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# From the young Turks to Kemalists: Links and discontinuities

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The American University in Cairo
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy


# From the Young Turks to Kemalists:
# Links and Discontinuities


A Thesis Submitted to
The Middle East Studies Department


In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts


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Under the supervision of
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Readers
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# Introduction

## Abstract

While current scholarship often points to a direct link between the ideology of Young Turks and the Kemalists, a closer analysis indicates there are many breaks in this link. This thesis analyzes the main influences on the Young Turk movement and the emergence and rise to power of the Kemalist movement, highlighting points of difference in the two movements' ideologies and practices. Although the Young Turk movement influenced the Kemalist movement in the early years of the Turkish Republic, this thesis seeks to highlight the differences and discontinuities that existed between them. While many ideas from the Young Turk movement did carry over to the Kemalist movement, the extent and form of some of ideas differed.

Scholars acknowledge that the Young Turk movement included numerous factions, whose ideology and practices differed greatly. Noticeable divides existed within the Young Turk movement, particularly between the movement's leadership and its radical faction, the *garbcilar*. It is the ideology of the Young Turk leadership's inner circle, the Central Committee, which is often compared with that of the Kemalists. However, many of the notable individuals who went on to lead and contribute to the ideology of the Kemalist movement were actually associated with the *garbcilar* and did not play a role in the Central Committee. In support of this argument, I will point to how the *garbcilar*, rather than the CUP central leadership, provided much of the inspiration for the radical aspects of Kemalist ideology and policies that prevailed in the early twentieth century.

To be clear, this thesis does not seek to discredit or disprove current scholarship, but rather to present the relationship between the ideology of the Young Turk and Kemalist movements through a different lens. By tracing the ideological links of the Kemalists back to the Young Turk movement, this thesis will highlight the limits of ideological continuity. In doing so, it will contribute to the existing scholarly literature on Ottoman and early Turkish thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

## Chapter Outline

*Chapter One: The Late Ottoman Empire*

This thesis begins with a background on the late Ottoman Empire and the conditions that contributed to the growth of Ottoman opposition and identity formation in the late nineteenth century. Chapter One explores the factors that influenced the ideological currents of the Young Turk movement and the historical emergence of nationalist trends during the late Ottoman Empire. Chapter One then goes on to discuss the emergence of Ottoman opposition groups, particularly the development of the Young Turk movement, and the 1908 Young Turk Revolution.

*Chapter Two: The Young Turk Era*

Following the 1908 Revolution, the Young Turk movement faced many challenges. This chapter begins by detailing some of these challenges and explaining the larger impact they had on the direction and ideology of the movement. Additionally, this chapter dissects the Young Turk movement by discussing its membership base, leadership and organizational structure. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the trending currents of ideological thought within the Young Turk movement and the main factors that influenced these trends.

*Chapter Three: Kemalists*

Chapter Three begins with an explanation of the fall of the CUP leadership and the rise of the Kemalist leadership. This chapter details the rise of Turkish nationalist movement during the late years of the Ottoman Empire and how the Kemalists, led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, came to lead the Republic of Turkey. Additionally, this chapter outlines the demographic and ideological shifts that took place during the early years of the Turkish Republic and how the Kemalists enacted a series of rapid, ruthless reforms meant to capitalize on these changes.

*Chapter Four: In Comparison*

This thesis concludes with an analysis of additional examples of discontinuity in the ideology and practices of the Young Turk and Kemalist movements. This chapter includes comparisons on each movement's stance on the following topics: embracing Western civilization; violence and forced assimilation; national identity; education and language; and secularism. Examples in this chapter seek to highlight the commonalities between the ideology of the *garbcilar* and the Kemalists.

## Literature Review

There is no lack of scholarship on the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. The works of Erik Zürcher and M. Şükrü Hanioğlu alone provide ample information for a comparison between the Young Turk and Kemalist movements, as the two scholars have spent the much of their academic careers focusing on this topic. The works of other prominent scholars, such as Kemal Karpat, Selim Deringil, Uriel Heyd, Jacob Landau and Fatma Muge Göçek also provide unique insight on the changes and challenges of the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic. Göçek in particular does a wonderful job detailing the complicated interactions between the various ethnic and religious populations of the Ottoman Empire. Karpat's work on the ideological shifts and factors that influenced Ottoman intellectual circles is also essential to the analysis of Young Turk and Kemalist thought.

Prominent authors in the Ottoman-Turkish history field (such as Zürcher, Hanioğlu and Mardin) all discuss Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's place within the Young Turk movement and the influences of the Young Turk era on the Kemalist movement. This thesis does not seek to disprove these authors, but to reexamine where the Kemalists fit into the structure and ideology of the Young Turk movement by

approaching this subject from a different angle. By doing this, this thesis will more accurately trace the ideology of the Kemalists within the Young Turk movement.

Current scholarship, especially from the above-mentioned authors, sufficiently shows the ideological links between the Young Turk and Kemalist movements. However, while available research focuses on the continuity between the two movements, it does not draw enough attention to many aspects of early Kemalist ideology and practices that originated from the Young Turk movement's radical faction and differed from its core leadership. In drawing a line between the ideologies of each movement, this thesis will show that current scholarship often minimizes the precise origins of Kemalist ideas.

When discussing the Young Turk movement's ideology, practices, and evolution, most scholars acknowledge that the movement consists of various factions and groups, but still tend to refer to the Young Turks as one cohesive body. However, there were notable differences between the movement's central leadership, its radical factions, and its lower-ranking membership. While some authors differentiate between these groups and factions, this practice is not consistent across current scholarship. There is not consistent usage of terms like "Unionists", "Liberals," "Young Turks" and "CUP members." This evidences the difficulty in separating these terms and identifying the boundaries between them. Zürcher and Hanioğlu, however, do give adequate attention to differentiations in terminology and both authors lay out how they use different terms in their writings.

