modern State*. London: C.Hurst Company, p.63.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p.63.

¹⁹⁰ See Kinross, *Atatürk*, pp. 146-7.

¹⁹¹ Dankward A. Rustow, “Atatürk as an Institution Builder,” p.65.

organized in Anatolia and independent of Istanbul.¹⁹² However, the dissolution of parliament by Vahidettin on 21 December 1918, and the appointment of the Damad Ferid Pasha, an advocate of a British-oriented policy, as the Grand Vizier in order to hold the Empire intact, marks a turning point in Mustafa Kemal's life.

*ATATÜRK AS THE LEADER OF THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN
ANATOLIA*

During the time when Mustafa Kemal was looking for a post in the Istanbul government in order to serve the Empire, CUP members were preparing the ground for a resistance movement in Anatolia by the order and the guidance of Enver Pasha who believed that this was the first phase of the war, and the opportunity would come for a second round.¹⁹³ They established an organization, named *Karakol*. *Karakol* was organized to help the local resistance movements "by sending able people, money, arms and supplies from the capital." Indeed, Enver and Talat, before leaving the country, ordered the secret organization of CUP, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, to store the arms and ammunitions in secret depots in Anatolia.¹⁹⁴ *Karakol* sent most of the nationalist leaders to Anatolia before the Independence War. The resistance societies established in this period were called 'Defense of the National Rights' (*Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyetleri*). These societies were local in character, generally supported by local notables, landowners, and traders. They, mostly, appeared in regions under occupation or in regions that were populated by Greeks or Armenians. The aim of these societies was to prove that the regions they represented were Turkish as regards to population, history, and geography. In that way, they were

¹⁹² See the proposals of Kazım Karabekir and Ali Fuat Cebesoy in Aydemir, *Tek Adam I*, pp. 339-347.

¹⁹³ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 140.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 140-1

hoping to remain a part of the Empire in accordance with the Wilsonian principle, which promised that the Turkish areas of the Empire would remain sovereign.¹⁹⁵

When Mustafa Kemal Pasha decided that an Anatolian strategy was the only way to rescue the Turkish lands from occupation as many other Unionists, he managed to arrange an appointment to a military post in Anatolia as the inspector of the 9th army located in Samsun, Erzurum, and Sivas. He was granted wide authority “to communicate, without reference to Istanbul, with neighbouring military commands, and also with civil authorities both in his own military region and in immediately adjacent districts”¹⁹⁶ by the help of the friends in the War Ministry. He was, indeed, responsible for ensuring stability in the region in order not to trigger an Entente occupation.

According to a very important interpretation of Zürcher, it was the CUP nationalists who chose Mustafa Kemal as the leader of the resistance movement in Anatolia. This was because they needed a personality whose image was not tainted by the disaster of the World War, and who had “politically clean hands.” Mustafa Kemal was among the most appropriate candidates, since he was the hero of the Çanakkale victory during the war and he was not associated by the wartime policies of Enver, Talat, and Cemal. Therefore, he was not among those who were accused of the disastrous outcome.¹⁹⁷

When Mustafa Kemal landed at Samsun on 19 May 1919, resistance against the occupiers had already started. The first task of Mustafa Kemal had been the transformation of local resistance organizations into a national one. On the other hand, although, later, Mustafa Kemal claimed in his *Speech* in 1927 that even before leaving Istanbul he had in mind to establish an independent Turkish state based on

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 154.

¹⁹⁶ Rustow, “Atatürk as an Institution Builder,” p. 65.

¹⁹⁷ Zürcher, *Milli Mücadelede İttihatçılık*, p. 111 and Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 148.

popular sovereignty,¹⁹⁸ he did not immediately pursue a strategy that was directed towards the establishment of a new Turkish state. Until the occupation of Istanbul in 1920, the nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal preferred a combined strategy without denying the legitimacy of the Istanbul government. Their immediate goal was to unite the regional societies and to establish a committee to represent the whole nation. When the nationalist aim became apparent through Mustafa Kemal's circulars to the commanders and to the local societies, in which he stated that the only solution was the total independence of the state and the nation, and in which he encouraged the organization of mass meetings to revive nationalistic feelings among the people, Britain attempted to force the Istanbul government to recall Mustafa Kemal to Istanbul. Mustafa Kemal refused to return and resigned from his military post on 9 July 1919.¹⁹⁹ Although he became a mere civilian, military commanders in Anatolia, devoted to the nationalist cause, did not question his legitimacy as a nationalist leader. When the Erzurum and Sivas Congresses were held respectively in July-August 1919 and in September 1919, Mustafa Kemal became the head of the 'Representative Committee' of the unified 'Defense of Rights Society in Rumelia and Anatolia'. These congresses, where harsh discussions on the solutions proposed for the survival of the state had occurred, were very important in determining the principles on which the Independence War would be based.

The most important issue discussed in the Sivas Congress was the issue of 'mandate'. Some of the comrades of Mustafa Kemal believed that an American mandate was necessary in order to protect the territorial integrity. They insisted that a mandate did not mean loss of sovereignty; it rather meant the backing of a foreign country. It was an economic support rather than a political one. They stated that the

¹⁹⁸ M.K. Atatürk. 1995. *Nutuk I*. İstanbul: Süryay.

¹⁹⁹ *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p.54.

state was not able to pay even the interest of its debts.²⁰⁰ How could the state win a battle against an enemy with ships and planes when Turkey lacked any transportation system to transfer its soldiers to the front?²⁰¹ The state, without doubt, needed the economic support of another country for reconstruction. Bekir Sami, later foreign minister of the Grand National Assembly government, went further in his approval of the mandate by stating his doubts on the success of the independence movement. An effort to gain full independence would probably result in division of the country; so in that case a mandate, which would preserve territorial integrity, would be preferable among the worst alternatives.²⁰²

Although Mustafa Kemal, later in his *Speech* in 1927, harshly criticized his comrades for proposing a mandate²⁰³, he did not say a word on the issue concerning the mandate during the Congress.²⁰⁴ It was probably because of the conditions the country faced in those days. There was no money, no army, and the Istanbul government, who insisted that diplomatic maneuvering could work in order to end the occupation, took every precaution to prevent the nationalists from acting. It was really difficult to believe that a military action would defeat the occupiers. On the other hand, during the Congress the meaning of 'mandate' remained ambiguous. Both those who were favouring a mandate and those who were indecisive were not sure about what 'mandate' really meant. That was why many delegates insisted that 'mandate' meant foreign financial assistance. Mustafa Kemal was sensitive on the matter. In a telegraph written to Ali Fuat Pasha, who was a commander in Anatolia, it can be observed that he had a tendency to limit the meaning of 'mandate' to foreign financial assistance. He said in the telegraph that it was very crucial to

²⁰⁰ U.İğdemir. 1969. *Sivas Kongresi Tutanakları*. Ankara: TTK, p. 53.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.59.

²⁰² *Ibid*, p.58.

²⁰³ M.K. Atatürk. *Nutuk I*, pp.87-115.

²⁰⁴ See *Sivas Kongresi Tutanakları*.

examine the American mandate support in detail and to compare it with the nationalist goal. Any protectorate that contradicted the nationalist goal and the sovereignty of the Turkish people on Turkish land could not be accepted.²⁰⁵ Foreign assistance that did not contradict the nationalist goal would be obtained from Soviet Russia in the years of the Independence War.

Despite a long discussion on the issue of mandate, the Sivas Congress ended with decisions with an emphasis on the integrity of the Fatherland (*vatan*) by accepting the principle of resistance against any occupation or intervention that were especially aimed at Greek and Armenian separation.²⁰⁶ The question of mandate was solved in a way that would not harm the principle of national independence. Article 7 of the manifesto of the Sivas Congress stated: "Our nation highly values and realizes full well our position and our needs in the technical, industrial, and economic fields. That is why on condition that the independence of our state and our nation in domestic and foreign policy matters and the integrity of our country are preserved, we shall gladly accept technical, industrial, and economic aid from any state which will show respect for the ideals of nationalism, and will not pursue the aim of seizing our country."²⁰⁷ This article determined the future attitude of the new Turkish state towards foreign aid and foreign capital.

At the Sivas Congress, it was also demanded that the central government should depend on national will. Therefore, a national parliament should immediately be convened.²⁰⁸ Just after the Sivas Congress, the resignation of the Ferid Pasha government, and the appointment of the more nationalist-minded Ali Rıza Pasha as the Grand Vizier helped the establishment of the goal of convening the national

²⁰⁵ M.K. Atatürk. *Nutuk 1*, p.103.

²⁰⁶ *Sivas Kongresi Tutanakları*, p. 113.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p.114.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

parliament. At Amasya, the Minister for the Navy Salih Pasha and Mustafa Kemal held meetings to shape the groundwork for a compromise between the Istanbul government and the nationalists in Anatolia. It was decided that elections would be held to convene the parliament in a city other than Istanbul. In the parliament, the articles of the Sivas Congress would be accepted. The Istanbul government agreed to all the principles, except that they rejected the idea that the location of the parliament should be a city other than Istanbul.²⁰⁹

In September elections were held, and Mustafa Kemal was elected as deputy of Erzurum. After the elections, Mustafa Kemal, the commanders and the members of the Representative Committee decided that a powerful group under the name of Defense of National Rights in Rumelia and Anatolia should be established in order to defend the national principles and to guarantee the integrity of the Fatherland. This decision was sent as an order to the deputies, who were on their way to Istanbul. Mustafa Kemal did not go to Istanbul to attend the sessions of parliament.²¹⁰ However, he wanted to be president of the parliament. He later mentioned this in his *Speech*. He said that the reason for not going to Istanbul was his belief that an Ottoman parliament would not survive. This had two reasons. Firstly, he believed that the Ottoman Empire's lifetime was over. Secondly, he believed that the occupiers would not tolerate such an attempt and would totally occupy Istanbul.²¹¹ Therefore, if he was the president of the parliament, it would be easy for him to assemble the following sessions in places other than Istanbul after the occupation. We read these reasonable explanations from the *Speech* in 1927 (the *Speech* is mainly composed of the history of the Independence War and the establishment of

²⁰⁹ Atatürk, *Nutuk I*, p. 241.

²¹⁰ According to the telegraph he had sent to Sivas representatives, he mentions that he would stay at Anatolia as the head of Representative Committee until the security of the parliament was assured. See *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p. 161.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 397.

one-party republican state from the side of Mustafa Kemal) after the Independence War was over. He says in his *Speech* that he was waiting as an observer of the natural phases of historical evolution, so he thought on nothing other than the precautions for the future.²¹² In his interpretations of the events about the last parliament of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal, the leader of the one-party tutelary regime of Turkey, excluded himself from the historical transformation and ascended to the status of an all-knowing man. As the story of Mustafa Kemal demonstrates, it is not possible to argue that Mustafa Kemal was the sole factor that determined the historical transformation during the period. He was not the only person who organized the nationalist movement as he presented himself to be. When he decided to go to Anatolia, a national resistance had been already organized by the former Unionists.

The life of the last National Assembly was indeed very short. In 16 March 1920, Istanbul was occupied by the Entente powers, in order to put an end to the collaboration between the nationalists and the Ottoman institutions.²¹³ The deputies were arrested and exiled to Malta. In this very short period, the deputies were able to form a group, named “*Felah-ı Vatan*” (Salvation of the Fatherland), although this group was harshly criticized by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in his *Speech* in 1927 for not recognizing him as the only authority for being head of the Representative Committee, because this parliament voted in favour of the government, which had banned any movement that expressed opinions on national will other than the constitutional parliament. According to Mustafa Kemal, this was nothing other than an attempt to delegitimize the Representative Committee in the eyes of the nation.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, the last Ottoman parliament managed to adopt the manifesto, National

²¹² *Ibid*, p.397.

²¹³ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 145.

²¹⁴ Atatürk, *Nutuk I*, p. 373.

Pact (*Misak-ı Milli*), which was based on the resolutions of the Erzurum and Sivas Congresses. According to the National Pact, the territories inhabited by the Ottoman Muslim majority, united in religion, race and aim, formed an indivisible whole, but the fate of the territories inhabited by an Arab majority and the Western Thrace, which were under foreign occupation, should be determined by plebiscite. The security of the capital, Istanbul, had to be assured. The rights of the minorities would be established in conformity with the treaties concluded with the Entente, and lastly the economic, financial, and judicial independence of the Empire had to be assured and be free of restrictions.²¹⁵ This pact would set the limits of concessions that could be made to the Entente during the Independence War.

The occupation of Istanbul on 16 March 1920 was the end of the efforts for compromise between Istanbul and the Anatolian movement. Mustafa Kemal, as the news of occupation reached Ankara, invited the deputies to Ankara to form a 'national assembly'. Ninety two members of the parliament, who were able to reach Ankara, and "292 representatives elected by the local branches of the Defense of Rights Societies" opened the Grand National Assembly (GNA) on 23 April 1923.²¹⁶ These events mark the period when Mustafa Kemal emerged as the "clear leader of the movement."²¹⁷ This was due to the gradual elimination of the Unionist cadres from the political scene by the efforts of Mustafa Kemal, who was not willing to share any power with any political body. Zürcher writes that Unionists were not pleased with the increasingly independent line of the Anatolian movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. However, at a period when they considered to replace Mustafa Kemal by another candidate, the occupation of Istanbul and arrest of many

²¹⁵ See Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 144.

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 158.

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 163.

Unionists by the occupiers “finished them as competitors” of Mustafa Kemal.²¹⁸ However, it is important to note that his leadership could not be consolidated, until mid twenties and especially during the period of first Grand National Assembly (1920-1923) there had been a harsh opposition to the rule of Mustafa Kemal, against his dictatorial tendencies and ambitions.

THE FIRST GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE INDEPENDENCE

WAR

The First National Assembly was convened as an ‘assembly with extraordinary powers’. Mustafa Kemal, later in his *Speech* in 1927, mentioned that he planned to convene a ‘constitutional assembly’ that would be able to change the regime at first hand. However, he was warned by the Sivas and Erzurum deputies because it was an unusual concept and could frighten the nation.²¹⁹ On the other hand, Celalettin Arif Bey, who was the president of the last Ottoman parliament, was against this view of Mustafa Kemal and insisted that GNA was the continuation of the last Ottoman parliament and should work within the same methodology. However, Mustafa Kemal stated that he had thought to convene a parliament with totally new methods and new obligations. In 1927, he stressed that he wanted to promulgate the radical reforms he had planned with this new parliament.²²⁰

It is true that the first parliament was to abolish the sultanate, however, this first parliament continued to recognize the authority of the sultan-caliph until the abolition of sultanate, although Istanbul had launched a harsh war against the Anatolian movement by requesting from the *Şeyhülislam* (the head of the official religious dignitaries) to issue a *Fetva* (legal opinion based on Sharia rules) to declare that nationalist rebels were against the caliph and his authority. Just after the issue of

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ Atatürk. *Nutuk I*, p. 415.

²²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 419.

this *Fetva*, Mustafa Kemal and some other prominent nationalist figures were officially sentenced to death.²²¹ Until the turn of Damad Ferid to the office, the attitude of the Istanbul government remained ambiguous towards the nationalist movement in Anatolia by trying to compromise at certain times, and at others by totally denying the movement's legitimacy. Despite the aggressive policy of the Istanbul government, the first GNA preferred to emphasize its loyalty to the sultan. In the speech presented to the parliament at the first session of the GNA in 1920, Mustafa Kemal not only emphasized that the national will, which materialized at the GNA, had the power to rescue the caliphate and sultanate from alien oppression, but also pointed out that the aim of the GNA was to ensure the freedom of sultan-caliph.²²² Years later in his *Speech* in 1927, Mustafa Kemal mentioned that from the very beginning he aimed to declare a republic, but he kept his aim as a "national secret" in his mind. He believed that it was necessary to make the nation rebel against the Ottoman caliph-sultan because he was just as much a traitor as the foreign occupiers. However, because the army and the nation did not think the possibility of independence without the caliphate and the sultanate, he had to separate his progress towards the final aim into phases. The feelings and the thought of the nation would have to be prepared, and it was inevitable to walk towards the aim step by step.²²³ Mustafa Kemal presented his approval of the aim of the GNA, which was presented as to ensure the freedom of sultan-caliph as a tactical maneuver. Even if it had only been a tactical maneuver of Mustafa Kemal, the explanation of this historical period by Mustafa Kemal gives us the signs of his pedagogical manner as the 'father of the nation'. On the other hand, he presents himself as the only person who dragged the nation to the future he had planned for.

²²¹ B.Lewis, *Modern Türkiye'nin Doğuşu*, pp.251-2.

²²² *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I*. 1997. Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, p.58.

²²³ Atatürk, *Nutuk I*, p. 15.

According to the proposal made by Mustafa Kemal to the parliament on 24 April 1920, parliament accepted that the supreme power was the Grand National Assembly (GNA) which represented the national will. It was inevitable to form a new government, and the GNA gathered the powers of executive, legislative, and judiciary in its body, so only a representative committee, which would be chosen among the deputies, was charged with the executionary duties of a government. Even temporarily, it was not proper to introduce a government head or an agent for the sultan. The president of the parliament would also be the head of the representative committee. And lastly, the caliph-sultan, who was also under pressure, would be positioned within the framework of the principle laws that would be promulgated by the GNA when the time arrived. When Mustafa Kemal was elected president of GNA on the same day, he became the head of the legislative, executive, and judiciary; thus, personally becoming the only dominant figure of the parliament. This type of parliament, where all the powers were united, resembled the main parliament of the French Revolution, the Convention. GNA, with this structure, was a parliament of revolution.²²⁴

The first task of the first GNA was to end occupation. The deputies, belonging to different social classes, with different views on the future of the country, were united in one supreme aim, 'national independence'. The treaty of Sévres, signed on 10 August 1920, left Turkey a small amount of land in northern Anatolia with Istanbul as its capital. However, the straits would be internationalized. According to the treaty, Eastern Thrace and the area around Izmir were given to the Greeks, who commenced their occupation on May 1919 and "extended their zone of occupation over all the western and north-western Asia Minor and over the Thrace,

²²⁴ Ahmet Demirel. 1995. *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet: İkinci Grup*. İstanbul: İletişim, p.158.

where only intense Entente pressure prevented them from occupying Istanbul.”²²⁵ An independent Armenian state would be created at eastern Anatolia. Under these circumstances, the only way to oust the occupiers was to take military action against them. However, the first action was to build up a regular army that would replace the *Kuvay-ı Milliye*, an irregular force of *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* raiders and bandits from Anatolia, who were unified with the local people, who were threatened by Christian attacks.²²⁶

The first phase of the Independence War was to be fought against Greece and the Armenians. However, at that time the Turkish forces in the region were very weak. On the Eastern front, Turkish troops under the command of Kazım Karabekir were making good progress against the Armenians. When they were about to capture Ardahan, Batum and Kars, Ankara ordered them to wait until an agreement with Russia was concluded. However, Soviet Russia, as a prerequisite to an agreement, demanded the cession of Van and Bitlis to Armenia. Mustafa Kemal, facing the situation wrote a telegraph to the representative of Turkey, Bekir Sami, that cession of Van and Bitlis was impossible, since they were the part of Turkish land as delineated in the National Pact. If the Ankara government, in order to reach an agreement with Soviet Russia, had ceded these lands, there would have been no difference between the Ankara government and Istanbul. He also mentioned that although cession was demanded by Soviet Russia, which was in principle an anti-imperialistic power, it did not change the fact that it was an imperialistic demand.²²⁷ As a consequence, Turkish troops began to advance towards the east until Armenia was defeated and a peace treaty signed between Armenia and Turkey in December

²²⁵ Zürcher. *Turkey*, p. 159.

²²⁶ See, Mete Tunçay. 1999. *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması (1923-1931)*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, p. 28.

²²⁷ Atatürk'ün *Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, pp. 371-3.

1920. Soon after, at the beginning of 1921, the Armenian government was toppled by the Bolsheviks. A treaty of friendship was concluded between Ankara and Soviet Russia on 16 March 1921, leaving Kars and Ardahan to Turkey. Soviet Russia, as a consequence of the treaty, recognized the Ankara government and its territory as delineated in the National Pact.²²⁸

After guaranteeing the Eastern front, Turkey was able to deploy all its forces to the Western front against the Greek troops. The first success of the Turkish troops was at İnönü, under the command of İsmet Pasha. The Greek forces were defeated by the regular forces and as a consequence of the advance of the Turkish troops and of the rapprochement between Soviet Russia and Turkey, the Entente powers had to question the terms of the Sévres Treaty and arranged the London conference.²²⁹ The conference was not fruitful, since National Pact bound the nationalists, and the Entente was making few concessions from the Sévres Treaty.

After the London conference, the Greek forces again started their assault. The Greek troops were able to advance through Eskişehir, a heartland city of Anatolia. This caused alarm in parliament, and the parliamentarians summoned Mustafa Kemal to take the command of the army. Mustafa Kemal became the commander-in-chief of the armies for three months with the extraordinary powers granted to him to use parliamentary powers. His word would become law.²³⁰ After Mustafa Kemal took the command, the Greek forces had to retreat beyond the Sakarya River on 13 September 1921. The Sakarya victory forced the Entente powers to question their position. France entered into negotiations and pulled her forces out of the Adana region. France was to be the first Western power to recognize the Ankara government. Italy

²²⁸ See the provisions of the treaty in Bülent Gökay. 1998. *Bolşevizm ile Emperyalizm Arasında Türkiye (1918-1923)*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, p. 137.

²²⁹ Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 160-1.

²³⁰ Demirel, *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet*, p. 260.

also followed the same way and retreated from Turkish territory. At the same time, Britain began to question its support of the Greek forces. The last battle against the Greek forces was won on 30 August 1922 when not only many Greek soldiers but also the commander-in-chief was captured. Turkish forces pursuing the Greek retreating to the coast entered Izmir on 9 September 1922.²³¹

Now the time came to face Britain which still occupied Istanbul. However, without any support from the Entente powers, and as a consequence of the British decision not to endanger its position among the colonized Muslim population, who had sympathy for the caliph and considered Istanbul as the city of the caliph, Britain entered into negotiations with Ankara. At Mudanya on 10 October, they reached an armistice agreement. The final solution was left to the Lausanne conference.²³²

The Lausanne Treaty was signed on 24 July 1923 after many disputes on many questions were hardly solved because Entente powers did not accept Turkey as an equal partner and for them Lausanne “was meant to adjust the terms of the Treaty of Sévres.”²³³ On the other hand, the Turkish side regarded themselves as the victors of the war. After harsh discussions, the Entente recognized Turkish political and economic sovereignty on the territory delineated by the National Pact. Straits would be internationalised. Eastern Thrace and other parts of Anatolia would remain in Turkey. Capitulations would be abolished. And all the inhabitants of Turkey, including the minorities and the foreigners, would be subject to the Turkish courts. Turkish side made some concessions by ceding Mosul to Iraq, the Sancak of Alexandretta to French Syria, the Aegean islands, except Imroz and Tenedos, to Greece and Italy.²³⁴

²³¹ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 162.

²³² *Ibid.* p. 163.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

²³⁴ Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 167-170.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha, and the supporters of Mustafa Kemal, regarded the treaty as a victory against the Entente powers. Peace was established, and for Mustafa Kemal Pasha the time had arrived for institutional reforms and a change of regime.

ATATÜRK AS AN INSTITUTION BUILDER

When both the Istanbul and the Ankara government were invited to the Lausanne conference by the Entente powers, the National Assembly abolished the sultanate on 1 November 1924 by unanimous vote in order to assure governmental unity in the country. The sultanate and the caliphate were separated from each other. Atatürk made a long speech on the same day giving historical examples to manifest that sultanate and the caliphate could be represented by different people. He said that the nation had regained its sovereignty, and nation itself occupied the post of sultanate (*saltanat-ı milliye*), the post of caliphate would be carried by a higher person (*Şahs-ı Ali*), whose point of support would be the Turkish state.²³⁵ The logic of Mustafa Kemal, who insisted that in Islam there was no obstacle to the separation of sultanate and caliphate, was developed in order to appease the religious figures in the parliament who had requested a guaranteed position for the caliph in the Turkish state. This logic of Mustafa Kemal seems to work because the sultanate was abolished by unanimous vote. After the abolition of sultanate, the last Ottoman sultan fled from the country, and Abdülmecid Efendi, a member of the Ottoman dynasty, was elected as the new caliph.

The Republic was promulgated on 29 October 1923 by majority vote. Mustafa Kemal was elected as the first president of the Republic. However, although the abolition of the sultanate did not meet with any serious opposition, some of war-time comrades of Mustafa Kemal, namely Hüseyin Rauf, Ali Fuat (Cebesoy),

²³⁵ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 293-4.

Adnan(Adıvar), Refet(Bele) and Kazım(Karabekir)²³⁶ criticized the proclamation of the Republic, stating that naming a regime ‘republic’ or ‘monarchy’ did not matter, what really mattered was the difference between freedom and democracy. As will be explained later, they were disturbed about the authoritarian tendencies of the new regime, and believed that to name the regime ‘republic’ would not change the situation.²³⁷ A popular discontent prevailed “not so much because of the proclamation of the Republic as because it had officially made Ankara the new capital of Turkey a fortnight earlier.”²³⁸ This decision not only hurt the pride of the inhabitants of Istanbul but also “meant continuing unemployment for the tens of thousands of civil servants among them.”²³⁹ However, Mustafa Kemal was decisive on the task of breaking all the symbolic and practical ties with the old regime and did not take a back step.

The third step undertaken by Mustafa Kemal was the abolition of the caliphate on 3 March 1924. This was to be the most important step in order to begin radical reforms for the secularisation of the institutions and the life of the Turkish people. Although the responsibilities of the caliph were strictly determined by the parliament which reduced the status of caliph to a ceremonial function, there were opponents who were not only emotionally attached to the caliphate but also perceived the caliph as a counterweight to the increasingly dominant role of Mustafa Kemal.²⁴⁰ Until the election of the president of the Republic, there had been an impression among the opposition that the caliph could be regarded as the head of state.²⁴¹ On the other hand, more articles appeared in the press concerning the issue

²³⁶ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 174.

²³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 174 ,also, see Atatürk, *Nutuk II*, p. 165.

²³⁸ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 174.

²³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 175.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.175.

²⁴¹ Atatürk, *Nutuk*, pp. 71-3. And also see Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek Parti Yönetiminin Kurulması*, p. 70.

of determining the functions of the caliph and extending his rights and obligations. More people openly claimed that if the caliphate was to be abolished, Turkey would be a minor power with no power base in the international arena.²⁴² The religious figures in the parliament insisted that caliphate meant government. It was not in the hands of any parliament to remove the rights and obligations of the institution of caliphate, with its right of jurisdiction that transcended the boundaries of the Turkish Republic.²⁴³ Mustafa Kemal was alarmed by these arguments. He argued that the Turkish people could not be burdened by such an unreasonable responsibility of carrying the institution of caliphate within its body because within the new world system none of the Muslim states would accept the jurisdiction right of a Turkish caliph within their sovereign territory. There was no way for the people of Turkey other than considering their own survival and welfare.²⁴⁴

As mentioned before, when a proposal was presented to parliament to abolish the sultanate, Mustafa Kemal had claimed that sultanate and caliphate could be separated because sultanate was for the nation, but caliphate was for the whole Islamic nation. But when Mustafa Kemal Pasha decided to abolish the caliphate, he insisted that the caliphate and sultanate could only exist together. When the Committee of Caliphate in India sent him a message proposing that he become the caliph, he answered that the caliph was the president of the state. It would be unreasonable to accept the proposal of nations who were governed by their own emperors and kings. How could he accept such a shadow responsibility?²⁴⁵ In this attitude of Mustafa Kemal, the tactical pragmatism of his leadership is observable. Although from the beginning he had planned to abolish the caliphate, for two reasons

²⁴² See Mustafa Kemal's criticism of those who were loyal to the caliphate in *Nutuk II*, pp. 189-217.

²⁴³ Atatürk, *Nutuk II*, pp. 73-5.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 73-7.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 211-2.

he did not prefer to abolish the sultanate and caliphate at once. The first reason was an international consideration. He avoided the reaction of the Muslim world at a critical phase when Turkey was struggling for her rights at the Lausanne conference. As will be re-mentioned, the spiritual and financial support of Indian Muslims²⁴⁶ had been very important for Turkey during the Independence War. Indian Muslims remained a factor that could be used in Ankara's relations with Britain. Secondly, Mustafa Kemal preferred to take gradual steps towards a secular state. To abolish both caliphate and sultanate would be unacceptable for most of the parliamentarians.

The authoritarian tendencies of the new Republic was furthered by the promulgation of the Law on the Maintenance of Order in March 1925, which empowered the government for two years to ban any organization or publication that caused disturbance to law and order. This law was a consequence of the Kurdish rebellion in Diyarbakır led by a prominent religious figure Sheikh Sait, which broke out in May 1925. The Law on the Maintenance of Order allowed the Kemalist regime to eliminate all opposition in the country. Not only was the Progressive Republican Party (PRP), established by the oppositionist Rauf Orbay, who questioned the authoritarian tendencies of the regime, requesting a more reformist attitude for change, closed down, but also eight of the newspapers and periodicals in Istanbul and other provincial newspapers were closed down as well. The chance for a second step to eliminate the opposition came when the plan for a suicide attack against Mustafa Kemal was deciphered on June 1926. Immediately, the Independence Tribunals were established and many of the former CUP leaders and Progressive Republican Party members were executed. Sixteen of the accused were sentenced to death, although their involvement in the incident was not proved.

²⁴⁶ Mustafa Keskin. 1991. *Hindistan Müslümanlarının Milli Mücadelede Türkiye Yardımları (1919-1923)*. Erciyes Üniversitesi Yay.

Hüseyin Rauf, the leader of PRP was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.²⁴⁷ According to Zürcher, the reason behind the elimination of the former prominent Unionists and the PRP leaders was the effort of Mustafa Kemal Pasha to monopolize the success of the Independence War. These nationalist leaders were also the bearers of the prestige of the nationalist war as the organizers and heroes of the war. Therefore, it was easy for them to make use of the unpopularity of radical reforms and of the continuing bad economic situation against the authoritarian tendencies of the new Republic.²⁴⁸

The abolition of the caliphate and the elimination of the opposition from politics hastened the secularising reforms. The Kemalist reforms that were introduced in this period can be summarized as the abolition of the Ministries of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations, secularisation of the civil law which was adopted from the Swiss Code in February 1926, the adoption of the Latin script instead of Arabic script in 1928, the introduction of Western headgear instead of the prohibited traditional headgear, the Fez, the ban on religious shrines and dervish lodges in September 1925.²⁴⁹ Among all these reforms, which intervened into the daily life of the people in order to change their symbolic universe, the adoption of the Latin script had far reaching consequences because it aimed at the written memory of the people, specifically the elite circle. As will be explained in the following chapter, Mustafa Kemal had taken very planned and systematic steps in order to change the “mental set” of the people, “which shaped their vision and the way they perceived the universe”²⁵⁰ and tried to uproot the people from its immediate Ottoman-Islamic

²⁴⁷ See Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp.175-183.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 181-2

²⁴⁹ See Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism*, pp. 461-78.

²⁵⁰ Büşra Ersanlı Behar. 1989. *The Turkish History Thesis: A Cultural Dimension of the Kemalist Revolution*. Bogaziçi University. PhD Thesis, p. 2.

past. On the other hand, the adoption of Latin script was another important step that alienated the traditional religious elites from ruling circle.

The reforms of secularisation cannot be limited to the Kemalist period. The Young Turks were also dedicated to secularisation. The Young Turk era witnessed many secularizing reforms. In that case, the originality of the reforms of Mustafa Kemal lies in his totalising attitude towards secularisation. First, he did not aim at partial secularisation. The aim was to end the duality of the post-*Tanzimat* era that also continued during the Young Turk period. To exemplify this distinction, during the Young Turk era, the Sharia courts were not abolished but were placed under the jurisdiction of the secular institutions, or the family code promulgated in 1917, reflected the coexistence of the secular and religious laws. On the contrary, during the Kemalist era, all of the institutions that existed due to the Sharia were abolished. Secondly, Kemalist secularising reforms were not limited to the institutional realm. They aimed at transforming the daily life of the people by eliminating the religious symbols from the life of the people. Totally, secular family law or the policies to reform the clothing of the people were reforms attempting the transformation of the religious Turkish man into a secular Turkish man\woman.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk²⁵¹ as the president of the Republic of Turkey and the president of the Republican People's Party (RPP), which he had established in September 1923, died in Istanbul on 10 November 1938, having succeeded in his planned reforms to transform Turkish society.

In the next chapter there is an attempt to analyze the ideology of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. However, it should be mentioned that Atatürk was not a man of ideology. There was no one doctrine developed by himself that determined his

²⁵¹ Mustafa Kemal was bestowed by the surname Atatürk by the parliament after the introduction of family names in 1934.

actions throughout his life. He says that the principles, which guided him and his Party, should not be regarded as the dogmas of the books that were believed to come from the sky. These principles were derived from life itself.²⁵² That is why it is hard to depict the framework of his thought from the speeches he made. As observed in the case of the abolition of caliphate, he could exploit some ideas in order to hide his future plans and to appease the opposition for the time being.

²⁵² Atatürk, *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p.423.

Chapter IV

THE PRINCIPLES OF MUSTAFA KEMAL ON SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE

POPULISM AND REPUBLICANISM

It can be claimed that the only principle that guided the nationalists in an ideologically heterogeneous environment during the Independence War was the principle of populism. However, despite the emphasis on the principle of populism, the meaning given to it remained vague. In a very general framework, it meant ‘government by the people for the people’. Kemal Atatürk, in his speech in August 1920, makes this point very clear by stating that “our point of view is populism, which means that power, sovereignty, and government belongs to the people.”²⁵³ The concept of “government by people” was emphasized by the First National Assembly and became first principle law by stating, “Sovereignty, without any reservation, belongs to the people.”²⁵⁴

The intention behind Atatürk to focus on populism was to create an alliance between the state elites and civil elites who would mobilize the people for the cause of national independence. As mentioned, as an effect of the war, nationalists, both with the ideal of saving the country from foreign occupation, believed in different ideologies that would be utilized to save the country. The only principle that gathered them together was their belief in the sovereignty of the people that also legitimised their own position as the representatives of the nation.

In that period, populism had also an anti-imperialistic and anti-capitalist tone. Within the principles of populism that was presented to the parliament by Mustafa Kemal on 13.09.1920, it is stated that “the aim of the Grand National Assembly is to

²⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 102.

²⁵⁴ Bülent Tanör. 1998. *Osmanlı-Türk Anayasal Gelişmeleri*. YKY, p.255.

secure independence, to rescue the sultanate and caliphate and to liberate the people from the oppression of imperialism and capitalism.”²⁵⁵ It can be argued that the emphasis of Mustafa Kemal on the oppression of imperialism and capitalism was a consequence of his attempts to establish good relations with the Soviet Union which would support Turkey in its struggle against the Western imperialist powers. In this period, Mustafa Kemal, convinced that there was not left any hope of justice for Turkey from the Western powers, turned his face towards Soviet Russia and the Islamic world.²⁵⁶

Mustafa Kemal must have preferred the concept of populism in order to describe the principle of people’s sovereignty because he avoided the concept of ‘republic’. As mentioned-above, Mustafa Kemal appears to be loyal to the sultan-caliph, describing as one of the main aims of the GNA as the liberation of sultan-caliph from alien oppression. However, his policies and applications were a gradual development towards the abolition of sultanate and proclamation of the Republic. As is known, the first GNA was organized on the principle of the ‘unity of powers’, where executive, judiciary, and legislative organs were gathered together under one authority, and these powers were dependent on each other. However, there was a dispute between Mustafa Kemal and some liberal-minded parliamentarians who were in favour of ‘separation of powers’. The main reason behind their objection was Mustafa Kemal’s personal authority, which was legitimised by the ‘unity of powers’ principle. Mustafa Kemal was the head of legislative, executive, and judiciary powers. His authority was strengthened when he became commander-in-chief, with the right to make full use of his GNA powers. In a discussion in the parliament on 1 December 1921, opposition members advised that ‘separation of powers’ was

²⁵⁵ See Levent Köker.2000. *Modernleşme, Kemalizm ve Demokrasi*. İstanbul: İletişim, p.140.

²⁵⁶ See *Atatürk’ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p.350

necessary to establish a government because despotism emerges if powers were not separated. Against this argument Mustafa Kemal argued that the idea of ‘separation of power’ was the product of constitutionalist philosophers. There was no separation of powers in nature, so that constitutional government, which was based on the separation of powers, was not natural. It was illegitimate. He claimed that to rule a country by the principle of the ‘unity of powers’ was natural because as in nature, there was no separation of powers in the ‘national will’. The ‘national will’, which was a totality, could be manifested in the National Assembly, which ruled the country and expressed the ‘national will’ by the principle of the ‘unity of powers’.²⁵⁷ He claimed that GNA system of government, which was based on the ‘unity of powers’, was the most advanced form of government in the world.²⁵⁸ In early 1923, he explicitly mentioned that republican systems were lacking. Republican systems, in order to reach the perfectness of the Turkish governmental system, had to have new revolutions.²⁵⁹

After the proclamation of the Republic, he accepted that the GNA system of rule, based on the unity of powers, was transitional and was applied in order to conceal his plan to establish a republican regime. He says,

We experienced a transitional period through the process from sultanate to republic. During that period some people favoured the continuation of the sultanate. The other plan was to end the sultanate and establish the republican regime. This was our thought. We avoided explicitly explaining our thought. However, we had to remove the loyalists of the sultanate from the implementation process. When new laws were issued, and especially when the constitution was being prepared, the supporters of the sultanate insisted that the rights and responsibilities of the sultan should be determined. We always told them the time was not convenient to discuss this issue, and it was not necessary at the moment. Without saying a word on the

²⁵⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 225-235.

²⁵⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 230.

²⁵⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 74.

republic, we were governing the state in keeping with the sovereignty of the people, and step-by-step we were progressing towards the republic. It was necessary to emphasize the supremacy of the National Assembly and prove that the state could be governed without the sultan or the caliph. We did not talk about the state presidency; the president of the parliament performed the duties of president of the state. In practice, the second president of the parliament carried out the presidency of the parliament. There was a government. But this government was known as ‘The Government of Grand National Assembly of Turkey’. We avoided the cabinet system because loyalists of the sultanate would immediately suggest the necessity of the use of sultan’s powers.... In this transition period, those who rightfully criticized our GNA system of government, and who tried to secure the implementation of constitutional government were questioning our practices. They asked “which kind of a governmental system do your implementations resemble?” This was nothing other than to force us to explain our future aim. We had to answer according to the necessities of the time in order to appease them.²⁶⁰

Therefore, it can be argued that the type of government during the Independence War served two objectives. Firstly, it partially legitimised the personal authority of Mustafa Kemal as the unity of powers principle granted him the presidency of all the powers. Secondly, it concealed the plans to abolish the sultanate and proclaim the republic. When Mustafa Kemal asked about the nature of his implementation of government, he repeatedly emphasized that his government was a “People’s Government,” based on the principle of populism.²⁶¹

After the Independence War, however, the political meaning attributed to the concept of ‘populism’ was weakened as ‘the people’s sovereignty’ was materialized within the principle of ‘republicanism’ and ‘populism’ began to imply the denial of class conflicts. As mentioned before, the war-time coalition within the parliament necessitated the emphasis on people’s sovereignty as it legitimized the position of the

²⁶⁰ *Nutuk II*, p. 201. All the translations from Turkish to English belong to me.

²⁶¹ On 1 December 1921, he stressed that Ankara government was neither a democratic government nor a socialist government. Ankara government resembled neither of the governments existed in the books. “Our government only manifests the sovereignty of people, the ‘national will’. If we have to name our government from a scientific, social point of view, we call it “people’s government.” See *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 211-2.

parliamentarian nationalists in Ankara. However, as Mustafa Kemal consolidated his authority by abolishing the sultanate and by eliminating the opposition gradually, the necessity for a powerful emphasis on people's sovereignty disappeared. The emphasis shifted from 'people's sovereignty' to the 'unity of nation'. Unity of nation was to be guaranteed by the principle of republicanism, which meant no more than absence of sultanate and replacement of it by an authoritarian and tutelary single party regime, which took over the sovereignty of the people in the name of the people. The new emphasis on 'unity' was to find its expression in the re-interpreted principle of populism. As Zafer Toprak states, the populism of the post-Republican period was highly influenced from solidarism, which favoured an organic solidarity within the society and denied class conflict. Solidarism criticizes liberalism because it causes the emergence of classes with conflicting interests. Similarly, during the single party period, RPP denied liberalism on the same ground. RPP distanced itself from liberalism because it was believed to harm the 'national unity' by causing emergence of the classes.²⁶²

According to Kemal Atatürk, there were no conflicting classes in Turkey. Every class was in need of the other. On 17 February 1923 at the Economic Congress of Izmir he stated that,

Our people are not constituted of classes with separate interests but classes whose existence and cooperative endeavor need each other. Right now, my audiences are the farmers, artisans, traders, and workers. How can one of these classes be against the other? Who can deny that the farmer needs the artisan, and the artisan needs the farmer, the trader, the worker and all the others?²⁶³

²⁶² Zafer Toprak. "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Uluslaşmanın Toplumsal Boyutu: Solidarizm," in *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol.2. İletişim, p. 381. Also for the emergence of solidarist thought among the Ottoman intellectuals, see Zafer Toprak.1995. *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi*. Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.

²⁶³ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 116.

The harmony of classes was necessary for economic development, which necessitated the employment of all the domestic sources in an orderly and a planned way. All classes would contribute to the economic development of the country. Mustafa Kemal states,

As in all the other countries in the world, our most important task is economics. It is vital and indispensable to work in order to gain the biggest success for this task. For this reason, all governmental institutions, all citizens, all of us should involve themselves in this task with great sincerity. The best way will be to choose the practical measures, which are inspired by our fundamental program when we will be taking radical and harsh steps with safety and firmness on our way to national economy. There is only one remedy: to transform all the divisions of labor in our social community into intimate comrades, who are walking with the same purpose and with the same interests, and to relieve the weariness of the state in economical tasks.²⁶⁴

The denial of the existence of class conflict²⁶⁵ legitimised the Kemalist one-party regime. Social harmony was not only inevitable for economic development but also for political harmony that would be assured by the one-party system. Just before the establishment of the People's Party, he stated, "I am considering establishing such a party that its programme provides for the welfare and happiness of all the classes of the nation. Our nation's conditions are directed to this aim."²⁶⁶ Therefore, there would be no need for another party. The Republican People's Party was all embracing. In another statement, he questioned the necessity of a multi-party system for Turkey. He said,

²⁶⁴ "Bütün dünyada olduğu gibi memleketimizde de en başta bulunan muhim işimiz iktisat işidir. Bu işte en yüksek muvaffakiyeti temine çalışmak hayatidir, zaruridir. Bunun için bu işte bütün devlet teşkilatının, bütün yurttaşların ve hepimizin ciddi dıyğularla alakalı olmanız lüzumu tabiidir. Milli iktisat yolunda emin olarak ve emniyet vererek kati ve radikal adımlar atarken, esas programımızın ilham ettiği ameli tedbirleri tercih etmek en doğru yoldur. İçtimai heyetimizin bütün iş bölümleri sahiplerini aynı faydalı alaka ile bu yolun elele vermiş, omuz omuza dayanmış, bir hedefe yürüyen samimi yolcuları yapmak, devletin iktisat işinde yorgunluğunu azaltmak ve muvaffakiyet zamanını kısaltmak için tek çare vardır." *Atatürk'ün Tanım, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p. 612.