In addition to a review of secondary sources, this thesis reviews the writings of members of the Young Turk and Kemalist movements, such as Ziya Gökalp, Mustafa Kemal, Abdullah Cevdet, Yusuf Akçura, and Ahmed Rıza. While these sources are essential to a discussion on ideological currents during this time period, they often show bias and present inaccurate information. This is particularly true of Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk*, in which Kemal outlines a completely fictional narrative of the history of the Turkish Republic. These primary sources must therefore be carefully analyzed and biases must be noted. Despite such inaccuracies, these primary sources highlight the developments in the individuals' thoughts and ideas throughout their lives.

## Methodology

In addition to an extensive selection of secondary sources, this thesis focuses on an analysis of periodicals, journals (*İctihad, Türk Yurdu, Türk*), articles, speeches (*Nutuk*, Grand National Assembly, Turkish Republic anniversaries), and memoirs (Gökalp, Cevdet, Akçura, Kemal and others).

Many materials analyzed for this thesis came from the private libraries of Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University, and Koç University as well as the public libraries of İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı (Atatürk Library), Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı (National Library), Türk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish Historical Society), and TBMM Kütüphanesi (Library of Parliament).

Primary source material used for this thesis was primarily in modern Turkish or Ottoman Turkish. Because of the language barrier with some sources, this thesis

also draws on primary source material cited in selected secondary sources. Many sources had translations available in English; those sources not available in English I either translated myself or enlisted the assistance of colleagues.

*Scope*

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are arguably the most turbulent, conflicted, and complex in the entire history of Ottoman Empire. It is impossible for this thesis to cover all the factors that influenced the emergence and evolution of the Young Turk and Kemalist movements and their respective ideologies. However, this thesis seeks to highlight the major factors influencing these movements and points to outside sources where the reader can find additional information on selected topics.

# Chapter 1: The Late Ottoman Empire

The late nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire was a time of evolving ideas and practices, many of which focused on how to preserve the deeply troubled state. The Ottoman Empire faced economic, political and territorial challenges that many Ottoman officials believed could only be solved through a series of reforms.  The then ruling Hamidian regime took steps it believed would help the Empire catch up to Europe and ensure its longevity in the face of domestic threats. In doing so, the regime consolidated its power, which in turn led to many factors that fueled the emergence of opposition to the ruling regime.

## A Century of Change

### *Implementation of the Tanzimat*

In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman central government began implementing a series of reforms aimed at advancing the Empire's military, economy, and technology. The abolition of the Jannisaries in 1826 marked this new age of Ottoman reform led by Sultan Mahmud II called the Tanzimat. Ottoman military reforms in the eighteenth century, including the attempt by Selim III to create a modern army, had not produced the desired results of halting the Empire's decline, and Ottoman leadership realized the urgency of taking additional steps to preserve the state.[1]

In comparison to Western countries, Ottoman rulers believed the Empire was less advanced, particularly in these areas noted above. Ottoman rulers envied the perceived superiority of the West and sought to imitate its developments. The Ottomans also faced the domestic threat of increasingly autonomous minority communities who sought to break away from the Empire. In an attempt to close this gap with the West and secure the state, Ottoman Sultans—Mahmud II, Abdülmecid, Abdülaziz, and Abdulhamid II—implemented a series of reforms, which they believed would help repair the Empire.

Issued in 1839 by Mahmud II's successor Abdülmecid, the Gülhane Edict was one of the most important reforms of the Tanzimat era. The Edict promised security and

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[1] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 253-254.

equal rights to all the Empire's subjects, regardless of their religious beliefs.[2] In 1856, Abuülmecid expanded upon the rights granted by the Gülhane Edict with the Imperial Reform Edict.[3] The 1856 Edict received mixed reactions from Ottoman subjects and had a limited reach. As Karpat explains,

> The [1856] rescript declared equality in military service (which nobody liked), justice, schools (already Christian schools were far more advanced), abolished the head tax,  and  provided equality of employment in government, though the implementation of all these measures was very limited.[4]

Karpat adds that as an unintended consequence, granting 'equality' to Ottoman subjects increased the economic power of the Empire's non-Muslim groups and indirectly contributed to their respective nationalist struggles.[5]

The Tanzimat accelerated the centralization of the Empire that was already underway by bringing an end to the Empire's *millets*. On a domestic level, centralization policies aimed to counter the threat of community leaders and rebellious elements.[6] With the abolishment of the *millets*, the Ottoman state began handling the legal matters and taxation of the non-Muslim communities. This signaled the Ottoman central government's attempt to exercise more control over all its subjects.

Many of the policies enacted during the Tanzimat era pushed a state-molded idea of Ottoman citizenry to the Empire's subject. These included the adoption of an Ottoman national anthem, Ottoman national flag and, for the first time, an official definition of Ottoman citizenship. This official definition of citizenship, outlined in the Nationality Law of 1869, did not reference religion.[7] However, as Hanley notes, the development of this official definition of Ottoman affiliation focused primarily on acquisition and loss of nationality (rather than the rights and obligations that nationality conveyed).[8]

The Empire's modernization efforts prior to 1839 focused primarily on reforming the military, but the Tanzimat marked a change in the Empire's strategy. At this point the Ottoman leadership began incorporating new social, administrative, and legal policies throughout the Empire.[9] The Empire's bureaucratic elite, intelligentsia and *ulema* felt a new social base was necessary for the Empire's survival. Ottoman rulers also began to realize that they could not simply claim legitimacy and that they must redefine Ottoman citizenry. Through the enactment of Ottoman citizenry-related policies of the Tanzimat, the Ottoman state hoped to secure its grasp on the Empire's subjects. These policies exemplified efforts by the Ottoman state to mold its subjects into loyal citizens.

### *Emergence of Ottomanism*

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[2] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 778.
[3] "Edict of Reforms (Islâhat Fermani) (1856)."
[4] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 259.
[5] Ibid. p. 259.
[6] Ibid. p. 253-259.
[7] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 778.
[8] Hanley, "What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not." p. 277.
[9] Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System." p. 69-88.

With the implementation of the Tanzimat came the emergence of a state-endorsed identity, Ottomanism. The state's promotion of Ottomanism was an attempt to unite the Empire's many ethnic and religious groups, ensure allegiance from its subjects, and subdue any 'nationalist and separatist enthusiasms'.[10] Ottomanism centered on the creation of a shared identity for Ottoman citizens and its supporters believed it would turn the Empire's population into citizens of the state. The Tanzimat marked the Empire's first official shift towards the creation and promotion of a unified Ottoman identity. Part of this shift was the new use of the term 'Ottoman'. Prior to the Tanzimat era, 'Ottoman' described the Empire's ruling circle and elites. During the Tanzimat era, the Ottoman government began using the term 'Ottoman' to describe all the Empire's subjects in an attempt to eliminate the distinctions between the rulers and ruled.[11]

Under the banner of Ottomanism, the state allowed non-Muslim communities to maintain their individual languages, customs, and religions so long as they were loyal to the Empire. The state hoped to use Ottomanism to create a "separate but equal" environment that allowed the state to exercise more control of non-Muslim communities. [12] However, the state encountered barriers to creating this new environment.

Despite its attempt to create a cohesive identity among the Empire's inhabitants, the state's reforms led to amplified divisions along religious and ethnic lines. Ottomanism became a failed attempt by the state to create a common political identity that superseded faith, ethnicity and language. The dissolution of the *millet* system, in particular, led to a number of unintended consequences.[13] However, even though the government did not achieve its intended goal with Ottomanism the concept still had a deep impact on the formation of identities within the Empire. Instead of creating unity among the Empire's citizens, Ottomanism instead increased awareness of the religious, ethnic and linguistic divides in Ottoman society.

The government attempted to use Ottomanism to bypass the existing ethnic and religious loyalties of the Empire's non-Muslim groups. Karpat argues that this strategy did not produce the desired effects since it lacked an emotional appeal. Instead, it appealed to Muslim intellectuals who "seized upon Ottomanism as a nationalist ideology of their own and defined its content according to their own cultural-social background and interpretation of history."[14]

As the Empire's religious ratio continued to shift in favor of the Muslim population, the concept of a multinational Ottoman state based on shared citizenship no longer held the same value for the state. In line with this development, the Ottoman state shifted its focus to solidifying the unity of its dominant population as a strategy to ensure its survival. In line with this strategy, Abdülhamid II put heavy emphasis on

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[10] Fuad Pasha, one of the Empire's more notable elites at this time. Quoted in Davison, "Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth-Century." p. 852.
[11] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 140.
[12] Ibid. p. 140-141.
[13] Ceylan, "The *Millet* System in the Ottoman Empire." p. 259-261.
[14] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 261.

the Empire's Islamic qualities in an attempt to gather loyalty and support from Muslim subjects.[15]

## Dissolution of Millet System

In the pre-Tanzimat era, religious pluralism was a key characteristic of Ottoman society. Under the *millet* system, religious communities lived separately yet still interacted and cooperated with one another.[16]  Braude describes the *millets* "not as an institution or even a group of institutions, but rather a set of arrangements, largely local, with considerable variation over time."[17] These 'arrangements' between the Ottoman central government and non-Muslim communities allowed the *millets* to exercise a certain degree of autonomy and contributed to the continuation of individual languages, traditions, customs, and religious practices.[18]

The Empire's non-Muslim Ottoman subjects organized themselves into three distinct *millets*: Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Jews. Under this *millet* arrangement these communities lived alongside the Muslim communities and had recognition, but not equality. This differentiation allowed the non-Muslim communities to preserve their diversity and identities. [19] Ottoman policies of tolerance towards non-Muslim communities through the *millet* concept created an environment where a degree of coexistence was a practical and political possibility. This space of coexistence allowed the various religious and ethnic communities of the Empire to "recognize and adapt to the inevitability of difference."[20] In a conversation on this topic, Baer and Makdisi say the state's tolerant policies were a strategy the Ottomans employed to manage the Empire's religious and ethnic groups. As part of this strategy, the central government allowed non-Muslims a degree of autonomy but not full equality, thereby controlling the extent to which non-Muslim subjects could manifest their difference. The Ottoman state therefore tolerated these groups while simultaneously discriminating against them.[21]

The primary concern of Ottoman officials in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries was to maintain the status quo, that is, the superiority of Muslims over non-Muslims. While the *millet* system had once allowed the Ottoman state to ensure this status quo, the gradual rise in status of non-Muslim communities meant the state was losing its control over the Empire's social hierarchy. The Ottoman Muslims, who had long held the top positions, faced a new environment where non-Muslim

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[15] Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire." p. 12.

[16] The meaning of the term *millet* changed throughout the late centuries of the Ottoman Empire. In the pre-Tanzimat era, Ottomans used the term when referencing the legal systems of the Empire's non-Muslim communities. Over time, the term came to symbolize "nation." Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System." p. 65-86.

[17] He also argues that the *millets* were a myth, since there was no official administration of non-Muslims until the nineteenth century. Ibid. p. 83.

[18] Davison, "The Millets as Agents of Change in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire." p. 319-329.

[19] Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System." p. 69-70.

[20] Baer cautions against using the word coexistence to describe inter-relations as it suggests equality between groups. In the Empire certain groups were legally subordinated to others. Baer, Makdisi, and Shryock, "Tolerance and Conversion in the Ottoman Empire: A Conversation." p. 929.