²⁶⁵ On certain occasions Kemalism denied the existence of classes. See *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 54.

²⁶⁶ *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 54.

The nation has suffered much from political parties. Let me acknowledge that in other countries, parties are certainly based on economic interests. The reason is that in those countries there are classes. In opposition to a party that represents the interests of one class, another party is formed to preserve the interests of another. This is natural. The consequences we have suffered from the multiplicity of parties that were formed, as if there were classes in our country, are well known. However, when we say the People's Party, included in it is not only a part of the nation but its whole. ²⁶⁷

Kemalist populism, which introduced to Turkey a very pluralist parliament during the Independence War, lost its democratic face by the renewal of the elections in 1923. The First Grand National Assembly had a very heterogeneous nature. This was wartime cooperation between different people with different professions and different ideological points of view. The nationalists, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, formed such a coalition when they faced an external enemy threatening their survival. However, Mustafa Kemal was not satisfied with the heterogeneity of the parliament because there was a powerful opposition unified in their criticism against the authoritarian tendencies of Mustafa Kemal.²⁶⁸ When it was decided to renew the elections, Mustafa Kemal decided to eliminate all the opposing figures and form a more homogenous parliament. This new elections would be the end of populism, which meant 'sovereignty belongs to the people' but the beginning of a paternalistic populism, where only a portion of the sovereignty belonged to the people because the people were forced to leave their sovereign rights to the hands of the Kemalists, who would teach them how to be citizens, how to identify themselves, how to live, and how to believe. In his speech, his description of the selection of the candidates for the parliament is very explanatory for his understanding of paternalism, which meant the determination of the parliamentary majority by the central authority for the name of the people, who were not mature enough to determine their candidates.

²⁶⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 101. The translation is adopted from A. Dirlik, "Third World Identifications," p.17.

²⁶⁸ Demirel, *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet*.

It was decided to renew the elections on the first of April 1923. For the parliament to take this decision was a very important moment in our history of revolution. Because through this decision, the parliament had accepted the illness that appeared within itself, and therefore showed that it understood the anxiety of the nation.... We participated the new elections by announcing our already acknowledged principles. The candidates, who wanted to be parliamentarians by accepting our principles, first of all reported to me that they had accepted the principles, and they were in agreement with our opinion. I would choose the candidates for the Party, and I would announce them. I had preferred that method, because I knew that there would be many people with many interests, who would try to be parliamentarian by deceiving the people. On all sides of the country, my enlightening words were welcomed with great sincerity and confidence. The entire nation totally approved the principles and there remained no possibility for those to be elected, who were against myself and the principles.²⁶⁹

A homogenous parliament, loyal to the authority of the charismatic leader was essential for the post-war development of the country. Therefore, just before the elections he declared his trust in the people, who were expected to elect the candidates that were chosen by Mustafa Kemal.²⁷⁰ In fact, when the candidate lists were prepared, the number of candidates was determined equal to the required number of deputies for the constituency. Therefore, all the Party candidates, who were handpicked by Mustafa Kemal ‘for the people’, were elected ‘by the people’, and none of the independent candidates were allowed to be elected because of the strict control and surveillance of the central authority.²⁷¹ According to Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu, the 1923 elections were merely a formality. The candidates, who were hand-picked by Mustafa Kemal, were elected. The candidates were not offered for election by the people but for the consent of the people²⁷², which had transferred a

²⁶⁹ *Nutuk II*, p. 93.

²⁷⁰ *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 84.

²⁷¹ There was only one exception: Zeki Bey who was an independent deputy. He was elected as a consequence of the powerful reaction of the people of his election constituency. Mustafa Kemal did not oppress them but preferred to submit to the demand of the people. See Mahir İz. 1990. *Yılların İzi*, İstanbul: Kitabevi quoted in Demirel. *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet*, pp.575-81.

²⁷² Demirel. *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet*, pp. 574-5.

part of its sovereignty to the central authority that was controlled by the charismatic leader.

This election was the beginning of the period of tutelary democracy. According to Mustafa Kemal, people needed to be guided and enlightened; otherwise, the consequences could be devastating because traitors could deceive them. The guide of the people would be the People's Party, which was under his total personal control especially after the Law of Maintenance and Order of 1925. He stated,

The most serious threat to a nation governed by the sultans and caliphs is that they might serve the interests of the enemies in return for material benefit. (*düşmanlar tarafından satın alınmalarıdır*). This had happened before many times. In countries that are governed by parliaments, the most frightening thing is that parliamentarians might be stolen and bought by foreigners. Since there are historical examples, it is necessary to believe that we can encounter certain people, who managed to become parliamentarian, although they are not patriotic and they are disloyal to their country. Therefore, the nation has to be very cautious when electing its representatives. The only means to protect the nation from taking the wrong decision is the guidance of a political party, which is trusted by the people for its thought and policies. Although it is possible to accept on the theoretical level that individuals possess a confidential knowledge and a view that is in accordance with the reality that enable these individuals to take their own decision, it is an undeniable fact that this is not the reality, as experience shows.²⁷³

Nevertheless, it should be noted that in theory, Mustafa Kemal did not totally deny liberal democracy. Republican laws did not ban the establishment of another party other than RPP. In an interview with *Time* journal in October 1924, Kemal Atatürk said that it was natural to have political parties in a republican regime.²⁷⁴ The experiences of the Progressive Republican Party of the mid-twenties and the Free Republican Party of the early thirties are evidence that Kemal Atatürk did not

²⁷³ *Nutuk I*, p. 493.

²⁷⁴ *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p.109.

exclude the idea of multi-party democracy. However, these two parties were closed down when it was observed that people had a preference for these parties and their programs. It was because if the RPP transferred the governmental power to another party after an election, this could have resulted in a slowdown of the secularising reforms under the authority of Mustafa Kemal. Therefore, it was preferable to delay the application of multi-party democracy. That time would only come when the Kemalist elite would be persuaded that the Turkish people had reached an expected state of maturity after economic development and cultural westernization. But until that time arrived, the state and the Party were to be closely identified. While the president of the Republic would at the same time be the president of the Party, the prime minister would be the executive chairman of the Party and all the provincial presidents would be the RPP branch in that province.²⁷⁵

As it is derived from the speeches of Kemal Atatürk, the meaning attributed to the ‘government by people’ principle was not the concept of ‘democracy’, but it was the concept of ‘republic’ without a multi-party regime. It cannot be a coincidence that the Kemalist six arrows, which formed the state ideology of Kemalism, do not include democracy.²⁷⁶

SECULARISM AND WESTERNIZATION

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, under his tutelary one-party regime, introduced radical social reforms to transform Turkish society in its progress towards ‘civilization’. One of the principles of the six arrows, *inkılapçılık* (revolutionarism), became the means for total social change. When Atatürk utilized the concept, he meant “a movement aiming at a complete transformation of society by radical

²⁷⁵ Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 185.

²⁷⁶ Ahmet İnel. 2002. “Giriş,” in Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekin. *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce: Kemalizm*. İstanbul: İletişim, p. 20.

measures, to be imposed by force if necessary.”²⁷⁷ He was a critic of the half-measures applied by the nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman elites.²⁷⁸ However, Mustafa Kemal, as the ‘charismatic guide’ of the Turkish nation, never believed that his reforms were against the will of the people. He continually focused on the fact that the essential character of the Turkish nation was realized as a result of the radical reforms of the era (*Türk ulusuna doğumsal rengini veren bu devrimlerden her biri, çok geniş tarihsel devirlerin öğünebileceği büyük işlerden sayılsa yeridir*).²⁷⁹ This was because “it was the aptitude and the absolute decision of the Turkish people to walk towards the republic, civilization, and progress.”²⁸⁰ Thus, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the leader who was the first to discover and materialize the talent and abstract national will of his people. His own position as the introducer of radical reforms was very clearly stated in his statements. He said,

In a nation, there can be people who have good thoughts, and heroes who have the ability to achieve extraordinary tasks. However, their existence has no meaning unless they are the agents, representatives, or the expressions of a common sense. I have done nothing else than been aware of the intentions and the feelings of my nation, and expressing the requirements and the ability I have observed in my great nation. I am proud of my awareness of its ability and its feelings. The whole reason of my happiness is my observance of the nation’s quality that resulted in today’s victory.²⁸¹

When Mustafa Kemal talked about progress towards civilization, he had in mind only one point to arrive at. This was the ‘West’. The means that were utilized in the journey towards westernization were the secularising reforms. According to

²⁷⁷ Paul Dumont. 1984. “The Origins of Kemalist Ideology” in Jacop M. Landau. *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*. Colorado: Westview press, p. 34.

²⁷⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 362.

²⁷⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 398.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.351.

²⁸¹ “Bir millette güzel şeyler düşünen insanlar fevkalade işler yapmaya kabiliyetli kahramanlar bulunabilir. Lakin öyle kimseler yalnız başına hiçbirşey olamazlar, meğerki bir hissi umuminin amili, ifadesi, mümessili olsunlar. Ben milletimin efkar ve hissiyatına yakından vakıf olmaktan, aziz milletimde gördüğüm kaabiliyet ve ihtiyacı ifadeden başka bir şey yapmadım. Onun bu kaabiliyet ve hissiyatına olan vukufumla müftehirim. Milletimde ki bugünkü muzafferiyatı tevlid edecek hassayı görmüş olmak, bütün bahtiyarlığım işte bundan ibarettir.” *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 165.

Mustafa Kemal, there was only one civilization and in order to develop the country it was inevitable that Turkey should join this unique civilization. He thought that there was no nation that wished to join this civilization that did not westernize itself.²⁸²

His firm belief in progress, which meant to westernize, imposed on him the necessity to practice a westernization program; its very immediate consequence being to eliminate religion as a factor of identification for the Turkish nation. The first step undertaken was to create a state version of Islam which would be in complete accord with positivist science. Another step was to impose Western ways of living on the actual daily life of the Turkish people. However, during the days of radical reforms, Mustafa Kemal always utilized this newly-created Islam as a means of legitimisation of his policies.

The very first attempt towards secularization had been the abolition of the caliphate in March 1924. The same day the Kemalist regime abolished the Ministries of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations and realized unification of education under the Ministry of Education, which meant the closure of Medreses which gave a religion-based education to students.²⁸³ This was an attempt to abolish the institutions by which the religious elites attained the reason behind their official existence. The elimination of the religious elites from the state institutions, or making them dependent on the newly-established religious institutions, which were established to control Islam under state authority,²⁸⁴ gave Mustafa Kemal a freehand in his attempts at radical reform.²⁸⁵ On the other hand, the closure of all religious shrines and Dervish lodges enabled Mustafa Kemal's one-party regime to take a step further on its way towards creating a state version of Islam. Islamic *tarikats* (the path

²⁸² *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 90-1.

²⁸³ Berkes, *Secularism*, pp. 461.

²⁸⁴ Directorate of Religious Affairs and Directorate-General for Pious Foundations were established in order to serve the new interpretation of Islam by the Kemalist elites.

²⁸⁵ Baskın Oran. 1999. *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği: Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme*. Ankara: Bilgi, p. 192.

followed by the dervishes for gaining religious maturity under the guidance of a religious leader, named Sheikh), which were located in Dervish lodges, had always been outside the direct control of the state. They also provided unorthodox views of Islam. After the closure of the dervish lodges and religious shrines, Mustafa Kemal emphasized that “the Turkish Republic cannot be the country of sheikhs, dervishes and disciples. The most true and genuine *tarikât* is the *tarikât* of civilization.”²⁸⁶ The *tarikât* of civilization was based on science, so it would be ignorance to look for a *mürşit*²⁸⁷ other than scientific knowledge.²⁸⁸

Nevertheless, the way towards Western civilization, which was guided by the *tarikât* of science, would not conflict with Islam that was reinterpreted under state guidance. He interpreted Islam as the most natural and reasonable religion. According to him, for a religion to be reasonable, it had to be in conformity with reason, science, and logic. Islam was totally in accordance with these criteria. Therefore, it was the last prophetic religion.²⁸⁹

Mustafa Kemal, in his speeches, not only emphasized that Islam was a reasonable religion but always continued his speech by attacking the religious elite who considered the radical reforms as infidelity. According to Mustafa Kemal, the real infidelity was their own ‘false interpretation’. “They are those who wanted Islam to be the slave of infidels.”²⁹⁰ He believed that the reason behind the exploitation of the Islamic countries was their failure to modernize. Muslims’ reaction towards modernization was caused by these wrong interpretations of the religious elites who abused religion. Pure Islam was not only corrupted by the misinterpretations of the

²⁸⁶ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 225.

²⁸⁷ *Mürşit* means the head of a religious order (*Tarikât*). Here, Mustafa Kemal uses the word as a guide. His preference of the word is to delegitimize the existence of *tarikât* heads and their way of guidance. Science would replace the guidance of the *tarikât* sheiks.

²⁸⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 202.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 94.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 132.

religious elite but also as a consequence of the corrupted customs that had been incorporated into religion. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, Islam had been corrupted by the influence of the customs of Byzantines, Arabs, and Iranians.²⁹¹

This purist Islam that was to be revived by the Kemalist reforms had to be taught to every Muslim Turk under the existing education system in schools, and the *ulema* (who were the doctors of Islamic theology) had to be educated by the institutions of the state.²⁹²

In this period, Kemal Atatürk's resort to Islam had reached such a degree that he even claimed that the radical reforms introduced by himself were lacking from the viewpoint of Islam. One of his statements in October 1923 summarizes his point very clearly.

Our policy is not contrary to religion; we even think that it is lacking from the viewpoint of the religion. Turkish people should be religious; I mean they should be religious with their purity. I believe in my religion as I believe in the truth. It contains nothing contrary to reason and to progress. Nevertheless, there is another religion that is more confusing, superficial, and superstitious within the minds of this Asian nation that assured independence of Turkey. However, these ignorant and poor people will be enlightened in the due time. If they don't approach the light, they will destroy and imprison themselves (within their ignorance). We will rescue them.²⁹³

In this interpretation of Mustafa Kemal, the influence of the Young Ottomans, who favoured a return to pure Islam by eliminating the erroneous dogmas that had

²⁹¹ Mustafa Kemal does not accept that the mixing of old customs corrupted Islam among the Turks as it did in other Islamic nations. This was because the pre-Islamic way of life of the Turks was not in conflict with pure Islam. The Turkish way of life did not possess wrong and harmful customs. Therefore, the corruption was not due to the mixing of pre-Islamic customs but was due to the entrance of alien customs. See *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 142-4.

²⁹² *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 94. A Faculty of Divinity was established at the University of Istanbul and Imam and Khatip schools were opened to educate the religious learned men in 1923. See Berkes, *Secularization*, p. 477.

²⁹³ "Siyasetimizi dine mugayir olmak şöyle dursun, din nokta-i nazarından eksik bile hissediyoruz. Türk milleti daha dindar olmalıdır, yani bütün sadeliği ile dindar olmalıdır demek istiyorum. Dinime, bizzat hakikate nasıl inanıyorsam, bunada öyle inanıyorum. Şuura muhalif, terakkiye mani hiçbirşey ihtiva etmiyor. Halbuki Türkiye'ye istiklalini veren bu Asya milletinin içinde daha karışık, suni, itikası batıladan ibaret bir din daha vardır. Fakat bu cahiller, bu acizler sırası gelince tenevvür edeceklerdir. Onlar ziyaya takarrup etmezlerse, kendilerini mahv ve mahkum etmişler demektir. Onları kurtaracağız." *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 93.

interrupted the progress of Islamic countries, can be observed. Like Young Ottomans, Mustafa Kemal was very sensitive and attempted to legitimize his modernizing reforms by using Islam as a criterion. However, contrary to Young Ottomans, whose emphasis on Islam emerged from their own cultural and Islamic background, Mustafa Kemal's sensitivity seems to emerge in order not to be the target of opposition which was still an important factor during the period between 1923 and 1925. As mentioned before, the oppositionist figures' power was a consequence of their legitimacy before the eyes of the people who were also accepted as the heroes of the Independence War.²⁹⁴ Therefore, their criticism against Mustafa Kemal's rule was very essential for the future of the regime. The opposition frequently criticized Mustafa Kemal for his policy of radical change which was believed to be against the popular will. Accordingly, the program of the Progressive Republican Party, where oppositionists gathered together, mentioned that "the inclinations of the population will determine the passing of laws," and in Article 6 it was stated that "the Party respects religious beliefs and convictions."²⁹⁵

When it was accepted that Islam was not in conflict with progress which meant the acceptance of Western civilization, in theory, it became easier for Mustafa Kemal to apply radical reforms. As the ground was prepared, the time for introduction of Western symbols in the daily life of Turkish society came. The emphasis on Islam, which had been used as a means of legitimisation during 1923 and 1924, started to weaken after 1925, after the promulgation of the Law on Maintenance of Order. The elimination of the opposition from the political scene after the passing of this law and after the Izmir assassination attempt in 1926 when most of the oppositionists were either prisoned or sentenced to death enabled Kemal

²⁹⁴ Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp.181-2.

²⁹⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher. 1991. *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925*. New York: E.J.Brill, pp. 99-100.

Atatürk to become more radicalised in the introduction and practice of his planned reforms.

After the elimination of the political opposition, secularisation, which had been limited to the institutional arena, was extended to the daily life of the people. Religious symbols started to be replaced by Western symbols.²⁹⁶

Atatürk was so decisive in his attitude towards the acceptance of Western symbols. When he arrived in Central Anatolia to introduce the Western headgear to the people, he said,

We have to deepen and strengthen the foundations of our revolution. My honored people! We should not deceive ourselves. The civilized world is far advanced. We have to catch up with them and be a member of the circle of civilization. It is necessary to remove all the nonsense. It is meaningless to discuss whether we should wear Western headgear or not. We will not only wear Western headgear but also *accept all the symbols of Western civilization*. Gentlemen! Uncivilized peoples are liable to be trodden under the feet of civilized people.²⁹⁷

This time, Kemal Atatürk, did not point out the criteria of Islam. This was not only because there was no powerful opposition, but also because the radicalism of the reforms that were to follow reached such a degree that they could not be legitimized by Islam. Instead of Islam, he utilized science and international civilization. Any symbol that did not belong to that civilization was unacceptable. Just before the reform of restriction on the religious attire for prayer services in the mosques in September 1926, Mustafa Kemal, speaking to the masses, pointed at a listener's clothes and said that his clothes were very funny and asked whether a

²⁹⁶ The replacement of headgear by traditional headgear in 1925, restriction on religious attire for prayer services in 1925, the decree of 1935 which made Sunday the official day of rest rather than the holy Friday, adoption of the Western clock and calendar in 1926, the adoption of the Latin alphabet in 1928, and the adoption of the Swiss civil code which would regulate family law instead of Sharia were such measures towards the acceptance of Western symbols in daily life. See Zürcher, *Turkey*, pp. 194-203.

²⁹⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, pp. 234-5. Emphasis is mine.

civilized person wore such strange clothes. He added that state officials would change the dress code of the whole nation, and everybody would wear civilized clothes that were practical from the point of view of science and health.²⁹⁸

As can be observed above, Kemalist modernization meant total westernization. Mustafa Kemal was a firm believer in westernization and never questioned that Western civilization could have some deficiencies. Although Mustafa Kemal had been a leader of an independence war led by nationalists against the Western aggressors, his modernization was different from those semi-colonized or colonized non-Western countries, which fought against the West. Non-Western nationalisms had been selective in their attempts at modernization in order to construct themselves as a counter discourse. They were under a political burden which was to be against the colonizing power. Therefore, they had to create a sphere where they could claim their distinctiveness from their enemy. Occidental discourse, which is a mirror image of Orientalism, became the means of the nationalist maneuver in order to manifest their distinctiveness. As in Orientalist discourse, their Occidentalism perceived 'East' and 'West' as separate binary oppositions, both having its own essential characteristics. The 'West' was the domain of matter, and the 'East' was the domain of spirit. The material signified the outside domain, which were science, technology, statecraft, and the economy. The spiritual domain was the one that marked the nation's distinctiveness, since it bore the essential marks of its cultural identity. The nationalists accepted the material superiority of the West. The material aspects could be directly imitated from the West. However, the spiritual superiority of the East was undeniable. It marked the

²⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 226.

sovereign domain into which Western influence was not allowed to penetrate.²⁹⁹ On the other hand, the belief in the spiritual distinctiveness of their native culture provided them with national self-esteem.

In Turkey, an attempt to create a sovereign domain for national identity can be observed in the thought of Ziya Gökalp's, who was a Young Turk sociologist. He provided his prominent interpretation of Turkism at a period when both Ottomanism and Islamism had become bankrupt as ideologies of integration. He made a distinction between civilization which was international, and culture which was national. According to Gökalp, "civilization is the sum total of the concepts and techniques developed according to certain methods and transmitted from nation to nation. Culture, on the other hand, is composed of sentiments which cannot be developed artificially and cannot be transmitted from nation to nation."³⁰⁰ Religion, moral and aesthetic feelings, legal norms and ideals all belonged to the sphere of culture and could not be imitated by another nation.³⁰¹ Therefore, national culture was the sphere where the essential selfness of the nation could be claimed. On the other hand, his interpretation of Turkism did not exclude westernization but was limited to the level of civilization. A westernization policy that aimed at the imitation of Western culture would fail.

Mustafa Kemal, during the Independence War when he was under a military burden, had pursued a policy that focused on the uniqueness of the culture of his

²⁹⁹ Partha Chatterjee, *Milliyetçi Düşünce ve Sömürge Dünyası*, pp. 143-55. In the next chapter, we will see the Chinese nationalist leader Sun Yatsen's interpretation of modernization by his emphasis on the spiritual superiority of Eastern civilizations. As will be explained in the following chapters in detail, during the Independence War Mustafa Kemal, who was also under the political burden of being against the imperialists, tried to create an area, which was to be a criterion of distinctiveness. This criterion was Islam. During the war period, Mustafa Kemal attempted to strengthen the Islamic identity of the people, which not only served as a communal bond but also marked the sovereign domain of the Anatolian people, who were struggling against the Christian enemy.

³⁰⁰ Niyazi Berkes. 1950. *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization: Selected Essays of Ziya Gökalp*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 106.

³⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.108.

people. He frequently criticized imitation and mentioned that change should be based on the spirit of one's own nation; otherwise, the consequences would be the loss of one's identity. In a speech delivered in December 1921, he criticized the *Tanzimat* period modernization as a mere imitation that brought the end of the Empire. He said,

Sultan Mahmut III had taken steps in order to make progress and to reform the government of the country. But the enterprise turned out to be an imitation of Europe. He had undertaken reform attempts, such as importing European laws and regulations, wearing European clothes. But this did not give a real and positive result because it could not have given. This was because it resorted to mimicry in the name of reform.... The confusion caused by these reform attempts, which were no more than imitation, still continues. Look at our clothes. We have adopted European clothes. However, badness, prosperity, and disaster depend on one's mode of reception (*tarzı telakki*). Something that is considered as prosperity by a nation might be disaster for the other. Therefore, if the causes and means that are resorted to by a nation in order to reach something that is considered as prosperity is derived from its own spirit, then, that nation can attain its intention.... Russian Tsar Petro wanted to reform his nation by imitation. In fact, he was a genius of imitation. However, he never possessed the genius of creation and invention. Therefore, when he was taking the measures in order to reform the nation, when he considered that he would perfect the Russians as Russians, he was using the means that perfected a German or Englishman. Whereas, because it is impossible for a Russian to be a German, they lost their own personality, they could not achieve their aim and there appeared nothing other than a confused creature.³⁰²

These statements are totally in contradiction with his post-war policies and statements, which approved of westernization in the name of progress. The reason seems to be the conditions imposed by the war against the Western powers. It would not be reasonable to talk about westernization during a war against the West. The reasonable policy was to instill trust into the nation. He criticized any kind of imitation, even the imitation of governmental systems. During the war, Mustafa Kemal had avoided naming the regime. The above-quoted speech was an answer to a

³⁰² *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp 218-9.

question put by opposition parliamentarians, who asked Mustafa Kemal to name the regime. Mustafa Kemal avoided answering the question by stating, “We resemble ourselves”³⁰³ and criticized imitation. Therefore, the regime would not be similar to any of the regimes existing in the world. By criticizing imitation Mustafa Kemal not only claimed the nation’s distinctiveness but also avoided any ideological discussion that could harm the coalition formed during the war. Therefore, the answer, criticizing imitation, can be regarded as partially tactical during the War of Independence.

It is important to mention that, even in the very critical periods of the war against West, Mustafa Kemal had given signs of his belief in the superiority of the Western civilization by cautiously distinguishing between the ‘official Europe’ and the ‘Europe of culture, science, and civilization’. On 16 March 1920, in the telegraph he had written to the Western countries’ embassies in order to protest the occupation of Istanbul, it can be observed that Mustafa Kemal complained about the imperialism of the Western states to the Western people, who possessed the values of the Western civilization.

*Biz, hukukumuzu ve istiklalimizi müdafaa için giriştiğimiz mücadelenin kutsiyetine kail ve hiçbir kuvvetin bir milleti yaşamak hakkından mahrum edemeyeceğine kaniyiz. Tarihin bugüne kadar kaydetmediği bir suikast teşkil eden ve Wilson prensiplerine müstenit bir mütarekenin, milleti esbabı müdafaasından tecrit etmiş olmasından mütevellit bir hileye de müpteni bulunmak hesabıyla ait oldukları milletlerin şeref ve haysiyetiyle dahi kabili imtizac olmayan bu hareketin takdiri mahiyetini resmi Avrupa ve Amerikanın değil, ilmi irfan ve medeniyet Avrupa ve Amerikasının vicdanına tevdi ve iktifa ve bu hadiseden tevellüt edecek mesuliyeti azime-i tarihiyeye son defa bir daha nazarı dikkati umumiyeyi celbederiz.*³⁰⁴

³⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 219. Also see *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, pp. 211-2.

³⁰⁴ *Nutuk I*, p. 410.

The post-war westernization of Turkey would be a total imitation of the 'Europe of culture, science, and civilization'. The partial acceptance of Western civilization is not observable in Mustafa Kemal's thought. He did not separate civilization into material and spiritual spheres. Contrary to Ziya Gökalp, he denied any distinction between culture and civilization. The reason behind this total westernization project could be sought both in the conditions of the country and in the psychology of Mustafa Kemal, whose personal role during the initiation of radical reforms is undeniable. Firstly, early modernization attempts were very indigenous in Turkey. However, in colonized countries the colonizers initiated the modernization process. It was impossible for the colonized countries to separate official Europe and the Europe of civilization. This was the effect of direct colonization. Secondly, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was very ambitious for a Western way of life. In his biographies, it can be observed that since his youth, he had lived a very westernized way of life, especially in Salonika and Sofia. He was reactive to traditional symbols of daily life and considered most of them as absurd and unacceptable from the viewpoint of civilization.³⁰⁵

However, his total westernization program resulted with two problems. First, it would cause the loss of distinctive identity of the Turkish people. Turkish nation would also lose their own national self-esteem if they were required to leave all their native values and replace them with Western values. Secondly and very related with the first one, total westernization had caused more popular unrest than the secularization policies at institutional level. For Kemalists, these were reforms for the people in spite of the people. These reforms were imposed from the top. There was a contradiction between the abstract national will that was discovered by Kemal

³⁰⁵ In many of his speeches during the costume reforms, he criticized the woman and men costumes, arguing that with these costumes, we would not be able to enter in public places in civilized Europe. See *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, pp. 229-235.

Atatürk as mentioned earlier and concrete mass demands. This dilemma was attempted to be solved by educating the people along Western lines.

Despite the total westernization attempts, Kemalism had its own strategy for constructing the selfness of the Turkish national identity which would not also contradict with the westernization project. While Eastern colonized countries embraced their own traditional spiritual values as the essence and sovereign domain of their identity, Mustafa Kemal and his comrades turned their face to the pre-Islamic period of Turkish history in order to provide the Turkish people with national self-esteem and a kind of distinctive identity. A new historiography was built with the encouragement of Mustafa Kemal in the early thirties³⁰⁶ that emphasized the pre-Islamic achievements of the Turkish people in Central Asia. The thesis was expected to create a new “mental set” for the Turkish people in order to solve the crises caused by total westernization. According to this thesis, which was to be called The Turkish History Thesis, Turkish culture would be represented as the mother of civilizations. With this thesis, an attempt was made to imbue the Turkish people with a kind of confidence that would make them proud of being Turkish. It also eliminated Islam as a factor in the construction of the Turkish nation because the Turkish people had been a great people even before they became Muslims. On the other hand, this thesis enabled the Kemalists to reduce the Ottoman Empire to a small part in Turkish history. The History Thesis “was successful in casting a pessimistic shadow on the immediate past and in severing Turkish history from its strongest and longest period, the Ottoman Empire.”³⁰⁷ The denial of the Ottoman past was very important for two reasons. Firstly, it would legitimize its westernization program which necessitated the elimination of Islam. In Ersanlı’s words,

³⁰⁶ Turkish History Thesis was presented at the History Congress in 1932.

³⁰⁷ Büşra Ersanlı Behar, *The Turkish History Thesis*, p. 276.

Rejecting the historical reality of the Ottoman and Islamic periods, the Turkish History Thesis tried to create a golden age of secular implication from romanticized pre-Islamic, pre-historic past. In many ways secular policies of the Turkish revolution were justified by a historical thesis that hoped secular roots could be unearthed from pre-Islamic past at either Central Asia or in Anatolian excavation sites.”³⁰⁸

Secondly, the thesis strengthened Kemal Atatürk’s personal legitimacy because he had ended the Empire and had obtained his presidential legitimacy from the absence of the Ottoman Empire. After the introduction of the history thesis until it lost its validity, “historians of the Republic thought of Turkish history as consisting simply of mythological connections with Central Asia plus Atatürk’s revolution.”³⁰⁹ Atatürk was the ‘father of all Turks’, who returned the lost values and superior culture of the ancient Turks of Central Asia to the modern Turks of Anatolia by the revolution which ended the period that caused the Turks to lose their ‘essential identity’.

The Turkish History Thesis not only served to create a new Turkish identity but it also served the westernization project. The construction of the Turkish identity by the Turkish History Thesis did not create a space for the uniqueness of Turkish culture like the nationalists of colonized countries’ emphasis on the uniqueness of their culture on a non-material level. A denial of the spiritual superiority of Western culture by separating European civilization into spiritual and material levels could not serve the Kemalist reforms that had penetrated into the cultural spheres of the daily life of the people. On a theoretical level, the problem would be solved by claiming that pre-Islamic Turkish civilization was the source of all civilizations. The Turks, under the pressure of bad geographical conditions, had had to leave their

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 269-70.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 276-7.

fatherland and had dispersed to all continents. Not only were the first residents of Anatolia Turks but also those who first dwelt in Europe were the Turks who had migrated from Central Asia. In the words of Mustafa Kemal,

The Turkish homeland is delineated by sea and land and is located to the west of Asia and to the east of Europe. This country is named as *Türk Eli* and it is known world wide. The Turkic country was much larger. In the near and distant past, there is no continent that has not been home to the Turks. All over the world, Asia, Europe, Africa had been home to the Turks. This reality is proved by historical evidence.³¹⁰

The Turks were believed to have taught their superior civilization to the nations which they had encountered. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had a firm belief in the role played by the Turks in bringing civilization to other nations; in January 1931 he mentioned that “It was the Turkish nation, who taught agriculture and art to humanity. Real scientists do not doubt that the Turkish nation was the educator of the world.”³¹¹

All the above-quoted beliefs in the civilizational role of the Turkish people had served the westernization process of Turkey. As the Turks were the educators of the world, they had also been the educators of Western civilization, so a westernization program, which would bring Turkey to the level of contemporary and the most mature civilization of the world, would mean a return to the essential characteristics of the Turkish people.

It is impossible to understand the westernization project of Mustafa Kemal without analysing the Turkish History Thesis. During the period of reforms, Mustafa Kemal, being the leader of an independence movement against the imperialist powers, provided the space that he could inject national confidence to the people by

³¹⁰ Atatürk. 1997. *Yazdığı ve Yazdırdığı Fikirleri ile Atatürk*. İstanbul: Kazancı, p.7.

³¹¹ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, pp. 297-8.

the History Thesis. On the other hand, since the period of national superiority was found within the pre-Islamic past, the harsh consequences of the task of creating a secular Turkish identity was believed to be softened. The History Thesis, which tried to create a secular national consciousness, was disseminated among the people through the educational institutions and *Halk Evleri* (People's Houses) that were established in 1931 as institutions of cultural activities. These houses were aimed at strengthening the bonds between the regime and the people by increasing contact with the people, who were discontent with the radical reforms. By the new public sphere created in the People's Houses, the people were expected to become familiar with the new ideology that had been introduced with the Kemalist reforms. However, it should be noted that the People's Houses aimed to create a new Turkish men in Western line. This was tried to be achieved by activities in the People's Houses, which were in conformity with Western culture.³¹² But also as the discussion in this chapter tries to demonstrate, it was expected to be a Western Turkish men\women, who is not confused by the radical social and cultural change. This was tried to be achieved by educating the men by propositions of the Turkish History Thesis.

Whether the History thesis was successful or not in creating a new identity by eliminating Islam as a factor that constituted this identity is not the topic of this thesis. On the other hand, imagining a new 'history' for the recently 'created nation' is not unique to Turkey. Since the nineteenth century, European nationalisms were also experiencing a process of imagining a 'national history' that had invented new traditions, had re-narrated or adopted the earlier forms of identifications and traditions. In the case of Turkey, the History Thesis demonstrates the tactical genius

³¹² Neşe G. Yeşilkaya.2002. "Halkevleri" in Tanıl Bora, ed. *Kemalizm*, pp. 113-118. Mustafa Kemal thought that social and cultural *inkılap*s were a consequence of the opening of the People's Houses, which embraced the whole people. *Söylev ve Demeçler* I, p.401.

of Mustafa Kemal, who attempted to compromise his westernization project by the national identity.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk not only changed the regime in Turkey by eliminating the Ottoman Empire from the scene of history, he also tried to change the way Turkish people had identified themselves. In the next chapter, the Chinese nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen's efforts to bring a revolution to China through his efforts to re-identify the Chinese people, both by referring to the Chinese tradition and Western civilization will be examined.

PART III

NATION-BUILDING IN CHINA

The early twentieth century, which marked the end of the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire with the emergence of a Turkish Republic on a unitary nation-state model in 1923, was also a decisive period for the destiny of Qing Empire in its struggle against the forces of the new world order determined by the ambitions of the imperialist powers. As mentioned previously, the anxiety among intellectuals, students, and state elites, caused by continuing military defeats of the Empire in its struggle against Western imperialist forces which forced it to make economic, territorial, and judicial concessions after the Opium War (1838-1842), reached its climax with the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. This defeat was very humiliating and an undeniable evidence of the decay of the Empire, since China had to accept the superiority of Japan, a tribute-giving small state of the past.

The anxiety among intellectuals and students about the integrity of the country would soon turn into a revolutionary sentiment as the constitutionalist reforms initiated by the Emperor *Guangxu* in 1898 were doomed to fail. Most of the intellectuals, students, and scholars began to question the capability of the throne to initiate reforms for self-strengthening.

Another event that confirmed the belief of the newly-emerging revolutionary forces, which had lost their faith in the Manchu dynasty for the revival of China, was the Boxer Incident, which lasted from 1898 to 1901. The Boxers were members of various secret societies who had gathered together in an anti-foreign and anti-Christian cause. They recruited desperate farmers and workers who accused the foreigners and Christian converts for their impoverishment and then attacked them. The slogan of the Boxers was "revive the Qing, destroy the foreigners." However,

the Qing court, which they had sworn to revive, was unable to protect them despite an initial gesture of the court to support them. The Western powers- Russia, Britain, the United States, France- and Japan formed an expeditionary column and attacked Beijing and defeated the Boxers and supportive Qing forces. The Boxer Protocol, signed in September 1901, contained very harsh clauses such as the war indemnities, a ban on imports of arms for two years, besides the humiliation of symbolic ones, such as the article that forced the Qing court to erect monuments to the memory of the Western dead.³¹³

The events that caused the emergence of a new revolutionary activism that pledged to overthrow the Manchu dynasty and establish a republic did not cause reformist scholars, such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao to lose their belief in constitutional monarchism. As explained in the second chapter, the defeats of the Philipinos and Boers in their struggle against Western powers, proved to reformist circles, led by Liang Qichao, that a strong state was an inevitable necessity in a country's struggle for survival. The lack of a strong state was the reason behind the Phillipino and Boer defeats. And a revolution could cause harm to China, destabilizing the country and dragging it into turmoil as had happened in France. However, another group, who had lost all their confidence in the Manchu dynasty and its ability to strengthen the country, interpreted the Phillipino and Boer struggles in a way that would serve their hopes for a revolution that could only be achieved after the Chinese people were awakened to the dangers of imperialism and rebelled against those who were unable to protect the country's interests. The Philipinos and Boers were to become models for the Chinese, since these small nations were able to manifest their national spirit as they launched the greatest struggles against the most powerful states in the world. The awakening of the Chinese people would no doubt

³¹³ For the articles of Boxer Protocol, see Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. 233.

end with victory against the Westerners because China had a vast territory and huge population.

Global events were reconfiguring the minds of Chinese nationalists, who began to ask what the unit in China's struggle against imperialism should be. And in contrast to the reformists, the revolutionaries concluded that nation/race had priority over state. A struggle, then, would be based on the Chinese race, not on the decaying Manchu state. The examples of the Boers and Philipinos had demonstrated them the vitality of a national spirit, the examples of Poland and Jews demonstrated them that a nation could survive without even the existence of a state. Analyzing these nation-models, Chinese revolutionaries concluded that the existence of a people did not have any relation with the state that governed them. This enabled them to base their struggle on the people against the Qing state that was headed by the Manchu who were now seen as 'foreigners'.³¹⁴

The reformist and revolutionary conflict in China was much more apparent than in the Ottoman Empire because the Chinese Empire was ruled by 'foreigners'. Therefore, the question of whether to give priority to toppling the foreign dynasty or to give priority to the anti-imperialist struggle determined the line demarcating revolutionary and reformist thought. One can argue that existence of a foreign dynasty facilitated the activity of the revolutionaries. They were very explicit in their arguments that the Manchu were an alien race that had usurped the sovereign rights of the Chinese people. However, in the Turkish case, even revolutionaries, as explained in the preceding chapter, had to give priority to the anti-imperialist struggle by hiding their intention that they intended to establish a republic, and frequently pledged that they were struggling for the survival of the caliphate and

³¹⁴ For a discussion on the influence of the Boer War, Philippino struggle and the partition of Poland on Chinese intellectuals, see Rebecca Karl, *Staging The World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 117-148.

sultanate. Only when the Independence War came to an end, could the revolutionary leader Mustafa Kemal abolish the sultanate and switch to another discourse that represented the Ottoman dynasty as a foreign element that had usurped the sovereign rights of the Turkish people. The Ottoman dynasty members began to be represented as “robbers” who had harmed the Turkish people with their frequent struggles for the throne³¹⁵, and the Ottoman court began to be represented as ‘foreign’ because of its dependence of non-Turkish people especially in high governmental posts.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Söylev ve Demeçler II, pp. 189-90.

³¹⁶ Söylev ve Demeçler II, p. 186.

Chapter V

THE DEVELOPMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT IN CHINA: THE LEADING ROLE OF SUN YATSEN

THE EMERGENCE OF A REVOLUTIONARY LEADER: SUN YATSEN

The anti-Manchu revolutionary movement in China was led under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen. Sun Yat-sen is still praised by both the Taiwanese state and Communist China as the 'father of the nation'. His pioneering role in the revolutionary movement of China is undeniable. Who was Sun Yat-sen, and what were the most important elements of his ideas?

Sun Yat-sen was born in a village near Guangzhou (Canton) in 1866 as a member of a peasant family. Like M. Kemal Atatürk, the place of his origin was open to cosmopolitan influences because it was near to the coastal port cities of China which were far away from the Confucian center of the mainland, and which produced hybrid cultures as a result of the influence of foreigners living nearby, especially the British colony of Hong Kong and the Portuguese colony of Macao. The coastal Chinese were among the first to develop a modern nationalism not only because they faced the threat of Western imperialism, but also because they witnessed Western economic development and military superiority. Hence coastal Chinese produced solutions that depended more on a policy of development copied from the Western model. The coastal Chinese nationalists, just like the Turkish Westernist nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal, proposed 'westernization in spite of the West'. Their nationalism was much different from the nationalism of the Boxers who were anti-foreign and anti-Christian. As the life experience of Sun Yat-sen demonstrates, Sun's nationalist discourse was a product of this coastal Chinese

nationalism.³¹⁷ Many years later, Sun Yat-sen would say that what made him a revolutionary “was the contrast between the orderly and progressive British administration of Hong Kong, under which the Chinese prospered, and the conservatism and corruption of officials in his nearby native town, in the provincial administration, and particularly in Peking.”³¹⁸ He defined his aim in 1896 as to recreate a Chinese nation based on restoring the order of the Three Dynasties as well as emulation of the ways of the West.³¹⁹

Sun Yat-sen’s education did not provide him with the qualifications that were necessary for him to be accepted into the traditional scholar-elite circle. In that sense, he had a different path from Mustafa Kemal because Mustafa Kemal, having had a military education, was a member of the elite circle of the late Ottoman society. Sun Yat-sen, at the age of thirteen, having had a traditional primary school education in the village schools, was sent to Hawaii to join his elder brother.³²⁰ In Hawaii he was sent to a missionary school, where he learnt English and acquired knowledge of Christianity. His brother, becoming anxious about Sun’s tendency towards the foreign religion, sent him back to China. However, Sun had already deviated from the traditional belief system of rural Chinese society as a result of his education under missionaries. Upon his return, it would be hard for Sun to accept the superstitions in the village, and he was to commit his first act against popular religion by desecrating three statues of deities in the village temple. The community banished

³¹⁷ Marie Claire Bergère. 1998. *Sun Yat-sen*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 21.