[21] Ibid. p. 930.

communities dominated many sections of the Empire's economy such as trade, industry, and finance. [22]

Davison argues Ottoman non-Muslim *millets* played a decisive role in the introduction of Western-style reforms to Empire by acting as vehicles of change. In particular, Davison points to the non-Muslim *millets'* contact with European powers, their role in importing the printing press to the Empire, and the number of Western missionary schools established in their communities.[23] These factors helped the non-Muslim *millets* noticeably improve their levels of wealth and education, gaining a superior status to the Muslim majority. As these *millets* became increasingly independent, the Empire sought to redefine how its inhabitants interacted with each other. As a way to restrict the growing power and influence of the *millets,* the Ottoman government moved to dissolve the system by eliminating the distinctions between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.[24]

## Sectarian Violence

While the *millet* system organized the Empire's religious communities on the basis of inequality, these communities had a certain level of independence. For example, since each religious community conducted its own administration, each also had its own legal system. The abolishment of the *millet* concept also meant the abolishment of each religious community's legal system.[25]  The government's decision to bestow equality on the Empire's inhabitants was therefore not a welcome change. The Tanzimat reorganized the *millets* so it was no longer religion that determined one's place in the Ottoman hierarchy. This caused problems on both sides. The non-Muslim *millets* felt content with their previous social and economic status and now the Muslim millets became angered by their new, equal status with individuals over whom they had long had superiority. Among its unintended consequences, the disintegration of the *millet* system directly contributed to the rise of sectarian conflicts within the Empire.[26]

In the nineteenth century the Empire's economic and social environment shifted in favor of the non-Muslim communities. Karpat argues that centralization policies, more than any other measures initiated during the early nineteenth century, were instrumental in shifting the balance of Ottoman social, economic, and political relations. [27] This new environment prompted a shift in the interactions of Muslims and non-Muslims and in the view of the Ottoman state towards non-Muslim communities. While the Muslims once held a prestigious economic position in the Empire, they began to doubt their superiority over non-Muslims and believe the non-Muslims communities had certain advantages. Muslims began to feel threatened by not only the loss of the Empire, but also the loss of their superior status within the Empire.[28]

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[22] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 7.

[23] Davison, "The Millets as Agents of Change in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire." p. 319-337.

[24] Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876.* p. 388.

[25] Ceylan, "The Millet System in the Ottoman Empire." p. 259-263.

[26] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 130-134.

[27] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 251-256.

[28] Ibid. p. 245-246.

Exposure to Western and Russian trade in the late eighteenth century, along with territorial losses, led to the downfall of one of the Empire's biggest economic bases, the Black Sea.  This downward economic trend continued into the following century, pushing the Ottoman state to the brink of collapse. Karpat points out that the consequences of this deteriorating economic situation did not affect all subjects of the Empire at the same time or with the same intensity.[29] Under these economic conditions a new middle class arose consisting predominately of non-Muslims. The socio-economic advancement of non-Muslims forced Muslims out of their positions of superiority and prestige. As this non-Muslim middle class expanded, the Muslim middle class continued to shrink. This forced Muslim middle-class subjects into less important jobs and weakened their role in the Ottoman economy.[30]

Rising fears in the Muslim community stemming from this trend led to violent outbursts by Muslims against Christians and Jews during the nineteenth century in places such as Aleppo, Mosul, Nablus, Jeddah, Egypt, Lebanon and Baghdad. This sectarian violence signaled a larger communal rupture taking place in Ottoman society.[31] It also enhanced European perceptions of Muslim intolerance towards non-Muslims and led to deteriorating sectarian tensions.[32]

Muslims began associating Christians with the social, economic, and cultural changes taking place in the Empire. An increase in the economic status of the Christian community became apparent with the construction of new homes and churches. Muslim beliefs that the Christians were overtaking their role as the Empire's dominant group spurred feelings of anger and fear. Muslims saw advances in the Christian community as setbacks for their own community. Christians also shared their faith with European powers, which led to their frequent identification with the West in the minds of many Muslims. According to Masters, Christians also began to display a growing political assertiveness, which further contributed to Muslim fears that Christians were overtaking them in the social, political, and economic hierarchy of the Empire. Christian links to the West enhanced their political confidence as they received increased support from European officials and missionaries. Masters argues that it was this increase in political confidence, rather than the wealth or faith of the Christians, which led to a growth in social distance between the Empire's Muslim and Christian communities.[33]

## The Missionary Threat

During the Tanzimat period, Western powers increasingly intervened on behalf of the non-Muslim populations of the Empire. These interventions not only created difficulties in carrying out many of the Tanzimat era reforms but also had a lasting impression on many of Ottoman subjects, particularly those who were already disillusioned with the state of the Empire.

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[29] Ibid. p. 244-246.
[30] Ibid. p. 250.
[31] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 130.
[32] Ibid. p. 134.
[33] Ibid. p. 194.

Western intervention came in many forms, one of which was the widespread presence of missionaries in the Empire. Missionary work began in late 1820s and gradually became a systematic, large-scale activity throughout the nineteenth century. [34] Missionary activity gained momentum in the 1880s and 1890s and reached its peak during that time.[35] Missionary activities in the Empire concentrated mostly on non-Protestant Christian subjects, among them the Greeks and Armenians.[36] Through missionary activities Europeans had an indirect, unanticipated impact on the politicization of religious identities in the Ottoman Empire. Competition among the European powers for influence via missionary activities also impacted religious identities.[37]

As missionary activity gained momentum during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II the relationship between the Empire and the missionaries became one of "mutual suspicion and dislike." Abdülhamid II himself referred to missionaries in the Empire as "the most dangerous enemies to the social order."[38] As Deringil describes, the Ottoman state linked the threat of missionaries directly to the survival of the state:

> "None of the challenges to the legitimacy of the Ottoman state, and all it stood for, was more dangerous in the long term than that posed by missionary activity. The threat posed by the solider, the diplomat, the merchant, all had to do with the here and now; the missionaries through their schools, constituted a danger for the future."[39]

The Ottomans believed the missionaries undermined efforts to legitimize the basis of their rule.[40] Ottoman opposition to missionary activities focused particularly on the influence of missionary-run schools and the printing press. [41] However, the missionary problem was only one of many threats to Ottoman efforts legitimize their rule and safeguard the Empire. Missionaries had protections from colonial powers, introduced modern medicine, brought with them the printing press, and established a wide network of schools and churches. The missionaries' possession of scientific knowledge and Western technology also distinguished them from Ottoman subjects.[42] Missionaries portrayed themselves as representatives of modernity and superior culture. [43] In this way missionaries extended the reach of European cultural and political influences.

## *Ottoman Education and Intelligentsia*

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[34] Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries." p. 317.

[35] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 114.

[36] Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries." p. 319.

[37] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 152.

[38] Salt, "A Precarious Symbiosis: Ottoman Christians and the Foreign Missionaries in the Nineteenth Century." p. 56

[39] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 112.

[40] Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire." p. 12-13.

[41] Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries." p. 320.

[42] Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism and Evangelical Modernity." p. 680-682.

[43] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 132-134.

The influx of missionaries to the Ottoman Empire also stimulated the growth of religious and educational activities in many non-Muslim communities. The Ottomans understood that the only way to effectively compete with the high-quality education of the missionaries was to provide viable alternatives of equal quality. [44] However, foreign schools in many Ottoman provinces preceded the establishment of Ottoman schools and therefore set the standard for quality of education in the area. This belief that education could help the Empire overcome its missionary threat helped fuel the expansion of the Ottoman education system, which was already underway. The Ottoman education system sought to rival that of European missionaries, neighboring states, and non-Muslim minorities. This expansion of the Ottoman education became a defensive weapon against the emerging threats to the integrity of the Empire.[45]

In areas not heavily populated by missionaries, Ottomans worried about schools built by neighboring, nationalist-minded states and non-Muslim minorities.[46] A rise in the level of non-Muslims' education had not gone unnoticed by Muslims or the Ottoman central government. By the nineteenth century Ottoman authorities had come to believe non-Muslim minority-run schools were superior to state-run schools.[47] This accelerated the state's establishment and expansion of Ottoman schools.

Not only the quality but also the quantity of non-state schools state worried the Ottomans. European powers built more schools than the Ottoman government, and they built them faster. They also had more money to fund these schools.[48] Already by 1894 there were 4,547 minority-run schools and 413 foreign-run schools in the Ottoman Empire.[49] This had a dramatic impact on the number of Ottoman Muslims versus non-Muslims receiving their education in these schools, which led to a steady increase in the attendance of Ottoman minority students throughout the nineteenth century.

Improved and expanded education was a conscious, deliberate response to the threat that Ottoman territories faced. The central government believed the Empire was increasingly susceptible to instability tied to the presence of missionaries, activities of Ottoman minority groups, and the influence of outside powers. In its attempt to counter these perceived threats the state produced an entirely new version of education, one that fused Islamic values and Western methods. A shift towards this version of education occurred under the leadership of the Hamidian regime. During that time the state used a more selective approach of adapting Western models and institutions. An underlying Ottoman belief that the secret of the West's success could be adapted to Ottoman circumstances guided this shift. Fortna refers to this as an "Ottomanized version of Western-style education."[50] Instead of only adopting the Western methods as they were, the Ottoman state blended

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[44] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 133.
[45] Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire." p. 17.
[46] Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire.* p. 8-9, 45.
[47] Ibid. p. 44-45.
[48] Ibid. p. 54.
[49] Among the European countries building schools in the Empire France was the leader with 115 schools (in 1894). Göçek, "Ethnic Segmentation, Western Education and Political Outcomes: Nineteenth Century Ottoman Society." P. 524.
[50] Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire.* p. 9-10.

Western and Ottoman traditions to create an education system that fit its needs. Fortna argues that this style of education contributed to a shift in the way Ottomans perceived themselves, their place in the world, and their relationship with the state and its various communities. [51]

The expansion of the education system did not lead to the emergence of an Ottoman intelligentsia, but it did accelerate its development. The establishment of Western-styled schools was instrumental in the advancement of Ottoman intellectual thought. However, changes to the Ottoman social and economic landscape had wider reaching effects on the Ottoman mindset. As the Ottoman education system expanded and improved throughout the nineteenth century, the resulting changes mostly affected larger Ottoman towns and cities. However, the new class of intelligentsia that arose during the Hamidian period came from Ottoman provincial towns. Unlike the Young Ottoman intelligentsia before them, members of the Hamidian-era intelligentsia often belonged to the lower-ranking strata of the population as opposed to the middle and upper levels of Ottoman bureaucracy. According to Karpat, this indicates that the rise in Hamidian-era intelligentsia stemmed more from the increased social and economic status of provincial Ottoman towns. [52]

Ottoman intelligentsia not only expanded under the reign of Abdülhamid II, but also developed into a politically significant group. The establishment of professional schools helped create conditions that filtered the rising group of intelligentsia and contributed to their development into a group of political elites. New avenues of communication also helped accelerate the rise of Ottoman intelligentsia and played a decisive role in fostering ideological discussions. This began in the mid-nineteenth century with the introduction of the postal system, telegraph, railways, and modern press. The establishment of the press, in particular, had a drastic impact on the emergence, spread and development of ideas, as it allowed information to reach larger numbers of people in the Empire. [53]

## Defining 'Turk'

Ergul's review of Ottoman documents indicates that the term 'Turk' was well known among Ottoman subjects but that there was no clear definition for the term. There was therefore much ambiguity about who was a 'Turk'. [54] The majority of Ottomans did not self-identify as Turks despite recognizing the Turkish nature of the Ottoman ruling class and language. [55] However, non-Muslim community leaders did call the Ottoman bureaucracy "Turkish" and believed that the Ottoman state was already a Turkish state. [56]

Through the mid-nineteenth century the Empire's bureaucrats identified themselves as 'Ottomans' or 'Muslims', not 'Turks', a term which they used to differentiate between ethnic groups or as a derogatory reference to peasants or nomads in

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[51] Ibid. p. 19-20.
[52] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 275-279.
[53] Ibid. p. 261.
[54] Ergul, The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim or *Rum*? p. 634.
[55] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 774.
[56] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 249.