³¹⁸ Quoted in C. Martin Wilbur. 1976. *Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot*. New York: Colombia University Press, p. 13.

³¹⁹ Sun Yat-sen. 1994. *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*. Julie Lee Wei and Ramon H. Myers, eds. Stanford: Hoover Inst. Press, p. 19.

³²⁰ During that period many Chinese from the southern provinces of China were emigrating to Southeast Asia, the United States and Hawaii for a better future, which they were not able to gain in the native provinces where arable land was scarce and population dense. See Jonathan D. Spence. 1982. *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution 1895-1980*. Penguin Books, p.44.

him from the village, and Sun left for Hong Kong.³²¹ In Hong Kong he continued his education in English. In 1884, missionary education gave its fruits, and Sun Yat-sen adopted Christianity and lived as a Christian until his death. Paradoxically, in the same year he married a girl in the traditional arranged marriage method. In 1887, he entered the College of Medicine for Chinese in Hong Kong.

During his years in medical college, when he realized that he was becoming more alienated from traditional knowledge, he attempted to train in traditional Chinese literature. He studied Chinese under a tutor and read the dynastic histories.³²² Nevertheless, this would never suffice to gain the respect of the literati, and this would be the reason behind the Chinese nationalists' vacillating attitude toward Sun Yat-sen. Later, during his activist years, he was frequently to lose supporters to the reformist organizations led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao because they were prestigious literates, and even Kang Youwei had managed to become the advisor of the Emperor during the Hundred Days Reforms. For Kang Youwei, Sun was no more than an 'uneducated bandit'.³²³

After his graduation from college, Sun attempted to establish contact with the pioneering reformist state elites of the Qing Empire, since this seemed to be the swiftest way to working for the strengthening of the country. Also, during these early years, his revolutionary thought had probably not yet reached its maturity. The most important one among his attempts to communicate with the reformist state elites was his petition to the viceroy Li Hongzhang of Tianjin in 1894. In this petition, he explained the reasons behind Western development. He explained that it was not military power behind Western strength, but their ability to employ people's talents,

³²¹ Sidney H. Chang and Leonard H.D. Gordon. 1991. *All Under Heaven: Sun Yat-sen and His Revolutionary Thought*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, pp. 7-8.

³²² C. Martin Wilbur. 1976. *Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot*, p. 12.

³²³ Bergère. *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 77.

to fully utilize their lands and natural resources and allow free flow of goods. He emphasized the importance of education and presented himself as a candidate willing to serve for the strengthening of the country by making use of his Western education.³²⁴ Sun wanted to have a direct interview with Li Hongzhang, but as had occurred in his previous attempts to communicate with other reformists, he was refused.³²⁵ According to many authors of Sun Yat-sen's biography, the failure of Sun to enter the reformist circles forced him to become a revolutionary.³²⁶ After he was denied access to reformist circles, he turned his face to the peripheral members of the Chinese society, namely the secret societies, overseas Chinese, and the westernized compradors and merchants. As he would later proclaim, those who had generously contributed money to the revolutionary army were mostly the overseas Chinese, and those who fought and defeated the enemy were soldiers and members of the secret societies. These elements were praised by Sun for being more receptive to his message than scholar-officials.³²⁷

The starting point of Sun's revolutionary activism was to form the 'Revive China Society' in Hawaii in 1894. This society was indeed very small, with no more than a hundred members. The important point is that the manifesto of this society does not mention a necessity to overthrow the Manchu dynasty and to establish a republic. The reason behind the foundation of the society was presented as the threat of imperialism which coveted the country for its rich resources. The Manchu court was only blamed for its misgovernment which had weakened the country, and thus

³²⁴ For the whole text of this petition, see *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 4-15.

³²⁵ For Sun's reformist period, see Harold Z. Schiffrin. 1968. "The Enigma of Sun Yat-sen," in Mary Clabaugh Wright, ed. *China in Revolution: The First Phase 1900-1913*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 445-7.

³²⁶ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 41 and Harold Z. Schiffrin. "The Enigma of Sun Yat-sen," p. 446 and also see Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot*, p.13.

³²⁷ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 260.

had made China fall prey to imperialist powers.³²⁸ However, eyewitnesses later claimed that the secret oath of the society included a pledge to overthrow the Manchus.³²⁹

Just after the establishment of the Revive China Society, Sun returned to Hong Kong for the organization of an uprising against the central government in Canton (Guangzhou). The Canton uprising in 1896 was only the first of other ten unsuccessful uprisings that was organized by Sun until 1911. The uprising was financed by the donations of the overseas Chinese to the Revive China Society and by the sale of bonds that were promised to be redeemed at ten times their value once an uprising against the Manchu court had been achieved.³³⁰ The Canton uprising and the following ten uprisings had much in common. First, he coordinated his plan in alliance with several secret society leaders. He recruited the rebels from among members of secret societies. They were all too loosely organized for immediate political results. All of them looked for foreign aid, even if it came from a power that had imperialist ambitions on China, such as Japan, Britain, and France and an external base for revolutionary activities that were beyond the reach of the central authority.³³¹

Recruitment of Secret Societies³³² is important for our understanding of anti-Manchu activities in China during these years. According to Sun Yat-sen, secret

³²⁸ For the full text of the Manifesto, see Milton J. T. Shieh. 1970. *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*. John Hopkins University, pp. 1-4.

³²⁹ Sidney H. Chang and Leonard H.D. Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, pp. 16-7.

³³⁰ *Ibid*, p.17.

³³¹ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 58-9.

³³² Secret societies were composed of diverse social elements. Especially in the nineteenth century, people from various classes could become secret society members. This was mainly the consequence of imperialism and rebellions that uprooted the people from their soil and jobs. These societies had many different kind of goals, such as "mutual aid and group solidarity, Robin Hood type operations as well as preying on the poor, anti-state activities and/or anti-foreign activities, religious activities, criminal activities and, occasionally, even anti-lord activities". See Prasenjit Duara. 1995. *Rescuing History from Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 118.

societies were the “repositories of an authentic national consciousness”³³³ because they had preserved the anti-Manchu sentiment ever since the Ming dynasty had lost its power to the Manchus, although the literati were easily absorbed by the Qing bureaucracy through the examination system. Ming patriots, who understood that they could not depend on scholars to preserve the nationalist spirit, had decided to organize societies among the lower ranks of the Chinese people. According to Sun, this was like “hiding jewels in mud during risky times.”³³⁴ This was a right decision since, thanks to the role of the secret societies, the Chinese people, who were in constant conflict with imperial officials, “never abandoned their opposition to the Qing dynasty. ‘Down with the Qing’ and ‘long live Ming’ were near and dear to many Chinese.”³³⁵

It is true that anti-Manchu sentiment existed among secret societies, especially among those located in the southern regions. However, it is impossible to narrate a history of the secret societies by only regarding them as the agents of anti-Manchu cause. As the Boxer movement of 1898-1901 manifests, many of them were able to promote an anti-foreign and anti-Christian slogan rather than an anti-Manchu one. However, according to Duara, similar to the nationalists’ transformation, they began to give priority to the anti-Manchu slogan when it became obvious that the Manchu court was unable to protect the interests of the Empire against the imperialists.³³⁶

Sun Yat-sen was forced to exile by the central government after the badly organized Canton uprising of 1895. He was also banished from Hong Kong by the

³³³ *Ibid*, p.135.

³³⁴ Sun Yat-sen. 1931. *The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-sen*. Paschal Delia, trans. Wuchang: The Franciscan Press, p. 121.

³³⁵ Sun Yat-sen. 1969. *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary: A Programme of National Reconstruction of China*. London: Hutchinson, p. 192.

³³⁶ Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, pp. 122-3.

British authorities. This was to be the start of his 16 years of exile outside China. In order to avoid extradition, he fled to Japan. There, he changed his physical appearance by cutting off his pigtail, which was a sign of subordination of the Han Chinese by the Manchus, by growing a mustache and wearing a Western suit.³³⁷

Because of the Canton failure, pessimism appeared among the overseas Chinese, who were the most important element for fund raising. In order to regenerate revolutionary thinking and to raise funds for the coming uprisings he left Japan for the United States, Hawaii, and England. His stay in London was one of the most important episodes that turned Sun into a revolutionary hero. This was his being kidnapped by the Chinese legation. Fortunately, an old British friend, Dr. James Cantlie, who appealed to the British Foreign Office and publicized the event by organizing the press for Sun's cause, rescued him. After his release, Sun gave press conferences, made interviews and wrote articles, where he explained his revolutionary cause. Thus the event, which could have put an end to Sun's life, resulted in publicity for Sun, which transformed him from a rebel leader into a revolutionary one.³³⁸

THE IDEA OF ANTI-MANCHUISM AND REVOLUTION

In 1897, Sun Yat-sen settled in Japan, where he entered into contact with the Chinese students in Japan and the Japanese pan-Asianists, through whom he tried to gain the support of the Japanese for the Chinese revolution.³³⁹ Also, during his years in Japan, he would finally gain the support of some of the intellectual circles that he had lacked until then. His revolutionary role was finally accepted by the Chinese students in Japan, as they also lost their trust in Beijing for reform that would

³³⁷ Sun Yat-sen, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 188-9.

³³⁸ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp.61-4.

³³⁹ For Sun's contacts with Japanese pan-Asianists, see Marius, B. Jansen. 1954. *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*. Stanford University Press.

strengthen the country in its anti-imperialist struggle. Although it was Sun who was granted the leadership of the new organization established in 1905-the Revolutionary Alliance- his intellectual role in this transformation was limited. What caused the students to turn their face from reformism was Zhang Binglin, an eminent scholar, who developed a more scholarly discourse on anti-Manchuism. On the other hand, the anti-Manchu sentiment was ignited by the publication of *The Revolutionary Army*, written by Zou Rong in 1903. This new anti-Manchu discourse among the students that was also utilized by Sun Yat-sen was a re-surfacing of Ming patriotism along a Social Darwinist reading of relations between races. While Ming patriotic writings, such as those of Wang Fuzhi, made the revolutionary nationalists claim that the Manchus were foreign 'barbarians' who had captured the Chinese territory by force, Social Darwinism taught them that it was the evolutionary right of the Han Chinese to overthrow the unfit Manchus. Zong Rou in his famous "inflammatory" book, *Revolutionary Army*, called upon the Han Chinese to take revenge from their fathers' and brothers' murderers in order to remain loyal to the Confucian precepts of filial piety and fraternal respect. He ended his book with the song of an early Ming patriot. "I grasp a great sword, chop, chop, chop. I will kill every Tartar before I stop."³⁴⁰ Zhang Binglin, on the other hand, was campaigning against the reformist effort to place the Manchus and Han Chinese in the same nation/race in the struggle against the white races. Zhang Binglin argued that the Manchus were far from being assimilated. According to him, racial groups were to be distinguished by historical factors rather than by nature. It was history that produced different races. While other races had been assimilated into the Chinese tradition, the Manchus had imposed their own customs on the Chinese, such as the pigtail, and they maintained their own cultural signifiers, such as their language. They had attempted to assimilate the

³⁴⁰ See James Reeve Pusey. 1983. *China and Charles Darwin*. Harvard University Press, p.321.

Chinese. Their acceptance of Confucian principles was only a device to deceive the Chinese people in order to preserve their position as rulers. He also mentioned the Manchu atrocities. He argued that during their occupation of Chinese territory not only had leading Manchus killed Chinese people, but all the Manchus had taken part in the act of massacre, so “Chinese hatred of the Manchus should be hatred for them all.”³⁴¹

The Imperial Court, which was previously accused for the misgovernment that had paved the way for imperialism, began to be represented as the government of the ‘colonizers’. China was in a condition of double slavery. To get rid of the Manchus was a problem of survival. Hu Hanmin, a close collaborator of Sun Yat-sen, summarized this point as such,

As soon as one speaks of driving out the Manchus, those listening suspect one of speaking in narrow terms of vengeance. Little do they know that the Manchus’ standing in the ranks of the unfit as a result of their deeds is just like our Han race’s having to free itself from the control of an alien race if it is to compete with outsiders for its survival. It is all a matter of evolution and nature; there is no malice involved.³⁴²

Sun Yat-sen also developed similar arguments. According to him, the Manchus had to be overthrown, firstly because they were foreigners who did not have the right to rule the Chinese, and secondly, only the overthrow of the Manchus could prevent the partition of China by imperialist powers. He frequently referred to the Manchus as ‘cruel robbers’ and ‘Tartar slaves’.³⁴³ He explained the capture of Chinese sovereignty by the Manchus in 1905 as such,

³⁴¹ For the above quoted argument of Zhang Binglin, see Michael Gasster. 1969. *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911: The Birth of Modern Chinese Radicalism*. Seattle: University of Washington press, pp. 195-6.

³⁴² Quoted in Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, p. 321.

³⁴³ See his Autobiography written in 1896 published in *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 18-21.

The present Manchuria was originally a territorial possession of the outer barbarians. During the Ming Dynasty these barbarians were a constant menace to China. Finally they took advantage of our internal chaos, entered China at Shankaikwan and conquered us. By force they made us their slaves, killing hundreds of thousands of those who refused to obey them. Chinese have now suffered under a foreign government more than two hundred and sixty years. The Manchus have done us enough cruelty. Now is the time to raise an army and overthrow the Manchu government and regain the sovereignty of our country.³⁴⁴

For Sun, the priority had to be given to the overthrow of the Manchus because if the Chinese people manifested their own national spirit and strength by the overthrow of their 'colonizers', there would remain no way for foreign powers but to respect the Chinese. In 1903, in an article against the reformists' argument, which claimed that revolution could result in the further partitioning of China because of the turmoil it would create, he wrote that

Today, the Manchu government is finished. It has already lost not only all of its strategic regions but even its place of origin. Day by day, month by month, it is losing more land and more cities, and it will eventually perish. The only ray of hope that remains for its survival is the aspirations of the people. If the people can gradually wake up, bestir themselves, mount a great revolution, and at one stroke overthrow the corrupt and nearly defunct Manchu government, then the powers will have only admiration and respect for us.... First, we must oust the alien rulers and restore our own political power. Then we can prevent the Manchus from, on one day, signing a treaty ceding Shantung (Shandong) and, on another, an agreement selling out Kwantung (Guangdong) and Kwanxi (Guangxi). The Manchu government not only signs treaties and articles that cede away our territories, but furthermore, suppresses local rebellions on behalf of foreigners and then hands over those localities to them as gifts.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴ Sun Yat-sen. 1945. *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*. Compiled by N. Galgulee. London: The Sylvan Press, p. 31.

³⁴⁵ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 30.

Sun Yat-sen frequently gave examples from either small nations, such as Panama, Serbia, Poland, Transvaal, or from threatened nations with a powerful past, such as ‘Turkey’ in order to prove his argument that only revolution could prevent the partition of China. The 1908 revolution of Young Turks had made a deep impression on Chinese nationalists, although the empathy with Turkish nationalists did not last long as it became apparent that they could not prevent the partition of ‘Turkey’, since it was not a revolution in the real sense, for it preserved the monarchy.³⁴⁶ In 1908 Sun claimed that “ever since the European advance eastward, the turmoil resulting from the China problem has remained unresolved for over one hundred years. Consequently, China has been called the “Sick Man of the Far East.” But now the question of partitioning Turkey, the “Sick Man of the Near East,” has been resolved through revolution.”³⁴⁷ He would continue to develop his argument by proclaiming that the defeat of China, which had a vast territory and population, by Japan and the conquest of it by a tiny nation such as the Manchus only increased the confidence of European powers.

When the West witnessed in Japan’s defeat of China, the conquest of a nation so vast in territory and population by a minuscule country like Japan, ambitious persons in the various nations began urging that China be partitioned. They say the Chinese people are deficient in love for their race and country, but excel in obeying and fawning on alien races. When even the Manchus, a savage tribe of several million, could conquer and rule China for more than two centuries, certainly our civilized and powerful European nations could do the same.³⁴⁸

All the above arguments of Sun Yat-sen and other prominent revolutionary writers suggest that to overthrow the ‘unfit’ Manchus would be the re-awakening of

³⁴⁶ For a discussion on the influence of Young Turk revolution on the Chinese nationalists, see Rebecca Karl, *Staging the World*, pp. 177-93.

³⁴⁷ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 53.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 53-4.

the Han Chinese to their nationhood. Otherwise, they would be exterminated in the evolutionary struggle for survival.³⁴⁹ The revolutionary nationalists' equation of revolution with the struggle for survival was to bring them into full conflict with the reformists, such as Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, who would welcome the initiation of the constitutionalist reforms based on the Japanese model by the Manchu court as had been promised in the Imperial Edict of 1901. Revolutionaries never accepted any reform led by the 'unfit' Manchu race because it would not prove fruitful.

The reform period marks in China the establishment of a new political structure on foreign models, especially by imitating the Japanese Meiji reforms. The Manchu court initiated judicial and educational reforms and established a New Army in 1903 by recruiting and organizing it in a Western manner. The traditional examination system was abolished in 1905, which opened up government offices to the modern intelligentsia. On the other hand, the modernization of the institutions and creation of new ones hastened the "politicisation of public space" as the local elite preferred to embark upon "more modern ventures and projects with a national scope connected with defense, economic development, and fiscal matters"³⁵⁰ and as the central authority encouraged the establishment of modern institutions, such as modern schools, agricultural societies, and chambers of commerce. However, these newly emerged institutions were not so much attached to the official bureaucratic structure as to the sphere of autonomous projects.³⁵¹

The most important decision of this period, which promised to adopt a constitutional government after a nine-year preparatory period, was taken in 1906. The provincial assemblies based on a limited representative government convened in

³⁴⁹ Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, p.318.

³⁵⁰ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 101.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

October 1909. The provincial assemblies, which were under the influence of recently-emerged modern forces such as students, entrepreneurs, and the press, pressed the Qing court to speed up the reform program and convene the promised national assembly in October 1910.³⁵²

The revolutionaries attacked Manchu constitutionalism by proposing several reasons. First of all, it would be suicide for the Manchus to initiate reforms, because constitutionalism meant extension of the power of the people in order to make them capable of observing and directing the actions of the state. How could a minority race, knowing that they are an unfit race, curb their own power in favour of the people, which was dominated by the Han? This would be entering into a fair fight with the Han Chinese.³⁵³ According to Wang Jingwei, a prominent racist revolutionary of the period and a close collaborator of Sun Yat-sen, the Manchus would not initiate a constitutionalism similar to one that the revolutionaries had proposed because it would be to rush against the tide of evolution. He wrote,

If the Manchus were to give up their privileges at the urging and demanding of the Chinese, if they were to step down and assume a position of equality with the Chinese and engage in free competition, it could only mean that they wanted to exterminate their own race. The Manchus may be stupid, but would they be willing to exterminate their own race just because the Chinese asked them to?³⁵⁴

Sun Yat-sen also accepted the same argument that a real constitutionalism that curbed the power of central authority would harm the Manchus. In 1904 he argued that “it is absolutely impossible for the Manchus to reform the country because reformation means detriment to them. By reformation they would be

³⁵² J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. 247.

³⁵³ Cited in Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, p. 325.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.325.

absorbed by the Chinese people and would lose the special rights and privileges which they are enjoying now.”³⁵⁵

Another argument developed by the revolutionaries against Manchu constitutionalism was the hidden aspect of the reforms, which was the centralization of authority. According to the revolutionary Wang Jingwei, although the centralization efforts of the earlier Chinese empires were a result of the nature of absolute monarchy, the Qing effort was a matter of race because “the Manchus were conquerors and since they were too few in number to monopolize political power all over the country, they had to concentrate authority in such a way that a small group could hold the reins.” Centralization would curb the authority of the Chinese provincial authorities and would give it to the Manchu center.³⁵⁶ Sun Yat-sen would also make the same argument. In 1905 he wrote,

At present, it appears that the Manchu government intends to discriminate against the Han, to try to centralize power, and to use the constitution as a device for keeping the people ignorant. Truly, their schemes become more vicious day by day. On the other hand, their determination to hold on to power may be rooted in a fear that we Han may exterminate them; thus they are riding a tiger and cannot dismount. Therefore, we must be explicit about the objective of the nationalist revolution. If the Manchus stubbornly continue to hold on to power and keep the Han under their yoke, then as long as breath remains in the Han, the Han will refuse to accept it meekly.³⁵⁷

It is a fact that the reforms of the Qing court were authoritarian, like its Japanese and German models. They wanted to re-build the state in such a way that they could increase the revenues of the state and rationalize the workings of the state in order to strengthen its substructures. In order to extend the state’s control over its territory, the Qing court aimed at centralization by curbing the power of provincial

³⁵⁵ *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*, p.18.

³⁵⁶ Michael Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911*, pp. 88-92.

³⁵⁷ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 43.

administrations which were mainly governed by Han Chinese, and had attempted to penetrate into society by establishing new administrative organs. However, the most important attempt of the Qing court that alerted the revolutionaries was the policy of the Manchu regents of the new baby Emperor Puyi to form an advisory cabinet composed mainly of Manchus, which was increasing its institutional and military power.³⁵⁸ The intended policy of decreasing provincial autonomy was strongly resisted by the local bureaucracy, whose prerogatives were under threat. The centralization policy of the weak Manchu court was not only doomed to failure because it was a very late-coming policy, but it also expanded the circle of resistance against the regime. While, at the end of the nineteenth century, resistance was carried out by the intellectuals, who utilized the press, now it was extended to the local and provincial levels. Both “provincial assemblies, chambers of commerce and political and as well as educational societies mobilized resources to oppose government actions.”³⁵⁹

*THE REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION OF 1911 AND SUN AS THE
PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT*

When the Qing court was busy with centralizing reforms, the Revolutionary Alliance, headed by Sun Yat-sen, undertook eight unsuccessful rebellions in southern China. These rebellions were all local in character. Sun Yat-sen was dependent on foreign aid and foreign bases, which was a point of conflict in a Revolutionary Alliance that was a very heterogeneous and very fragile group. Most of the members of Revolutionary Alliance were disturbed by Sun's dependence on the Japanese and, later on, French aid. When Sun retained his trust in Japan, students in Japan were turning their backs on their host country because of increasing chauvinism in Japan.

³⁵⁸ Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, pp. 112-3.

³⁵⁹ R. Bin Wong. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and The Limits of European Experience*. Cornell University Press, p. 164.

Japan, by the end of the decade, was promoting an imperialist policy towards China as its self-esteem increased after its victory over Russia in 1905. The policy change in Japan resulted in its support of the “defunct” Manchu regime. It would be easier for Japan to gain concessions from a “tottering” Manchu dynasty.³⁶⁰ After Japan became an unreliable foreign country, Sun Yat-sen sought French aid for his revolutionary activities in return for a promise of economic concessions in South China once the revolution was achieved. The French would grant Indochina as a base for his revolutionary activities when they decided to make use of the revolutionaries for their own economic expansion. However, French aid was to cease when the central government of France banned its own governor in Indochina from supporting Sun as they regarded working with the Manchu regime as more beneficial.³⁶¹ How could Sun reconcile his nationalism with his act of granting concessions to expansionist France? This dilemma seems to result from his activism, which targeted an immediate result, namely to overthrow the Qing court. During this period, he seems to have been short-sighted as he did not calculate the cost of foreign aid to China. On the other hand, during this period, his nationalism was more anti-Manchu than anti-imperialist. In order to achieve his primary aim, he did not regard collaborating with the imperialist powers as negatively.

The uprising that was to mark the end of the Empire in 1911 would come into being when the controversy between provincial authorities and the central government on the nationalization of the railway issue resulted in unrest in the Sichuan province in western China. The controversy of railway construction was the peak point of the tensions between provincial governments, mainly led by the Han Chinese, and the central authority on the issue of centralization of power. While

³⁶⁰ Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, p. 105. As a consequence of this policy, the leader of Revolutionary Alliance, Sun Yat-sen, was expelled from Japan in 1907.

³⁶¹ M. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 175-78.

provincial authorities demanded that 'regional' railways should be constructed with domestic funds, the central government insisted that they should be constructed with foreign loans and on a 'national' scale. When the Qing court attempted to nationalize the main railroads in 1911, the unrest in Sichuan erupted.³⁶² This was the right time for the revolutionaries. However, the uprising that toppled the dynasty in October 1911 was not the work of the Revolutionary Alliance, and the role of Sun was very limited. "It was the work of groups of local revolutionaries who had recruited men from the New Army³⁶³ and also enjoyed support from both the secret societies and the urban elites."³⁶⁴ When the revolutionary rebels captured the city of Wuchang in Hubei province, they immediately established a military government there. In the following weeks, the revolution spread across southern and central China. One by one the provinces declared independence from the central authority, and when the number reached fourteen, there emerged the necessity to establish a central government. Nanjing was chosen as the capital of the new provisional government, and the provisional assembly met on December 14, 1911.

In fact, when the Wuchang uprising broke out, Sun Yat-sen was out of China. He was in the USA, busy with raising funds. When the uprising was successful he preferred not to return immediately to China but to go to England and France in order to gain diplomatic support for the revolution and prevent the granting of loans to the Manchu regime. In the end, after a calculation of the risks, France and Britain announced their neutrality, and they decided not to give any loans to either side in the conflict. Russia, Japan, and Germany followed and declared their neutrality.³⁶⁵

³⁶²S. Chang and L. Gordon, *All under Heaven*, pp.34-5.

³⁶³ Revolutionary Alliance Members were working hard to infiltrate into the New Army since 1905. Their policy to recruit the New Army members to the revolutionary cause had proved fruitful in the Wuchang uprising of 1911.

³⁶⁴ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 201.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 208, and S. Chang and L. Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, p. 37.

The revolutionary leaders at the time of the establishment of provisional government were deadlocked on the issue of the presidency. The problem was solved when Sun Yat-sen appeared as the most appropriate name for the provisional presidency for every faction. In December 1911 he was to be elected as the provisional president by the delegates of sixteen provincial assemblies. However, the delegates knew that it was a temporary measure, since northern China was not under the control of the revolutionary armies, and unification seemed possible only by compromising with Yuan Shikai who commanded the Beiyang armies of the New Army in the north before he was forced into retirement by the regents of the Emperor Puyi. He was the officer who had helped the Empress Dowager Cixi in her coup against the Emperor Guangxu during the Hundred Days Reforms. Now, in the new threatening situation, Yuan was called back to his former duty, since many commanders of the New Army units in northern China, who were loyal to Yuan, refused to serve the Qing court to suppress the revolutionary upheaval. Yuan finally agreed to lead the troops in return for concessions made by the court, which were to convene the national assembly and to organize a cabinet responsible to the assembly. Yuan would become the supreme military commander. The Beiyang troops, led by Yuan Shikai, recaptured several cities held by revolutionaries. His successes resulted in his appointment as prime minister of the cabinet in Beijing. Yuan, securing his position in the north, entered into negotiations with the revolutionaries in Nanjing.³⁶⁶ Sun Yat-sen declared that he would resign if Yuan Shikai accepted the presidency. Yuan Shikai, at that time, "seemed to everyone to be the man capable of resolving the crises produced by the uprising and of obtaining the abdication of the dynasty, avoiding civil war and preserving national unity by preventing the intervention of

³⁶⁶ J. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, pp. 115-6.

foreign powers,” since foreign powers were favouring Yuan.³⁶⁷ The negotiations proved fruitful. On February 12, 1912, an imperial edict declared the abdication of the emperor and few days later Sun resigned. Years later, in 1924, Sun would explain his resignation as a forced necessity because they were anxious to avoid the prolongation of the civil war, and also they did not have the backing of a powerful and well organized party to undertake the task of reconstruction.³⁶⁸

Sun Yat-sen had an important demand before he resigned. He wanted Nanjing to remain as the capital of the new Republic. To hold Nanjing as the capital had symbolic importance, as in the case of Atatürk’s decision to make Ankara the capital rather than Istanbul, which marked the denial of the imperial Ottoman heritage. Similarly, in the Chinese case, the choice of a new capital symbolized the full break of the new Republic with its imperial tradition and gave recognition to the revolutionary origins of the Republic. However, Sun’s proposal was rejected on the ground that the removal of the capital far away from the Great Wall would “signal the abandonment of the regions that lay beyond the Great Wall.” These were minority regions, Manchuria, Xinjiang, and Mongolia, which imperialist powers had an eye on. On the other hand, Yuan also resisted the idea because it would remove him from the center where his power was consolidated. Sun had to submit to the decision to move the capital to Beijing, and Yuan Shikai was elected as the president of the new Republic on February 15, 1912.³⁶⁹ Sun’s forty-five days of presidency (January 1, 1912-February 15, 1912), during which foot-binding and growing the pigtail were forbidden, the solar calendar was introduced, and the five-colour flag was replaced by the Imperial Dragon were to end by this date, and he would be

³⁶⁷ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 219.

³⁶⁸ Sun Yat-sen. 1933. *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals: A Source Book*. Compiled by Leonard Shihlien Hsü, trans. University of California, p. 121.

³⁶⁹ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p.221.

appointed as the Director of Railroads. As the Director, Sun thought that he could realize his dream of constructing a railroad network all over China, which would stimulate industrialization.

The optimistic days that laid great hopes on Yuan's capability to reconstruct the country through parliamentary democracy were to fade away when it became clear that Yuan had dictatorial tendencies. The problem emerged on the issue of "presidential prerogatives and ministerial responsibilities."³⁷⁰ Soon after, under the direction of Sun, the Revolutionary Alliance was reorganized as a new political party with the leadership of Song Jiaoren under the name of Guomindang (National People's Party). The main aim of the Party was to curb the powers of the president in order to protect the powers of parliament. Many other parties-the Progressive Party (led by Liang Qichao) and Republican Party- tended to favour an enlightened despotism, which Yuan would make use of. The election of early 1913 was a clear victory for Guomindang. According to the provincial constitution of 1912, the majority party would determine the prime minister and the cabinet members. Accordingly, Song Jiaoren would become the prime minister. Yuan, being aware of the threatening situation that would decrease his power, organized an attack and Song was assassinated shortly after the elections.

Opposition to the rule of Yuan continued as the Guomindang members pressured for the promulgation of a permanent constitution and the holding of new presidential elections in accordance with the decrees of the provincial constitution. However, as the opposition reached its peak when Yuan took out a huge loan under the name of 'Reorganization Loan' from a consortium of foreign banks without the necessary parliamentary approval, Yuan illegalized the Guomindang at the end of 1913.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 222.

Dissolution of the Guomindang ended Sun's passivity. He decided to launch a second revolution in order to end the task of the unfinished revolution of 1911, since for Sun, 'revolution' meant not only the overthrow of the Manchus but also to establish a democratic form of government and to promote industrialization that would benefit the whole of society. He had been developing his principles since 1905, namely- Three Principles of the People-, which were to be the aims of the Republican government for the reconstruction of China, which would enable China to catch up with the West and even surpass it. These were the principle of democracy and the principle of livelihood that accompanied the principle of nationalism, which was until 1911 defined as the overthrow of Manchu rule. For Sun, the principles that gave shape to the revolutionary ideology were the criteria that made the nationalist revolution different from the heroes' revolutions of the past, which were only concerned with the driving out of the barbarians.³⁷¹ In 1906, he wrote that a nationalist revolution alone was not sufficient to eradicate the roots of several thousands years of autocracy. It was because the earlier revolutionaries had stopped when they managed to drive the barbarians out and restored Chinese rule and did not change the political regime consequently, foreigners conquered China again and again. Therefore, a political revolution, which meant creating a constitutional and democratic system, had to accompany the nationalist one. As in the case of the French and Russian revolutions, where there was no issue of race, a revolution would have been necessary even if the monarch had been a Han. Sun argued that revolutionaries should not stop even when political revolution was achieved, since there was a third step, the social revolution. Democratic European countries were troubled with social inequities in their societies, and for them a second social

³⁷¹ Mentioned in the inaugural Manifesto of the Military Government (1906) in Shieh, *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, pp. 13-14.

revolution was inevitable. China, being in the early stages of industrialization, could prevent such a second revolution simply by promoting the principle of livelihood. He declared that Chinese revolutionaries should overthrow the regime of Yuan and adopt political and social revolution simultaneously.³⁷²

Sun Yat-sen's military attempt, which aimed at an open break with Beijing, was not favoured by many of his collaborators, who preferred a legal solution to the problem because Yuan's position was much more consolidated after he had used the Reorganization Loan in order to strengthen his military forces. However, Sun had lost all his confidence in a parliamentary opposition and insisted on a military solution to the question. "He argued for the political and military mobilization of the provinces of the Center and the South, which he wanted to persuade to declare their independence and perhaps even create a separatist government."³⁷³ The Second Revolution that broke in July, 1913, was easily crushed by the forces of Yuan in a short time. Sun Yat-sen again fled to Japan in August, 1913, where he would organize a new party under the name of *Zhongguo Gemingdang* (Chinese Revolutionary Party). The establishment of this Party marks a transition in Sun's understanding of organization because he believed that the "Second Revolution had failed because of the lack of solidarity."³⁷⁴ The new Party was organized in a very disciplined and centralized manner. Even the members of the new Party were required to take a personal oath that pledged allegiance to Sun. Sun might have thought that in this way he could prevent his Party from being a fragile one like the Revolutionary Alliance of 1905. The foundation of the Chinese Revolutionary Party marks the starting point where Sun wanted to establish himself as the sole leader of

³⁷² *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 43-50.

³⁷³ M. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 240.

³⁷⁴ See the Manifesto of *Zhongguo Gemingdang* in Milton J. T. Shieh. 1970. *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, p.53.

the revolutionary movement through his Party. It also marks a transformation in his idea of 'post-revolutionary construction'. Now during the reconstruction period, he planned to give the whole power to a revolutionary party that was strictly disciplined under his leadership. However, despite his efforts to create a new charismatic image for himself, he failed to do so for two reasons. Firstly, many of his close friends refused to take the personal allegiance oath, since they considered it resembled the procedures of secret societies, which were organized in a despotic way. It was not a manner of a modern political party. Those who refused to take the oath were also disturbed by Sun's dictatorial tendencies. A second episode that decreased the confident image of Sun among the revolutionaries was Sun's insistence on relying on the 'friendly' Japanese government because of its revolutionary activities during the First World War, when Japan declared its Twenty-one Demands in 1915, which caused the emergence of anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese. Sun's readiness to grant any favours to Japan for its support for his action against Yuan disappointed the revolutionaries.³⁷⁵

By the time Sun was busy reorganizing anti-Yuan revolutionary groups, Yuan Shikai, with the confidence he had gained from his victory against the revolutionaries during the Second Revolution, had made the parliament elect him as president for five years. His dictatorial regime was to be further consolidated when he decided to dissolve parliament and the provisional constitution in January 1914 and replace the constitution with a "constitutional compact" which gave him "unlimited power over war, finance, foreign policy, and the rights of citizens."³⁷⁶ Yuan, finally, taking advantage of the outbreak of First World War, which made the European powers to turn their face from China, declared himself emperor of China in December, 1915.

³⁷⁵ For the offers granted to Japan by Sun, which were even harsher than the Twenty-one Demands, see, M. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, pp.189-193.

³⁷⁶ J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 276-281.

Yuan believed that China at that time was not ready for a parliamentary democracy, and even said that a central authority transcending the powers of president was more suitable for China. Yuan's American advisor, Dr. Goodnow, recalled that the Chinese people did not have any experience of political participation. A change from autocracy to republic was a very radical leap, so a constitutional monarchy was more suitable to Chinese needs than a constitutional republic.³⁷⁷ However, neither provincial authorities nor foreign powers welcomed the idea. Many provinces were to declare their independence in opposition to Yuan's monarchy. For Yuan Shikai, under the pressure of mass protests, there was no other way than to declare that he would abolish the monarchy. However, he died of uremia in June 1916, leaving behind him a "shattered image."³⁷⁸

THE WARLORD PERIOD AND SUN AS THE EXTRAORDINARY

PRESIDENT OF CHINA IN CANTON

Just after the death of Yuan Shikai, Vice-president Li Yuanhong became the president. He re-established the parliamentary system and re-adopted the constitution of 1912. This was a relief for Sun Yat-sen. However, soon after there appeared a clash between the Prime Minister Duan Qirui and the president over the issue of the participation of China in the World War. Duan Qirui, despite the opposition of the president, declared war on Germany in May 1917. This act caused his dismissal from his post, but the supporters of Duan pressured Li to dissolve parliament. Several coups d'état occurred during this period, which opened up the way for the warlord period in China. The Beijing government simply "became the playground of the militarists."³⁷⁹ From mid-1917 until 1920, the Beijing government "weakened

³⁷⁷ S. Chang and L. Gordon, *All under Heaven*, pp.55-6.

³⁷⁸ J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. 282.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 282.

further, riddled with factionalism and cliques vying for power and with warlords beginning to supply military might in support of weak politicians.”³⁸⁰

When Beijing was in turmoil because of warlord factionalism, the separation line between the South and North became apparent. Southern generals “reasserted their independence and tried, without much success, to organize them into a common political system.”³⁸¹ Sun Yat-sen, on the other hand, decided to establish a separatist government in southern China, which was expected to transfer the legal government of the Republic to the south.³⁸² In September, 1917, the old parliamentarians, who had gathered in an extraordinary session of parliament, elected Sun as the Grand Marshall of the Military Government in Canton. However, though it seems that Sun was in power during this period, as the name of his post suggests, power actually rested with the militarists of the Guangxi Clique, who were to replace the Grand Marshall with a seven-man directorate in April 1918. Although Sun was invited to become one of the directorates, he refused the post and left Canton for Shanghai.³⁸³

The years of the early 1920s marks the period when Sun tried to establish Guangdong as a revolutionary base of a separatist government and tried to reunify China by military conquest. However, it would not be so simple for Sun to consolidate his regime in Guangdong for two reasons. Firstly, his plan to make Guangdong a revolutionary base in order to organize military expeditions against Beijing was opposed by the military governor of Guangdong, Chen Jiongming. The story of conflict was oriented on the different solutions proposed by Chen and Sun for the re-unification of China. The second problem was on the level of international

³⁸⁰ S. Chang and L. Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, p. 61.

³⁸¹ M. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 269

³⁸² *Ibid*, p. 273.

³⁸³ C. M. Wilbur, *Frustrated Patriot*, pp. 29-30.

relations, for Sun's government in Canton was never recognized by powerful states as legitimate.

When Chen Jiongming, who until that time had remained a collaborator of Sun Yat-sen, whom he believed to be offering a federalist solution to the Chinese problem, recaptured Guangdong from the Guangxi Clique, he invited Sun to his territorial base in late 1920. However, very soon several problems were to emerge between Sun and Chen Jiongming. The first problem emerged when Sun insisted that an "extraordinary president" should be elected. According to Sun, the recognition of the south by the foreign powers would enable it to have a share in the customs revenues, but Chen and his supporters did not favour the idea, arguing that the declaration of a separatist government would make Guangdong the target of the militarists and that provincial resources would not be sufficient to counterattack the Beijing forces. On the other hand, he was against the use of Guangdong resources for military purposes. Instead, they had to be used for the reconstruction of Guangdong and for the welfare of the Guangdong people. However, Sun persuaded the others, and was elected as the extraordinary president.

The friction between Governor Chen and President Sun soon turned into an open clash when Sun blamed Chen for his unwillingness to contribute to his army financially. Sun dismissed Governor Chen who left Canton for Huizhou. But the dismissal of Chen did not bring relief to Sun because Sun was dispelled from Canton by the troops of Ye Ju, who was a loyal general of Chen Jiongming, on June 1922. Sun Yat-sen for the second time left Canton for Shanghai, where he prepared his loyal troops for the recapture of Canton, and he was in contact with representatives of Soviet Union, who decided to support Sun's political movement against Beijing and the warlord governments.

*SOLUTIONS OFFERED FOR REUNIFICATION: FEDERALISM VS
CENTRALIZATION*

The conflicts that appeared between Chen and Sun during their rule of Guangdong, mainly, emerged from an ideological split that dominated the minds of the Chinese at that time. The question was; how to reunify China? While the discourse utilized by Chen Jiongming was a federalist one, Sun was insisting on a centralizing nationalist policy.

A federalist discourse can be said to be an inheritance of the late Qing period. Indeed, as it erupted during the Wuchang revolt of 1911, there was open opposition to the centralizing efforts of the Manchu court from the provincial elites. They did not want the central state penetrate into their autonomous realm. Those who were against centralization made the tradition of *fengjian* (Chinese feudalism) to re-surface, but in a new and mobilizable way. In other words, now the meaning of the tradition of *fengjian* as 'feudalism' had transformed, and it implied a degree of literati dissent and local autonomy that was developed during the Ming-Qing transition period. This new understanding became available for the reformists, who struggled to restrict the authority of the imperial state and enhance the role of the local elites through the implementation of local self-government. For Liang Qichao, who favoured local autonomy in his early years, the principle of *fengjian* that was employed by the ancients allowed the locals to govern. However, since the consolidation of imperial despotism, the 'outsider' rulers, who were chosen through the examination system, oppressed the people. "Now the only means of reopening the channels between those above and those below was to renew the strength of the

village by returning to the intentions of the ancients and grasping the legal system of the West.”³⁸⁴

Before the revolution, anti-Manchu nationalists also favoured the idea of local autonomy because they regarded the problem as a conflict between the Manchu-governed center and Han-governed provinces and counties. The problem was a racial issue. However, after the abdication of the court, the conflict on federalism versus centralism was transformed into a totally new one. The statist discourse began to dominate the scene. There were several intermingled reasons behind this transformation. First of all, there was no longer a racial issue, so there was no need to be against the centralization of the state structure because the center was also Han Chinese. Secondly, anti-imperialist discourse, which was covered by the anti-Manchu discourse, re-surfaced in a violent way, especially after the May 4th incident of 1919 when the Chinese students gathered in Tiananmen Square to oppose China’s submission to the articles of the Versailles Treaty. The construction of a strong China that would be able to counter imperialist aggression became the primary object. And many argued that the creation of a strong China would only be possible by establishment of a unified China around a strong center that would represent the sovereignty of the whole Chinese nation. A third reason, closely related to the former one, was the will to imitate the model state chosen by many of the Chinese intellectuals and Chinese officials since the New Policy period of the Qing Empire. This country was Japan with its strongly centralized state structure. Fourthly, warlord politics in China made many deny the usefulness of a federalist policy, since many had been disturbed by the fragmented nature of China under warlord rule.