Anatolia.[57] The inhabitants of Anatolia, often referred to as 'Turkmen', were thought by most Ottomans to be 'boorish' and 'rough'. The term 'Turk' referenced these characteristics. This negative connotation of the term 'Turk' prevailed among the Ottoman elites and particularly in larger cities, such as Istanbul.[58] Lewis notes that, "To apply it to an Ottoman gentleman of Constantinopolis would have been an insult."[59]

In the span of one century the meaning of 'Turk' changed drastically. Makdisi summarizes this change below:

> …from the old regime meaning of an imperial elite that disparaged the common "Turk," to a secular Tanzimat legal citizenship and official discourse of patriotic *Osmanlilik* that included all Ottoman subjects, to a more ambiguous, more romantic, more exclusivist late Ottoman meaning that ennobled the "Turk.[60]

Kusher attributes this shift in meaning to a number of 'inspirational factors'. Firstly, the members of the ethnic-Turkish educated class had close contact with nationalism through education and personal contacts with other Turkic peoples from outside the Empire. They also had accessibility to an abundance of literature being published on the Turks, Turkish language, and Turkish history during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The emergence of Turcology studies and the expansion of available scholarly works on the field also contributed to a shift in terminology. Changing political and social circumstances in the Empire, coupled with these 'inspirational factors' helped formulate new opinions on what it meant to be a 'Turk'.[61]

The Western world's use of the term 'Turk' and its perceptions of the Ottoman state changed as well. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe there existed multiple, diverse, and inconsistent ideas of 'Turks' formed in part by travellers' experiences in the Ottoman Empire. By the eighteenth century these perceptions shifted to focus on scholarly writings of European authors who presented a coherent, consistent, and often negative view of the Turks.[62] Ergin notes that negative images of Turks and the Ottoman Empire became so entrenched over time that, "Westerners in the first half of the twentieth century who questioned these images upon closer contact with Turkey presented their change in opinion as a radical conversion."[63]

These negative perceptions of the Turks led in part to the Ottomans becoming increasingly preoccupied with their public image, particularly in the nineteenth century. This contributed to the rise of what Deringil describes as "Ottoman image management," which he says was one of many efforts to simultaneously defend and unite the Empire.[64] Ottoman uneasiness over the Empire's public image stemmed in

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[57] Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary ." p. 219.
[58] Ergul, "The Ottoman Identity: Turkish, Muslim or *Rum*? p. 634.
[59] Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey.* p. 1-2.
[60] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 792.
[61] Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary Turkey." p. 220-221.
[62] Cirakman, *From the 'Terror of the World' to the 'Sick Man of Europe': European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth.* Cited in Ergin, "'Is the Turk a White Man?' Towards a Theoretical Framework for Race in the Making of Turkishness." p. 826.
[63] Ergin, "'Is the Turk a White Man?' Towards a Theoretical Framework for Race in the Making of Turkishness." p. 836.
[64] Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire." p. 5-6.

part from concerns over missionary activity in the Empire. The Ottomans believed that the missionaries fueled anti-Ottoman sentiments in the Western press by using phrases like "Terrible Turk."[65] Negative references, such as "unspeakable Turk" or "sick man of the East," prompted Ottoman statesmen to actively project a positive image abroad. Ottomans saw this task as essential to the Empire's survival and legitimacy.[66]

## Emergence of Ottoman Opposition

### Hamidian Era

The gradual disintegration of the Ottoman state coincided with a rising need for a new solution Empire's challenges. Centralizing reforms, beginning with Selim III, began as an attempt by the Ottoman state to salvage itself and later as an attempt to control the Empire's subjects and status quo. Abdülhamid II maintained the dominant trends of the Tanzimat, particularly centralization, but also shifted towards a more "Islamic-styled official nationalism." A drive for Muslim unity was one of the distinctive characteristics of the Hamidian period. Abdülhamid II emphasized Muslim unity by capitalizing on pre-existing trends and pan-Islamic sentiments.[67] This shift began after the Empire's loss of the Balkan Christian provinces during the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877-1878.[68]

Under the leadership of Abdülhamid II a small circle of handpicked individuals exploited power. Political participation remained limited to close associates and supporters of the Sultan and his inner circle. In an attempt to further consolidate his power Abdülhamid II suspended the Ottoman constitution in 1878, which sought to place a check on his powers. He had approved the constitution in 1876, just two years before. Afterwards, some Ottomans intellectuals began expressing their opposition to Abdülhamid II and his policies. In response to the mounting criticism against him, Abdülhamid II resorted to violent measures to silence his opponents, often exiling, jailing, and even assassinating them. The regime also engaged in espionage practices as a way of monitoring and preventing opposition.[69]

The widespread corruption, oppression and absolutist rule of the Hamidian regime, along with the continued deterioration of economic, social, and military conditions in the Empire, directly contributed to the emergence of Ottoman opposition groups in the late nineteenth century. This began with the Young Ottoman group, which emerged in 1865 with the goal of saving the Empire from Western encroachment and internal decay by modernizing Ottoman state and society.[70] Though different in much of its structure and ideology, the Young Ottoman movement of the Tanzimat

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[65] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 2

[66] Ibid. p. 3,135.

[67] Duguid, "The Politics of Ottoman Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia." p. 139-140.

[68] Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire." p. 12.

[69] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926.* p. 112-113.

[70] For more information on the Young Ottoman movement see Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas.*

era laid much of the groundwork for the Young Turk opposition movement that later appeared.

## The Rise of Opposition

The important role Western-styled education played in the rise of Ottoman opposition sentiments should not be understated. The nineteenth century in particular saw an increase in the number of these schools in the Empire. Newly established schools modeled on ones in the West included: Mektub-i Mulkiye (Civil Service Academy/School of Administration); Mektub-i Harbiye (War Academy); Bahriye (Naval Academy); Mektub-i Tibbiyeyi Askeriye (Military Medical Academy); Mektub-i Baytariyet (Veterinary School); Mektub-i Bahriye (Naval Academy); and Topçu Muhendishane Mektub-i (Artillery and Engineering School). Many of these schools had teachers who received some degree of Western-style education and some were former supporters of the Young Ottoman movement.[71]

The first members of the Young Turk opposition movement were students attending the Empire's Military Medical Academy in Istanbul. These students founded a secret society in 1889, which they named the Society of Ottoman Union (Ittihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti). At the time this group only had a few members: Ibrahim Temo, Abdullah Cevdet, Ishak Sukuti and Cerkez Mehmet Resit.[72] The Society's initial goal centered on ending Hamidian rule and reinstating the 1876 Ottoman Constitution and Parliament. In the years following its emergence the Society slowly gained the support of more students, particularly those in the Empire's newly established schools and Western-style military academies. It then opened new branches throughout the Empire. The Society also established links with Ottoman citizens living in European countries, such as Ahmed Rıza, a prominent Ottoman intellectual who later became a leading member of the Young Turk movement in Paris.