³⁸⁴ For the discussion on the tradition of *fengjian*, see P. Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, pp. 147-60.

Federalists, on the other hand, were no less nationalist. They regarded the establishment of provincial autonomous governments, all of which would be strong ones governed on the basis of local self-rule, as a vehicle for the establishment of a federal China that would be strong enough to resist imperialism. They favoured a policy that would start from the bottom. Their model was the United States of America rather than Japan. Although the federalists' provincial sentiments, shaped by the threat of imperialism, a legacy of provincial military autonomy, the *fengjian* tradition, and the emerging rhetoric of local self-government was strong, they never had any intention of achieving provincial independence. This was mainly because "no smaller groups could create a notion of nation to displace China. No provincial level process of state-building could introduce a process of political engagement to persuade people that they are an identifiable group with a particular history and consequent right to their own political system."³⁸⁵ Federalists would rather argue for a share of authority between the center and the province. This was necessitated by China's "large landmass and population, its diversity of regional and ethnic interests," and it was "impossible to achieve good government through simple unification under centralized authority."³⁸⁶ Chen Jiongming, the prominent federalist, made the distinction between centralist unification and federalist unification as such:

Blind critics have often accused one who advocates *fenzhi* [authority shared between the central and local governments, i.e., provincial autonomy] of being an enemy to *tongyi*[unification of the country]. But *fenzhi* is the antinomy of *jiguan* [authority concentrated in the central government], not of *tongyi*.

³⁸⁵ B. Wong, *China Transformed*, p. 170.

³⁸⁶ This argument was developed by the Governor of Hunan, Zhao Hengfu, in 1922 in an open letter to the Northern militarists. Quoted in Leslie H. Dingyan Chen. *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement: Regional Leadership and Nation Building in Early Republican China*. Ann Arbor: The University of Chinese Studies, p.158.

The United States of America is a living example for all to see. [That is, the United States is a unified country, with authority shared by the federal and state governments].

Since the establishment of the Republic, these blind critics have mistakenly construed the concentration of power in the central government as equivalent to the unification of the country, thus allowing the opportunists to usurp power in the name of unification.³⁸⁷

Federalist unification was a gradual one and depended on the consent of the provinces. The Reconstruction Plan, prepared by Chen Jiongming, which was presented to the public in May 1922, is explanatory of how they envisioned unification, and what the demarcation line that divided central and provincial autonomy was. “Chen pointed out that the Chinese Republic was created out of liberated provinces of the Qing dynasty.”³⁸⁸ Therefore, it would be natural to establish a system based on the sharing of power. The central government would be responsible for foreign affairs and military affairs and for national finance. Matters concerning judiciary, education, communications, industry, etc., the delegation of power and duties were to be determined by a federation conference. He, then, proposed the submission of the Reconstruction Plan to the provinces for consideration and the drafting of a federation conference by the consenting provinces. Chen, at the first stage, “projected a preliminary federation of twelve provinces,” which would open the minds of the others to a peaceful unification.³⁸⁹

Sun Yat-sen embraced the idea of federalism, modeled on the United States, until his idea began to change by the beginning of the warlord era. While in 1903 he had likened the provinces of China to the “States of the American Union,”³⁹⁰ in January 1912 he was proclaiming the need for a federal China. He said,

³⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 116.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 160.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 162.

³⁹⁰ *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*, p. 29.

The area of the state is wide and the various provinces have their own ways and the Manchu government has tried to effect centralization of power under the name of constitutional government, but now it is to be arranged that each province be self-governed and all shall be federated under a common central government.³⁹¹

However, the following years of warlord experience would make him believe in a more centralized state structure as his formulation of self-government became more clarified. Sun's self-government model was based on the county/district as the unit of popular sovereignty. 'Province' was bypassed in this model. If it continued to exist it would become a supervisory eye of the central state on the county. He claimed that his model was a middle way between the "false self government"³⁹² model of the provincialists and centralists. He presented county-based self-government as the only way which would make the people the sole solid foundation of the Republic because only "under such a system, could the people exercise their power directly, which is how it differs from regional autonomy." He continued, "If the provincial system still exists at that time, the persons in charge of the provinces should both, on the one hand, hold central government commissions to handle national affairs at the provincial level and , on the other, supervise county-level autonomy."³⁹³

The county-based self-government model was first introduced by Sun when he was called back to Canton by Chen Jiongming in late 1920 for the purpose of establishing a military government in Canton, which would turn into a federal government of twelve southeastern provinces.³⁹⁴ When Sun arrived at Canton, aware of Chen's willingness for federalism, he proposed his county-based self-government model. A group organized by Zhang Binglin criticized his model. Zhang believed

³⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.34.

³⁹² In Sun Yat-sen. 1953. *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*. China Cultural Service, p. 6.

³⁹³ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp.250-1.

³⁹⁴ Leslie H. Dingyan Chen. *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement*, pp. 103-4.

that “this was a top to down federation and did not really amount to federalism at all.”³⁹⁵

Sun also opposed Chen’s federalist model because it gave priority to provincial autonomy before the independence of the Chinese state as a whole. The Guomintang Declaration at its first national convention criticizes this and insists that “a movement for local autonomy must be preceded by the movement for national independence. Only when there is a free nation can there be a free province.”³⁹⁶

On the other hand, Sun Yat-sen, who likened the provinces of China to the states of the USA in 1903, developed a completely different argument during 1924 and claimed that the historical and social conditions of the USA and China were so different that an application of the American federalist model in China would be regarded as an abnormal phenomenon. He proclaimed in 1924,

In Chinese history, unification of the country has been regarded as the normal phenomenon, and the separation of the country as an abnormal phenomenon. The country is composed of eighteen provinces known as China Proper and the Three Eastern Provinces.... China has been a united nation, not a federated state. When the country is divided, as it has been several times in the course of its history, the Chinese look upon such division as a sign of national chaos, an abnormal phenomenon. On the other hand, the thirteen colonies were originally independent and separate from one another. Their union was first regarded as a measure of expediency in meeting great crises. The revolutionary statesmen went through many difficulties and troubles in order to get the present constitution adopted and the federal form of government set up. This very union has caused their prosperity and ascendancy to the position of a world power. It is evident that if the colonies had not united, they would have become the prey of European powers, and their independence would have been nothing more than the independence of Korea or the Philippine Islands.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁵ P. Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, p. 197.

³⁹⁶ See the text of the Declaration in the *Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1849-1969*, p. 78.

³⁹⁷ Three Principles of People, included in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp. 325-6.

For Sun it would only be rational to advocate federalism when independent states would be unified under a federalist model in order to increase their power against European imperialism as in the case of the USA. A federation between Southeast Asian countries was acceptable, not a federation between Chinese provinces.

Sun announced that advocates of federalism were no more than those who “keep the country divided and prolong civil war purely to satisfy their own ambitions.”³⁹⁸ It is a true fact that besides intellectuals, warlords, as in the case of the military governor of Guangdong, Chen Jiongming, were also advocating the federalist solution to China’s problem. And Sun utilized this fact very well in order to develop his argument against federalism. Especially after his contacts with Soviet Russia increased, he accused the warlords of China of depending on imperialist assistance and promoting regional feudalism under the guise of federalism.³⁹⁹ Therefore, he established a connection between warlords, who “take possession of some region and province, and govern it with an iron hand in defiance of the laws of the nation and the orders of the central government”⁴⁰⁰ and imperialist aggression, which inclined toward a decentralized China as an easy prey. The warlord interests and imperialist interests were regarded as interrelated.

It is important to note that Sun’s accusation of warlords of regional feudalism and of alliance with the imperialists starts with his dismissal from Canton by the supporters of Chen Jiongming. Until that time, Sun had worked with warlords and depended on their armies during his military expeditions. The revolutionaries appreciated Chen as a reform-minded progressive warlord. A reading of Chen

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

³⁹⁹ Manifesto of the First Congress of the Guomindang declares, “being unable to live independently, the militarists had to establish connections with the imperialists. Even the so-called Government of the Republic was under the thumb of the militarists who utilized it to curry favor with the imperialists to strengthen their own positions. The imperialists in turn utilized them, furnishing loans to fill their war chests and prolong the civil war so that they might fish in troubled waters.” In *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, p. 76.

⁴⁰⁰ From Three Principles of People, included in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 326.

Jiongming's biography reveals that he achieved much in making Guangdong a modern province through the application of democracy and local self-government, the establishment of a modern municipality and struggling to curb the power of the military in favor of civilian rule.⁴⁰¹ He was far from being a regional feudal warlord who wanted to satisfy his personal ambitions. Then, how can one understand this sudden change of idea, which began to present Chen as a traitor and warlords in a derogatory sense? First of all, not all warlords were as progressive-minded as Chen as the post-Yuan events show. It was very difficult to bring together so many warlords, whose backgrounds endlessly varied. Some had come up by the route of Qing military academies and service in the Beiyang Army, some had studied abroad, some had been bandits who were content with a local base that might furnish revenues from opium smuggling, transport dues, or rural taxes, some had been members of the Revolutionary Alliance or some of more radical establishments. Not all of them were revolutionary during the pre-Republican period. Some of them fought for the Qing armies and some, being loyal to Yuan Shikai, changed sides as Yuan allied with the revolutionaries.⁴⁰² The fragmentary nature of the warlord period was easily utilized by Sun and later by the Communists, who reduced all warlords to a homogenous image of regional feudalism. Secondly, Sun's rejection of federalism was a consequence of the transformation of his principle of democracy, which will be analyzed below. The successful Soviet revolution, the experience of warlordism and his failure to deal with the clashing ideological views that dominated China made him a firm believer in the necessity of one-party rule in China. As he accepted Soviet aid and Soviet advisors for the reorganization of his Party after 1920, he became an antagonist of Western-type liberalism and advocated communal liberty

⁴⁰¹ For the accomplishments of Chen, see Leslie H. Dingyan Chen. *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement*, pp. 120-56.

⁴⁰² Spence, *Heavenly Gate*, pp. 138-9.

for China, which would be guided by the revolutionary party. The party-state “was to expand its reach at the expense of local autonomy, customary liberties, and new political freedoms,”⁴⁰³ which would strengthen China. Such a model would be more applicable under a centralist state structure.

REORGANIZATION OF GUOMINDANG UNDER SOVIET GUIDANCE

The rapprochement between Sun Yat-sen and Soviet Russia began when Sun was the extraordinary President of China in Guangdong. The contact began when Sun requested information from Chicherin, the Soviet foreign affairs commissioner, “about the organization of the Soviets, their army and educational system.”⁴⁰⁴ His contact with the Soviet Union was a consequence of his interest in the successful techniques applied by the Soviet revolutionaries and also a consequence of his unceasing search for foreign aid. The Soviet Union’s positive reply arrived when Sun had lost hope of gaining the assistance and recognition of Japan and the United States, the states he had trusted so much during the World War. Neither of these states recognized Sun’s military state in Guangdong. It is apparent that Sun’s alliance with the USSR was a last resort in his search for foreign aid, and it was promoted by pragmatic reasons rather than ideological concerns, as in the case of the Turkish Republic’s alliance with the USSR during the Independence War. The detail of the alliance with the Soviet Union is the topic of the last chapter, which includes a comparative analyses of Sun and Atatürk and their struggle against imperialism. In this chapter, briefly, I will be dealing with the consequences of Soviet alliance for Sun’s revolutionary movement.

The first meetings between Sun and the Soviet envoys were held between the Dutch Comintern agent, Maring, and Sun on December 1921. The most important

⁴⁰³ John Fitzgerald. 1996. *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.163.

⁴⁰⁴ Sidney Chang and L. Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, p. 69.

consequence of this meeting was the decision to establish collaboration between the Chinese Communist Party, which was established in 1921, and the Guomintang. Sun's acceptance of the Communists into his Party was a consequence of his will "to profit from the new impetus provided by the communist militants."⁴⁰⁵ However, Sun was cautious on the issue and insisted that Communist Party members should join the Guomintang individually. They were required to obey Guomintang and party discipline. Those who disobeyed would be expelled from the Party, and Soviet Russia would not intervene in the issue.⁴⁰⁶ By the end of 1922, the Communist Party members began to join Guomintang.

The alliance became public and took an official turn with the joint statement of Sun Yat-sen and the envoy of the Moscow government, Adolf Joffe, just after the recapture of Canton from Chen Jiongming by Sun's forces at the very beginning of 1923. This manifesto is explanatory of the intentions of the two sides in entering into an alliance. The first article of the manifesto denounces any intention of Soviet Russia to establish a Soviet system in China and recognize that the most urgent problem of China is unification and achieving national independence. Soviet Russia promises to support Sun's efforts for reunification and attainment of independence. Although the second article denounces the past treaties between Tsarist Russia and China, in the following articles Sun accepted the *modus vivendi* that left the management of eastern railways to Russia and recognized the occupation of Outer Mongolia by Russian troops and did not require an immediate evacuation of the territory on the pretext that Soviet Russia did not promote an imperialist policy.⁴⁰⁷ Through this alliance, the support of Soviet Russia was guaranteed in return for several concessions made to the Russian side.

⁴⁰⁵ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 336.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴⁰⁷ See the whole text in *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents*, pp.75-6.

Soviet support would benefit Sun's movement, especially on the issues of party re-organization and military development. When Mikhael Borodin arrived in Canton as the envoy of Soviet Russia in October, 1923, he realized that Sun's Guomintang was not a party at all and from political, organizational, and theoretical aspects, it was something very diffuse and undefined. Therefore, he gave priority to the reorganization of the Party in order to make it an efficient tool. At the same time, he wanted Guomintang to make its anti-imperialism more explicit through incorporating it in the Party program.⁴⁰⁸ The strengthening of the Party through a more efficient reorganization was what Sun had struggled for since 1914. The Reorganization Congress was held in January, 1924. The Congress approved new statutes, closely inspired by the Soviet model. Guomintang turned into a highly disciplined party with a strong central structure. "They established a presidency endowed with very extensive powers" and "entrusted this presidency to Sun Yat-sen for the whole of his life."⁴⁰⁹

The reorganization of the Party was also accompanied by an ideological renovation under the influence of Borodin. The Party Congress accepted the Three Principles of the People, which Sun had been developing since 1905, as the principles of Guomintang. However, anti-imperialism and anti-militarism were also announced by the manifesto of the Congress and were imbued with a more Soviet viewpoint.

Now Sun Yat-sen, who preferred to use the term 'Great Powers' in order to distinguish those friendly states from the unfriendly ones until his collaboration with the Soviets, did not hesitate to enter into an open clash with "international imperialism." His changing attitude became more explicit with the Customs Surplus

⁴⁰⁸ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 321.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 330.

Affair, when he requested from the great powers a share in the revenue collected by the foreign-controlled Maritime Customs Service. When his request was refused, Sun threatened to seize the Canton customs by force if necessary. The diplomatic corps responded with an impressive demonstration of naval power in Guangzhou Harbor. Losing the battle, Sun became more convinced of the need to “overthrow imperialism.”⁴¹⁰

Just after the Reorganization Conference, when Sun Yat-sen was preparing to launch another military expedition against the southern allies of the northern warlords, a new opportunity for a diplomatic solution to China’s unification problem appeared. This opportunity appeared when the forces of Feng Yuxiang (warlord who was powerful in north-western provinces of China in the 1920s) turned against Wu Peifu (most powerful warlord in the east-central area of Hubei and Hunan in the 1920s), who was the main source of support behind the Beijing authorities, and occupied Beijing.⁴¹¹ Feng invited Sun for a re-unification conference just after he established a new cabinet and a provisional government under the presidency of Duan Qirui. Sun agreed to attend the conference on condition that a national conference should be convened with the members of popular organizations such as educational associations, universities, student unions, manufacturers’ associations, farmers, workers, and merchant unions; and also with the military and political parties. For Sun, this would open the way for democracy because “then the conference would not only represent all the national interests, but also pave the way for complete cooperation between the military and the citizens.”⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ J. Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 170.

⁴¹¹ For the information on the respective warlords, see the glossary of J. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, pp. A51 and A66.

⁴¹² See the letter on this issue in *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*, p.55.

Sun left Canton for Beijing for this last effort for unification during his lifetime. He died on his way to Beijing in April 1925 when it became apparent that this last effort would not work because the new provisional President Duan had distanced himself from Sun, declaring that Sun was an idealist. He also declared that an abrogation of the unequal treaties, which Sun was advocating fiercely after he collaborated with the Soviet Union, was not on the agenda. He also refused to include popular organizations in the reorganization conference.

Sun left behind an anti-imperialist discourse, which was re-emphasized in his last testaments. He enjoined his Party to restore Chinese sovereignty and provide China with rank equal to that of the other nations and maintain their cooperation with the USSR. He wanted them to follow in his path remaining loyal to his writings, *The Plan for National Reconstruction*, *The Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*, *The People's Three Principles*, and *the Congress Manifesto*.⁴¹³

⁴¹³ See his last testament and his Letter of Farewell in Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 406.

Chapter VI

THE VIEWS OF SUN YATSEN ON SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE:

THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF THE PEOPLE (*SAN MIN ZHUYI*)

The Three Principles of the People, which Sun had been developing since 1905, and which underwent several transformations, was an attempt to give his political Party a full-fledged program for national reconstruction. The first time the Principles were published in the Revolutionary Newspaper, *Minbao*, in 1905, he presented them to the public as a series of lectures in 1924. Although some of aspects of his principles as re-defined since 1919 were under the influence of Soviet ideology, we can accept them as an effort to present China with an ideology that can be distinguished both from Marxism and liberalism. During his speeches, on several occasions, Sun defines China's special conditions and develops solutions that are appropriate to China's own problems.

THE PRINCIPLE OF NATIONALISM (MINZU ZHUYI)

Until 1911, the entire content of Sun's principle of nationalism had been anti-Manchism. The aim of the principle was to awaken the Han Chinese to their nationhood by making them aware of the 'otherness' of the Manchus and to regain political power from the Manchus, for Sun believed that a nation did not exist if political power rested in the hands of 'foreigners'. Before the revolution the priority had been anti-Manchu struggle, although revolutionaries were not ignorant of the Western imperialist threat. However, during this period, Sun's principle of nationalism did include little mention of anti-imperialism.⁴¹⁴

Sun did not exclude his principle of nationalism after the overthrow of the Manchu court. Sun might have become aware of the fact that awakening of the

⁴¹⁴ See *Minpao*, December 2 1906, which is included in *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 41-3.

Chinese to their nationhood was not guaranteed by the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. As the threat of imperialism persisted, and as China was fragmented under warlord rule, Sun continued his discourse on the awakening of the Chinese. This time he urged his fellow men to awaken to the threat of imperialism.

What remained unchanged in his principle was his re-construction of the Chinese people as a *minzu* (race-nation). He did not reconsider his use of the term and refused to use the word *guo-jia* (state-nation).

In 1924, during his lectures on the principle of nationalism, Sun clearly explained why he used the word *minzu*. For Sun, in China, *minzu* (race) and *guojia*(nation) denotes the same group because since the time of Qin (255-206 BC)and Han (206 BC-221 AD) dynasties one sole race had developed into one single nation. This was what made China special because in foreign countries there were cases where a single race (*minzu*) founded several nations (*guojia*) or a nation (*guojia*) was founded by several different races (*minzu*). However, only a nation that was founded by a single race, as in the case of China, was the product of natural forces. The other cases resulted from artificial forces, such as military intervention. This manifested the difference between race (*minzu*) as the product of natural forces and nation (*guojia*) as the product of artificial forces.⁴¹⁵ The natural forces that formed a *minzu* were listed by Sun as blood, life, language, religion, habits, and customs.⁴¹⁶ It is important to note that in Sun's formulation 'territory' is not a determining factor. This omission is explanatory of his refusal to use *guojia* because territory is an attribute of state-nationalism (*guojia zhuyi*). Sun Yat-sen's formulation of the concept of race is an attempt to endow the Chinese nation with homogeneity,

⁴¹⁵ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 64-7. For the Chinese terms that are preferred by Sun Yat-sen, see Sun Yat-sen. 1989. *San Min Zhu Yi*. Taipei Shi.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 68-70.

as it is a group composed of one race, namely the Han, and an essential character, produced by the workings of natural forces.

Sun Yat-sen declared that the Chinese possessed every criterion that made them a great race; however, they lacked national spirit. The Chinese were unaware that they were a nation, so they were like a “loose sheet of sand,”⁴¹⁷ having only family and clan spirit. The lack of consciousness was the consequence of two interrelated factors. Firstly, Sun mentioned cosmopolitanism, which enabled the Chinese to accept foreigners to rule themselves.⁴¹⁸ Secondly, he accused the policy of the Manchus, who were welcomed by the Chinese because of being influenced by cosmopolitanism. According to Sun, the Manchu court wanted to denationalize the Chinese people through suppressing all literary works of a patriotic character and trying to wipe out the social and racial distinctions between the Han and the Manchu people.⁴¹⁹

The Chinese race, which had not yet reached the state of nationalism, was under the threat of three forces, namely the economic and political force of the foreigners and the increase in foreign population even after the overthrow of the Manchus. Sun Yat-sen made use of Social Darwinist argument and urged the Chinese people that China was on the verge of extinction, and it might perish in the near future if it did not awaken its spirit of nationalism. He again chose Japan as his model nation. Japan, a small nation with a territory and population that was only equal to a province of China, had become the strongest nation of Asia just because they were imbued with national spirit.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.71.

⁴¹⁸ In *Three Principles of the People*, which is translated in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 211. Here what Sun meant by cosmopolitanism is the Confucian culturalism, which is explained in the first chapter.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 207.

⁴²⁰ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 73.

How did Sun Yat-sen formulate his method to awaken Chinese nationalism? First of all, he wanted the Chinese to recognize their enemy. He presented an ancient Chinese saying in order to explain the importance of consciousness of one's enemies. It says, "a nation without enemies and external danger often falls." According to Sun, this saying proposed that a nation which believes itself to be too powerful neglects its national defense. Therefore, when it faces an attack, it is bound to collapse. But a "nation conscious of a crisis ... would rise up and struggle to bring their nation out of troubles."⁴²¹ The enemy of China was the treaty powers, who controlled China by economic invasion through territorial and judicial concessions, tariff controls, protective tariffs imposed by foreign powers against Chinese goods, tariffs against home industries in favor of foreign industries, the workings of foreign banks in China, and several other related economic factors.⁴²² Economic invasion was much more threatening than political invasion because it was invisible and the consequences could not be recognized at once. However, the Chinese, who were unaware of the consequences, consoled themselves by claiming that China was only a 'semi-colony', and therefore in a better situation than a regular colony such as Korea and Vietnam. Sun urged them that China's condition was worse than that of direct colonies because China was a colony of several powers, and neither of them regarded dealing with the problems of China as their responsibility, although, in the case of regular colonies, these powers fulfilled their duties by assisting them, especially during times of natural calamity. Sun invented a new term to define China's special position as a colony: "the hypo-colony."⁴²³

Secondly, Sun proposed to direct people's loyalty from the primordial communities to the nation. In contrast to Liang Qichao, who regarded local

⁴²¹ Sun Yat-sen: *His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 233.

⁴²² For Sun's thought on the forces of economic invasion, see *ibid*, pp. 180-98.

⁴²³ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism*, pp. 97-8.

sentiments as an impediment to the construction of a nation-state, Sun declared, “links of lineage and locality could be turned into the service of the nation.”⁴²⁴ Regional feeling was very deep-rooted in China, and it could be used as the foundation of a new national spirit by extending the idea of family loyalty to the nation. In order to form a wide association, he said, “We must first have small bases, which by being grouped together will render the task possible.”⁴²⁵ The small bases, which would serve as the bases of a Chinese nation, would be the clans and families.

In contrast to the constitutionalist reformer Kang Youwei, Sun’s idea of community did not include a world community transcending the ‘nation-state’. Family loyalty would be extended to include national loyalty but not the above. He criticized the New Culturalists, who argued that the Three Principles of the People was contrary to the current trend in world thought, namely cosmopolitanism. Sun argued that cosmopolitanism was the same doctrine as the Chinese doctrine of universalism⁴²⁶, which was 2000 years old and had been designated by China. As mentioned before, he believed that Chinese universalism was the reason behind the Chinese loss of nationalism. And now cosmopolitanism had re-appeared but this time as the tool of the imperialists, who utilized it “in order to preserve their privileged position in oppressed countries as well as their supremacy over the world.”⁴²⁷ Sun Yat-sen, in principle, was not against cosmopolitanism. He stated that “the ethical value of everything is relative and so nothing in the world is innately good or innately bad. It is determined by circumstances.”⁴²⁸ However, the circumstances were not yet ripe for the Chinese to preach cosmopolitanism because “these theories

⁴²⁴ Fitzgerald, *Awakening of China*, p. 85.

⁴²⁵ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism*, p. 175.

⁴²⁶ For the meaning of Chinese universalism, please, see the first chapter.

⁴²⁷ *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 210.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 210-1.

are not to be accepted by a race which has been the victim of injustice.”⁴²⁹ “The abused race” must first of all “recover the liberty and equality of the race”⁴³⁰ and could then talk of cosmopolitanism.

The time was to revive nationalism and rise up against the imperialists and to be aware of the real intentions disguised behind cosmopolitanism. Sun proposed to follow Gandhi’s non-cooperation policy in order to organize the nation against imperialist economic domination in China. The lack of organization was the other reason behind China’s failure. He discovered that a non-cooperation policy harmed British economy and trade. He declared,

Hindus cannot resist political oppression, but to economic oppression. They oppose (to economic oppression by) the non-cooperation policy of Gandhi.... And yet, if India, which is already a subject country, could practice non-cooperation, how much more could our China do so since, for the time being, she is not yet a subject? The common people who can hardly do anything else can very easily refuse to work for foreigners, to buy imported goods; they can promote the use of Chinese goods, refuse to use foreign banknotes, accept only Chinese Government money, and sever economic relations.⁴³¹

Sun Yat-sen, urging his fellowmen, who lacked any national spirit, against the threat of imperialism, lastly came to the conclusion that foreign aggression was a consequence of Chinese inability to govern themselves. This argument was similar to his pre-revolutionary claim that imperialism was the result of Chinese unwillingness to revolt against its foreign rulers. As before, Sun returned the mirror towards the Chinese in order to make them realize their shortcomings, directly related to the lack of personal hygiene and existence of certain undesirable customs. He used the standard Orientalist clichés to criticize some particular habits of the Chinese people.

⁴²⁹ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism*, p. 150.

⁴³¹ *Ibid*, p. 180. The words in bracket belong to me.

These customs, such as spitting in public, growing fingernails to an unacceptable length and leaving them dirty, lack of care of teeth, etc., caused deep embarrassment for Sun, who had acquired a Western education and applied Western rules of delicacy. Sun argued that the Westerners had treated Chinese on an equality footing until they were disturbed by certain Chinese forms of behavior in public places. It was only after this realization that signs in public places, which stated that Chinese could not enter to that place,⁴³² became widespread in Western countries and in extraterritorial regions.

M.K. Atatürk, also, shared this kind of a feeling of embarrassment because of some customs of the Turkish people that might be considered strange by the possessors of ‘Western culture’. Especially after he consolidated his power and adopted a policy of ‘remaking’ the Turkish people in accordance with Western customs, he frequently made public his feeling of embarrassment.⁴³³ Atatürk’s scorn and advice was motivated by his desire to make his country as civilized as the Western ones, and he regarded etiquette, costume, ethics, and personal taste as the very important components of being part of a civilization. Similarly, Sun was also struggling to remake the “Chinaman”, however, in Sun’s case, “both his scorn and his advice were motivated by an intense urge to awaken his countrymen to drive the foreigners or imperialists from Chinese soil.”⁴³⁴ Sun Yat-sen, when he used Orientalist ideas to remake his countrymen, was in a different situation than M.

⁴³² Such signs in public places, like the one in the Shanghai Municipal Park, which forbade the entry of dogs and Chinese, caused the Chinese to realize their own subjugation to the Westerners. The naming of dogs and Chinese side by side reminded the Chinese of “the derision they reserved” for the barbarians and the minorities they subjugated. As mentioned in the first chapter, the Chinese had a custom of writing the names of the other people with animal radicals. And “by 1920 it was no longer possible for a Chinese person to stroll in the park without reflecting on what it meant to be “Chinese and Dogs”. Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, pp. 122-3.

⁴³³ When he advised Turkish women to wear western headgear, he criticized the customary headwear of the Muslim women on the ground that with such headwear a Turkish woman could not even enter public places in Western countries. See *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 229.

⁴³⁴ Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 105.

Kemal, who, having defeated the imperialist powers, trusted himself to the degree that he could promote full westernization in spite of the West. M. Kemal was struggling in order to make his nation reach the level of civilized Western nations in order not to come to the point of extinction as in the case of the Ottoman Empire, Sun was struggling to show the Westerners that the Chinese were capable of governing themselves.

Sun proposed that the only way to improve personal culture, which was the reason behind foreign oppression, was self-cultivation. He drew “an explicit connection between governing of the self and governing of the state.”⁴³⁵ Through this connection he was able to draw his conclusion. He converged Orientalist premises, which claimed that “Chinese were incompetent administrators because they could not care for themselves,”⁴³⁶ with the ancient philosophy of China as a point to legitimize his argument by referring to the ancients. The Great Learning wrote, “investigate into things, attain the utmost knowledge, make the thoughts sincere, rectify the heart, cultivate the person, regulate the family, govern the country rightly, pacify the world.”⁴³⁷ It was because Chinese did not follow this dictum, Sun argued that they were not able to cultivate themselves, and thus were unable to govern their country. At last the equation was concluded, he declared, “foreigners, seeing that the Chinese are unable to govern their country, want to come and establish a common control over us.”⁴³⁸

However, unlike M.K. Atatürk, Sun never thought to impose complete westernization and had an oppositionist stance against those who wanted to convert the Chinese into foreigners. For Sun, reviving ancient learning and moral values,

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁴³⁶ For the comments of foreign visitors on the Chinese culture, see *Ibid*, p, 11.

⁴³⁷ Sun Yat-sen, *The Triple Demism*, p. 194.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*,p.195.

which had been suppressed by the foreign rulers of China, was important in the process of regaining the national spirit. Despite his hatred for certain Chinese customs, such as idol worship, foot-binding, dirt tolerance⁴³⁹, etc., Sun had a firm belief in the superiority of ancient Chinese morality and traditional learning, which would enable China to live in peace for a long time. As a critic of the New Culture movement, he said

As for China's ancient standards, they are not yet lost sight of the people of China. First come loyalty and filial devotion, then kindness and love, then faithfulness and justice, then harmony and peace. The Chinese still speak of these ancient qualities of character. But since our domination by alien races and since the invasion of foreign culture which had spread its influence all over China, there are those, who are intoxicated with the new culture, have begun to reject the ancient ethical standards, saying that the former makes the latter unnecessary. They do not understand that we ought to preserve what is good in our past and reject only the bad. China now is in a period of conflict between old and new currents.

We must revive not only our ancient morality but also our traditional learning. Since our subjugation by the Manchus our four hundred millions have been asleep, our ancient learning has been asleep. If we want to regain our national spirit, we must reawaken the learning as well as the moral ideas, which we once possessed.⁴⁴⁰

Sun Yat-sen, concerning China's relations with the West, would develop an Occidental argument like most of the non-Western nationalists who wanted to open an autonomous sphere for their national culture. He would reverse the Orientalist dichotomy of 'East' versus 'West' and attribute essential characteristics to each of them. In Sun's formulation, 'East' becomes the domain of spirit, and 'West' becomes the domain of matter. According to this thought, Western civilization

⁴³⁹ Donald Treadgold relates Sun's scorn of these kinds of Chinese customs as Protestant influence. Donald W. Treadgold. 1972. "Sun Yat-sen and Modern Christianity," in David Buxbaum and Frederik W. Mote eds. *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture*. Hong Kong: Cathay Press, p. 140.

⁴⁴⁰ *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*, p. 28.

appears as the rule of Might and Eastern civilization as the rule of Right. In his speech in Japan in 1924, he declared that,

From the aspect of cultural development during the last several hundred years, the material civilization of Europe has reached its height while Oriental civilization has remained stagnant. Outwardly, Europe is superior to Asia. Fundamentally, European civilization during the several hundred years is one of scientific materialism. Such a civilization, when applied to society, will mean the cult of force, with aero planes, bombs, and cannons as its outstanding features. Recently, this cult of force has been repeatedly employed by the Western peoples to oppress Asia, and as a consequence, there is no progress in Asia. To oppress others with the cult of force, in the language of Ancients, is the rule of Might. Therefore, European civilization is nothing but the rule of Might. The rule of Might has always been looked down by the Orient. There is another kind of civilization superior to the rule of Might. The fundamental characteristics of this civilization are benevolence, justice and morality.... Such a civilization in the language of Ancients, the rule of Right or the Kingly Way. One may say, therefore, that Oriental civilization is one of the rule of Right.⁴⁴¹

Quite differently, while Kemal Atatürk preferred to invent a new history for the Turkish people through the project of Turkish History Thesis, in order to show that the Turkish nation was also a part of European civilization, and applied a non-selective westernization, Sun, although a Christian⁴⁴², returned to Chinese ancient teachings and traditions in order to provide his people with a sense of cultural pride and an autonomous space from the culture of their enemy.

⁴⁴¹ Sun Yat-sen. 1941. *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*. Shanghai, p. 145-6.

⁴⁴² Since Confucianism is not regarded as a religion but as an ancient philosophy, Confucianism did not hinder one from being a Christian. For Sun's relation to Christianity, see Donald W. Treadgold. 1972. "Sun Yat-sen and Modern Christianity," p. 139.

THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRACY (MINQUAN ZHUYI)

A reading of Sun Yat-sen's speeches and writings manifest that his political thought had shown an oscillation between populism and elitism.⁴⁴³ Despite his tendency towards elitism, he never lost his belief that in reality people possessed the political power. Sun Yat-sen praised popular sovereignty frequently by declaring that in the Chinese Republic, "four hundred million are all emperors," "the people are the ultimate sovereign or monarchs."⁴⁴⁴

His advocacy of democracy stemmed from his belief that democracy was the next stage in the invertible evolutionary development. In his first lecture on democracy, he described the evolution of the governmental systems as such: "The political tendency of the world ran from theocracy to monarchy, then from monarchy to democracy; and its power is irresistible."⁴⁴⁵

Sun, as Liang Qichao did, frequently turned to Chinese tradition and re-interpreted the ancient sayings, so as to make them legitimize his ideas by establishing an authentic antecedent. He would also cultivate national pride by showing that the ancient political precedents of recent political thoughts existed in China. He would not forget to use the sayings of Confucius and Mencius in order to prove that China had the concept of popular right, albeit in an un-institutionalized form.⁴⁴⁶ Both Confucius and Mencius were democrats. Sun wrote:

Confucius said, "When the Way prevails, All under Heaven Belongs to All." He was pleading for a free and fraternal world in which the people would rule.... Thus China, more than two millennia ago, had already considered the idea of democracy, but at the

⁴⁴³ Audrey Wells.2001. *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen: Development and Impact*. Palgrave, p. 53.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 283.

⁴⁴⁵ *Sun Yat-sen: Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 277.

⁴⁴⁶ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 253.

time could not put it into effect. This democracy was what foreigners call a Utopia, an ideal which could not be immediately realized.⁴⁴⁷

Sun's elitism becomes apparent on several occasions, one of which is his proposal of a three- staged gradual adaptation of democracy in China. The stages were the 'military stage', when a military government employed its armed forces to eradicate all internal obstacles and disseminate its principles so that people would be enlightened, the 'tutelary stage' when government would send persons, trained and qualified through examinations, to various districts to assist the people in preparation for self-government, and the 'constitutional stage' when the government would establish a five-power government and a constitution would be promulgated.⁴⁴⁸ Such a revolutionary tactic was necessitated because of China's monarchical past. An immediate establishment of constitutional democracy would open the way for the tyranny of autocracy, militarism, and politicians, since the people lacked any experience of self-government.⁴⁴⁹

The other reason of his elitism lay in the character of the masses. He believed that in nature there was no equality and men were divided into three classes according to their innate ability and intelligence. The first were the "pioneers and leaders" who invent and create, and the second were the "disciples" who were good imitators and followers of the first class men, and lastly, the "unconscious performers" whose intelligence is inferior and do what others instruct them.⁴⁵⁰ Sun argued: "in building a country it is easy to find men of action, but very difficult to

⁴⁴⁷ *San Min Chu I, The Three Principles of the People*. 1943. Translated by Frank W. Price. L. T. Chen Chungking, ed. p. 169-70 in Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 8.

⁴⁴⁸ Sun Yat-sen, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*, pp. 9-16.

⁴⁴⁹ *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary: A Programme for National Reconstruction of China*, p. 131.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 112.

find people who can work out plans of reconstruction.”⁴⁵¹ Sun, who believed that he belonged to the first class of men, commanded his disciples:

The rights of the people are not inborn, but are created. Since the mass of the people are pu chih (bu zhi) pu cho (bu jue)⁴⁵² and not creative, it is our duty to create rights and give these rights to them without asking. ... We must think for the common people, fight for their rights of self-government, and after having obtained these rights, hand them over to the people on our initiative, not upon their request.⁴⁵³

In these statements of Sun it is possible to find the origins of his idea of tutelary democracy. His elitist division of ‘men’ into three layers made him believe that those who invent and create should teach the others to govern themselves.

Before 1914 the necessity of a transition period, when the pedagogical government would be like an imperial tutor who once instructed the emperor,⁴⁵⁴ was limited by Sun to three years with an additional three-year period extending beyond military government. However, after 1914, when he lost his trust in liberal politics, he organized his revolutionary plan in a different way, “merging the first stages into a “revolutionary period” of indeterminate duration, during which the Party monopolized power.”⁴⁵⁵ His advocacy of tutelary democracy changed form and became a model for the enlightened dictatorship of a party, the members of which were required to submit totally to the party leader. He began to consolidate his power in the Party and ended compromise even with those “political groups that were still happy to work within the framework of a liberal democratic polity.”⁴⁵⁶ He revered Soviet Party organization and “deployed the figure of Lenin to bolster an appeal of

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 117.

⁴⁵² The third class men, who are the unconscious performers.

⁴⁵³ Sun Yat-sen, *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp. 354-5.

⁴⁵⁴ *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 137.

⁴⁵⁵ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 378.

⁴⁵⁶ Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 185.

absolute loyalty to his own person and total commitment to the Party.”⁴⁵⁷ This was necessary in order not to fail again. In his memoirs, he argued that the failure of the first revolution was because his party members “unexpectedly turned out to be a different opinion” from himself.⁴⁵⁸

When Sun had consolidated his power in the Party to a great extent by the year 1924, having been elected as the lifetime president,⁴⁵⁹ he presented his Party as the sole legitimate authority. The role of the Party is explained in the ‘Manifesto of the First National Congress’ in 1924.

After the political power has been restored and the people’s government established, the Kuomintang (Guomindang) must serve as the central organ for the administration of such political power, so that all counter revolutionary movements will be suppressed, the designs of the militarists to injure our people will be frustrated, and all obstacles in the way of executing the principles of the Kuomintang will be swept away. Only an organized party, and one with authority, can serve as the foundation of the revolutionary masses; only such a body can render this duty loyally to the people of the whole country.⁴⁶⁰

Sun Yat-sen used a more explicit discourse on the issue of party rule than the Manifesto suggested. He declared that success depended on the priority of party over state: “We must use the Party to construct the state. It is fair to say that the success

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 65.

⁴⁵⁸ *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 6.

⁴⁵⁹ The influence of Soviet ideology and the acceptance of Communist Party members to Guomindang in 1924 makes us believe that Sun had little theoretical influence within his party, however, on practical level, he was able to impose himself as the sole leader of the movement. And at least in the short run, he was accepted as such by the Communists. “What would have been the position of Sun in his party in the long run as he continued his alliance with the Chinese Communists” is a question that remains unanswered because of the untimely death of Sun. However, I believe that if Sun had lived, he would not have been able to compromise the two ideological groups in his party- the Communists and the Nationalists. Some were against the cooperation with the communists and were against the injection of anti-imperialist and pro-Soviet articles into the party program.

⁴⁶⁰ *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents*, p. 82.

[of the Russian Revolution] is due to the priority given to the Party over the state.... We must recognize ourselves and place the Party above the state."⁴⁶¹

The great similarity between Atatürk and Sun on the issue of party rule is observable. Both of them were disturbed by heterogeneity within the revolutionary movement. The first period of the National Assembly, during which the opposition groups frequently put forward their reservations about M. Kemals' policy of parliamentary rule under his presidency, and the period of Revolutionary Alliance (1905-12), during which Sun had great trouble in consolidating his power, are comparable because both of these leaders, troubled by opposition, decided to establish a very disciplined party structure. Guomindang and the People's Republican Party are the products of dedicated leaders who absolutely believed in the appropriateness of their ideology to their society. Both of them planned to construct the state and the nation through the party, which were under their total control. Both of them were elected as lifetime presidents of their parties.⁴⁶² They declared that the principles of their parties were the principles of the state.⁴⁶³ When Sun Yat-sen changed the five colored Republican flag used after 1911 and substituted it with a Nationalist flag dominated with the motifs of the Party flag in 1924, he was declaring the identification of state with party. Similarly, while in 1937 M. K. Atatürk praised the union of party and governmental organizations within the same structure because it manifested that the state did not discriminate between its citizens,⁴⁶⁴ the Chinese nationalists in 1924 offered to replace local assemblies, which had been functioning since the end of the Qing dynasty, with party

⁴⁶¹ Quoted in Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 379.

⁴⁶² Even Mustafa Kemal rejected to resign from party presidency when he was elected as the president of the Republic because state and party were not separable from each other.

⁴⁶³ See *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 423. For the Chinese case, see *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents*, p. 82.

⁴⁶⁴ See *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 423.

institutions.⁴⁶⁵ For both of these nationalist leaders, strength meant union, which could only be achieved through a state governed and constructed by a single party that could only provide good results under the leadership of one charismatic leader.

A reading of the speeches of M. Kemal does not enable one to understand what he envisioned for the future, since, contrary to Sun, he did not have a systematic scheme for the development of political life in Turkey. However, as mentioned before, when one observes his practical policies, it becomes apparent that he gradually abandoned the populist discourse that he made use of during the Independence War period. After the war he frequently emphasized that enemies were defeated only through a unified nation, which was still needed by the nation. Therefore, he did not approve of a multi-party democracy because the time was not yet ripe.⁴⁶⁶ However, as the establishment of the Free Republican Party in 1930, under the guidance and advice of Atatürk, manifested, at certain times, he believed that the time for multi-party democracy had arrived. However, this tutelary multi-party democracy experiment soon came to an end when Atatürk thought that he had miscalculated and forced the Party to dissolve it. It is important to note that even if in principle Mustafa Kemal was not against multi-party democracy, his model of multi-party democracy was not an approval of a political sphere where every oppositionist group whether they approve the Kemalist model or not could voice themselves. The concept of the 'time of maturity of the people for a multi-party democracy' is explanatory in that sense. In Mustafa Kemal's 'democratic' model, the people, after a long education process by the party-state reaches such a degree of maturity that the differences of opinions do not harm the 'unity of the nation'. The time for multi-party democracy arrives only when every member of the nation deeply believes in

⁴⁶⁵ Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 207.

⁴⁶⁶ See *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 199.

the Kemalist principles but only clash on some minor issues, such as on certain governmental policies that would not deviate from the ‘path that is directed by the father of the nation’.

Sun, on the other hand, planned to hand over the political power to the people after they had reached the degree of enlightenment envisioned by the Party. On a practical level, the establishment of a constitutional government would take place when all the districts, which Sun conceived as units of self-government, of a province reached the level of self-government. When half of the provinces in the country reached the constitutional stage, Sun proposed that, the People’s Congress, which was planned to be a gathering of the delegates from the districts, would convene and promulgate the constitution.⁴⁶⁷ Therefore, it can be argued that both Sun and M. Kemal regarded the people as children, to whom democracy, which was the play of the enlightened adult, could not be left before a process of education.

Sun Yat-sen developed his model for government and state structure after he realized that the Western forms of representative democracies were deficient. He argued that in Western democracies those, who were not capable of being statesmen, were elected because of influential demagogy. On the other hand, he criticized the three-power separation system because it created a very dominant executive.⁴⁶⁸

As a solution to the problems of Western democracies, he proposed that “the control of political power” and “the exercise of political responsibility” should be distinguished.⁴⁶⁹ According to Sun’s formulation, people possessed “sovereignty/power” (*quan*), but because the majority were *bu zhi bu jue* (unconscious people, who don’t know, who don’t think), the state should be

⁴⁶⁷ See *The Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*, pp. 8-17.

⁴⁶⁸ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 49. Also see, his speech on Five Power Constitution in 1921 in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp.91-2.

⁴⁶⁹ *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 355.

governed by those who possessed ability (*neng*). He considered that states must be governed like a business corporation, where shareholders have power, but the general managers have ability.⁴⁷⁰ Similarly, he argued, “on the one hand, the people must have absolute and direct control of their government so that autocracy and exploitation will give way to democracy and liberty. On the other hand, the government must be so efficient that it is capable of doing every good service to the people.”⁴⁷¹

Sun Yat-sen believed that the only way to make “people all powerful and government all mighty”⁴⁷² is to grant the people four great rights and to initiate a five-power constitution. The four rights of the people were the ‘right to vote’, ‘right to recall’, ‘initiative’, and ‘referendum’. These rights would be performed on a local level. On the national level, the delegates of the People’s Congress, elected directly from the districts, would “exercise the powers of election and recall in reference to officials of the central government, as well as the powers of initiative and referendum in reference to laws enacted by the central government.”⁴⁷³ To counterbalance the four great rights, which made people all-powerful, the five-power constitution, namely, the executive power, the legislative power, the judicial power, the examining power, and the supervisory/impeachment power, should be adopted. What is of interest here is his placement of impeachment power and examination power as equal and separate powers besides the classical powers of Western democracies. While the examination power only permits those who are able to govern, the supervisory power eliminates those who abuse their power.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 354-64.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 381.

⁴⁷² *Ibid*, p. 384.

⁴⁷³ *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*, pp. 15-6.

It was the examination power that would enable China to eliminate corruption in popular elections without limiting suffrage. Sun proudly mentions that he derived his theory of examination power from “the ancient institution known as the civil service examination,”⁴⁷⁴ which is copied by Western countries for the appointment of civil servants.⁴⁷⁵ But Sun proposed to develop modern forms of the examination system, which were copied from the ancient Chinese examination system, by making it an independent power and by including not only the appointed officials but also the elected ones.

Consequently, it can be argued that the basis of Sun’s idea of democracy was his belief in the inequality of men, which in the end made him an elitist, albeit with a populist theory to hand over the political power(*quan*) to the ‘ordinary’ *bu zhi bu jue* (unthinking, unconscious) people. It is hard to assess to what degree Sun would insist on his program of national construction; because as in the case of Atatürk, nationalist leaders, who were activists rather than theoreticians, could easily repudiate their own ideas when the circumstances changed. A reading of Sun’s biography shows that he was a man of action, who could easily shift positions, as the case of the dispute on federalism showed. If he had lived longer, would China have been able to reach the constitutional period? This question is unanswered, but it is obvious that the Nationalist Party dictatorship (1925-49) under the leadership of Chiang Kai-Shek (Leader of Guomindang after the death of Sun Yat-sen. Between 1928 and 1949, he ruled China by his Nationalist government) tried to legitimize itself by claiming that he was following the principles of Sun Yat-sen.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 94. “The examination system in China had a long history, beginning in the Han Dynasty in the first century BC. It was gradually developed as the examination for administrators, although it stressed literary knowledge.” In A. Wells. *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 87.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁴⁷⁶ In China, both the Nationalists and the Communists claim to be the heir of Sun Yat-sen’s thought. Even Wang Jingwei, who had become the head of the Chinese puppet regime under command of the

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIVELIHOOD (MINSHENG ZHUYI)

Sun Yat-sen developed his principle of livelihood as early as 1905, just after his visit to Western countries, when he realized that “although the foremost European countries had achieved power and popular government, they could not accord complete happiness to their people.”⁴⁷⁷ Therefore, in Europe a second revolution seemed inevitable as a result of the growing influence of the socialists and anarchists who reacted against Western ills.⁴⁷⁸ Sun proposed that his principle would prevent China from experiencing the social evils of the West before they appeared in China. He argued that in Western capitalist countries “because their civilizations are advanced and their industry and commerce are well developed, a social revolution is difficult to overcome.”⁴⁷⁹ In such countries capitalists have emerged and brought many problems. However, since China’s industry and commerce are not mature enough, capitalists have not appeared yet. So in China a social revolution is easy, and China could accomplish its social and political revolution at one stroke by adopting the principles of people’s livelihood.⁴⁸⁰

When Sun developed his principle, he avoided the use of the term socialism (*shehui zhuyi*), although he used the term ‘people’s livelihood’ as a synonym of socialism during his early period. But later, in 1924 he argued that *minsheng zhuyi* is different from socialism. He said, “there is a great deal of confusion as to the meaning and nature of “socialism”.... There are different kinds of socialism; the most extreme is communism.... It was difficult to find a satisfactory answer to the

Japanese published a selected writings of Sun, where he sought to legitimize his action. See Sun Yat-sen. *China and Japan: Natural Friends, Unnatural Enemies*. Compiled by Wang Jingwei. Shanghai. It should be borne in mind that both of their efforts for legitimization depends on a selective reading. It is hard to find a comprehensive thought of revolutionary leaders. They are more reactive to the circumstances and most of the time realistic so dilemmas in their thoughts are easily discernable.

⁴⁷⁷ *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 193.

⁴⁷⁸ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 40.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

problems of modern industrialized society in any of the socialistic theories, and that we therefore must go on searching for a new solution.”⁴⁸¹

In his early period, Sun reduced the application of people’s livelihood (*minshengzhuyi*) to a policy of land taxation in accordance with the theories of the American reformer, Henry George. He believed that the sources of Western social problems were created by their inability to solve the land problem. Sun argued that land profits, emerging as a result of the increase in land values in industrializing areas should be controlled by the state through single taxation and appropriation of the ‘unearned increment’. Since the increase in land value was the result of the effort of everyone, which was economic progress, the revenue gained from it could not be left to the landowner.⁴⁸² The appropriation of profits from land would guarantee the “transfer of capital from traditional to modern sectors of the economy and preclude the concentration of private wealth, and also free inert capital, otherwise locked in land speculation, for employment in the more dynamic sectors of the economy.”⁴⁸³

Until 1924, Sun did not consider a land reform through redistribution. He believed that appropriation of unearned increment would benefit all without harming the landlord due to the proposed taxing method, which taxed the owner according to the declared value of the asset rather than the amount of it. He explained his position during 1906 against those who criticized him for planning to take the land of the rich as such,

I have heard it said that the principle of the people’s livelihood would entail killing half of our 400 million people and taking the land of the rich for ourselves. This irresponsible talk is based on ignorance.... With respect to a solution, although socialists

⁴⁸¹ In *Three Principle’s of People*, translated in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp. 392-3.

⁴⁸² *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 46-7.

⁴⁸³ A. James Gregor and M. Hsia Chang. 1982. “Marxism, Sun Yat-sen, and the Concept of Imperialism,” in *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 55/1, pp. 67-8.

have different opinions, the procedure I most favour is land valuation. For example, if a landlord has land worth 1000 dollars, its price can be set at 1000 or even 2000 dollars. Perhaps in the future, after communications have been developed, the value of the land will rise to 10000 dollars; the owners should receive 2000, which entails a profit and no loss, and the 8000 increment will go to the state.⁴⁸⁴

As Sun Yat-sen entered into contact with the Soviets, he extended his land reform policy to include redistributing land to the peasants by the state. He deplored the fact that although China did not develop a large land-holding system, the tenants were exploited by the small land-holders as they had to “hand over to the landlords most of what they produce every year, because they do not own the land.” It was only just that “the farmers should have their own land and own what they produce.”

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In his Three Principles of the People, Sun left his new argument about the ‘redistribution of the land’ on the level of propaganda and did not develop a schematic and systematic program for a ‘redistribution of land’ policy, although he systematically explained his plan on appropriation and taxing of ‘unearned increment’. Therefore, through a reading of his Three Principles of the People, it is impossible to understand how he planned to achieve the emancipation of peasants. However, rather than explaining the procedure for peasant emancipation, Sun spent his time on explaining the method of increasing agricultural productivity. He was

⁴⁸⁴ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 47. However, there also remains a problem in this solution. If the determination of land prices is left to the landowner, how could the state guarantee the right assessment? Sun proposed: “if people expect the nation to buy their land, they will raise the price. But if the nation does not buy it after all, and they have to pay the highest taxes year after year, they will not dare to raise the price. However, if they lower price in hope of paying lower taxes, they will worry that the government may buy the land, so they will not dare lower price.” In *ibid*, p. 67.

⁴⁸⁵ Three Principles of People in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp. 448-9.

more interested in “increased production, obtained as a result of a technological revolution, than in any redistribution of wealth.”⁴⁸⁶

Mustafa Kemal, who believed that “the peasant was Turkey’s master and owner, and the true producer,”⁴⁸⁷ also, put forward the necessity of land reform in order to grant the landless farmers with some amount of land that would enable them to use fruits of their own labor to their own advantage, especially in 1929⁴⁸⁸ and 1935⁴⁸⁹. However, during his lifetime no land reform was carried out. The reason, as put by Feroz Ahmed, was firstly because “Turkey was not confronted with a land question...resulting from a large population and insufficient land,” and secondly, because Kemalists did not want to alienate the landlords, who supported the independence movement while peasants, who were tired of war and who accused the state for their shortcomings, were hardly mobilized to the cause.⁴⁹⁰

Sun Yat-sen, as Mustafa Kemal did, repudiated the Marxist argument of ‘class struggle’ during his lectures on people’s livelihood. While Mustafa Kemal emphasized the lack of classes in Turkey in order to legitimize his single-party regime, Sun developed it in order to manifest that China was troubled by poverty, not by unequal distribution of wealth, which made the application of Marxist solutions to the problem impossible. However, both considered that the Republic, which they had founded, was the name given to a people’s state where solidarity and unification were the inevitable condition for the establishment of a new order and the overthrow

⁴⁸⁶ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 387-8. Also see, Three Principles of People in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social ideals*, pp. 441-55.

⁴⁸⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 240.

⁴⁸⁸ Taha Parla. 1995. *Türkiye’de Siyasal Kültürün Resmi Kaynakları: Kemalist Tek-Parti İdeolojisi ve CHP’nin Altı Oku*. İstanbul: İletişim.

⁴⁸⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 407.

⁴⁹⁰ Feroz Ahmed. 1981. “The Political Economy of Kemalism,” in Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun, eds. *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*. London, p.153.

of the old one. Every member of the nation had to be mobilized into the nationalist cause.

Sun criticized Marxist class analysis during the period of the Reorganization Conference, although he had allied with the Soviets and Chinese Communist Party members. Sun argued that Marx was a social pathologist because he regarded class struggle, which was a deviation in human evolutionary history that appeared when a social group lacked the means of livelihood and resorted to abnormal means of obtaining it, as the cause of social progress.⁴⁹¹ He believed that the “problem of livelihood” was the central force in social progress.⁴⁹²

Sun tried to prove his argument by claiming that Western countries had progressed but not in the way that Marx had proposed. Rather, the compromise between classes enabled economic progress. The policies adopted by Westerners, which regulated capital and restricted the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few people, were “improvement of the social conditions of the working class,” “socialization of transportation and communication facilities,” “creation of direct taxation” and “socialization of distribution.”⁴⁹³ He furthered his case by mentioning that labor conditions in Western countries were improved through mutual cooperation between capital and labor, both of which realized that “capital will make higher profits and labor greater wages through greater efficiency,” not by class struggle.⁴⁹⁴

Sun Yat-sen concluded his critique of Marx by putting his reservation to the method of Marx rather than his principle. According to Sun, communism was the shared ideal of both principle of livelihood and Marxism. The doctrine of livelihood

⁴⁹¹ Three Principles of People in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 405.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 401.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 404-5.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 405.

was the practical application of communism.⁴⁹⁵ His interpretation of communism was shaped by the Confucian ideal of Great Unity (Da Tong). He contended that

The San Min (Three Principles) doctrine means a government “of people, by the people, and for the people”- that is, the state is the common property of all the people, its politics are participated in by all, and its profits are shared by all. Then there will be not only communism in property, but communism in everything else. Such will be the ultimate end of the Doctrine of livelihood, a state which Confucius calls ta t’ung (Da Tong) or the age of “great similarity”.⁴⁹⁶

The method of Marx, on the other hand, was not applicable to China because in China there were no classes, but only the poor people. The inequality of wealth only existed between the poor and the extremely poor, not between the rich and the poor. Marxian ideas were only appropriate to those societies where wealth was too unevenly distributed. But because in China the real problem was poverty, which was the consequence of underproduction⁴⁹⁷, the solution was to develop industry on the one hand, and on the other, to apply preventive methods to check beforehand the growth of large private capital and vast inequality in society.⁴⁹⁸

On the practical level, what Sun had in mind was a statist economic policy, highly influenced by Bismarck’s economic policies. He was proposing a “welfare state” where the state promoted industry, owned and operated fundamental sectors, such as transportation, communication, and mining, while preventing unequal distribution of wealth through equalization of landownership and tax regulation of private capital.

In Turkey also, the days following the Great World Depression of 1929 would signal a change in Turkish economic policy under the name of statism (*devletçilik*). It

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 422.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 440.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 436.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 438.

became one of the six fundamental principles of the RPP program in 1931 and was incorporated into the constitution in 1937. In 1935, M.Kemal defined it as a “very new order of planned economy,” which would provide economic progress and prosperity.⁴⁹⁹ As in the case of Sun’s planned economic policy, in Turkey, during the 1930s, Turkish statism was adopted to attribute active government intervention to the economic sphere in order to guarantee the welfare and prosperity of the nation, although it retained a place for private enterprise.

Sun Yat-sen declared that the necessity for public enterprise emerged because private operation suffers from insufficient capital, and government could run big enterprises more efficiently. He believed that public enterprise was important for the speedy industrialization of the country. On the other hand, M. Kemal declared that statism “evolved from the principle of the private activity of the individual, but places on the state responsibility for the national economy... to do quickly things which have not been done throughout centuries in the Turkish motherland by individual and private activity.”⁵⁰⁰ “Industrialization is one of the greatest national aims. We will establish and operate every kind of industry whose economic elements exist in our country.”⁵⁰¹

It is not clear whether Atatürk’s statism emerged from an ideological or pragmatic point of view. However, an analysis of the economic policies of Turkey during the early Republican period manifest that statism emerged as a policy to counter the newly-emerging forces. Especially, the gradual decline in the emphasis on private enterprise, to which the main economic role was assigned during the 1920s, shows the nature of the Kemalist economic regime. Feroz Ahmed argues that,

⁴⁹⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 399.

⁵⁰⁰ In *İktisat vekaleti. 2inci 5 yıllık Sanayi Planı, 1936*, pp. 30-1, quoted in Z. Y. Hershlag.1984.

“Atatürk’s Etatism,” in J. Landau, ed. *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*. Leiden, p. 176.

⁵⁰¹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 414.

Perhaps this experiment with economic liberalism would have continued for longer if the great depression had not exerted an immediate effect on Turkey, where the economic crisis in the capitalist world, ushered in by the Great Crash of 1929, gave a sharp impetus to state intervention. The impact of the depression on the economy was sufficient to force the government to take counter measures. The crisis came to be seen as a failure of the free-enterprise system, identified with Western capitalism. The Soviet Union, with its system of state controls, seemed to escape the crises. It was therefore seen by the Kemalists as a model that might be usefully copied in certain areas of the Turkish economy.⁵⁰²

Feroz Ahmed further argues that the “Kemalist regime,” by which he meant to be a single party political system with an interventionist economic policy, “continued to be transitional in character, preparing the ground for a liberal political and economic system which would replace it in the near future.”⁵⁰³

Despite his theoretical analysis of economic systems, Sun’s position concerning the economic sphere was determined by his concern for underproduction in China. He frequently emphasized that China’s primary problem was the creation of national capital rather than the regulation of private capital. Both of the leaders concerned here were committed to rapid industrialization under state guidance that would bring welfare to all.

⁵⁰² Feroz Ahmed. 1981. “The Political Economy of Kemalism,” in Ali Kazancigil, *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*. p. 158.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 159.

PART IV

**THE NATIONALIST DISCOURSES OF SUN YATSEN AND
MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK IN COMPARATIVE
PERSPECTIVE**

Both the Ottoman Empire and the Qing Empire ruled vast lands resided by various nationalities, the governance of minority regions and the minorities became harder for the empires as their economic power weakened as a consequence of imperialist economic exploitation and political pressure. While Britain started to expand its power in Qing Tibet, Russia claimed rights in Mongolia and Manchuria, and France began to exert its influence in south-western China. In the Ottoman Empire the same imperialist powers began to play the role of protectors of the Christian minorities, who had claimed their independence from the Empire during the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries as a result of the support they gained from Western powers. Therefore, the history of the Chinese and the Turkish nationalist struggle also turned into a struggle that aimed to overthrow Western economic and political exploitation and to reclaim the territories that were under threat as a consequence of Western territorial claims that were demanded for minorities or for their own territorial expansion.

Chapter VII

THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST DISCOURSE OF MUSTAFA KEMAL AND SUN YATSEN IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

An anti-imperialist discourse was a very important component of Sun Yat-sen's thought, especially after the revolution of 1911. Until that time, he had the belief that the cause of China's weakness was Manchu rule, and Western aggression would stop as the Chinese manifested their determination to overthrow the alien rulers from their soil. However, as it became clear that the overthrow of the Manchus did not bring about any improvement in China's relations with the Great Powers, he had to reconsider his thinking and arrived at the point that anti-imperialist struggle was necessary in order to free China from foreign exploitation. As analyzed in the preceding chapter, for Sun, the awakening of the Chinese to their nationhood required the Chinese to awaken to the dangers of imperialism.

Similarly, many nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal during the Independence War were determined to overthrow imperialist powers by use of force. However, since the Ottoman ruling dynasty was not alien, for the Turkish nationalists, there was no confusion in their mind as to the question of the enemy. Mustafa Kemal utilized an anti-imperialist discourse as early as 1919 in order to establish a connection between the Turkish struggle for independence and the anti-colonialists struggles of non-Western nations that were flourishing throughout Asia and Africa.

However, before embarking on a discussion of the elements of the anti-imperialist discourse of the two leaders, it is important to remember that both Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen were men of action rather than men of ideologies. They were realists and pragmatics and could utilize any discourse which they believed could serve their ultimate aim that was to overthrow the enemy and

establish a republic. Neither Mustafa Kemal nor Sun Yat-sen became harsh critics of imperialism until they lost all their belief for any Western support for their cause or any Western reconsideration of their relations with Turkey and China. Similarly, the radicalization of anti-imperialist discourse in Turkey and China was a consequence of the support of the Soviet Union, which emerged as a supportive force to the Turkish nationalists during the critical years of the Independence war in Turkey (1920-1), and to the Chinese nationalists during when Sun failed to gain any recognition or help from the Great Powers in China (1922).

As mentioned earlier, Sun Yat-sen, until he entered into official relations with the Soviet Union in the second half of 1922, preferred to use the term 'Great Powers' in order to distinguish the friendly powers from the unfriendly ones.⁵⁰⁴ The primary aim of Sun was to unify China, which meant to overthrow the Beijing government that was controlled by the warlords after the death of Yuan Shikai. Therefore, he welcomed any help from a 'Great Power' which would recognize his government in Canton and support his government as he undertook military expeditions against Beijing. During his lifetime, he requested support from imperialist powers many times in return for concessions. Before the 1911 revolution, although he harshly criticized the Manchus for 'selling the country', which did not belong to them, to the foreigners, he entered into negotiations with the French and asked them for arms and military advisors in return for granting concessions in the southern provinces that would be wrested from imperial control.⁵⁰⁵ After the revolution, this time, Sun demanded support from the Japanese in order to topple Yuan's regime in return for concessions that were even harsher than the Twenty-one Demands of Japan from China during the First World War. Although the concessions made to Japan

⁵⁰⁴ J. Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 170.

⁵⁰⁵ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 115.

remained secret until the secret letters to the Japanese officials were publicized after World War II, Sun's pro-Japanese tendencies that he made public during a speech in which he criticized the entrance of China into the First World War⁵⁰⁶, disturbed the Chinese nationalists, who did not hesitate that Japan had monopolistic ambitions in the Far East. Sun's attitude was a contradictory one because although Sun criticized Japanese policy as imperialistic in 1914 for its occupation of Shandong, he became the tool of Japanese imperialism. He considered his attitude to be beneficial to China, since it would mean the end of authoritarian Yuan regime.⁵⁰⁷ Sun's relationship with imperialistic Japan is a complex one and should be considered within the framework of his belief in pan-Asianist unity. Therefore, below, I will re-examine his attitude towards Japan within the context of Sun's pan-Asianism. In this section, the aim is to demonstrate that Sun's anti-imperialism was not an ideological one and as we follow his practices, it is observable that he could rely on imperialist powers if they guaranteed to support his cause.

Although Sun's attitude towards imperialist powers was vacillating until his alliance with the Soviets, Mustafa Kemal's policy against imperialism can be followed in a more linear fashion. After Mustafa Kemal emerged as a nationalist leader of the Anatolian resistance movement, he did not give up his anti-imperialist discourse although it became harsher after nationalists in Ankara entered into negotiations with Soviet Russia in the early 1920s. Only after Ankara was victorious in its Independence War and entered into negotiations with the Western powers in Lausanne at the end of 1922, did he moderate his anti-imperialist tone, and even abandoned it in the following years. This point manifests that Atatürk's anti-imperialism was pragmatic rather than ideological.

⁵⁰⁶ Sun Yat-sen, *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 194.

⁵⁰⁷ M.Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, pp.188-9.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, in contrast to Sun Yat-sen who was ready to grant concessions to the Great Powers before he came into contact with the Soviets, and like Sun Yat-sen, who in 1924 insisted that economic exploitation which was implicit and indirect was even more threatening than direct colonization, would never agree to grant economic and political concessions to the invaders as his dispute with the foreign minister of the day- Bekir Sami- demonstrates. When Bekir Sami was sent to the London conference as a delegate for the revision of the Sévres Treaty in February 1921, he concluded separate treaties with Britain, France, and Italy at the cost of economic concessions. Mustafa Kemal declared that the treaties he had signed were nothing other than the occupation of Anatolia under different names.⁵⁰⁸ Bekir Sami believed that the Turkish nationalists were doomed to fail unless they reconciled with the Great Powers through granting them concessions. He insisted that the continuation of a war against an enemy who was much more powerful than the nationalists could bring disaster to the country and the entire Islamic world.⁵⁰⁹ However, for Mustafa Kemal, independence not only meant political independence but also economic independence as well. This point seems to have been accepted by the majority of the parliamentarians, since the treaties signed by Bekir Sami were not ratified.⁵¹⁰

Mustafa Kemal, just like Sun Yat-sen, who insisted that China was not an independent country but a 'hypo-colony' of the colonizers, believed that the Ottoman Empire was a colony of the foreigners because they interfered in the economic independence of the Empire and had acquired rights that were not the product of equal economic interaction between two sovereign countries. Just after the Independence War in 1923 he mentioned that,

⁵⁰⁸ M. Kemal Atatürk. 1973. *Nutuk II*. MEB, p. 589.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p.592.

⁵¹⁰ E. Zürcher, *Turkey*, p. 161.

... The Ottoman state in reality and in practice was deprived of independence. In truth, it was such a state that the taxes, which it imposed on its own people, were not imposed on the foreigners. It did not have any control over its customs and tariffs. Here was a state with no jurisdiction over foreigners. It is impossible to regard such a state as independent. The intervention in the domestic tasks of the state, and the nation was not limited to these. For example, the state was not free in building railroads and factories which were vital for the nation. In any case there was interference. In that sense could such a state be viewed as an independent state? As I mentioned previously, in reality the state had lost its independence long before and became nothing but a free colony of the foreigners. The Turkish nation among the Ottoman peoples was reduced to the status of slavery.⁵¹¹

Mustafa Kemal was sensitive on the issue of the independence of Turkey. He argued that the military victory of Turkey would not last long unless it was supplemented by economic victory. It was the period of economics and the means to write national history had to be the “plow” rather than the sword.⁵¹²

Thus, the status of Turkey when it entered its Independence War was nothing other than a colony. Therefore, right at the very beginning of the national resistance movement, during the Erzurum Congress in 1919, Mustafa Kemal talked about the anti-colonialist struggles throughout the world.⁵¹³ He gave the anti-colonialists struggles in Egypt, India, Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq as examples. He described how these nations defied foreign sovereignty in their own countries, and what kind of methods they utilized in order to force the colonialists to retreat.

Dört aydan beri Mısır'da istiklali millinin temin ve istirdadı için pek kanlı vakayı ve ihtilatat devam ediyor. Nihayet İngilizler tarafından bittevkif Maltaya götürülmüş olan

⁵¹¹ The speech was presented during the Izmir Economic Congress. *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri II*, p. 108.

⁵¹² Atatürk stated that , '*Siyasi, askeri muzafferiyetler ne kadar büyük olursa olsunlar, iktisadi muzafferiyetler ile tetviç edilemezlerse husule gelen zaferler payidar olamaz, az zamanda söner. ... Efendiler, dahil olduğumuz halk devrinin, milli devrin, milli tarihini dahi yazabilmek için kalemlerimiz sapanlar olacaktır. Bence halk devri, iktisat devri mefhumu ile ifade olunur*'. *Ibid*, pp. 111-2.

⁵¹³ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 1-5.

murahaslar tahliye olunmuş ve Paris Sulh Konferansına azimetlerine muvafakate mecbur olmuşlardır.

Hindistan'da istiklal için vasi miyasta ihtilaller oluyor. Maksad-ı millilerine vusul için bankalar, Avrupa müessesatı, demiryolları bombalarla tahrib ediliyor.

Afganistan ordusu da İngilizlerin milliyeti imha siyasetine karşı harb ediyor. İngilizlerin bel bağladıkları hudut kabailinin dahi Afganlılara iştirak ettiğini ve bu yüzden İngiliz askerlerinin dahile çekilmeğe mecbur olduğunu İngiliz gazeteleri itiraf etmişlerdir.

Suriye'de ve Irak'ta İngilizlerin ve ecnebilerin tahakküm ve idaresinden tekmil Arabistan halkı galeyandadır. Arabistan'ın her yerinde ecnebi boyunduruluğu reddolunuluyor. Yanlız refah ve saadeti memleket için ecnebilerin, iktisadi, umrani, medeni vesaitinden muavenete rıza gösteriliyor.⁵¹⁴

The reason behind Mustafa Kemal's emphasis on anti-colonialist struggles during his short speech at the Congress seems to be his effort to inject trust to the delegates for victory. Some of the delegates were hesitant about the possibility of a victory over the imperialists because of the imbalance in the power situation as it became apparent during the mandate discussions at the Sivas Congress that was held just after the Erzurum Congress. The Erzurum speech is important firstly because it shows that if the minor colonized countries could resist colonial rule, Turkey could also do so. Secondly, it shows the empathy that was established between the nationalists in Anatolia and colonized countries which had started to resist foreign exploitation. It should be remembered that Sun was also making use of the struggle of small countries as examples to his fellow men. The examples of Transvaal, Poland and the Philippines, which had struggled against the big powers despite their weaknesses, were frequently emphasized by Sun.⁵¹⁵

Anti-imperialist discourse gained a new momentum as China and Turkey entered into a cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union. In the case of Sun Yat-

⁵¹⁴ These statements are in the speech presented during the Erzurum Congress. *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp.1-5.

⁵¹⁵ See *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 101 and p. 197.

sen, cooperation with Soviet Union can be presented as a last measure as one follows his lifetime effort to gain international support from Britain, France, and Japan. In the case of the Turkish nationalists, the attempts to cooperate with the Soviets, although represented as cooperation under the umbrella of anti-imperialism, started as a tactical maneuver. In the middle of 1919, Mustafa Kemal planned to use Soviet Russia as a tool in order to threaten the British. If the plan did not work, it would be necessary to enter into cooperation with the Bolsheviks, but at the same time preventing them from entering into Turkey directly. He wrote on 23.06.1919 in a telegraph to Kazım Karabekir that;

It is an appropriate decision to appear neutral in case of the increasing influence of the Bolsheviks in order to change the decision of the Entente powers from occupying our country. We have to claim that otherwise the Entente powers will cause our country to enter under the influence of the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, before the Bolsheviks make a proposal for cooperation it is very appropriate to enter into discussions and reach an agreement with them by the means of a few respectful intermediaries. In this way, we will prevent the entrance of the Bolsheviks in our land by force and with many troops. For this purpose we should say that our national forces are ready, and we have to arrange some secret meetings for discussions on our future situation, our arms, technical materials, ammunition, and money.⁵¹⁶

Soon after, when Istanbul was occupied in March 1920 by the British, there remained no other option for the Turkish independence cadres but to cooperate with

⁵¹⁶ "Bolşeviklerin daha etkili bir duruma girmeleri halinde tarafsız görünmek kararıyla itilaf kuvvetlerini memleketimizden uzaklaştırmaya zorlamak ve aksi halde vatanımızın Bolşevik istila alanında kalmasına sebep olacaklarını iddia etmek ve ona göre gereken fiiliyata kalkışmak uygun olacaktır. Diğer yönden ilk teklifin herhangi bir suretle Bolşevikler tarafından yapılmasını beklemeyerek derhal bölgeden dahile doğru gizlice gönderilecek birkaç kıymetli kişi vasıtasıyla hemen tartışmaya girişmek, anlaşmak pek yerinde olur. Bu suretle Bolşeviklerin bizim memleketimiz dahiline kalabalık ve kuvvetle girmesine lüzum olmaz. İşbu amaç için zaten bu memleketin milli gücünün hazır olduğu söylenerek yalnız şimdilik gizli olarak mesela bazı temsilcilerin kabul edilmesi ve gelecekteki durumlarımız, silahlar, muhimmat ve fenni vasıtalar ve para ve gerekirse insan vermek gibi işler üzerine tartışmalar yapılabilir." Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, p. 45. It was also argued if the Entente powers returned the Arab countries back to Turkey, they could hope that Turkey struggle against the Bolsheviks. See the telegraph sent by Mustafa Kemal on 5.2.1920 in Atatürk'ün Tamim Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, p. 193.

the Soviet Union. However, cooperation with the Soviets could only succeed with the collapse of the Caucasian barrier. The Caucasian states, protected by Britain, were an obstacle to cooperation between the Soviet Union and Turkey because this barricade prevented the transfer of military aid from Soviet Russia which was inevitable for a Turkish victory. Mustafa Kemal regarded the Caucasian barrier as a plan implemented by the Great Powers to drag Turkey to her death. If this plan succeeded, Turkey, which would be blockaded, would lose its sovereignty and the Anatolian Turks would become soldiers of the colonial powers and would fight for the Great Powers to force the Caucasian states to obey the Great Powers in order to end the progress of the Bolsheviks.⁵¹⁷

The solution that was proposed was to cooperate with the Soviets and support the Soviets in their plan to take the Caucasian states under Bolshevik control. Just 3 days after the opening of the GNA in Ankara, Mustafa Kemal proposed to the Soviet government a common struggle against the imperialists. Turkey promised to launch a military operation against imperialist Armenia and to make Azerbaijan enter the Soviet Union if the Bolsheviks forced Georgia to enter into the Bolshevik alliance and force the British troops to retreat.⁵¹⁸

Although the specific article of the letter sent to the Moscow government by Mustafa Kemal was the sovietization of the Caucasus, the first article is important for our understanding of the role that was planned to be played by the Turkish nationalists during their struggle for independence. It said that the Turkish state accepted to cooperate with the Bolshevik Russians, who aimed at rescuing the

⁵¹⁷ See the telegram sent by Mustafa Kemal to the commanders on 5.2.1920 in *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, pp, 194-5.

⁵¹⁸ See in *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p.318. Also in this letter, Mustafa Kemal requested military and financial help from Soviet Russia.

oppressed people from the oppression of the imperialist states.⁵¹⁹ From now on, on official terms, the Turkish nationalists had joined the struggle together with Soviet Russia and other oppressed people against the imperialists. Mustafa Kemal frequently made mention of the Turkish nationalists' association with the ongoing anti-imperialist movement. Independence War began to be presented as an anti-imperialist struggle that would prevent the progress of the imperialists in the East. The Anatolian movement was the model struggle before the eyes of other nations, who lost their sovereignty under imperialist yoke. During this period, he started to identify 'East' with the 'oppressed', and the 'West' with the 'oppressors'; and Anatolia became a part of the 'oppressed East' in his discourse. In November 1921, during a speech in the Azerbaijan Embassy, he presented Anatolia as a barricade against imperialist aggression towards the East. He stated,

As the map on that wall obviously shows, Anatolia is the point where *Asia- the world of the oppressed-* comes to an end and where the world of the oppressor starts. Because of this positioning of Anatolia, it is subject to all the oppressions, attacks, and aggressions. They want to tread Turkey under feet and they want to dismember it. However, this concerted attack is not only limited to Turkey. The common target of this concerted attack is the entire East.

Anatolian people are defending themselves by utilizing all their power and without a doubt they believe in their future success. With this defense, *Anatolian people do not only perform their duty, which concerns only themselves, but they are also building a barrier against the attacks on the entire East.* Gentlemen! Certainly, these attacks will be prevented. And only then not only in the West, but all over the world peace and prosperity will prevail.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 318. It said that: “*emperyalist hükümetler aleyhine ve bunların taht-ı tahakküm ve esaretinde bulunan mazlum insanların tahlisi gayesini istihdaf eden Bolşevik Ruslarla tevhid-i mesali ve harekatı kabul ediyoruz.*”

⁵²⁰ “*Tesadüfen sağında duvarda asılı olan şu haritanın pek güzel irae ettiği gibi, Anadolu’da, bütün Asya’nın , bütün mazlumlar dünyasının , zulüm dünyasına doğru ileri sürdüğü bir vaziyette bulunmaktadır. Anadolu bu vaziyeti ile bütün zulümlere, hücumlara, taarruzlara maruz bulunuyor. Anadolu yıkılmak, çiğnenmek, parçalanmak isteniliyor; fakat efendiler, bu muhacemat Anadolu’ya maksur ve mahsur değildir. Bu muhacematın hedefi umumisi bütün Şarktır. Anadolu her türlü tasallutlara karşı bütün mevcudiyetiyle müdafainefs etmektedir ve bunda muvaffak olacağından emindir. Anadolu bu müdafasıyla yalnız kendi hayatına ait vazifeyi ifa etmiyor, belki bütün şarka müteveccih hücumlara bir sed çekiyor. Efendiler, bu hücumlar elbette kırılacaktır. Bütün bu*

Similarly, Sun Yat-sen's anti-imperialist discourse was based on a distinction he made between Asia as the 'oppressed', and Europe as the 'oppressor'. He frequently exemplified his case by giving examples from those Asian states that had successfully prevented Western states from taking away their sovereignty. In 1924, during his speech on pan-Asianism he shared Mustafa Kemal's belief that Turkey stood as a barricade against Western aggression as Japan did in East Asia. He stated,

Japan is the first nation in Asia to completely master the military civilization of Europe. Japan's military and naval forces are her own creation, independent of European aid or assistance. Therefore, Japan is the only completely independent country in East Asia. There is another country in Asia who joined with the Central Powers during the European War and was partitioned after her final defeat. After the war, however, she was not only able to regain her territory, but to expel all Europeans from that territory. Thus she attained her status of complete independence. This is Turkey. At present, Asia has only two independent countries, Japan in the East and Turkey in the West. In other words, Japan and Turkey are the Eastern and Western barricades of Asia.⁵²¹

Sun was introduced to a pan-Asianist ideology during his stay in England in 1897 when he met with a Japanese botanist. When Sun asked this Japanese botanist about his life-time ambition, the answer of the botanist, who said that his desire was that the Asians would drive all Westerners out of Asia once and for all, became a life-time inspiration for Sun.⁵²² The new inspiration reached Sun just at the same time when Sun had lost all his hope in British neutrality towards his revolutionary activities. During the same period, Sun wrote to the Hong Kong colonial secretary "demanding the revocation of the banishment order issued against him in March 1896." "The reply informed him that the colony could not be used for conspiracies

tasallutlar mutlaka nihayet bulacaktır. İşte ancak o zaman garpte, bütün cihanda hakiki sükun, hakiki refah ve insaniyet hüküm sürebilecektir". Söylev ve Demeçler II, p. 24. The emphasis is mine.

⁵²¹ In Sun's Kobe Speech on Pan-Asianism in Sun Yat-sen. 1941. *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*. Ed by Wang Jingwei, p. 148-9.

⁵²² M. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 66.

against a friendly neighbouring empire and warned that he would be arrested if he set foot in Hong Kong.”⁵²³ The rebuff was balanced by the welcome of the Japanese pan-Asianists,⁵²⁴ who thought that Sun was the hero they were searching for in their activities in China. Sun, after he met with the pan-Asianists, was no more a “church-going” admirer of Western civilization but had become a “redeemer” of humiliated Asians.⁵²⁵ As mentioned in the preceding chapter, his suspicion about the fruits of Western civilization were to grow in 1905 as he studied Western philosophy and observed that Western regimes did not bring happiness to their own people and to world at large.

Sun’s pan-Asianism, which he did not abandon until his death in 1925, can only be understood in terms of his relations with Japanese pan-Asianists. However, Japanese pan-Asianism cannot be reduced to a single category, as every separate group had a different understanding of pan-Asianism and Japan’s role in Asia. While some circles insisted that Japan had to pay its debt to China, which contributed to Japan by its culture and civilization, by saving China from imperialist aggression, the others interpreted pan-Asianism as a factor of legitimacy for Japanese expansion in Asia. On the other hand, Japanese official policy considering pan-Asianism, and its official policy towards China was very vacillating. The Japanese policy many times changed in the course of time as different pressure groups, which had various positioning in terms of pan-Asianism and favoured different political groups in China, had exerted their own ideology on the Japanese officials. But more importantly, “Japan’s many shifts of policy toward China derived from more than the pressure exerted on the Tokyo government by particular factions. Equally important

⁵²³ Harold Z. Schriffirin. “The Enigma of Sun Yat-sen,” in Mary C. Wright ed. *China in Revolution: The First Phase 1900-1913*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 452.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*

was the changing power status of Japan and the consciousness of that status on the part of Japan's military and political leaders."⁵²⁶

The group among the various pan-Asianist circles that supported Sun's revolutionary activism in Japan consisted of those, who were led by the "liberal nationalist," Okuma Shigenobu, "who was the leader of the Progressive Party" and "combined the functions of Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1896 to 1898," and Inukai Tsuyoshi, a journalist and a liberal statesman.⁵²⁷ Okuma formulated a doctrine, known as the Okuma Doctrine in 1898, when imperialist aggression against China had risen to a maximum level. The doctrine spoke of the moral obligation of Japan, which had been the first nation in Asia to modernize itself and reach to the level where it could support other Asian nations. In the doctrine, "Japan, a grateful recipient of China's culture and spirit in the past, now promised to repay that debt by holding the West at bay and helping the Chinese hero in his development of a friendly, grateful, China."⁵²⁸ Since these two leading figures, who defined pan-Asianism as the moral obligation of Japan towards China to keep Western imperialism away from China, were also public figures, they had to rely on intermediaries in order to make contacts with the Chinese revolutionaries and to organize subversive activities. The intermediary would be Miyazaki Torazo (Toten), a *shishi* (in the past they were loyal to the emperor against the barbarians) who had lost all their status and wealth as a consequence of the Meiji reforms. Miyazaki Torazo as the other *shishi*, dedicated himself to the 'noble' ideal of pan-Asianism and accused the Japanese government of contributing to the plight of China, with

⁵²⁶ M. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, p. 9.

⁵²⁷ Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 73.

⁵²⁸ Quoted in M. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, p. 53.

which the Japanese shared a common culture and common interest.⁵²⁹ Miyazaki, being a member of the Okuma-led pan-Asianists, believed that Sun was the hero that his group was seeking for the establishment of a friendly and powerful neighbouring China. Miyazaki was to become the life-time collaborator of Sun Yat-sen and supplier of arms for Sun's revolutionary activities against the Manchus despite the Japanese policy, which except for a short time in 1897-9 and in 1900, had remained unfriendly to Sun Yat-sen.