As the organization continued to expand it drew increased attention from the Sultan, leading to the arrest and exile of some of its members by police and the escape of others to Europe. In the late 1890s the Young Turk movement gained strength in Europe, and particularly in Paris. During this time opposition within the Empire remained largely confined to secrecy and subject to oppression from the Sultan. The Young Turk movement continued to gain strength in the Empire, albeit underground. Two main factors aided this expansion: word of mouth and the circulation of illegally distributed journals and papers.[73]

A common belief that the Ottoman Empire was falling behind and struggling for survival guided the evolution of the Young Turk movement during the late nineteenth century.[74] During this time the Young Turk movement developed in two distinct ways: as an unstructured intellectual movement of opposition to Hamidian rule and as an umbrella group of individually organized groups and societies. In 1894 the

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[71]Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*. p. 12-13.
[72] Ibid. p. 13.
[73] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 113.
[74] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement*, 1905-1926. p. 71.

Society of Ottoman Union renamed itself as the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (Osmanlı Ittihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti), or the CUP. By the late 1800s the CUP had become an umbrella organization for the Empire's opponents of Hamidian regime. However, the membership of the CUP, while united by the common goal of ending Hamidian rule and reinstating the constitution, differed on other political and ideological topics.[75]

The CUP remained an umbrella organization through the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. A major part of the CUP's success in carrying out the 1908 Revolution was its ability to exist as a larger umbrella organization that acted on behalf of many smaller groups united by a single goal. However, following the Revolution there was no longer a single goal that unified the organizations under the CUP's umbrella. Many of the groups under the CUP felt they had achieved their goal and no longer saw a need to continue their activities under the CUP. Others believed that the CUP should exit the political scene and "leave the business of government to those who knew the job," since the majority of the CUP's members lacked experience in government positions.[76] Accordingly, these groups broke away from the umbrella of the CUP.

## The Young Turks

> Is it appropriate to call our committee the "Young Turk Committee"? Surely not…
> - Ahmed Rıza [77]

The term 'Young Turk' first surfaced in Europe as a way to describe the Ottomans opposed Abdülhamid II's policies and practices and who worked towards the restoration of the Ottoman Empire. The term reflected European beliefs that these individuals were young and predominately Turkish. However, this term was misleading since many of those involved in the Young Turk movement were not ethnic Turks. Ironically, among the founding members of the Young Turk movement mentioned above, none were ethnically Turkish. The movement's founders actually had roots in the Russian Caucasus, the Albanian areas in the Western Balkan region of the Ottoman Empire, and Kurdistan.[78] The term 'Young Turk' best describes the military officers that joined the movement in years leading up to the 1908 Revolution. These individuals were on average 29 years old and of ethnic Turkish descent, fitting the literal description of 'Young Turks'.

In the early years of the movement the CUP leadership consisted mostly of individuals who possessed post-secondary education. The Ottoman intellectuals of the Young Turk movement saw themselves as members of an elite group, despite the fact that no official organization of individuals existed. The majority of them received their education as medical doctors. Even though many of them trained in military institutions, none of them had actively served in the Ottoman army. [79]

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[75] Ergil, "A Reassessment: The Young Turks, Their Politics and Anti-Colonial Struggle." p. 27.
[76] Ahmad, "The Young Turk Revolution." p. 24.
[77] "Isim Mes'elesi," *Sura-yi Ummet* (May 1, 1904). No. 52.
[78] Bayar, *Formation of the Turkish Nation-State, 1920-1938.* p. 26.
[79] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 97-98.

Although some Young Turk members did not identify as ethnically Turkish, they still proceeded to use the term 'Turk' when identifying themselves. They used this term in a proud, elitist way, as within the Ottoman intellectual circles the term 'Turk' had shifted to indicate positive traits and exclusivity. In newspapers and reviews published in European countries members of the Young Turks often called themselves as 'Turks' as a reference to their political identity.[80] Zürcher also points out that the Young Turk leadership also used this term when describing themselves, particularly while living in Europe. [81]

Both Hanioğlu and Kayali highlight the challenges of understanding and using the term 'Young Turk':

> The vague and inaccurate use of the term *Young Turk*, especially in the writings of non-Turkish scholars, has created confusion, because many activities have been falsely attributed to the Young Turks. There were many independent groups working in the Ottoman Empire against the regime of Abdülhamid II and only some of these had dealings with the Young Turks.[82]

> An unfortunate misnomer, because it implies that the group of liberal constitutionalists called the Young Turks consisted exclusively of Turks, of even of Turkish nationalists. The Young Turks, in fact, included in their many ranks Arabs, Albanians, Jews, and in the early stages of the movement, Armenians and Greeks.[83]

Berkes, another prominent scholar on the Ottoman-Turkish transition era, refers to the 'Young Turks' as a mix of "persons, associations, and parties which actually used other and different names in Turkish, and which represented often opposite views."[84] In his own writings, Berkes uses the term 'Young Turks' to denote those individuals who opposed the Hamidian regime politically, though he points out that these individuals often had opposing ideologies despite their unity in Hamidian opposition.

## *A Young Turk Revolution*

In 1896 Abdülhamid II's secret police uncovered a coup d'état plan, which led to the exile of many of the Young Turk movement's earliest members. This resulted in the remaining Empire-based members of the movement taking their activities further underground. During this time, the Young Turk movement was far from united and was divided into numerous factions. Its members only had loose connection and communication with each other. However, in the years that followed these factions began to attract more attention from like-minded individuals who also aspired to save the crumbling Ottoman Empire. As membership began to increase, so did the communication and organization between the various factions located in the Empire and elsewhere.