But not all former Samurais were favouring a policy directed by obligations towards China. A group of former Samurais, headed by Toyama Mitsuru (1855-1944), understood pan-Asianism in terms of Japanese expansion in Asia. Toyama Mitsuru, born into a samurai family in south Japan, never held an official post, but through his personal wealth he financed small ultranationalist groups, and he indeed became a very influential person in governmental politics. The organization, namely the Black Dragon Society (*Kokuryukai*) established in 1901, which was patronised by Toyama Mitsuru, argued that the territory of Japan had to be extended as far as the Amur River in Siberia. The expansion of Japan was understood as the leading role of Japan in the revival of the Asian peoples through Japan's pioneering role in reconciling the Western and Oriental civilizations, which would retain Oriental values. It is important to note that it is claimed that the figure that founded the Black Dragon Society became the principle organizer of the Japanese fascist movement.⁵³⁰

In 1898-9, Japanese pan-Asianists and Sun Yat-sen collaborated for a cause in the Philippines in order to help an anti-American guerrilla, Emilio Aguinaldo. When Aguinaldo requested support from Japan, Sun Yat-sen played a role as a key figure in arranging the interaction between the Japanese pan-Asianists and the

⁵²⁹ For an introduction about who the *shishi* were, see *ibid.*, p. 14-19. And for an introduction about Miyazaki Torazo (Toten), see *ibid.*, pp. 54-8.

⁵³⁰ See Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 72. Also see M. Jansen, *Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 34-7.

Philippine revolutionaries. Sun's role as a negotiator was important because of the "Japanese fears of antagonizing the Americans." "The project seemed a Chinese one."⁵³¹ Here the aim is not to give a detailed account of the unsuccessful strategy to support the Philippine revolutionaries. However, the act is important in terms of our understanding of Sun and his relations with the Japanese within the context of pan-Asianism. As Jansen quotes, Sun believed that "any victory against Western imperialism would be a victory for all Orientals."⁵³² However, as noted earlier, during this period, the primary aim of Sun was anti-Manchuism and his pan-Asianist collaboration with the Japanese over the issue of the Philippines was guided by a purpose aimed at anti-Manchu activism. A liberated Philippines, who would be grateful to Sun and the Chinese revolutionaries, could become a revolutionary base for anti-Manchu activities.

The only other period that Sun was supported by the Japanese government was in 1900, when Japan, after sending troops for the Allied Expedition to suppress the Boxers, did not derive any real advantage from this support while Russia gained the advantage of occupying Manchuria. Thus, Japanese "concern for China's territorial integrity was heightened by their inability to share in its probable violation."⁵³³ In this period, Japanese officials supported the upheavals of Sun Yat-sen through the cooperation of Japanese pan-Asianists. The reason seems to have been the plan of the Japanese government to obtain concessions from Sun who would become the grateful president of the Chinese Republic if the revolution succeeded. In the following years of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Japanese never again gave firm support to Sun, although several times, Sun requested it in the name of pan-Asianism. After the Japanese had won a victory over Russia and occupied

⁵³¹ M. Jansen, *Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, p. 71.

⁵³² *Ibid*, p. 70

⁵³³ *Ibid*, p.84.

Korea in 1910, the Japanese without any doubt entered the camp of the imperialists. The Japanese state, becoming confident in its own power, in the end preferred to preserve the “tottering Manchu dynasty” rather than entering into negotiations with the revolutionaries. They thought that they could get any concession they wanted from the already weakened Manchus without any trouble. And the pan-Asianist circles, who were friends of Sun, lost contact with Japanese authorities.⁵³⁴

During the First World War, when Japan presented its Twenty-one Demands to China, Sun was busy with his plans for toppling the regime of Yuan. Since he knew that the Japanese authorities were disturbed by Yuan Shikai and his anti-Japanese attitude, Sun once again turned to Japan in order to persuade Japan to support his cause for a second revolution.⁵³⁵ He wrote a letter to the head of the Foreign Office in which he agreed to grant military, economic, and political concessions to the Japanese if they helped him to topple Yuan at this very convenient time, when the Westerners were busy within their own continent. He believed that the revolutionaries’ ascendancy to power would mark the beginning of a Sino-Japanese alliance which was necessary for the emancipation of Asia from European imperialism. In his secret letter to Okuma, who took office in 1914, he stated that “England’s greatness depended on India, for which she had to fight. But Japan had at hand a potential India for which she did not need to fight; she had only to arm and help the Kuomintang (Guomindang) forces.”⁵³⁶ It seems that Sun was ready to reduce China to the status of Japan’s India in the name of pan-Asian brotherhood and the anti-imperialist struggle of the Asians.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid*, p.104.

⁵³⁵ Sun was indeed right in his thinking, since the Japanese had had a vacillating policy since 1911 towards the regime of Yuan. On one hand they supported the revolutionaries but not to the extent that they could be successful against the government and on the other hand they gave formal support to the Beijing regime, which became suspicious about Japanese policies because of its support, though a minor one, to Sun and his party. *Ibid*, p .175

⁵³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 189.

As one analyses within the context of these two letters, it becomes more explanatory why Sun was still insisting on the “same race same culture” discourse just as every patriotic Chinese had turned against Japan during the First World War. Sun Yat-sen, in an article written by him in 1917, insisted that Japan was the friendliest nation towards China and the one most capable of providing China with talent, capital, and materials for supporting Chinese development. Sun believed that Japan and China’s relationship was one of “mutual survival and security.”⁵³⁷ This was not only because of the ‘common race and civilization’ they shared but also the consequence of ‘common interest’.⁵³⁸ He believed that “in the interests of lasting security for the two countries, there must not be the slightest friction between them.”⁵³⁹ As Sun was aware of the common interests that lay between the relations of Japan and China, Japan was also well aware of it. Sun criticized those who believed that China should enter the First World War on the side of the USA in order to prevent the further progress of Japan in the Far East. According to Sun, the Chinese patriots were convinced of the benefits of China’s participation in the war just because Japanese, only the year before, had not wanted China to participate. They believed that if Japan did not want China to participate the war, these Chinese nationalists did not suspect that the Japanese would be harmed, and China would be benefited by its participation. However, for Sun Yat-sen it was quite to the contrary that the Japanese did not want China to enter the war just because it would have been disadvantageous to China. Japan determined for China where Chinese interests lay and offered its advice accordingly.⁵⁴⁰ He stated; “If we look at the matter objectively in criticizing Japan’s motives, we see that Japan’s primary motive was

⁵³⁷ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 194.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 150.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 194.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 150.

China's interests and that Japan's own interests were secondary. (Needless to say, Chinese and Japanese interests were similar at the time)."⁵⁴¹

As far as the Twenty-one Demands were concerned, Sun believed that Japan could not be accused. Sun claimed that it was Yuan Shikai who,

encouraged Japan to propose whatever it wished in exchange for recognizing Yuan as emperor-and not Japan that coerced Yuan. Yuan's anti-Japanese stance had always been well known. Therefore, knowing that Yuan would certainly bite back after a settlement was reached, the Japanese renewed demands for their rights in China in order to prevent future contretemps.⁵⁴²

Sun was running against the tide and struggling to revive trust among the Chinese towards Japanese policies. He once again made use of the pan-Asianist discourse. He stated that since the Chinese did not listen to Japanese advice because of the fear of Japanese imperialism, "we have lost so many opportunities for the joint development of East Asia and are letting ourselves be used by the white people."⁵⁴³ The prosperity of China, peace for both countries and benefits to the civilization of the whole world depended on the reconciliation of Japan and China; and "on the basis of pan-Asianism, China and Japan together" will "develop the abundant resources west of the Pacific."⁵⁴⁴

After Sun cooperated with the Soviets, he once again invited Japan to a pan-Asianist alliance. When Sun visited Kobe on 28 November, 1924, on his way to Beijing for the reunification conference, he made a speech on pan-Asianism.⁵⁴⁵ In his speech, Sun explained how Asia, as the cradle of world's civilization, had fallen prey

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.158.

⁵⁴² *Ibid*, p. 159.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 158.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 194.

⁵⁴⁵ The whole text of the Kobe speech can be found in Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*, pp.141-51.

to the ambitions of Western imperialists and proposed a method for the emancipation of Asia.

Most of Sun's Kobe speech consisted of his praise of Asian civilization and how Japan, as a rising power, injected new hope into the coloured Asians. He criticized Orientalist literature, specifically the article of an American scholar named Lothrop Stoddard⁵⁴⁶, who believed that the Yellow Peril was threatening the White people and their civilization, especially after the Russian defeat in the Russian-Japanese war of 1905. In Sun's words, he "described all emancipation movements" in Asia "as revolts against civilization."⁵⁴⁷ Then, Sun followed his argument by criticizing the belief of the Westerners that the only true and worthy civilization was the Western civilization. He said, "The Westerners consider themselves as the only ones possessed and worth of true culture and civilization; other peoples with any culture or independent ideas are considered as Barbarians in revolt against civilization. When comparing Occidental with Oriental civilization they only consider their civilization logical and humanitarian."⁵⁴⁸ Sun, in order to break away from this Orientalist presumption, stated his belief that Western civilization was one of material civilization, guided by scientific civilization but nothing more than that. He challenged the Orientalist argument by preserving the Orientalist dichotomy of East versus West and, as described in the preceding chapter, claimed that Oriental civilization comprised the worthiest characteristics of a civilization, which were benevolence, justice, and morality. Oriental civilization was the "rule of Right", whereby Western civilization, which exploited all Asia through its material

⁵⁴⁶ The books are: Lothrop Stoddard. *The Rising Tide of Colour against White World Supremacy* (1920) and *Revolt against Civilization* (1922).

⁵⁴⁷ Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*, p. 145.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

superiority, was the “rule of Might”. Therefore, morally, Oriental civilization was superior to Western civilization.⁵⁴⁹

The only way for Sun to emancipate Asia from Western hegemony and to revive Asia as the greatest civilization of the world was to take ancient Asian civilization as the foundation stone and supplement it with Western science and industry. This was pan-Asianism. In his words:

If we want to realize pan-Asianism in this world, what should be its foundation if not our ancient civilization and culture? Benevolence and virtue must be the foundations of pan-Asianism. With this as a sound foundation we must then learn science from Europe for our industrial development and improvement of our armaments, not however, with a view of oppressing or destroying other countries and peoples as the Europeans done, but purely for our self-defense.⁵⁵⁰

Sun believes that the problem that underlined pan-Asianism was a cultural problem, “a problem of comparison and conflict between the Oriental and Occidental culture and civilization.”⁵⁵¹ However, there was an immediate political necessity, which was to expel Western imperialism from Asia now and forever. This could only be achieved by the unification of the Asian people or at least the East Asian peoples on the foundation of benevolence and virtue in order to present a united front against the Occidentals.⁵⁵² During his speech on the Three Principles of the People, he made this point more explicit. When he was criticizing the federalists of China, he proposed that a federation not within China but in Asia should be established. He stated,

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 146.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 148.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵² *Ibid*, p.149.

Instead of breaking up the Chinese Empire by federalization, we should advocate the federation of China and Japan, or of China, Annam, Burma, India, Persia, and Afghanistan to present a common front against Europe because the lack of cooperation among these Asiatic states in the past has caused the supremacy of the European Powers in Asia, and because their federalization is essential to Asia's prosperity.⁵⁵³

The unification would not only be a cultural unity on Asian principles but also a military one, since Sun believed that "to rely on benevolence alone to influence the Europeans in Asia to relinquish the privileges they have acquired ... would be an impossible dream." In order to gain the lost rights of Asia, resort to force was inevitable.⁵⁵⁴

Some writers claim that his visit to Japan and his speech on pan-Asianism in 1924 was an effort "to win Japan and to break with the Soviet Union."⁵⁵⁵ However, this time Sun was cautious and was trying to bring Japan into the anti-imperialist camp rather than to break with the Soviet Union. During his speech, Sun praised Japan as the first Asian nation to become independent through the abolition of unequal treaties and the first Asian nation that challenged the power of the West in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. He believed that the Japanese victory inspired Asian peoples and gave them a new hope that they could also achieve what Japan had achieved by breaking the belief that only the Whites could be strong and progressive. He said that Asian peoples regarded the Japanese victory as their own victory. As a result, "since the day of Japan's victory over Russia, the peoples of Asia have cherished the hope of shaking off the yoke of European oppression, a hope which has given rise to a series of independence movements-in Egypt, Persia, Turkey, Afghanistan, and finally in India."⁵⁵⁶ These were the statements that Sun

⁵⁵³ See *Three Principles of the People* in Hsü ed. *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 327.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁵ A. Wells, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 119.

⁵⁵⁶ Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*, pp.143-4.

occasionally mentioned during his speeches.⁵⁵⁷ However, the time of the Kobe speech was after Sun's collaboration with the Soviet Union, of which Sun mentioned that it was the first Western nation to break away from the "rule of Might" and accept the Asian principle of "rule of Right". During his speech, Sun praised Japan but he also warned the Japanese. The last sentence of the speech, which shows that Sun abandoned his unconditional trust in the Japanese that was apparent during the First World War, is very important in that sense. He stated:

Japan today has become acquainted with the Western civilization of the rule of Might, but retains the characteristics of the Oriental civilization of the rule of Right. Now the question remains whether Japan will be the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might, or the tower of strength of the Orient. This is the choice which lies before the people of Japan.⁵⁵⁸

While Sun was struggling to form a pan-Asianist front against Western imperialism by including Japan in the pan-Asianist camp, some of the activities of Mustafa Kemal during the Independence War were aimed at gaining the support of the Eastern peoples for supplementing the Turkish struggle against the Imperialists. As Sun Yat-sen spoke about pan-Asianism, he did include all the Asian states that were under the imperialist yoke, despite the variety of culture and religion throughout this pan-Asianist circle. However, a reading of his writings and his speeches demonstrates that his immediate aim was a unification of the East-Asian countries. In the Kobe speech, he stressed his belief that a unification of the East

⁵⁵⁷ Also see his *Three Principles of People* in Hsü(comp). *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals: A Source Book*, p. 170.

⁵⁵⁸ Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan: Natural Friends-Unnatural Enemies*, p. 151. Sidney Chang mentions that just after Sun collaborated with Soviet Union, he urged Japan "to join their Asian compatriots. He suggested two specific policies that Japan must adopt to redeem itself in the Asian community. First, Japan must take definite action to assist the success of the Chinese revolution, and change Japanese policy and no longer follow European powers blindly. Second, Sun urged that Japan should recognize Russia and suggested that it must be done soon". See S.H.Chang and L.H.D Gordon, *All Under Heaven: Sun Yat-sen and His Revolutionary Thought*, pp. 79-80.

Asian peoples was on its way. He stated, “the present tide of events seems to indicate that not only China and Japan but all the peoples in East Asia will unite together to restore the former status of Asia.”⁵⁵⁹ Mustafa Kemal similarly included all the Eastern nations under the yoke of imperialism in the anti-imperialist Eastern camp during his speeches as observed in his previously quoted speech where he presented the assault against Anatolia as an assault against whole Asia.⁵⁶⁰ But his immediate aim was to mobilize the Islamic peoples, who could easily be mobilized to the cause of a struggle of Muslim Eastern nations against the Christian Western imperialists. Mustafa Kemal regarded the support of Islamic nations from both a material and spiritual aspect. Although he believed that the Turkish victory would be better if it depended on only domestic forces, to utilize the support of the Islamic nations was very important concerning the power of the Western nations. During a debate in the parliament, against those who criticized the acceptance of Azerbaijani troops for the struggle against European powers, Mustafa Kemal stated in July 1920 that,

The principle that we follow is to assure our purpose and to rescue our lives and honor by depending on our own forces and own presence. However, the Western world, in which the USA is also included, possesses a great power. Therefore, although basically we will be depending on our own forces, we have to utilize the aid of the other countries, which have an interest in our existence and survival. It is not right to refuse such a force. The troops that are coming cannot multiply our force. However, it is important not only because it demonstrates that the Eastern and the Islamic world is deeply interested in our destiny, but also because it might cause the other countries to send their forces.⁵⁶¹

From this speech, it can be observed that Mustafa Kemal attached great importance to the spiritual and material help of the Muslim nations. Therefore, he would not escape the opportunity to represent his struggle as a Muslim war and the

⁵⁵⁹ Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, p. 144.

⁵⁶⁰ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 24.

⁵⁶¹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 84.

assault against Turkey and the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, as an assault against the whole Muslim world. If one remembers that Mustafa Kemal led the GNA, and until the victory of the Turkish forces he had defined the goal of the GNA as “to rescue the sultan-caliph from alien oppression,” the presentation of the Turkish Independence War as a Muslim Holy War becomes more understandable. Just after the occupation of Istanbul by the British, Mustafa Kemal’s declaration to the Muslim world is explanatory.

This assault not only concerns the Ottoman sultanate but also concerns the entire Islamic world which regards the institution of the caliphate as the only point of support to their freedom and independence. The last resort of the Entente powers in order to break the moral and spiritual powers of the Islamic peoples of Asia and Africa, who are continuing their struggle for freedom and independence, is to take over the freedom of Islam, which will prevail for ever, by reducing the post of caliphate to the status of slavery.

We know that the people of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Azerbaijan, northern Caucasus, Turkistan, Afghanistan, Iran, India, China, and finally the people of all Africa and all Asia share the same excitement and have the same purpose. The assault of the Entente powers will not be able to damage the spiritual and moral power of these people, but on the contrary it will cause the emergence of a miraculous power.⁵⁶²

Mustafa Kemal was right in his assessment that the spiritual support of the Muslims abroad was very important. But for Mustafa Kemal there was an important consideration, which was directly related to British interests. Many of the British colonies at the time of the Turkish Independence War were largely populated by

⁵⁶² “*Bu tecavüz saltanat-ı Osmaniyyeden ziyade makamı Hilafette hürriyet ve istiklallerinin istinadgahı yeganesini gören bütün alem-i islama racidir. Asya’da ve Afrika’da peygamber pesendane bir uluvvu himmetle hürriyet ve istiklal mücadelesine devam eden ehli İslamın kuvay-ı maneviyelerini karmak için son tedbir olarak İtilaf Devletleri tarafından tevessül olunan bu hareket, Hilafet makamını tahtı esarete alarak binüçyüz seneden beri payidar olan ve müebbeden masunu zeval kalacağına şüphe bulunmayan hürriyeti islamiyeyi ittihaz etmektedir. Mısırın onbine balığ olan şuhedayı muazzezisine, Suriye ve Irak’ın binlerce muhteremesine, Azerbaycan’ın, şimal-i Kafkasya’nın, Türkistan’ın, Afganistan’ın, İran’ın, Hind’in, Çin’in velhasıl bütün Afrikan’ın ve bütün Şarkın bütün azim bir heyecanı vahdet ve derin bir emeli istihlas ile titreyen efkârı müşterekesine havale edilmiş olan bu darbayı tahkir ve tecavüzün düşmanlar tarafından tahmin edildiği vechiyle maneviyatı haleldar etmek değil belki bütün şiddetiyle mucizeler gösterecek bir kaabiliyet inkişafa mazhar eyleme neticesini tevlihd edeceğine şüphemiz yoktur.*” Atatürk’ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, pp.271-2.

Muslims, and if Mustafa Kemal had managed to mobilize them into the Turkish cause, it would have disrupted stability in the Muslim colonies, especially by causing tension between British colonial authorities and the colonized Muslims. That was why Mustafa Kemal supported the activities of the past Unionist leaders, who had fled from the Empire in order to organize a struggle against European powers. Especially, Cemal Pasha and Enver Pasha's activities were important, and although Mustafa Kemal was very sensitive on the issue of the return of the Unionists to Anatolia in order to capture the leadership from him, he continued his communications with Enver and Cemal throughout these years.

Enver Pasha, after he left Turkey, went to Berlin, and there joined the establishment of an organization named "Asian Muslims Federation," which was a result of the negotiations between Arab, Iranian, Afghan, and Indian nationalists. The aim was the 'awakening of Asia' and the organization was supported by the Soviets, Germans, and Italians. The aim was to determine a common strategy for Asian emancipation and to organize uprisings against Western colonizers throughout the Muslim world in order to shock the colonizers. Enver Pasha continued his activities in Central Asia for the organization of the Muslims for a common cause.⁵⁶³ On the other hand, Cemal Pasha was active in Afghanistan in order to reform the Afghan army and in order to turn Afghanistan into a base for Indian emancipation. Like Sun Yat-sen, Cemal believed that India was the source of British power, and a Britain without India would not be able to trouble the other Eastern nations.⁵⁶⁴ In a letter that he wrote to Mustafa Kemal in June 1920, he defined his goal as organizing

⁵⁶³ See Mim Kemal Öke.1988. *Güney Asya Müslümanları'nın İstiklal Davası ve Türk Milli Mücadelesi*. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, pp. 58-9.

⁵⁶⁴ See *Ibid*, p. 87-8.

revolutions in Iran and India. He presented himself as the Turkish General that would guide the Indian revolution.⁵⁶⁵

Although Mustafa Kemal did not give official help to the activities of the former Unionists and declared that Cemal and Enver could not enter into negotiations in the name of the GNA,⁵⁶⁶ he supported their activities and congratulated them for their efforts, which would relieve the heavy burden on Turkey and enable Turkey to attack the British far away from Anatolia with the supplementary forces of the Central and East Asian nations.⁵⁶⁷

While Mustafa Kemal sent delegates to India, Afghanistan, and Azerbaijan in order to explain to them the aim of the Turkish nationalist struggle, and while he accepted the volunteers from the Islamic nations in order to fight against the Christian forces, Ankara signed its first treaty with Afghanistan (1 March 1921) which accepted the spiritual leadership of Turkey in the Islamic world within the struggle of the oppressed East against the imperialist West.⁵⁶⁸ These developments alarmed the British. The Research of the British Foreign Office documents reveals that the British perceived the Turkish nationalist activities as pan-Islamist as early as 1919. Just after the Sivas Congress, the report to the British Foreign Office claimed that the Congress was a pan-Islamist gathering.⁵⁶⁹ The High Commissioner warned the British government, stating that the Turkish nationalists understood a pan-Islamist strategy would relieve their burden.

⁵⁶⁵ See Bilal Şimşir. 1981. *Atatürk ile Yazışmalar I (1920-23)*. Kültür Bakanlığı, pp. 58-60.

⁵⁶⁶ See N. Rasuh İleri. 1999. *Atatürk ve Komünizm*. Scala. p. 138.

⁵⁶⁷ See Mim Kemal Öke, *Güney Asya Müslümanlarının İstiklal Davası*, p. 88. Also for the letters written by Mustafa Kemal to congratulate Cemal and Enver, see Rasih Nuri İleri, *Atatürk ve Komünizm*, pp. 215-218. Also, Mustafa Kemal in November 1921 wrote to the Ambassador of Ankara in Moskow that "he would continue to support Cemal Pasha and explain the mission of Cemal Pasha to the whole Turkish people and strengthen his position in Turkey". See Mim Kemal Öke, *ibid*, p. 88.

⁵⁶⁸ See the treaty text in Bilal N. Şimşir. 2002. *Atatürk ve Afganistan*. Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, pp. 409-11.

⁵⁶⁹ See PRO, FO. 371/4161/170729. Also in *British Documents on Atatürk vol I*. Compiled by Bilal Şimşir, pp. 290

The Nationalists and Committee of Union and Progress elements in Turkey have realised the extent to which the country has been enfeebled by the war, both in men and resources, and how much it is at the mercy of the victorious Entente Powers but it is natural that they should endeavour to draw fresh strength from other Moslem countries, such as Persia, Egypt, India, and the Arab world. Moreover, both the Bolsheviks and the Turkish Nationalists have this in common that they may both expect to profit from the arousing of an anti-British and Pan-Islamic sentiment amongst the Mohammedans of the Central states, and it is therefore to be anticipated that efforts are being made with this end in view.⁵⁷⁰

Just before the occupation of Istanbul, some British officials, led by the High Commissioner in Istanbul, the British War Ministry and the Ministry responsible for Indian Affairs and the Government of India argued that the British could not crush pan-Islamism any more than they could crush the nationalisms of the West. Therefore, it was necessary to reconcile with M.Kemal who was believed to pursue a pan-Islamist strategy with Bolshevik support. It would be very harmful to British interests if the Entente powers imposed a very punishing treaty on the Turks, since now it was impossible to recruit Indians for an anti-Turkish war, and also, if Istanbul was occupied, Turkey would fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, uprisings throughout Asia and Europe- in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Asia, China, Afghanistan, and India- would take place.⁵⁷¹ Against this argument, Lord Curzon (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) argued that when he was the viceroy of India for nearly seven years, he did not see “any pronounced feeling among Indian Moslems in favour of Constantinople as the seat of caliphate or the capital of Islam.”⁵⁷² He served the arguments of those who believed that the Turks had to be punished, and Turkey, which was foreign to Western civilization and brought tyranny to Europeans, had to be expelled from Europe. The First World War had

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 290-1.

⁵⁷¹ See the documents, DBFP., Ist series, vol. IV, p. 1001-1003, No. 647/1, and DBFP., Ist series, Vol. IV, p. 1003-1005. No. 647/2 in *British Documents on Atatürk*, pp. 303-317.

⁵⁷² DBFB. Ist series. Vol. IV. P. 992-1000 in *British Documents on Atatürk*, p. 302.

brought a great chance for the expulsion of the Turks and the Muslim feelings had been overestimated.⁵⁷³

Despite the argument of those who believed that Muslim feelings had been overestimated, the response of the Indian and Afghan Muslims to the message of the Turkish nationalists, who represented the assault on Istanbul as an assault on the whole Islamic world, had been very effective. Especially the Indian Caliphate Movement organized many congresses, where Indian Muslims threatened the British Empire and questioned their loyalty. The Congress that began on 23 November 1919 declared that if the treaty that would be signed with Turkey was not satisfactory, then Indian Muslims would end their cooperation with the British government and boycott British goods. When the Sévres treaty was imposed on Turkey, as declared at the congresses, Indian Muslims initiated their passive resistance. The students did not attend schools, the government officials gave up working, and Indian Muslims refused to be recruited to the British army. In addition, Indian Muslims financially supported the military resistance in Anatolia, and some Indian Muslims arrived in Turkey in order to be recruited by the Turkish army.⁵⁷⁴

British Officers, who wanted to protect British interests in India by reconciling with the Turks, were right in their estimation that the occupation of Istanbul and harsh treaty clauses would motivate the anti-British activities of the Indian Muslims. However, British intelligence was misled when they considered that Mustafa Kemal was pursuing a pan-Islamist policy because Mustafa Kemal was very sensitive on the issue that their efforts should not take a pure pan-Islamist colour. In fact, a search through his speeches shows that when he pointed to the Muslim world,

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*, pp. 303-305.

⁵⁷⁴ See Mim Kemal Öke, *Güney Asya Müslümanlarının İstiklal Davası ve Türk Milli Mücadelesi*. Also see Mustafa Keskin. 1991. *Hindistan Müslümanlarının Milli Mücadelede Türkiye Yardımları (1919-1923)*. Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları.

he also supplemented his argument by including the 'East' in his consideration. One of the reasons behind his cautious behaviour was stated in the letter he wrote to Enver Pasha, in which he urged him to escape from presenting his efforts to unite the nationalist movements in the Muslim countries within a pan-Islamist framework in order not to arouse suspicion and anxiety among the Russians. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to present the efforts as one of a struggle of the Muslim and non-Muslim Eastern peoples, who had been reduced to the status of farm animals by the English, to regain their human rights and their sovereignty.⁵⁷⁵

Mustafa Kemal not only distanced himself from pan-Islamist strategy for fear of the Russians, but also because he was a firm believer in the nation-state system, in which all nations hold their own sovereignty as the experiences of the post-Lausanne period show. Mustafa Kemal gradually gave less emphasis to the ties between Islamic nations and Turkey and the alienation process from Islamic brotherhood reached its peak with the abolition of the caliphate in 1924, which was the most important date for the start of westernizing reforms that were aimed to create a new 'Western Turkish Man'. The reason behind the distancing of Turkey from the Muslim world was firstly because Mustafa Kemal did not need the material and spiritual support of the Muslims any more after the victory of the Turkish armies in the Independence War, and also because (which is related with the first one) he did not believe that the caliphate was a working institution, since he thought that once the Muslim nations gained their independence they would not recognize the political powers of the caliphate.⁵⁷⁶ In the age of the nation-state system, when none of the Muslim nations were willing to recognize any transnational authority on their national sovereignty, the Turkish nation could not preserve the caliphate.

⁵⁷⁵ See the letter that was written on 4 October 1920 in Rasih Nuri İleri, *Atatürk ve Komünizm*, p. 216.

⁵⁷⁶ *Nutuk II*, pp. 71-75.

But even before Lausanne, Mustafa Kemal, despite his utilization of the institution of the caliphate, had the idea of independent Muslim states and criticized a pan-Islamist policy that would absorb all Muslim states into a single political whole. During a speech in the GNA in December, 1921, Mustafa Kemal, after stating his gladness about the intimate interaction of the Turkish government with the Muslim world, warned all the parliamentarians about the dangers of the expansionist policies of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanism. He criticized Ottoman expansionism and said that the only aim and policy of the GNA was directed to secure its independence within the defined national boundaries.⁵⁷⁷ It was because pan-Islamist expansionism was illogical, unreasonable, and unnatural that the Ottoman Empire had ended in devastation. The conditions of Islamic societies were various. Therefore, it was impossible to make them similar through a political process. It would be to the pleasure of the Turkish nation if these Muslim nations managed to establish their own independence. In a declaration to the media members, Mustafa Kemal stated the points that the media had to be cautious about. One of the points was to make public that the GNA would refrain from pan-Islamist and pan-Turanist propaganda and to state that the only cause of the war was the assurance of the sovereignty of the Muslim nations within their own 'nationality' frontiers and national boundaries.⁵⁷⁸

As described during the Independence War , after the Turkish nation-state was established Turkey did not follow a revisionist policy (aggressive foreign policy that is aimed to revise the past treaties in order to re-gain lost lands) even though it had to abandon certain lands that were depicted within the boundaries of the Turkish state in the *Misak-ı Milli* (National Pact). Turkish foreign policy during the time of Atatürk was one that respected the sovereignty of other states and a policy that

⁵⁷⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 214.

⁵⁷⁸ The declaration was published on 4.3. 1920. See *Atatürk'ün Tanım, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, p. 251.

pursued peace in international relations. As described earlier, Turkey denied any institutional bond with the Muslim states. Gradually, even the discourse that emphasized Islam as a symbolic common identifier between the Muslim nations ceased. The speech that Kemal Atatürk made during the visit of the Afghan king to Turkey in honour of the King is explanatory in that sense.⁵⁷⁹ The relation between the Afghan nation and Turkey during the Independence war was pursued under the umbrella of Islamic brotherhood and Asian anti-imperialism. A reading of the texts demonstrates that Islam as a common signifier was frequently emphasized. However, in 1928, in the speech of Kemal Atatürk for the honour of the Afghan king, it is observable that the new emphasis was the common Central Asian heritage of Afghanistan and Turkey, and this common heritage replaced Islam as the shared common signifier. The emphasis on the anti-imperialist struggle of the East was largely softened and replaced by an emphasis on a common experience of independence struggle. Atatürk stressed that the Turks to the east of Europe and, the Afghans to the center of Asia were struggling for their national independence. It is worth mentioning that Mustafa Kemal did not mention Islam even once throughout his speech.

Although Mustafa Kemal abandoned his discourse of anti-imperialism and Islamic brotherhood after the Lausanne treaty in 1923, the shared discourse on the “awakening of the East” among Chinese nationalists led by Sun and among Turkish nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal is important, despite its pragmatic side as explained by the examples of Sun’s cooperation with the Soviets and the Japanese, and Mustafa Kemal’s intentions behind his alliance with the Soviets. Despite this pragmatism, I still consider the Eastern nationalists’ discourse of the “awakening of the East,” sometimes oriented around pan-Asianism and sometimes around Islamic

⁵⁷⁹ See the speech in *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 269.

brotherhood, as one of the most important characteristics of non-Western nationalisms. This discourse enabled non-Western nationalists to distance themselves from Western imperialism by ideologically gathering within a circle of Asiatic brotherhood which had discursive and strategic consequences. On the level of discourse, the discourse of the “awakening of the East” enabled non-Western nationalisms to create for them an autonomous area of maneuver against the power that labelled them with ‘negative’ characteristics such as passivity and irrationality. This was the Orientalist discourse that legitimized colonialism as it claimed that Eastern people were passive and irrational to the degree that they were not able to govern themselves. However, peoples under imperialist yoke, without deconstructing the East-West dichotomy that was imagined by the European Orientalists, challenged the signifiers that were accepted as characterizing the East. They recognized that there was an ‘East’ over there, which was oppressed and exploited by the ‘West’. The Asian nations by coming together for the same cause under the umbrella of Eastern identity, by organizing activities and resistance movements, wanted to demonstrate that they were as active and rational as the West, since they were not only able to actively resist the imperialists but also rational enough to govern themselves. That was a very critical argument frequently stressed by Asian nations which were struggling for their sovereignty. As analyzed in the second chapter, before 1911, Sun Yat-sen believed that the reason behind imperialist aggression was the foreign Manchu rule in China, which gave the impression to the Western nations that Chinese were not able to govern themselves, and that even a small nation like the Manchus could capture Chinese sovereignty. It was believed that imperialists would leave Chinese land as they became aware of Chinese national consciousness. Mustafa Kemal also had a similar approach. During the Independence War, he

frequently emphasized that the reason behind Western occupation was the Western belief that Turkish people lacked national consciousness,⁵⁸⁰ lacked a belief in independence and law⁵⁸¹, that the Turks were not capable of governing a sovereign-independent state⁵⁸², and that the Turks were violent, unjust, and barbarian⁵⁸³. During his speeches Mustafa Kemal did not question the colonialist reasoning, which argued that since these nations lacked the virtues that had to be possessed by a sovereign rational nation, they had to be colonized and governed by the nations who possessed these virtues. What Mustafa Kemal questioned is the characteristics, which were used by colonialists in order to label the Turkish nation with the above quoted negative features. He attempted to show that Turks were capable of governing themselves, and they possessed national consciousness which enabled them to struggle for their independence. He believed that the enemies of Turkey were misconceived (*Halbuki düşmanlarımız bu zanlarında tamamen aldanmışlardır*).⁵⁸⁴

Mustafa Kemal stated in 1921 that:

Imperialist states regard our nation as an animal flock which is not conscious of law, honour and independence. Therefore, naturally they could not approve to leave such a wide and fertile country, which possess abundant natural treasures to such a nation....

⁵⁸⁰ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 6.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp. 159-60.

⁵⁸² *Ibid*, p. 181.

⁵⁸³ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 38. When Mustafa Kemal listed the negative characteristics that were proposed by the Western powers in order to label the Turkish people, he was totally right. In 1920, Earl Curzon (British Foreign Minister) claimed that: "... it is impossible to ignore it is a commonplace that for well-nigh four centuries the rule of Turk has been a blight and a curse to the countries which he had misgoverned, and I know of no single good thing that the Turk has done to a single nation or community or interest in Europe. His presence at Constantinople has poisoned the atmosphere of Eastern Europe, and everywhere spreading corruption maladministration and ruin. At Constantinople he has always been able to set the Power by the ears, to embroil Governments and nations and to inoculate the West with the worst vices of Eastern intrigue. From now there he has ordered the massacres of hundreds of thousands of his Christian subjects. Consequently in his hands, has been, and if left there will remain, a plague-spot of the Eastern world." See Memorandum by Earl Curzon on the future of Constantinople January 4 1920. 168210\151671\44 in *British Documents on Atatürk*, vol.I, p. 305-6.

⁵⁸⁴ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 38.

However, contrary to this consideration of our enemies, our nation had never been alien to its own rights and independence.⁵⁸⁵

Thus, the strategy of Mustafa Kemal, similar to Sun Yat-sen's pre-Republican strategy,⁵⁸⁶ was not to de-construct Orientalist discourse but was to change its political consequence, which was the colonization of Turkish territories. Mustafa Kemal started an independence struggle on the military level in order to demonstrate that the Turkish nation did not lack national consciousness and therefore would preserve its sovereignty. On the other hand, GNA had a special meaning because it showed that the Turkish nation was able to govern itself.⁵⁸⁷ Mustafa Kemal did not limit his arguments to the Turkish nation. As analyzed, he called all the colonized nations of Asia to a similar military and political struggle by questioning the Orientalist premise that attempted to reduce Asian nations to "farm animals" and invited them to take their arms in order to gain their independence. As observed in the above-quoted statement of Mustafa Kemal, although he did not question the right of the Western nations to colonize those who lacked national consciousness and who were not capable of governing themselves, by calling Asian nations to a common anti-imperialist struggle on the military level, he opened up a space 'within' the discourse of Orientalism by not challenging Orientalism itself but by challenging the

⁵⁸⁵ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 159-160. In its original form, it is said that: "*Emperyalist kuvvetler milletimizi hukuk, haysiyet ve istiklalden mahrum ve bunları gayr-ı müdrik bir hayvan sürüsü telakki ettiği için böyle bir sürünün elinde namütenahi hazain-i tabiiyeye malik, kıymetli ve vasi bir memleketin bırakılmasını tabii caiz görmezdi. ... Halbuki efendiler milletimiz hiçbir vakitte düşmanlarımızın telakki ettiği gibi hukukuna ve istiklaline yabancı değildir.*"

⁵⁸⁶ After the establishment of the Republic, Sun observed that although Chinese were able to overthrow the foreign rule, imperialist aggression did not cease. Then, he started to question the Orientalist premise, again by not de-constructing it, but by reversing the East and West dichotomy as East, for its spiritual values, becomes superior to the material West.

⁵⁸⁷ "*Efendiler, itilaf devletleri bizi müstakil bir devlet halinde yaşamaya kabiliyeti olmayan bir millet telakki ediyor. Ve bu yanlış telakki bahanesiyle memleketimizi parçalamak ve milletimizi esaret altına almak istiyorlardı. Onların bu telakkide aldatan saik milletimizin kendi kendisini idareye muktedir olmaması zehabıdır.*" *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 181.

legitimacy of Western imperialism, which was gained by the argument that Asian nations were not able to govern themselves because they lacked reason and capability. On the other side of Asia, Sun Yat-sen created the autonomous realm for the nations, who were struggling against imperialists and their legitimizing premises, by reversing the Orientalist East-West dichotomy and by attributing different characteristics to these domains. While Mustafa Kemal tried to demonstrate that both the Turkish nation and many other Eastern nations were rational and capable enough, Sun Yat-sen believed that Eastern superiority laid in its spirituality.

The discourse of the 'awakening of Asia' also had a strategic importance as in the case of Indian support for Turkish nationalism. Cooperation between non-Western nations around the same cause could harm the imperialist interest to the degree that they would reconsider their own positioning. As mentioned before, there had been many discussions on the future of Istanbul and Anatolia within the British foreign ministry. The discussions were oriented around the Indian reaction to an occupation of the Istanbul.⁵⁸⁸ The British were not willing to sacrifice their interests in India in exchange for Istanbul and Anatolia.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁸ DBFB. Ist series. vol. IV, p. 992-1000 in *British Documents on Atatürk vol I*, p. 302.

⁵⁸⁹ Although the Sevres Treaty was so harsh from the viewpoint of the Turks and Muslims, some British, such as Sir Donald Maclean from the House of Commons, were shocked by the decision that Istanbul was left to the Turks though under international supervision. The Prime Minister would argue that war had continued longer than expected and they had to depend on Indian forces, which were sensitive on the future of Istanbul. He would accept that without Indian forces they would not be able to be victorious in the World War. However, those who were determined to punish the Turks argued that the British had made so many concessions to the Indians by allowing the Turks to retain Istanbul. See Mim Kemal Öke, *Güney Asya Müslümanlarının İstiklal Davası*, p. 73-4.

Chapter VIII

THE POLICIES OF INTEGRATION: THE QUESTION OF MINORITIES

In the previous chapter I have dealt with the external aspect of nationalism, which was the positioning of Chinese and Turkish nationalist struggles within the international arena. There is also a domestic aspect of their thought of nationalism which can be named as 'nation-building'. China and Turkey inherited a multi-ethnic and multi-religious community. The century old enterprise of creating a nation was to continue. The question remained: What were the elements that were to constitute the nation, and what would be the criteria of cohesion? These questions cannot be answered without determining the positions of minorities vis-a-vis the majority ethnic group. What were to be the place of minorities within the newly constructed nations? The answers given to these questions by Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen are the topic of this chapter.

Both Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen's consideration of the minorities had been transformed as the conditions changed throughout their lifetime. However, it is possible to argue that both of them preferred a minority discourse that would serve their immediate aims before the establishment of their republics. It is observable that Sun's anti-Manchuism was not only an ideological positioning but it also enabled him to mobilize different groups from various backgrounds under a single cause. On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal's early treatment of the minorities during the Independence War was also necessitated by the conditions pertaining. Therefore, the post-war period minority policy was completely different from the policy pursued during the war.

In China, the invention of the idea of the Han *minzu* (Han nation) is important for our study of Sun's understanding of the situation of minorities in China. Dru

Gladney claims that “while the concept of a Han person (*Han ren*) certainly existed” as “the descendents of the Han dynasty which had its beginnings in the Wei River Valley,” “the notion of a unified Han nationality that occupies 94 percent of China’s population gained its greatest popularity under Sun Yat-sen.”⁵⁹⁰ For Gladney, it was important to mobilize the northern Chinese Mandarin speaker intellectuals and merchants to the same cause of anti-Manchuism. Since Sun Yat-sen, “as one who spoke little Mandarin, and had few connections in North China,” “would have easily aroused traditional northern suspicions of southern radical movements extending back to the Song Dynasty of the tenth century.”⁵⁹¹ Therefore, anti-Manchuism and, related with it, the invention of a Han *minzu* as holding the majority in China were two essential factors that enabled various people from different backgrounds and with different post-Republican programs to be drawn to the same cause of overthrowing the Manchus.

As Sun Yat-sen was pursuing an anti-Manchu revolutionary programme, he said little on the issue of minorities before the revolution. But on certain occasions he mentioned that the revolution was not aimed at the Manchus but against those Manchus who had usurped Han sovereignty. He said in 1906:

We should recognize that nationalism does not mean discrimination against a people of a different nationality. It simply means not allowing such people to seize our political power, for only when we Han are in control politically we do have a nation.... Then reason for the nationalist revolution is our unwillingness to let the Manchus extinguish our nation and dominate us politically, and our determination to restore our nation by liquidating their regime. Thus, we don’t hate the Manchus *per se*, but only those Manchus who are harming the Han.⁵⁹²

⁵⁹⁰ Dru Gladney. 1991. *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People’s Republic*. Harvard University, pp. 82-3.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 85.

⁵⁹² *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 43.

Prasenjit Duara claims that during the pre-Republican period the ideas of Sun on the minority policy reflected those of Wang Jingwei⁵⁹³. Wang believed that “a state made up of a single race was infinitely superior to that made of a number of races” because “common race implied that a people are brothers and when they are brothers, they are naturally equal.”⁵⁹⁴ Wang arrived at this conclusion by reviving the ancient notion that proposed that “the hearts of those not of our race are different.” Then, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, Wang utilized his social Darwinist orientation, and deriving his argument from the belief that “Han” were the fittest race in China, he claimed that Chinese minorities were not able to stand alone since they were not fit, so that it would be reasonable for the Han to assimilate them, which would be in accordance with evolutionary principles.⁵⁹⁵ First of all, since the minorities were unfit unless they were assimilated, they would be wiped out by the evolutionary process. And secondly, a purified China, “one which would then be internally egalitarian and free of disputes,” would “forge ahead in the evolutionary struggle of life and death.”⁵⁹⁶

While in China Sun Yat-sen considered pursuing an anti-Manchu strategy for mobilization, Mustafa Kemal revived the classical Ottoman notion of *millet* with its religious implications during the Independence War, despite a century of Ottomanist efforts of the dynasty. His pre-Republican policy of governing the relations between the state and non-Turkish Muslim elements were also guided by his desire to mobilize them to the cause of an independence war because after the First World War, although Turkish-speaking Muslims were in the majority, there was also a

⁵⁹³ Wang Jinwei is an early associate of Sun Yat-sen since the establishment of Revolutionary Alliance. He held top positions in the Guomindang. “In 1940 Wang agreed to be titular head of a collaborationist regime in Nanjing that cooperated with invading Japanese forces.” Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, p. A65.

⁵⁹⁴ P. Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, pp. 140-1.

⁵⁹⁵ Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, p.332.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 141.

considerable non-Turkish Muslim population.⁵⁹⁷ And Mustafa Kemal utilized Islam as a symbol of unification during the period of Independence War.

The name and the articles of the Society for the Defense of the National Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia, which was the unification of local resistance organizations against the occupation of Anatolia, is important. It suggests that the organization that served as the means of struggle did not refer to an ethnic group or even a nation but to geographical regions. On the other hand, all Muslims living within the geographical region depicted by the National Pact were considered as the natural members of the organization.⁵⁹⁸ The first article of the organization defined the boundaries of the national identity by stating that “the parts of Ottoman land that were formed by the Muslims who resided within its boundaries, which were agreed by the treaty signed on 30 October 1334 (1918) between the Ottoman state and the Entente powers, are a whole that cannot be separated from each other and from Ottoman society. Entire Muslim elements are genuine brothers who are filled with mutual respect and a feeling of loyalty and respectful for the conditions of ethnicity, sociality, and the rules of the locality.”⁵⁹⁹

Mustafa Kemal, who was the leading figure during this period, and as the person who initiated the process of the unification of the local resistance movements under the name of the Society for the Defense of the National Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia, accepted the above-mentioned understanding of the nation and did not deviate from it until the end of the independence movement. However, according to

⁵⁹⁷ According to Dankward Ruskow, after the Independence War, the new Turkish state was ethnically homogenous: Over 90% spoke Turkish and 98% professed their religion as Islam. See in D. Ruskow. 1981. “Atatürk as an Institution Builder,” in A. Kazancigil and Ergun Özbudun, eds. *Atatürk Founder of a Modern State*, p. 59.

⁵⁹⁸ Mesut Yeğen. 1999. *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu*. İstanbul: İletişim, p. 91.

⁵⁹⁹ The original text in Ahmet Yıldız. 2001. “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*”: *Türk Ulusal Kimliğinin Etno-Seküler Sınırları (1919-1938)*. İletişim, p. 127. One day after the establishment of the GNA, Mustafa Kemal repeated this article during this speech in order to make it clear to every parliamentarian about the issue of the identity of the nation. See *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 59.

Ahmet Yıldız, Mustafa Kemal Pasha used the term *millet* by attributing to it a double meaning; one 'national' and one 'religious'. In fact, the Turkish word *millet* concealed in itself two meanings, and Atatürk, being aware of it, utilized it for his political discourse.⁶⁰⁰ However, it is very important to note that while during the Independence War the religious meaning attributed to the term *millet* was dominant, the national aspect of the term *millet* was dominant especially after 1924. On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal himself used the terms *Türk milleti* (Turkish nation) and *Türkiye milleti* (the nation of Turkey) during his speeches by attributing them a synonymous meaning. The term 'Turkey' was first incorporated in the constitution of 1921 by naming the parliament as the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*). Mustafa Kemal during the war period made wide use of the term *Türkiye milleti* (the nation of Turkey), although he sometimes used the term *Türk milleti*.⁶⁰¹ It is evident that since *Türkiye* (Turkey) referred to a political and geographical territory and *Türk* referred to an ethnicity, the term *Türkiye milleti* was more inclusive than the term *Türk milleti*.⁶⁰²

When there appeared confusion in the minds of some of the parliamentarians⁶⁰³ about the term *Türk* at the end of February 1920, Mustafa Kemal, a few days later, made a speech on the issue in order to clarify the elements that constituted the *millet*. He stated that

⁶⁰⁰ A. Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene*, pp. 128-9.

⁶⁰¹ Baskin Oran calculated the terms used by Mustafa Kemal during his speeches and concluded that he used the terms *Türkiye Milleti* (the nation of Turkey) and *Türkiye Halkı* (the people of Turkey) 54 times before the proclamation of the Republic and used the terms *Türk milleti* (the Turkish nation) and *Türk halkı* (Turkish people) 61 times. But after the Republic, while he preferred the term *Türkiye milleti* and *Türkiye Halkı* 5 times, he preferred the terms *Türk milleti* and *Türk halkı* 187 times. See Baskin Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği*, p. 211.

⁶⁰² A reading of his speeches and interviews shows that even during the period of the Independence war, Mustafa Kemal would prefer to use the term *Türk* during his interviews with foreign interviewers. See *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 22 and also see *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 38.

⁶⁰³ For an account of this confusion, see A. Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*, pp. 126-32.

I would like to present a few points in order not to discuss them again. Here the intention is not only the Turks. This parliament does not consist simply of people who are Turkish or Circassian or Kurdish or Laz, but is composed of Islamic elements, which consists of all of these people....These various elements of the Islamic community are citizens. We accept and confirm that they will treat each other with mutual respect, and that they will respect each other's ethnic, social, and geographical rights.⁶⁰⁴

In this text it is observable that Mustafa Kemal Pasha does not refrain from mentioning the multi-ethnic structure of the society of Turkey. The nationalist leaders recognized the ethnic, geographical, and social differentiations within society in a legal framework. This meant that the existence of the ethnic groups was recognized as inherited from the imperial regime. It was not proposed that they should be assimilated to the dominant ethnic group in order to form a large nationality group (contrary to the Chinese case). In this period Mustafa Kemal and his comrades did not regard the variety of ethnicity and locality as an obstacle to the political and military project because there was a transcending factor that would unite multi-ethnic Muslim society for the same cause. Every ethnicity was recognized as distinctive parts of the *millet*. As Mesut Yeğen states in his book on the Kurdish problem, the Kurds, although disturbed by the centralization attempts of the Ottoman Empire, which allowed them a certain kind of autonomy until the nineteenth century, were still determined to continue a loose relationship with the centre, and the caliphate was one of the rare institutions that served as a means for this loose relationship.⁶⁰⁵ Mustafa Kemal, who stated his determination to mobilize the Kurds and the whole nation around the same cause and to achieve it by the

⁶⁰⁴ "Meselenin bir daha tekerrür etmemesi ricasıyla bir iki noktayı arz etmek isterim. Burada maksut olan ve meclisi alinizi teşkil eden zevat yalnız Türk değildir, yalnız Çerkes değildir, yalnız Kürt değildir, yalnız Laz değildir. Fakat hepsinden mürekkep anasırı İslamiyedir, samimi bir mecmuadır. ... Bu muhtelif anasırı İslamiye ki; Vatandaşlırlar, yekdiğerine karşı hürmeti müteakabile ile riayetkardırlar ve yekdiğerinin her türlü hukukuna, ırkı, ictimai, coğrafi hukukuna daima riayetkar olduğunu tekrar ve teyid ettik ve cümlemiz bugün samimiyetle kabul ettik."Söylev ve Demeçler I, pp. 74-5.

⁶⁰⁵ Yeğen, *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu*, pp. 57-65.

Societies of the Defense of National Rights, believed that since the Kurds were under attack by Armenian brigands and had experienced many disasters, they were willing to enter into a common struggle with the other members of the nation.⁶⁰⁶ In order to mobilize the most willing Kurdish groups, Mustafa Kemal, who used his relationships with the Kurdish tribal leaders that were established during his service on the Eastern front in the First World War, sent many letters to these leaders stating that the Kurds and Turks had fought on the same fronts against the Great Powers and would now unite in order to rescue the sultan-caliph from alien oppression and protect the holy land of Turkey from the Armenians.⁶⁰⁷

While Mustafa Kemal used the symbol of 'caliphate' and the 'common enemy' in order to mobilize the non-Turkish Muslims for a common struggle, the non-Muslim residents of the territory depicted by the National Pact were wholly excluded from the process of struggle for independence. The main and perhaps the only reason was the long-lasting historical experience of the Ottoman state with the non-Muslim elements. While, before the First World War, non-Muslims had sought their independence under the protégé of the Western powers, after the war they began to demand parts of lands determined by the National Pact. The Armenians were demanding territories from eastern Turkey, and the Greeks were demanding territories from western Turkey. The Christian population welcomed the invasion of Turkey after the Sévres Treaty, and the only exception was the Jews. Under those conditions, non-Muslims were barred from being members of the GNA by not being permitted to take part in elections.⁶⁰⁸ However, in 1920, just one day after the establishment of the GNA, Mustafa Kemal stated that the Congress of Erzurum

⁶⁰⁶ See the telegram sent on June 1919 in *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, pp. 36-7.

⁶⁰⁷ See *Nutuk II*, pp. 296-04, for several examples of the letters that were sent to the Kurdish Tribal Leaders and Sheiks during the Independence War.

⁶⁰⁸ Baskın Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği*, p. 142.

recognized that non-Muslims would be granted the same rights that were granted to the Muslims because this was the most natural principle.⁶⁰⁹ In 1921, against those who criticized the Turkish nationalists for discriminating against the non-Muslims by not allowing them to take part in the political process, Mustafa Kemal made a long statement emphasizing that non-Muslims had been treated justly for centuries, and this was proven by the welfare and wealth of non-Muslims, which was in excess of Muslim welfare and wealth. But it was necessary to build a barrier in front of the enterprise of those who had betrayed the soil on which they had won their wealth with foreign support. Then, he went on to recognizing the rights of non-Muslim subjects who were obedient and peaceful. They would be protected and recognized with the same rights as the Muslim citizens.⁶¹⁰ It is apparent that the rights of the non-Muslims were delayed until independence was achieved and stability was established. While Muslims were the natural elements of the *millet*, non-Muslims would be granted citizenship which was the most natural principle.

After the foundation of the Republics, both Sun Yat-sen's and Mustafa Kemal's discourses had changed. While the change was very sharp concerning both the discourse and the policies of Mustafa Kemal, Sun Yat-sen's discourse underwent several transformations according to the conditions pertaining, although he preserved his belief in the necessity of assimilation throughout his lifetime.

In China, throughout the Republican period (1912-1949), the minority policy was directed at preserving China's national unity, and Sun's solutions to the problem were also directed by the same consideration. We have to remember that the most important characteristic of the Chinese Republic as opposed to the Turkish Republic was that the Chinese Republic had inherited most of the territory of the Qing Empire.

⁶⁰⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, p. 31.

⁶¹⁰ *Söylev ve Demeçler I*, pp. 198-9.

This had a great effect on the post-revolutionary minority policy because the minorities of China- Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Muslims (mainly Hui and Uyghur nationalities), and many other smaller communities, although they were only six percent of the total population⁶¹¹ could now claim two-thirds of the territory of China.⁶¹² Therefore, the minority policy had to be sensitive. Non-Han nationalities also initiated secessionist policies by claiming that they were part of the Qing Empire not the Chinese Republic. As mentioned in the first chapter, the Qing emperor held many titles that legitimized his position in the eyes of many other ethnic groups. As Richardson stated in his *A Short History of Tibet*: “The president of a modern Republic could not take the place of the Son of Heaven- a sort of honorary reincarnation- as Patron of the Dalai Lama.”⁶¹³ On the other hand, imperialist powers were threatening to annex the minority regions if “Chinese claims on these territories were actively pursued.”⁶¹⁴ Because of the threat of imperialism and secessionism, there appeared a change in the rhetoric of the Chinese nationalists from an assimilationist discourse to a discourse emphasizing the equality of the races. The 1912 provisional constitution stated that “all citizens were to be equal with no racial, religious, or class distinctions.”⁶¹⁵ On the other hand, the Republic inherited the five ethnicities policy of the Qing Empire. Now, China was the “Republic of Five Nationalities.” The flag of the Chinese Republic also symbolized the ‘Five

⁶¹¹ The percentage of the minorities in China is according to the census of 1953, see Colin Mackerras. 1994. *China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, p. 238.

⁶¹² P. Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, p. 142.

⁶¹³ H.E. Richardson. 1962. *A Short History of Tibet*. New York: E.P. Dutton, p. 103.

⁶¹⁴ P. Duara, *Rescuing Nation from History*, p. 142.

⁶¹⁵ Deal David Michael. 1971. *National Minority Policy in Southwest China, 1911-1965*. University of Washington. PHD thesis, p. 54.

Nationalities of China.” Red for the Han, yellow for the Manchus, blue for the Mongols, white for the Tibetans, and black for the Muslims.⁶¹⁶

Sun Yat-sen’s early Republican thought was also in accordance with the understanding of the ‘Five Nationalities Republic of China’. During his proclamation in January 1912, when he was the provisional president of China, he emphasized the goal of the Republic as the unity of these five ethnicities. This proclamation of Sun as the first president of China is important since it was among the first statements that acknowledged the ‘five nationalities’ as they were classified during the Qing. He said, “Thus, I proclaim my own idea frankly. I say the foundation of a state is the people. The different races, such as Hans, Manchus, Mongols, Mohammedans, and Tibetans are now to be united as a nation. This is what I call the unity of our races.”⁶¹⁷

However, it can be argued that Sun was not so enthusiastic about the understanding of the ‘Five Nationalities Republic’. It was because of this that Sun referred to the ‘Republic of Five Nationalities’ only when he was speaking to the minorities.⁶¹⁸ A few years later, he turned against the ‘Five Nationalities’ understanding and argued for the assimilation of the minorities in order to form a strong unified China. The first signs appeared when Guomintang, which was established in 1912 under the direction of Sun Yat-sen, declared in its manifesto that the Party pledges “to enforce racial integration so that various cultures within the Republic can be developed to become one enjoyed by all.”⁶¹⁹ In order to achieve the

⁶¹⁶ James Cantlie and C. Sheridan Jones. (1912) 2001. *Sun Yat-sen and the Awakening of China*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, p. 140.

⁶¹⁷ *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen: Selections from His Writings*, pp. 33-4.

⁶¹⁸ Duara, *Recuing History from Nation*, p. 143.

⁶¹⁹ See the manifesto in *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, p. 38.

proposed assimilation, Guomindang leaders “founded an association to promote the Han settlement of the border lands.”⁶²⁰

In 1919, Sun Yat-sen began to attack the understanding of the ‘Five Nationalities Republic’. He believed that the Republican revolution had achieved the negative half of the goal of nationalism by overthrowing Manchu rule, but it could not achieve the positive goal of nationalism. What he meant by the achievement of the positive goal of nationalism was to construct a Chinese nation in the American style. The name ‘Republic of Five Nationalities’ prevented China from converting all nationality groups into a single nation. He stated:

We shall establish a united Chinese Republic in order that all the peoples- Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Tartars and Chinese- should constitute a single powerful nation. As an example of what I have described, I can refer to the people of the United States of America, constituting one great and terrible whole, but in reality consisting of many separate nationalities; Germans, Dutch, English, French, etc. The United States are an example of a united nation. Such a nationalism is possible, and we must pursue it.⁶²¹

What he had in mind was not a nation where all other nationalities preserved their distinctiveness. Instead, he thought to create a completely new nation where all ethnicities united around a single cultural and political whole as the different ethnicities in America had come together around the ‘American style of life and culture’ which converted all of them to Americans. He believed that America had achieved this kind of nationalism because the people of America came together around common aspirations, “which was the loftiest and most civilized nationalism.”⁶²² What he offered as a method was to make China a melting pot,

⁶²⁰ Duara, *Rescuing History from Nation*, p. 143.

⁶²¹ From the speech that Sun delivered on March 6th, 1921, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Guomindang at Canton in the *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, pp.228-9.

⁶²² *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 224.

where all the peoples of China would become *Zhonghua Ren* [Another naming of the *Zhongguo* (Middle Kingdom)].

The name “Republic of Five Nationalities” exists only because there exists a certain racial distinction which distorts the meaning of a single Republic. We must facilitate the dying out of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China, i.e. Manchus, Tibetans, etc. In this respect we must follow the example of the United States of America, i.e. satisfy the demands and requirements of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole, to constitute a single nation with such a name, for example, as “Chunhua” (*Zhonghua*) (China-in the widest application of the name). Organize the nation, the State.⁶²³

Although in the above mentioned statements, Sun urges that all the nationalities of China should forget their names and melt within *Zhonghua* in order to form a single nation, culturally and politically, he implied that the dominant culture that the others were expected to melt in was the Han culture. Because, occasionally, he mentioned that China possessed a great assimilation power which would help China to become a single nation. He stated:

Why should we talk of five peoples? I am convinced that when China, the world’s oldest and largest nation and the one richest in assimilative power, is infused with the new world principles and takes positive action to bring about the full expression and development of the new Chinese People, we will quickly surpass America and become first in the world.⁶²⁴

It is observable that what Sun meant by the assimilation power of the world’s oldest and largest nation, what he had in mind was a Sino-centric reading of Chinese history that has dominated Chinese historiography until now. As discussed in the first chapter, Sino-centrism claims that the Han Chinese, even at times when they were ruled by alien races, were able to assimilate them into their own culture. Aliens, who

⁶²³ *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p. 229.

⁶²⁴ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 225.

came into contact with the Han were sinified. Sun, although before the revolution insisting that the Manchus were not assimilated by frequently stating that they were an alien race, gave up his argument after the revolution and occasionally talked about how the Han, whose moral foundation was superior, had assimilated the Manchus and Mongols.⁶²⁵ Therefore, I would argue that what Sun meant by the assimilative power of the Chinese was the power of Han to assimilate other races, so the melting pot that would convert the Chinese nationalities into a single nation was expected to be the *Zhonghua* dominated by the Han.

A few years later, in 1924 Sun Yat-sen seems to contradict his former idea of the assimilation of China's ethnicities into a single cultural and political whole. Under Soviet guidance, Sun Yat-sen included the principle of 'self-determination' into his nationalism. The Manifesto of the First National Congress of the Guomintang stated two aspects of the principle of nationalism in January 1924. The first aspect was the emancipation of the Chinese nation from imperialist aggression and exploitation. The second aspect of the principle was related to the minority policy of the Guomintang. It stated:

The government of China after 1911 being still in the hands of the militarists, the different races within the country began to entertain doubts regarding the sincerity of the Kuomintang (Guomintang) policies. From now on we must try to secure the sympathy of these races, and explain their common interest in the success of the national revolutionary movement. When the Kuomintang is trying to promote the acceptance of its principles and to gather all support, we should gradually have more organized contacts with different racial groups and attempt at work out a concrete policy with regard to nationality problems. The Kuomintang solemnly declares that it recognizes the right of self-determination of all races within the country and that a free,

⁶²⁵ See The Three Principles of People in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, pp. 247-8. Also, see *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, p.81.

united Republic of China based upon the principles of free alliance of the different peoples will be established after the downfall of imperialism and militarism.⁶²⁶

The principle accepted by the Congress was also re-mentioned by Sun in his *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* in 1924, as he wrote: “the government should help and guide racial minorities in the country towards self government.”⁶²⁷ However, although Sun adopted the right to self-determination principle, it is hard to determine what he meant by self-determination. There are two points that need to be discussed in the principle as acknowledged by the Guomintang manifesto.

Firstly, it delays the application of the principle until after the achievement of the goal of nationalism against the militarists and the imperialists. During that delay period, Sun and the Guomintang promised to help and guide the minorities. Therefore, it can be concluded that a common struggle against the militarists and imperialists is offered under the guidance and with the support of China during the period of delay. It seems that Sun Yat-sen attempted to mobilize ethnic minorities for his cause of anti-militarism and anti-imperialism by gaining their sympathy through promising the right to self-determination. In relation to this, Sun Yat-sen, during his speeches on the Three Principles in 1924, stressed that “at the Kuomintang Congress at Canton several delegates were sent from Mongolia to see if the Southern government were imperialistic. When these delegates learned that it was our policy to help the weak or minor nations against the oppressive mighty powers, they were most enthusiastic about cooperating with us.”⁶²⁸

Secondly, it is stated in the Guomintang Manifesto that a free United Republic of China based upon the free alliance of the different peoples will be established after the downfall of imperialism and militarism. What the Guomintang

⁶²⁶ See the whole text in *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, p. 80.

⁶²⁷ Sun Yat-sen, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction*, p. 10.

⁶²⁸ See the *Three Principles of the People* in *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, p. 183.

meant by the free alliance of the people is not clear. Most probably, it did not mean the right of the minorities to secede from China.

I will conclude that Sun Yat-sen's admission of the principle of self-determination was more pragmatic than ideological. It was not only a consequence of Soviet influence, but also it was utilized in order to mobilize the minorities in the same cause. In this regard, he was similar to M. Kemal, who managed to utilize an understanding of Islamic brotherhood and the symbol of the caliphate for the mobilization of the minorities in the same struggle. It was because Sun's position was not ideologically determined, only 4 days after the Reorganization Congress, where the principle of self-determination was recognized; he stated that in China the nation was founded only by one race. Although he acknowledged that in China there were other nationalities, he tended to ignore them as their population was very low. He stated that,

In round figures, the Chinese race comprises 400 000 000 people. Among these are only a few million Mongolians, over a million Manchus, a few million Tibetans, and a million and some hundred thousand Mohammedan Turks. The total aliens number merely ten millions. Thus, considering the great majority we can say that the 400 000 000 Chinese (Zhongguo Ren) are exclusively Chinese (Han Ren), having the same blood, the same spoken and written language, the same religion, the same habits and customs, and forming a complete and independent race.⁶²⁹

Another contradictory policy with his new principle of self-determination that Sun initiated was the substitution of the Republican flag by the Nationalist flag. In August 1924, several months after the Reorganization Congress, when the right to self-determination was recognized, Sun Yat-sen ordered that 'five-bar flag' of the Republic of China be lowered from all units under his command in South China.

⁶²⁹ *The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 70. See Sun Yat-sen. 1989. *San Min Zhu Yi*. Taipei Shi.

Instead a bright red flag, “bearing in its top inner corner the distinctive nationalist motif of a white sun against a blue sky,” was raised. “Within weeks the Republican flag was lowered from party and government offices in Guangzhou, and on New Year’s Day 1925, the municipal chief of police began issuing fines to private citizens who persisted in flying the Republican colours.”⁶³⁰ In fact, Sun Yat-sen, who had criticized the understanding of the Republic of Five Nationalities for years, and who favoured a racial integration through assimilation, did not “sit comfortably under the multiracial flag.”⁶³¹ He, the first time in 1914, had tried to replace the Republican flag by the Nationalist flag. However, even his collaborators, who had taken a personal oath of loyalty to Sun, did not approve of the substitution.⁶³² In 1919 Sun criticized the five-colour flag not only because it symbolized the separateness of the racial groups but also because it was inherited from the Qing. He stated in 1919 that:

Our countrymen have assumed, ever since the Han people toppled the political power of the Manchus and struck off the shackles of alien rule, that the goal of nationalism has been attained. Other ignorant, irresponsible people in those days following the triumph of the Revolution espoused a Republic comprising five nationalities (Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans), and the bureaucrats chimed in. They compounded this by adopting as the National flag of the Republic of China the five-color flag used to distinguish top-ranking C’hing (Qing) military officials, intending the five colours to represent the five nationalities. Most members of the Revolutionary party, however, did not notice this, so they adopted that divisive bureaucrat flag and abandoned the flag with a white sun against a blue sky that Lu Haotung, the Republic’s first martyr, had chosen for the Republic of China. The Senate responded to my constant objections by making the white-sun, blue-sky flag the naval flag. Alas! This is why the Republic has been divided ever since it was founded, while the navy has so often upheld the cause of justice. This ill-omened flag has been the cause of all Republic’s misfortunes. No sooner had we discarded the C’hing dynasty’s imperial yellow-dragon flag than the five-color flag of its military officials was adopted in its stead! It is little wonder that we

⁶³⁰ Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 180.

⁶³¹ *Ibid*, p.182.

⁶³² *Ibid*, p. 184.

are able to throw the Ch'ing emperor but have found it difficult to extinguish the despotism of the Ch'ing military.⁶³³

Despite the fact that the Republican flag was among the flags of the Qing bureaucracy as its military banner, the meaning attributed to it was completely different during the Republican period. It symbolized the liberal values expressed in the Provisional Constitution of 1912 and the brotherhood of the ethnicities of China within the same polity. It was no coincidence that Sun's substitution of the Nationalist flag, which bore within it the symbols of Nationalist Party flag (Guomintang flag) took place when Sun came to the conclusion that during the tutelary period a single-party regime should be established. Therefore, Sun was accused by his contemporaries of "changing the emblem [from the five colored flag, which symbolized the harmonious cohabitation of the five major ethnic groups] to one with a Nationalist emblem, which represented one-party totalitarian rule."⁶³⁴

The symbolism inherent in the substitution of the Nationalist flag demonstrates that Sun, although he favoured "the equality of all groups in China and would surely have denied favouring coercive measures to attain the "single cultural and political whole" he advocated, there can be no doubt that he regarded the continued existence of non-Han groups as hindrances in the path to its attainment."⁶³⁵ A mere ten million members of minorities were 'spoiling' the purity of China, which could still be regarded as a country where a single nation had emerged out of a single race. While Sun never intended to deny the existence of the ethnic minorities during his life time, his successor Chiang Kai-Shek went a step further and denied the existence of various races in China. He argued that "Our various clans actually

⁶³³ *Prescriptions for Saving China: Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 224-5.

⁶³⁴ See the articles that indicted Sun for crimes against the nation and the people between 1923-4 which was prepared by the Cantonese citizen organization in Leslie Dingyan Chen, *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement*, p. 229.

⁶³⁵ June Teufel Dreyer. 1976. *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China*. Harvard, p. 17.

belong ...to the same racial stock...that there are five peoples designated to China is not due to differences in race or blood, but to religion and geographical environment.”⁶³⁶

Mustafa Kemal and the Kemalists also denied the existence of different ethnic groups in Turkey in the thirties. The transformation from the legal acknowledgement of the various ethnicities of Turkey during the war period to the denial of their existence during the post-Revolutionary period is related to the leading Turkish nationalists' desire to ethnically and culturally unify the country through making many ethnicities forget their own names, languages, and cultures. The efforts to transform the ethnicities cannot be separated from Atatürk's policy of creating a new 'Turkish man'. As the Turks were to be transformed into new, secular, Western Turkish personality, the non-Turkish ethnicities were expected to be assimilated within the newly-created Turkish society. What Sun Yat-sen had dreamed of was attempted to be achieved in Turkey after the consolidation of the Republic in Atatürk's hands.

Just after the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, a new period started concerning the minority policy which cannot be separated from the thought of M.K. Atatürk. Kemal Atatürk was now very determined to exclude religion as a factor that had united the different peoples of the country so far. However, this new policy of nationhood cannot be interpreted as a policy in order to include the non-Muslims within the nation. It was a policy to substitute Turkish culture and Turkish nationality, as it was reinvented by the Kemalist regime in place of Islam. In 1925, Atatürk explained this very clearly. He stated that as a consequence of the reforms (*inkilaplar*), the nation had changed the centuries-old form and content of its common bonds, which were religious and sectarian, and replaced 'it' with the bond

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*

of Turkish nationality.⁶³⁷ This new understanding also appeared during the speeches of M.Kemal. Now he did not prefer to use the term *Türkiye Milleti* (The nation of Turkey) but instead used the term *Türk Milleti*. (Turkish nation).⁶³⁸ Now not only the name of the state (*Türkiye*) but also the name aimed at defining the people residing within the boundaries of that state (*Türk*) was signifying an ethnic group. Since not all the people residing in Turkey were ethnically Turkish, what Atatürk and the other statesmen meant by ‘Turk’ becomes a problematic.

On the legal level, Article 88 of the Constitution of 1924 refers to “the people of Turkey as Turks with regard to citizenship without religious and ethnic distinction.”⁶³⁹ By relying on a superficial reading of the article, it can easily be concluded that Turkey had imported a kind of nationalism based on French nationalism with an emphasis on territory. Therefore, being a Turk was a legal status and was not related to ethnicity. But a close reading of the article and the ensuing debates in the parliament demonstrate that in reality there existed a distinction between ‘real Turks’ and the ‘Turks as regards to citizenship’. As Mesut Yeğen claims, the term “with regard to citizenship” was consciously added to the article, since when the article was first submitted to the parliament, it said: “the people of Turkey are regarded as Turks without any religious or ethnic distinction.”⁶⁴⁰ The term “with regard to citizenship” was added when some parliamentarians expressed their hesitations. When they asked if the article meant nationality or citizenship, it was answered: “citizenship”. However, those parliamentarians were not really

⁶³⁷ *Söylev ve Demeçler* II, p.249.

⁶³⁸ After the Republic, Atatürk used the term *Türkiye Milleti* only once but used the term *Türk Milleti* 186 times. See Baskın Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği*, p.211.

⁶³⁹ Article 88 writes: “Türkiye ahalisine din ve ırk farkı olmaksızın vatandaşlık itibariyle Türk ıtlak olunur”. See in Ahmet Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene*”, p. 319.

⁶⁴⁰ Mesut Yeğen. “Yurttaşlık ve Türklük,” in *Toplum ve Bilim*. Vol. 93 Yaz 2002, p. 212.

satisfied. The reservation of Hamdullah Suphi Bey explains the reason behind the addition of the term ‘with regard to citizenship’. He stated:

We might aspire to name all the people living within this territory as ‘Turk’. However, as you see, we have been engaged in a very difficult struggle and neither of us believes that this struggle has come to an end. We state that all the subjects of the Turkish Republic are Turkish. On the other hand, the government is attempting to dismiss the Greeks and Armenians, who work in the organizations and companies that were established by the foreigners. How are we going to answer those who will oppose us by stating that these people are Turks according to the law that is promulgated by the parliament and therefore can not be expelled?⁶⁴¹

So the solution offered was to add ‘with regard to citizenship’, which meant that there were ‘Turks with regard to citizenship’ and there were ‘real Turks’. This distinction enabled the Turkish state to implement both assimilationist and discriminatory policies concerning the minorities. The best examples that demonstrate the distinctions made by the state concerning the question of ‘being a Turk’ are government announcements for job applications, which showed that from the viewpoint of the state there were degrees of ‘Turkishness’. In 1938, in order to apply for the Bolu Forest Schools, one had to be “a subject of the Republic of Turkey,” but in order to be a teacher within the Türkkuşu General Directorate one had to be “ethnically Turkish” or to become a student in the Military Academy of the Veterinary one had to be “a subject of the Republic of Turkey and also ethnically Turkish,” and some required one to be a “Turk” as in the case of the announcement

⁶⁴¹ “Bütün siyasi hudutlarımız dahilinde yaşayanlara Türk ünvanı vermek bizim için bir emel olabilir. Fakat görüyorsunuz ki, çok müşkül bir mücadelenin içinden çıktık ve hiçbirimiz kalbimizde mücadelenin tamam olduğuna dair birşey taşımıyoruz. Diyoruz ki: Devletin, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin tebaası tamamıyla Türktür. Bir taraftan da hükümet mücadele ediyor, ecnebler tarafından tesis edilmiş olan müessesatta çalışan Rumu, Ermeniye (sic) çıkarmaya çalışıyor. Biz bunları Rumdur Ermenidir diye çıkarmak istediğimiz vakit bize hayır meclisinizden çıkan kanun mucibince bunlar Türktür derlerse ne cevap vereceksiniz?” *Ibid*, p. 213. Also see the text of discussion in the parliament in Ahmet Yıldız, “Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene”, pp. 319-323.

of the Aviation School.⁶⁴² As Yeğen mentioned, these were the degrees of Turkishness. However, Turkish citizenship was not a ‘degree’ that surpassed being ethnically Turkish. As the announcements show, Turkish citizens who were not ethnically Turkish were discriminated against in the institutions that were more central and strategic, such as the military.⁶⁴³

Who was a “real Turk” then? It was not really determined only by ethnicity. It can be argued that Kemalism vacillated between an ethnicist definition and a culturalist definition throughout the life of Mustafa Kemal. Although after the 1930s, the emphasis on ethnicity increased, Kemalist nationalism never renounced its definition of a Turk on the cultural level. Therefore, if ‘Turkishness’ was not determined by ethnicity but by culture, then it meant that one could be assimilated into ‘Turkishness’. Just because of this, assimilationist policies were more dominant than the discriminationist policies during the early Republican era. Turkish policymakers never pursued a policy to preserve the ‘racial purity’ of the Turkish race. And the definition of Turkishness as an identity that the others could assimilate into determined another important aspect of the Turkish nationalist discourse.

This cultural and political definition of ‘Turkishness’ comprised three essential elements. The RPP program of 1931 classifies them as ‘unity in language, culture, and ideal’. In accordance with these principles, in 1923, in order to become a member of the Party, it required one to be either a ‘Turk’ or any immigrant, who had accepted Turkish citizenship and Turkish culture. It is obvious that to be a Turkish citizen was not enough to become a member of the Party. In fact, it is not contradictory within itself. Since as the RPP defined the ‘nation’ as those who shared a single language, a culture, and an ideal, it means that if one does not accept Turkish

⁶⁴² See the announcements in the appendix of *ibid.*, pp. 327-33.

⁶⁴³ M. Yeğen, “Yurttaşlık ve Türklük,” p. 207-8.

culture, he/she contradicts with the principles of the Party. Similarly, in the following years, the RPP made its requirements more explicit, while in 1927, the Party program only accepted Turks who had accepted Turkish culture; in 1931 the Party program added the requirement of language. A person, who did not speak Turkish, could not become a member of the RPP.⁶⁴⁴

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk stressed the importance of Turkish culture during his speeches. In 1926, he said: “We are directly nationalists and Turkish nationalists. The basis of the Republic is the Turkish community. If the members of this community are imbued with the Turkish culture, then the Republic, which is based on it, will be powerful.”⁶⁴⁵ What he meant by the Turkish culture remains ambiguous but what Atatürk had in mind was not the culture that was imbued with Islamic-Ottoman customs and practices. When he was talking about Turkish culture in 1926, he was applying radical reforms to transform Turkish society and imbue Turkish society with Western symbols and cultural practices. Several years later, he denied religion as a factor in the formation of the Turkish nation. As mentioned before, however, this was not an effort to include non-Muslims within the boundaries of the nation, but an effort to exclude Islam as a bonding factor. He wrote:

There are those who claim that religion is a factor in the formation of a nation. But we see a contrary situation in the example of the formation of the Turkish nation. The Turks were also a great nation before the adoption of Islam. After the adoption of Islam by the Turks, neither the Arabs, nor the Persians, or the others did not aspire to form a ‘nation’ by uniting with the Turks. On the contrary, it loosened the national ties of the Turkish nation; it made national feelings and national excitement sleepy.⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴⁴ Ahmet Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*,” p. 142-3.

⁶⁴⁵ *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, p. 118.

⁶⁴⁶ *Elyazısıyla Yazdığı ve Yazdırdığı Fikirleri ile Atatürk*, p. 29. Of course what he proposed was not turning back to the pre-Islamic culture. What he was proposing was to accept the Western culture, which he believed to be the child of a great pre-Islamic Turkish civilization.

While religion was excluded, in its place criteria, such as language, national morality, and common history appeared. The emphasis on common language is more than a common official language that would be the language of the public sphere. As Kemalist state tried to destroy the boundaries between the public and private spheres by intervening in the daily lives of ordinary people, the Turkish language became a tool in the Kemalist effort to assimilate the non-Turks into the Turkish society by forcing them to speak Turkish at public and private places.⁶⁴⁷ Mustafa Kemal presents the ‘preciousness’ and the importance of Turkish language as such:

The language of the Turkish nation is Turkish. Turkish language is the most beautiful, richest, and easiest language in the world. Therefore, every Turk is required to love and improve it. On the other hand, Turkish language is a holy treasure for the Turkish nation. Because, it is thanks to the Turkish language that Turkish nation could preserve its morality, customs, memories, interests, and everything that made up the nation despite the permanent misfortunes that were experienced by the nation. Turkish language is the heart and the mind of the Turkish nation.⁶⁴⁸

In order to pursue the same “national ideal”, which was listed by the RPP among the elements that made up a nation, one had to share the same heart and mind as the Turkish nation, and therefore one had to speak Turkish as one’s mother tongue, which made up ‘the minds and hearts of the Turkish nation’. The sharing of the same ideal did also require the sharing of a common history and common national morality. For Kemal Atatürk, national morality could be above individuals. National morality was the factor that made one sacrifice oneself for the order, stability, welfare, happiness, and the civilizational progress of the nation.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁷ In 1927, the state initiated a campaign under the name “*Vatandaş! Türkçe Konuş.*” (Citizens! Speak Turkish), which tried to convert Turkish to the mother language of all Turkish citizens. It intended more than making Turkish the official language. See Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene,*” p. 140.

⁶⁴⁸ *Elyazısıyla Yazdığı ve Yazdırdığı Fikirleri ile Atatürk*, p. 5.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 23.

Therefore, as Atatürk stated “the Turkish nation was constituted of the people who established the Turkish Republic.”⁶⁵⁰ Since the people shared the same national morality and thus the ideal, they came together to establish the Republic for the welfare and progress of the nation. Consequently, according to this formulation, those who did not participate in the Independence War, such as the Greek and Armenian residents, could not be considered as members of the Turkish nation. Since they neither shared the language of the Turkish nation nor shared the same national morality and ideal, therefore they did not participate in the process of republic-building but, on the contrary, they put obstacles before it by collaborating with foreign powers.

But now order and stability were established and all the citizens of Turkey could be converted into Turks if they agreed to substitute Turkish for their mother tongues, adopt Turkish culture, and work for the same ideal. As Yeğen puts it very correctly, the Kemalist regime accepted that non-Turks could be assimilated into Turkishness but not all of them.⁶⁵¹ It is ironic that the difference between communities who were expected to easily assimilate to Turkishness and those who were denied assimilation was determined by the criteria of religion. During the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in accordance with the articles of the Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians were forced to leave Turkey and non-Turkish Muslims were accepted. In reality, the exchange was between the Greek Orthodox and the Ottoman Muslims. This was due to the insistence of the Turkish delegates during the Lausanne conference, who argued that there was no racial minority in Turkey but religious minorities. Since the articles on the exchange of the population were determined even before the Republic, it can be

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.3.

⁶⁵¹ M. Yeğen, “Yurttaşlık ve Türklük.”

argued that during that period still the understanding which regarded all Muslims as being within the same nation persisted. But in the 1930s, even when religion was excluded from all spheres of public sphere, the Christian Gagavuz Turks were not allowed mass migration. Instead, Ottoman Muslims residing in the Balkans, who were not ethnically Turkish, were allowed to migrate into Turkey. This immigration policy manifests that although religion, as a factor of communal bondage, was not legally accepted on practical levels; the Kemalist regime had to seek help from the references of the religious-dynastic system of the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁵² In other words, the Kemalist regime's aim was to allow the immigration of those whose loyalty could be easily re-produced. The immigrants, such as the Bosnians and Bulgarian Pomaks, did not develop any identity other than being former Ottoman Muslims and remained loyal to the Empire until its death. Similarly, as I have explained, the loyalty of the Kurdish Muslims, even though they were not at ease with the efforts of centralization, could be assured during the Independence War, since during the war period the consciousness of a distinct ethnic identity was not mature enough. Therefore, during the Kemalist period, those who remained loyal and obedient until the end of the Empire were accepted as immigrants. Even in the 1930s the memory of Christian disobedience seems not to have been forgotten and was so powerful that it was not relaxed to allow Christian Turks into the territory even in a period when Mustafa Kemal had abandoned Islam as a shared ideology and replaced it with a shared common Central Asian heritage.⁶⁵³

⁶⁵² See Ahmet Yıldız, "*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene*," pp. 132-9.

⁶⁵³ He stated that Turks and Balkan nations belong to the same race: "We should not forget that Balkan Nations, despite the differences in social and political directions, all come from Central Asia and share the same blood and same ancestors." Speech with the delegates of the Balkan Conference in 1931. See *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 305-6.

In the 1930s, the “ethno-secular” boundaries of Turkish national identity⁶⁵⁴ were clarified. Although ethnicism was not completely out of the picture in the 1920s, it became a dominant factor within the nationalist discourse during the thirties. This discursive change was a consequence of ‘scientific’ studies concerning the Turkish race. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk attributed great importance to scientific studies that would determine the characteristics of the Turkish race. He personally engaged with the topics of national education, national culture, language, and history with a racist perspective that was guided by ‘scienticism’.⁶⁵⁵ The result of the scientific studies was the Turkish History Thesis. The reason behind the importance attributed to the scientific studies was multiple. As mentioned in the second chapter, one of the reasons was to fill the gap created by the destruction of Islam. Long before Islam had been eliminated as a national tie, but Republican ideals could not fill the gap. Republican ideals and the symbols that were invented for the Turkish people did not create any excitement, and they even caused unease among the population. Then some other factors were needed to create the feeling of Turkishness among the people. This would be the Turkish History Thesis, which claimed that Turks were a great race which was the mother of civilizations. The most important aspect of the thesis was that it not only tried to create self-confidence among the Turkish population but also aimed at demonstrating to the Turkish people that westernization was not in contradiction with real Turkish culture because the Turks were the mother of Western civilization.⁶⁵⁶ Therefore, the Turkish History Thesis aimed at introducing the Turks to themselves. As early as 1923, K. Atatürk was warning the nation by stating: “Our nation has suffered through forgetting its nationality. Our fault is forgetting ourselves. If we want the world to respect us...we have to show our

⁶⁵⁴ Ahmet Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene.*”

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁶⁵⁶ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 297.

respect for our selves and nationality.”⁶⁵⁷ The Turkish History Thesis contributed to the re-creation of this self-respect. However, although the aim was to re-create self-respect and self-confidence in the Turks, it also caused an increase in the tone of racism in the speeches of Kemal Atatürk and other statesmen. An analysis of the speeches and writings of Kemal Atatürk also shows that there was a gradual increase of the emphasis on ‘pure Turks’ and ‘Turkish blood’. The most repeated statements of M.K. Atatürk belong to his speech to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Republic. Mustafa Kemal talked about the “high character of the Turkish nation,” its “innate diligence and intelligence,” and after acknowledging his belief that “the entire civilized world will again appreciate the greatness of the Turkish nation that had been forgotten,” he ended his speech by stating: “Happy is the one who can call himself a Turk! (*Ne mutlu Türküm diyebilene!*).”⁶⁵⁸

Another example that shows increased tone of chauvinism can be observed in the speech in which Atatürk praised the beauty of the Turkish race after a Turkish girl, Keriman Halis, was chosen as ‘Miss World’ in a beauty contest. He stated:

The Turkish nation deeply appreciates her child. Cumhuriyet Newspaper pursued the enterprise of manifesting the distinguished beauty of the Turkish race among the nations of the world.... It is very natural for me that a Turkish girl be chosen as the most beautiful girl in the world, since I know that historically the Turkish race is the most beautiful race of the world. But, Turkish youth should know how to protect the natural beauty that we are proud of through scientific methods.⁶⁵⁹

It is important to note that this kind of rhetoric also has a relationship with the influence of increasing chauvinism throughout the world but especially in fascist countries. However, Turkish nationalism was not revisionist and not imperialist, so

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.147.

⁶⁵⁸ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, pp. 318-9.

⁶⁵⁹ *Söylev ve Demeçler III*, pp. 132-3.

the chauvinistic rhetoric was not converted into systematic racist policies. However, another reading of the Turkish History Thesis shows that ‘scientific studies’ enabled Turkish nationalists, who were determined to construct a homogenous nation state, to deny the existence of non-Turks on Anatolia. To the conclusion that the minorities were originally Turks was caused by anxiety among Turkish nationalists to demonstrate that Anatolia was the mainland of the ancient Turks. This anxiety arose in order to put an end to the Armenian and Greek claims on Anatolia by proving that the first residents of Anatolia were the Turks. In that sense, the Central Asian heritage did not serve this end very well. The Turkish state, under the guidance of M. Kemal, engaged in finding Turkish ancestors in Anatolia. Archaeological searches and linguistic studies were made throughout the 1930s and the findings that were presented as proof formed the backbones of the Turkish History Thesis. What the Kemalist historians concluded was that the Hittites, who lived in Anatolia around 2000 B.C were ancient Turks, who had migrated from Central Asia. What interests us here is not the validity of this argument, but how it was used by Mustafa Kemal in regard to non-Turkish ethnicities in Turkey.⁶⁶⁰

It is interesting to note that the thesis, which was presented at the History Congress in 1932, was proposed by Mustafa Kemal as early as 1923 in a speech in Adana.⁶⁶¹ During his speech, Mustafa Kemal claimed that Adana was a land of the ‘pure Turks’ despite the claims of the Armenians. He stated:

The ethnic groups that invaded our Adana, such as the Armenians and the others, had occupied our craft guilds and regarded themselves as the real owners of this land. This is most unjust and insolent behavior. In this country, there is no right for the

⁶⁶⁰ Etienne Copeaux. 1998. *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk-İslam Sentezine: Tarih Ders Kitaplarında(1931-1993)*. TVYY, pp.31-2.

⁶⁶¹ This fact also shows that Turkish History Thesis was a re-presentation of Mustafa Kemal’s belief in a more ‘scientific’ manner.

Armenians. This land belongs to you. It belongs to the Turks, it historically belonged to the Turks, and it will belong to the Turks forever. It is true that since ancient times this beautiful country has been invaded by foreigners. However, in the end, fellow Turkish people from the Central Asia arrived in this country and returned the country to its real owners. Therefore, Armenians do not have any right in this land. These fertile places are pure Turkish soil.⁶⁶²

The name of the ancient Turkish people that resided in Anatolia was acknowledged in the 1930s by the presentation of the History Thesis. Mustafa Kemal stated in 1933:

The Turkish children of the present, who decided to enlighten their minds by the light of progress, knows that they are not the members of a tribe composed of 400 tents but the members of a race and a very capable nation. We have to know very well that the *Hittites, our ancient forefathers*, had been the first and indigenous inhabitants of this country. They made here the genuine home of the Turkish people. They brought the center of Turkishness from Central Asia to Anatolia and Thrace.⁶⁶³

As mentioned before, the belief that the Turks were the earliest inhabitants of Turkey enabled the Kemalist elite to claim that ethnic groups in Turkey were indeed originally Turks. Ahmet Hamdi Başar quotes that Atatürk “had said that Arabs, Suryanis, and the others, who regarded themselves as minorities, might be Turks who had forgotten their Turkish origins.”⁶⁶⁴ The most important consequence of this belief was the denial of the physical existence of the Kurds. In the 1930s, it was suddenly realized that Kurds were originally “mountain Turks” who had forgotten

⁶⁶² *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 130.

⁶⁶³ *Söylev ve Demeçler II*, p. 308. The emphasis is mine.

⁶⁶⁴ Ahmet Hamdi Başar. 1981. *Atatürkle Üç Ay ve 1930'dan Sonra Türkiye*. Ankara: İktisadi Ticari İlimler Akademisi, p. 114, quoted in Ahmet Yıldız, “*Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*,” p. 182. On the other hand, it is interesting that Mustafa Kemal while reading the book of Mustafa Celaleddin, named *Les Turks Anciens et Modernes* (1870), underlined the paragraph, which claimed that “With some exceptions, the Aryans are the origins of all the Christian and Muslim population in Turkey and almost all of them are Turks in origin.” I should add that the Turkish History Thesis claimed that Turks do not belong to the yellow race, but are originally Aryan people, who had Brakisefal heads.

their Turkishness.⁶⁶⁵ In order to re-assimilate them to Turkishness, some ethnic groups were forced to leave their lands for re-settlement. When the Law on Settlement was presented to the parliament in 1934, it was argued that the Turkish state could not allow them to use the rights granted to Turkish citizens if they were not loyal to the Turkish flag. Therefore, in order to assimilate them within the Turkish culture, which was the main criterion of being a Turk and also to make them more loyal to the country as Turks by assimilating them into the Turkish culture, the law was promulgated and ethnic groups were dispersed among the Turkish population.⁶⁶⁶ It was assumed that if these ethnic groups were dispersed among the dominant ethnicity, they would lose their ethnic identity.

The thirties remains a complex period in order to understand the Turkish state discourse concerning the issue of minorities. On certain occasions, as in the speech of Atatürk in 1923, minorities were denied “any right” to the land of the Turks, and on other occasions they were urged to return to their Turkish origins as in the case of the Kurds, who were regarded as ‘mountain Turks’. However, generally it can be argued that the Turkish state preferred to practice discriminatory policies against the non-Muslim Greeks and Armenians because they were supported by Armenia and Greece and could demand territory from Turkey, and preferred to apply assimilationist policies to the Muslim ethnic groups, whose loyalty was easier to guarantee. However, this boundary between the non-Muslims and Muslims could be blurred due to the conditions pertaining. As in the case of the Jews, despite their being non-Muslims, the Turkish state applied assimilationist policies because in that period there was no other external source of support for the Jews, and they were willing to remain loyal to the Turkish Republic, as they had remained loyal to the

⁶⁶⁵ Mesut Yeğen, *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu*, p. 126.

⁶⁶⁶ Mesut Yeğen, “Yurttaşlık ve Türklük,” p. 209.

Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the Kurds could be reduced to the status of non-Muslim Greeks and Armenians and at least at the level of discourse could be denied any right on Turkish soil. The changes occurred at times of Kurdish uprisings, which made them as disloyal as the non-Muslims in the eyes of the Republican authorities.⁶⁶⁷

Despite all the chauvinist rhetoric, which approached a denial of the physical existence of non-Turks in Turkey, the culturalist definition of Turkishness of the early Republican era continued to exist side by side with the rhetoric of the 1930s. What was required from the ethnic groups was to make them forget their names as Sun Yat-sen had demanded of non-Chinese minorities in 1921, and merge within the Turkishness defined by the Kemalist doctrines. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk believed that these various terms, such as Kurd, Bosnian, etc., were none other than the product of the propaganda of foreigners and enemies, since these communities were bound to each other by a common past, history, and morality.⁶⁶⁸ What differed in Sun's demand from that of Mustafa Kemal was that the ethnic groups of China would merge in *Zhonghua* (The Middle Kingdom- the name of China as a classic dynastic civilization that was a 'universal' world empire) which did not point the name of the dominant Han race. But what Mustafa Kemal demanded of the other ethnic communities was to merge into 'Turkishness'. However, on the other side of the coin, the similarity still persists. As I have attempted to demonstrate despite Sun's choice of the name "*Zhonghua*", a reading of his writings and speeches demonstrates that it was a *Zhonghua* centered on the Han Chinese, who would be 'remade' by Sun

⁶⁶⁷ Just after the Ağrı upheaval of 1930, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, a radical theoretician of the Kemalist doctrine and the Minister of Justice, claimed that the masters of the country were the pure Turks and the only right of those, who were not pure Turks were to be servants and slaves. See Hugh Poulton. 1997. *Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic: Top hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent*. New York University Press, p. 120.

⁶⁶⁸ *Elyazısıyla Yazdığı ve Yazdırıldığı Fikirleri ile Atatürk*, pp. 53-5.

Yat-sen and his revolutionary party. Similarly, as the name specifies, the center of Turkishness would be occupied by the Turks, who were being 're-imagined' by Mustafa Kemal and his revolutionary party.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I am concerned with the thoughts of Sun Yat-sen and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in a comparative perspective. Although focusing on their thought of nationalism, I have attempted to give a comprehensive analysis of their ideas as far as these ideas could be related to their efforts of nation-building. The choice of these two respective leaders is due to their experience in re-constructing a modern nation-state from the remnants of multi-ethnic and multi-religious empires through saving their country from imperialist aggression at around the same time.

In the first part, I presented a historical background that would serve my study in the following chapters. I have concluded in the first part that modern identifications of the late nineteenth century, especially the emergence of a new Han consciousness that was also anti-Manchu was not only a product of the modern era that suddenly appeared without any historical background, but was a product of a re-reading, re-narration, re-imagination of historical identifications within the context of the modern nation-state system. To argue that anti-Manchuism was a “relational identity between historical identities and modern nation-state system,”⁶⁶⁹ one needs to challenge the Sino-centric reading of Chinese history, which proposes that the non-Chinese, who came into contact with the Chinese, were assimilated into Han culture, which was dominated by Confucianism. In addition, Sino-centrism argued that the Chinese people accepted non-Chinese as governors as long as these barbarians were sinicized by accepting Confucian morality and Chinese customs. There are many exceptions to this theory. First of all, despite the Confucian identification, which dominated the minds of the Chinese until the twentieth century, there always had been an embryonic form of ethnicism in the Chinese thought as

⁶⁶⁹ P. Duara, “De-constructing the Chinese Nation,” p. 11.

observed in the anti-Manchu literature of the Ming loyalists of the 1600s. This literature would be revived and re-narrated by modern Chinese nationalists, who had come up with a modern form of Han consciousness in the late nineteenth century. The second challenge to the sinicization thesis is that, although Manchus partially accepted the Chinese customs, they never lost their perception of being different from the Han Chinese. Here, I analyzed this fact by describing the policies of the Manchu court. Therefore, while on the one hand it is very difficult to argue that Manchus were assimilated into 'Chineseness', on the other hand, the preserved distinction between the Manchus and the Han Chinese served the discourse of anti-Manchuism, which claimed that an alien tribe usurped the sovereignty of the Han people. While the analysis of historical identifications serves our purpose, for it makes what anti-Manchuism means more obvious to the reader, a description of the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire is presented not only for comparative reasons, but also for our understanding of Kemalist nationalism. Because it cannot be understood without understanding what *millet* meant during the Ottoman centuries, what it meant during the Independence War, and what it meant in the post-war period. It also had direct implications for my understanding of the problem of minority incorporation after the Independence War.

In the second chapter of the first part, I evaluated the thought of the Ottoman and Chinese constitutionalist reformers. The ideas of these reformists constitute the last resort before the revolutionaries preferred to de-construct the imperial system and establish new republics through which they could re-construct their countries as they wished to. The question that troubled the reformists of the respective empires was how to save the empires. For them an intellectual re-vitalization was inevitable and the proposition was the acceptance of Western political ideals, especially that of

democracy and constitution. However, what was similar for both of the Chinese and Turkish constitutionalists was that; they considered the importation of Western political ideals as a 'return to the origin', since both of them believed that their traditions, before they were corrupted, incorporated such ideals. On the other hand, the reformist thought is important for our discussion because it was the first time that an understanding of 'citizenship' had emerged. I analyzed the Young Ottoman ideal of Ottoman citizenship into which entire Ottoman ethnicities would merge, and Liang Qichao's effort to create a Chinese nation and Chinese citizenship around which ethnicities living in China would come together. Both the re-reading of tradition and the efforts to create a nation of the reformists were efforts to make the empires more powerful in their struggle against the Western hegemony and imperialism.

In the following chapters, I examined the thoughts of Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen. I tried to follow their ideas in a historical sequence without limiting the thought of Mustafa Kemal to the thirties, when Kemalist doctrine was officially written, and Sun to the twenties when he wrote his Three Principles of the People.

For Mustafa Kemal, I will conclude that while he used Islam as a factor of legitimization until he consolidated his power in the mid twenties, after then he replaced Islam with Western symbols and culture, which was legitimized by the Turkish History Thesis. On the other hand, as the problem of political participation is concerned, the populist discourse of Kemal Atatürk had also shifted. While during the Independence War period, populism (*Halkçılık*) meant people's sovereignty, after the war it meant the denial of class conflict in the Turkish society. The new *Halkçılık* legitimized the Kemalist single party regime. According to Atatürk, as there were no

classes in the Turkish society, there was no need for multi-party system, which protected the rights of different classes.

Sun Yat-sen's ideas are analyzed as they were classified in the Three Principles of the People. However, the principle of nationalism, the principle of democracy, and the principle of the people's livelihood is supplemented by his ideas on anti-Manchuism and federalization. I concluded that Sun's governmental model resembled the Kemalist one because both of them favoured a single-party regime in order to re-construct their nations. While party and state was identified in their thoughts, the party-state was given priority over the individual freedoms.

In the last part, I complemented my comparison by an analysis of these respective leaders' nationalisms. In the first part, I analyzed whether there is an anti-imperialist component of their thought. I came to the conclusion that both Mustafa Kemal's and Sun's nationalisms had an anti-imperialist concern, but this was pragmatically determined. If it had been ideologically determined, Mustafa Kemal would not have left his harsh anti-imperialist discourse after the Independence War, and Sun Yat-sen would not try to enter into negotiations with the imperialist Japanese government. However, I argued that this does not decrease the vitality of their anti-imperialist discourse; since their ultimate aim was to strengthen their countries in a manner that will enable them have a sovereign voice in the international arena.

In the second section of the last part, I specifically dealt with the minority issue of nation-building in China and Turkey. Despite the very confusing arguments of both Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen on the problem, which tried to solve 'who belonged to Turkishness', and 'who belonged to Chineseness', I concluded that both of them imagined homogenous nations, where the minorities through assimilation

would lose their own identities. In the case of China, although Sun proposed that all ethnicities of China should merge into the identity of being *Zhonghua ren*, the culture of the *Zhonghua ren* would be determined by the Han culture and the Han people. In the case of Turkey, the minorities, were forced to assimilate into 'Turkishness', which was re-constructed by the Kemalist elite and Mustafa Kemal.

After these sectional conclusions, I would like to present what one could derive from the comparative reading of these respective leaders. Both Mustafa Kemal and Sun Yat-sen did not only fight against the imperialist threat in terms of economic exploitation, political domination, or territorial invasion, but also fought against Euro-American hegemony through claiming their nation's right to subjectivity. It is known that Orientalist discourse, which granted legitimacy to Euro-American cultural hegemony and colonialism, denies any right to subjectivity to the 'Eastern nations', since they are not accepted as participants in modernity or at best, they are accepted as latecomers as the evolutionary process of human history drags every nation along the same path, where the 'West' takes the lead. On the other hand, according to most scholars of 'nationalism', the nationalist thinking of non-Western countries is reduced to mere imitations of European nationalism, since the nationalist elites of these countries had chosen certain modular forms, which they regarded as suitable for their own position.⁶⁷⁰ However, as mentioned several times, non-Western nationalisms- in our case- the Chinese and Turkish nationalisms had a political burden, which was to be against the powers that attempted to exploit them by various methods. Mustafa Kemal led the Independence War, and Sun Yat-sen tried to create a consciousness of imperialism in the minds of the Chinese people for years.

⁶⁷⁰ For a criticism of the discourse, which reduces Third World nationalisms to modular forms of Western nationalisms, see P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, pp. 4-5.

Therefore, the thought of these two personalities as the leaders of two non-Western nationalisms cannot be explained simply by claiming that they are mere imitations of Western nationalisms, since their relationship to the West was a matter of conflict.

I would argue that the aim of all types of non-Western nationalisms, whether as complete imitations of Western culture and civilization or as a selective use of the same, is a claim for an autonomous voice for their nation within the discourse of modernity. Modernization for the non-Western nationalists meant participation in the global world system as autonomous subjectivities, not as colonial objects of modern Western empires. In that context, as Arif Dirlik, in his unique article on Sun Yat-sen and Atatürk states very correctly, these two respective leaders belong in the first generation of Third World modernizers⁶⁷¹, who challenged to Euro-American hegemony⁶⁷² through “their efforts to bring their respective nations into the contemporary world dominated by Western civilization, while securing for them the independence necessary for their participation in this world as autonomous subjects.”⁶⁷³ According to Arif Dirlik, the challenge that Sun and Atatürk posed against Euro-American hegemony is made possible in the “distinction they drew between modernism and Westernism.”⁶⁷⁴

As Arif Dirlik notes, the distinction drawn between modernism and Westernism is very much clear in Sun Yat-sen’s thought. As I analyzed in the preceding chapters, he not only criticized Western liberal democracy, and without denying democracy as a principle, proposed a new model of democracy for the Chinese people as necessitated by the different historical conditions, he also proposed a new model of economic development different from Western capitalism

⁶⁷¹ Arif Dirlik. “Third World Identification: Atatürk, Sun Yat-sen and the Problem of Modernity,” p. 3.

⁶⁷² *Ibid*, p. 4.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 20.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 4.

after he observed the social illness in European countries as early as 1905. His model also differed from socialism because of his denial of class struggle. Lastly, on the cultural level, he limited the superiority of Western culture to the material level and claimed the superiority of Eastern spiritual values. Thus, Sun was a modernizer, who sought for an autonomous domain for his nation within the new modern global context through a selective method. Therefore, modernity did not mean Westernism in Sun's method of catching up with the contemporary world in order to become equal partners.

However, I would disagree with Arif Dirlik that Mustafa Kemal's thought also separated modernity from Westernism. Although Arif Dirlik accepted that Mustafa Kemal regarded westernization as the only possible way for catching up with contemporary civilization, which was the Western civilization by quoting from Atatürk's speeches⁶⁷⁵, he claimed that "to portray Kemalism merely as a Westernism is misleading," since it ignored a very important component of his thought: Turkism⁶⁷⁶, which was an ideology that aimed at creating a Turkish nation that did not exist before the Republican revolution. Dirlik argues that the Kemalist task of converting a "nation that existed as mere geographic entity into a cultural entity" necessitated two repudiations: the repudiation of the Ottoman past and the repudiation of the Islamic past. As I explained in the previous chapters, Mustafa Kemal led an intellectual effort at history-making under the name 'Turkish History Thesis' in order to help the creation of a Turkish identity by granting the Turks a pre-Islamic history. Here Dirlik's argument is true if we take it as a historical fact: the Kemalist effort in the 1930s to create a pre-Islamic history for the newly-imagined Turkish nation. However, in the article the reason behind Dirlik's argument that only

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 20.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 22.

through the repudiation of these two pasts- Ottoman and Islamic-could a Turkish nation be created remains very ambiguous. On the other hand, I would argue that supplementation of Turkism with Westernism does not distinguish Westernism from modernity in Atatürk's thought, since Mustafa Kemal's Turkism was a cultural project that aimed to re-make the Turkish people in a Western manner. As explained, the legitimacy for this new secular and Western identity was provided by the History Thesis, which proposed that the Turkish nation was the mother of all civilizations and, thus, the mother of Western civilization, which was the only true civilization in the contemporary world. Therefore, westernization meant a return to the true path, and also to the essence of the Turkish nation. Kemalists thought it was the most logical thing to do.

The reason behind Sun's selective approach toward modernity and Kemal Atatürk's committed Westernism may be related to the pertaining historical conditions. As analyzed before, Mustafa Kemal's Westernism does not cover his whole lifetime. It is limited to the period when he consolidated his power in the domestic arena and secured Turkish sovereignty in the international arena. In 1930s, when Mustafa Kemal turned out to be a committed Westernist, Western countries had long ceased to pose immediate threats to Turkish sovereignty. Therefore, as the political burden of Mustafa Kemal to fight against the Western powers was relieved, the dilemma of the colonized countries to create a space for the native voice from the thought of the enemy had disappeared in the Turkish case. Atatürk did not feel himself obliged to deny the direct political implications of the thought of the Western states after the Independence War. That is why during the Independence War, since the Kemalists were fighting against Western states, Atatürk did not mention Westernism as the future program but instead emphasized Islam as the most

important signifier of the national identity. On the contrary, until the death of Sun Yat-sen, the political burden on the nationalists to relieve imperialist aggression and establish a sovereign unified state was not achieved.

Although I concluded that in Kemal's thought Westernism was equated with modernity I would argue that it does not exclude Kemalism from the category of Third World modernizers, who sought to modernize their countries through adoption of a selective method. Kemal Atatürk was determined to westernize his country, since Western civilization, being the only true civilization, was the only way that could make Turkey and Turkish nation powerful, progressive, and contemporary. This would not only enable Turkey to meet the challenges of the other powerful nations, but also make the Turkish nation an equal partner within the modern world context by granting it an autonomous voice. Kemal Atatürk's injunction "not to turn one's back upon the West while struggling against it"⁶⁷⁷ is thus worth noting as a concluding remark.

⁶⁷⁷ Quoted in *ibid*, p. 20.



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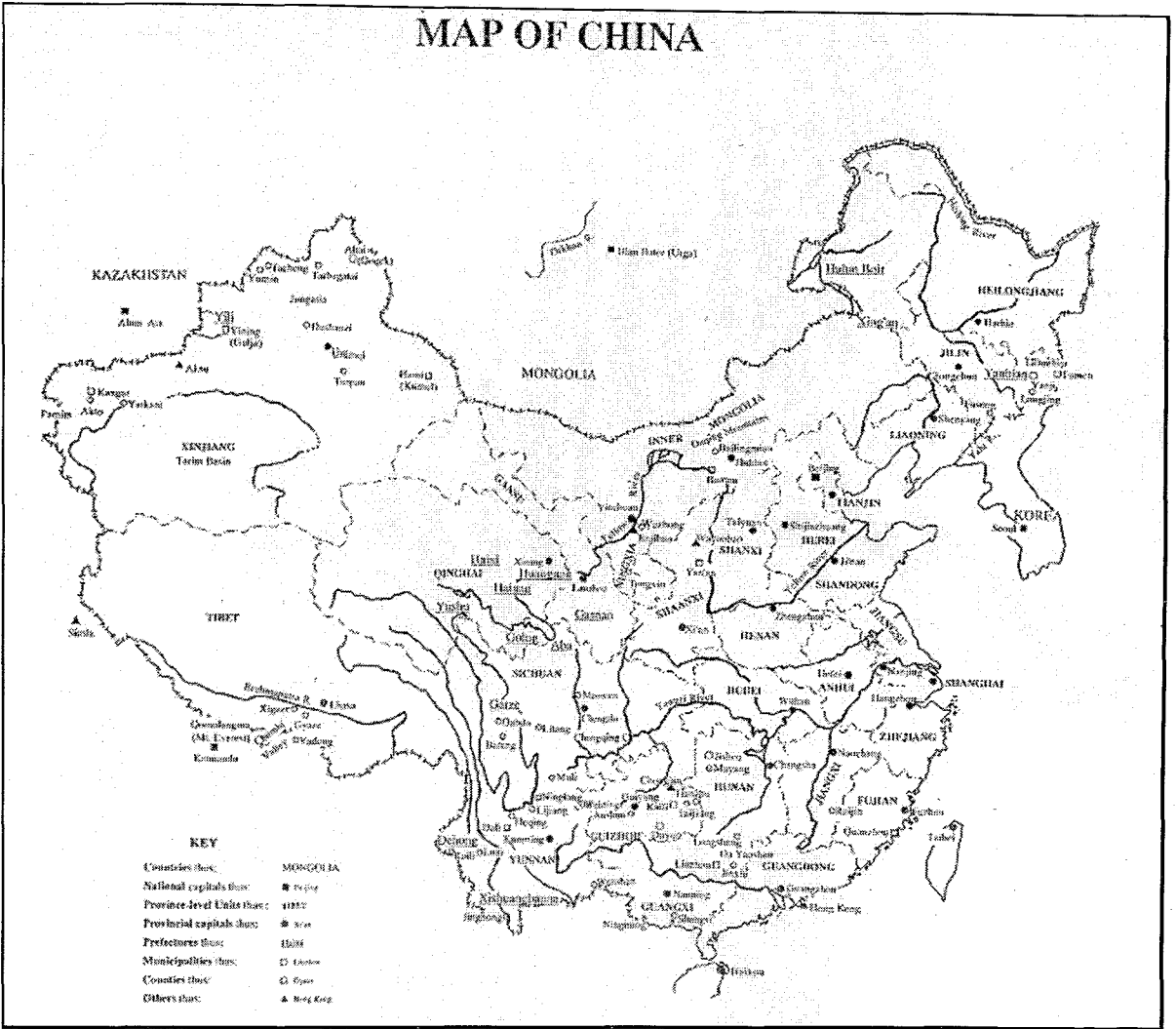
⁶⁷⁸ Sun Yat-sen in 1922. In Shanghai Museum of Sun Yat-sen's former residence.



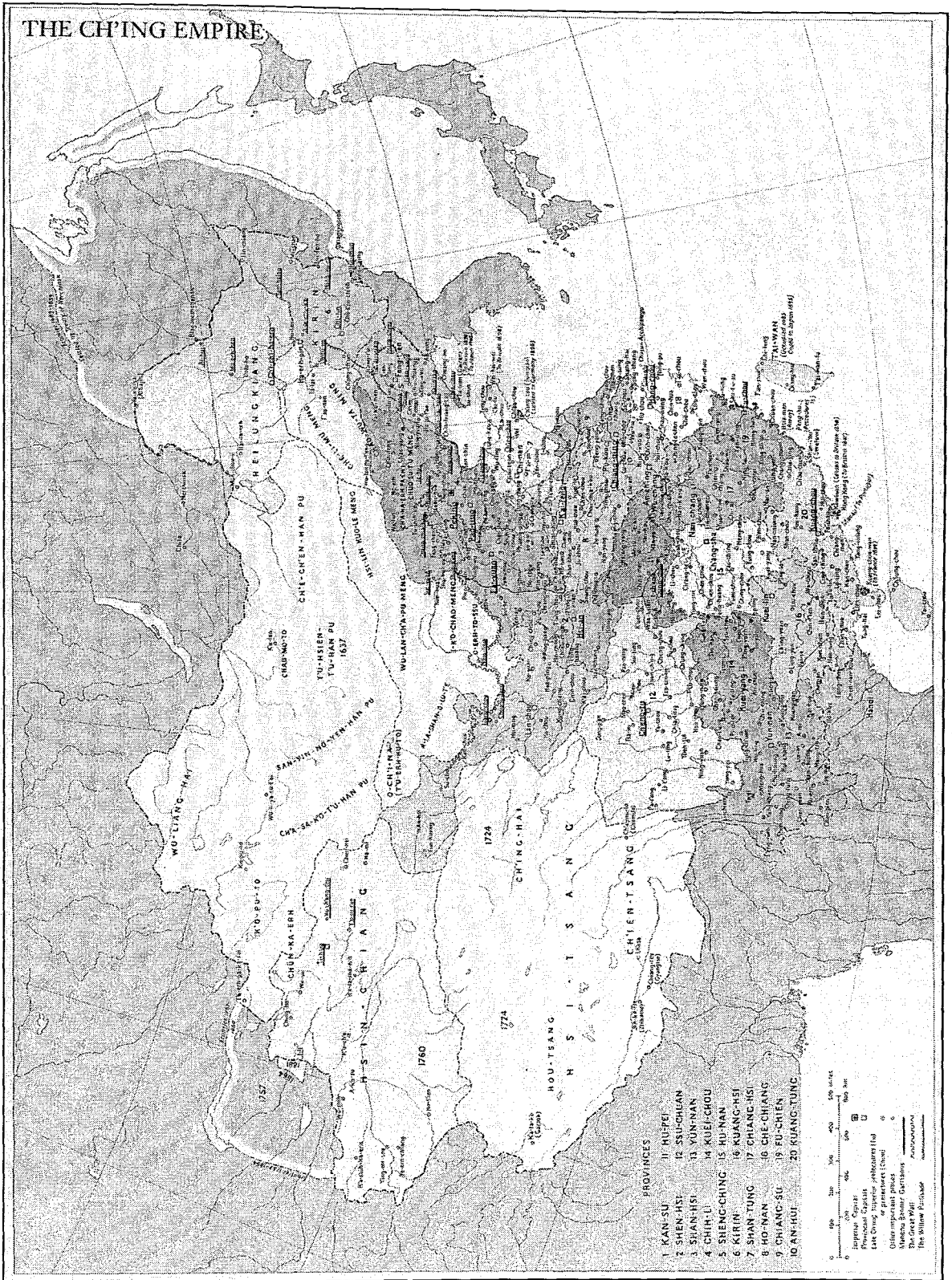
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⁶⁷⁹ Mustafa kemal Atatürk. Ülger, S.E. 1995. *Alman Basımında Atatürk ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti (1910-1944)*. Ankara: TBMM basımevi, p.173.

MAP OF CHINA



THE CH'ING EMPIRE

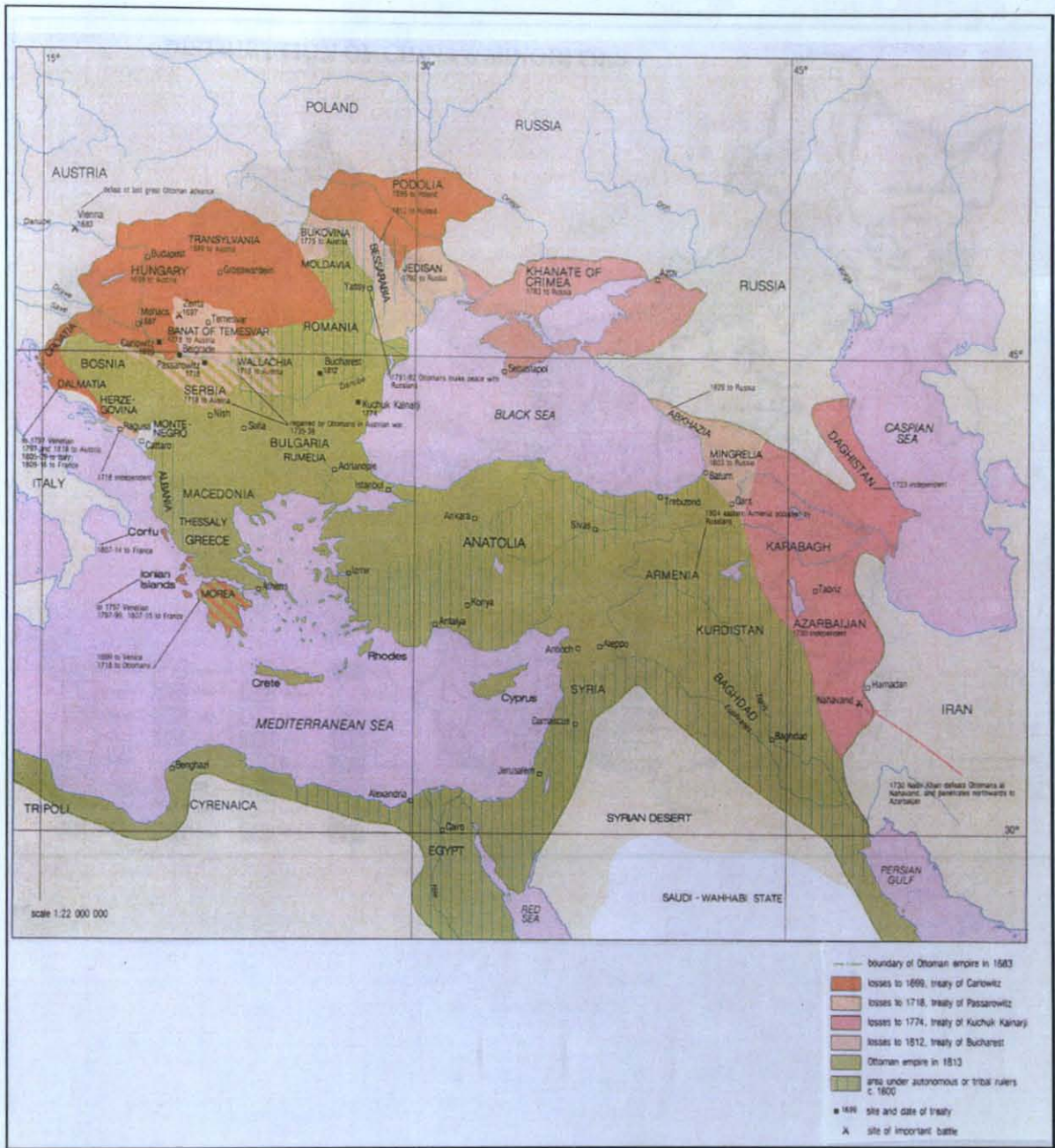


- PROVINCES
- 1 KAN-SU
 - 2 SHEN-HSI
 - 3 SHAN-HSI
 - 4 CHI-LI
 - 5 SHENG-CHING
 - 6 KIRIN
 - 7 SHAN-TUNG
 - 8 HO-NAN
 - 9 CHIANG-SU
 - 10 AN-HUI
 - 11 HU-PEI
 - 12 SHU-CHUAN
 - 13 YUN-NAN
 - 14 KWEI-CHOW
 - 15 HU-NAN
 - 16 KUANG-HSI
 - 17 CHIANG-HSI
 - 18 CHE-CHIANG
 - 19 FU-CHIEN
 - 20 KIANG-TUNG

Scale: 0 100 200 300 400 500 Miles

0 100 200 300 400 500 Kilometers

Imperial Capitals
 Peking (Ch'ing) Inspector of Recovery (I.R.)
 or prefectures (I.R.)
 Prefectures
 Municipalities
 Major Rivers, Districts
 The Great Wall
 The Yellow River

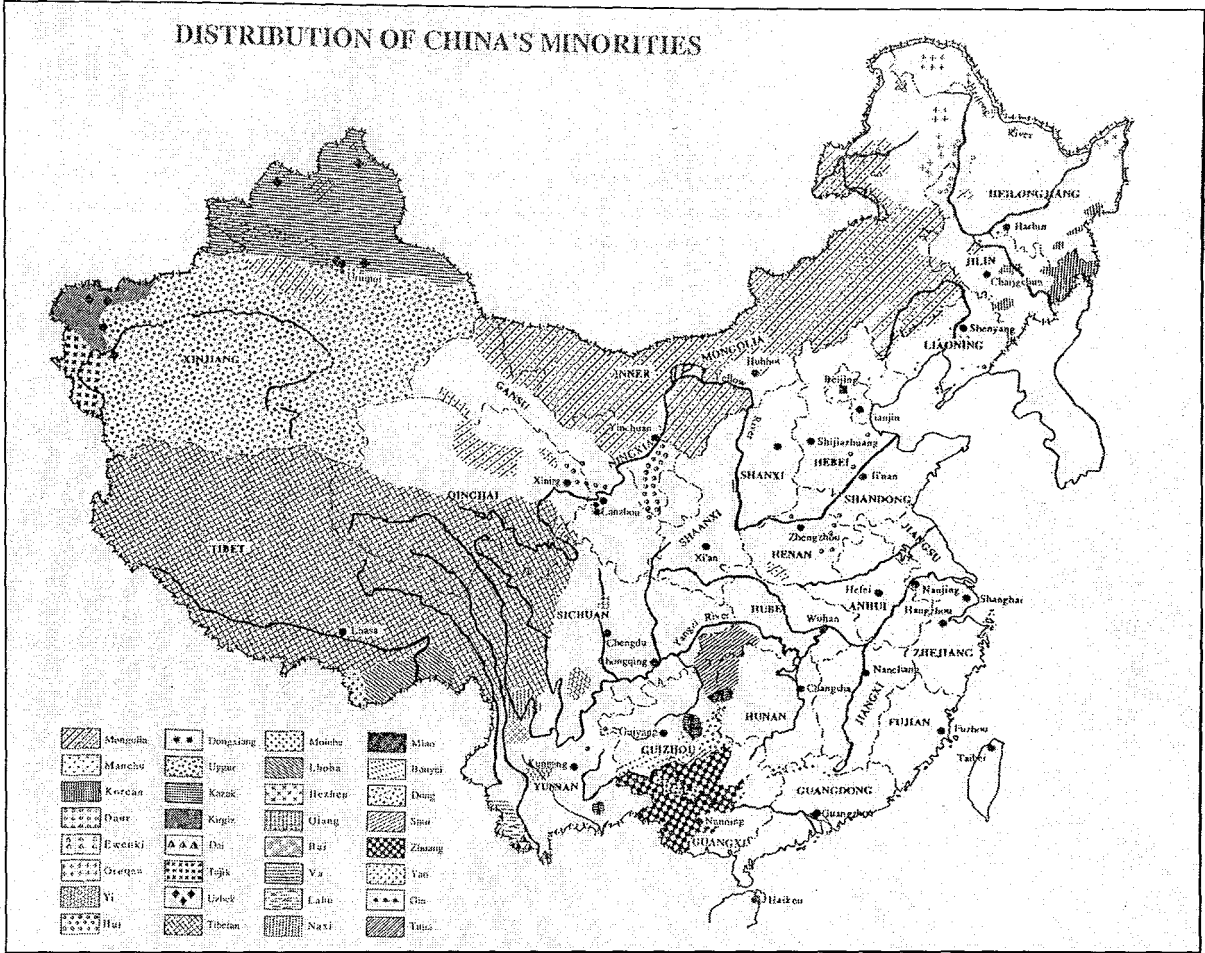


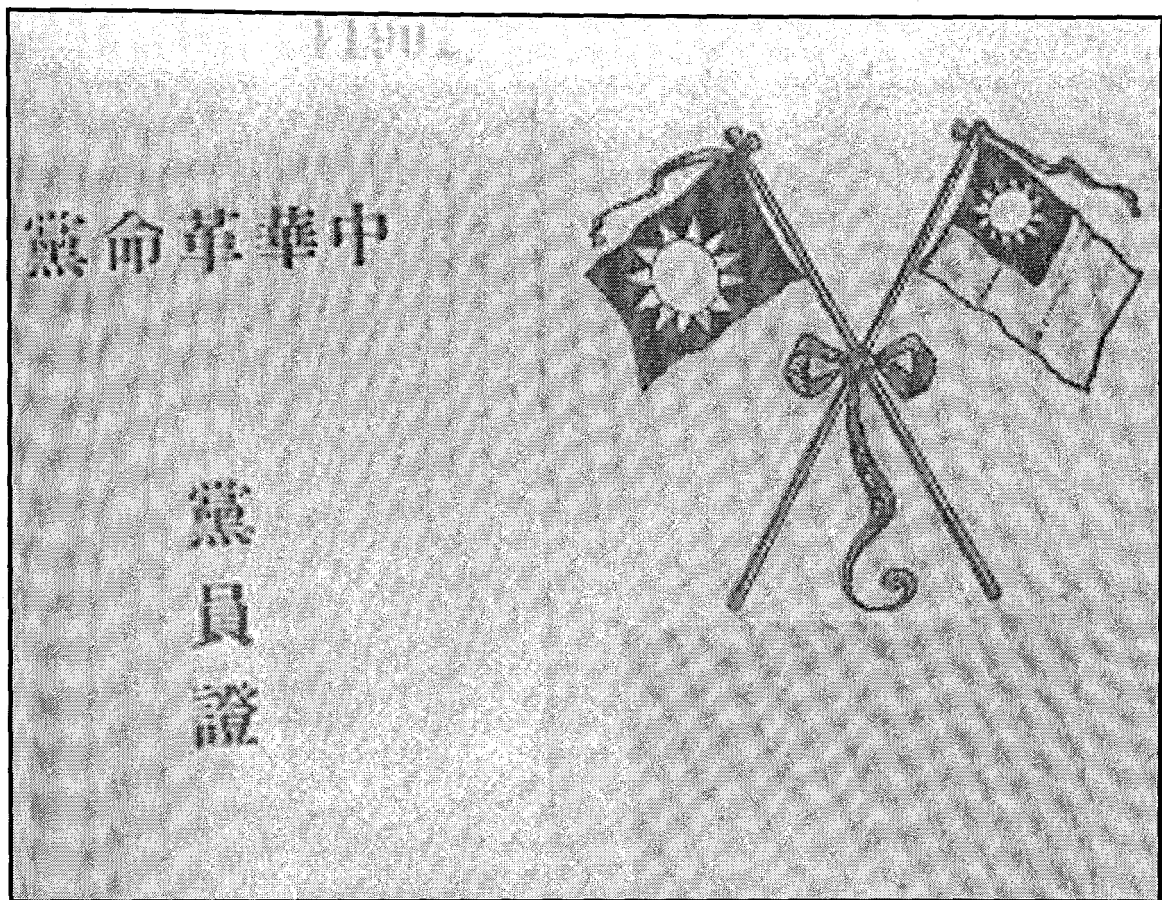
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*** The Great Atlas of Cyprus 1974. Constantinople: The New York Times Books.

DISTRIBUTION OF CHINA'S MINORITIES





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⁶⁸⁴ The flag at the left is the flag of the Guomindang. The flag at the right is the flag that is substituted for the Five Colored Republican flag by Sun Yat-sen in 1925. In Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, p. 261.

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