In an effort to unify the various Ottoman opposition groups that had emerged in the late nineteenth century the First Congress of Ottoman Opposition convened in 1902.

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[80] Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908." p. 280.
[81] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 98.
[82] Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition.* p. 4.
[83] Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918.* p. 4.
[84] Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey.* p. 305.

However, no alliance came about after the First Congress. After the 1902 congress the Young Turk movement increased its membership, but also the divides among its membership. As Zürcher notes, these divisions "ran deep and were to play a part in the politics" between the 1908 revolution and the years leading up to WWI. [85] It was not until after the Second Congress of Ottoman Opposition in 1907 that the Young Turks joined forces with other opposition movements to create the CUP. Until this point the CUP was solely an intellectual movement, spreading their ideas by distributing pamphlets, newspapers, and journals and holding meetings. However, once the Europe-based CUP began to join forces with other opposition movements in the Empire it took on a new, revolutionary momentum.[86]

This marked a turning point in the pre-1908 Revolution phase of the Young Turk movement. After this, the integration of the Salonika-based Ottoman Freedom Society (Osmanli Hurriyet Cemiyeti) brought in many army officers from the Balkan provinces of the Empire. These members became an important component of the CUP's membership, as it was these officers who went on to carry out the revolution.[87]

Many members of the Young Turk movement still lived in Europe at the time of the Revolution. The army officers living in the Empire therefore played the key roles in the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. At the time of the Revolution the CUP had approximately 2,000 members, two-thirds of which were military officers.[88] These military officers carried out a carefully planned Revolution against Abdülhamid II that resulted in reinstating the Ottoman constitutions and the dismissal of many individuals from the Hamidian regime.

# Chapter 2: The Young Turk Era

## Post-Revolution Challenges

After the 1908 Revolution the Young Turk movement faced the challenge of rebranding itself from a revolutionary movement into a political party. Though many members attained high levels of education, the majority lacked experience in the Ottoman administration and had little idea about how to run a government. Among the movement's leaders, none had previously held a political position.  The movement also saw many groups under the CUP umbrella organization break away once the Revolution took place. This led to multiple shifts in the CUP's organizational structure, membership base, policies, and ideology.

The Young Turk members took credit for the planning and implementation of the 1908 Revolution, but most members remained relatively unknown within Ottoman society.  Following the 1908 revolution the CUP needed to gain legitimacy in the eyes of Ottoman citizens. Many of its members were young, unknown army officers

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[85] Ibid. p. 18.
[86] Ibid. p. 19-24.
[87] Hanioğlu, "Genesis of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908." p. 297-299.
[88] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 126.

and low-ranking civilian offers, which added to the challenge of the movement gaining recognition and legitimacy.[89]

In many ways the CUP was unprepared for the Ottoman landscape it encountered. During the years following the 1908 Revolution it carried out reforms in a haphazard manner and the movement lacked consensus on a coherent ideology, platform, or direction it should take. Before 1908 the CUP focused its efforts on the Revolution, not the aftermath. Its members gave comparatively little attention to the political problems that would need to be solved following the revolution.[90]

The Young Turks were not the only members of Ottoman society that supported reinstating the constitution and removing the Empire's leadership.[91] Other organizations emerged alongside the CUP, particularly during the years 1908-1911. Former opponents of the CUP led some of these groups while others emerged as reactionary groups with differing views. Among these groups were: the National Unionist Federation (Fedakâran-ı Millet Cemiyeti); the Ottoman Liberal Party (Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası); the Ottoman Democratic Party (Osmanlı Demokrat Fırkası); the Mohammadin Union (İttihad-ı Muhammedi Fırkası); the Ottoman Committee of Alliance (Heyet-i Müttefika-i Osmaniye); the Moderate Liberal Party (Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırkası); the Ottoman Fundamental Reform Party (İslahat-ı Esasiye-i Osmaniye Fırkası); the People's Party (Ahali Fırkası); the Ottoman Socialist Party (Osmanlı Sosyalist Fırkası); and the Association of Mohammedan Union (İttihad-ı Muhammedi Cemiyeti).[92] Many of the parties and groups that opposed the CUP united in 1911 to establish the Party of Freedom and Accord (Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası), also known as the Liberal Union or Liberal Entente. The party, whose members were unified by their common opposition to the CUP, remained politically active for only two years, during which time it was the main challenger to the CUP.[93]

## Organization and Structure

The CUP was not monolithic; it was a conglomerate of groups and factions with different backgrounds, loyalties and leaders.[94] However, as Hanioğlu aptly points out,

> The term *faction* is insufficient to describe the component groups of the CUP, because they functioned almost as independent groups and some eventually adopted independent courses, even severing ties with the center.[95]

Underneath the formal structure of the CUP there was a system of sub-groups informal networks. While the CUP's Central Committee held the decision-making

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[89] Ahmad, "The Young Turk Revolution." p. 24.

[90] Ergil, "A Reassessment: The Young Turks, Their Politics and Anti-Colonial Struggle." p. 36.

[91] Hanioğlu points out in his research that at various points there were also multiple organizations that called themselves the CUP but had no affiliation with the CUP. Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition.* p. 67-68.

[92] Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler.* p.36-45.

[93] Ibid. p. 63-70.

[94] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926.* p. 49.

[95] Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition.* p. 213.

power, these factions did not always agree with or follow the decisions of the inner circle.[96]

## Membership Base

Members of the Young Turk movement were predominantly male, young, urban, and literate. The movement's leadership and base membership consisted mostly of Muslims and ethnic Turks, but also included individuals with other ethnic (Arab, Albanian, Kurdish) and religious (some Jews, few Christians) backgrounds.[97] Most members of the Young Turk movement came from Macedonia or Constantinople (Istanbul), while others had roots in the Empire's Balkan provinces.

Education and profession were the two defining characteristics of Young Turk membership. Members overwhelmingly received their education and training in one of the Empire's new, Western-styled schools established by the Ottoman Sultans. The majority of the movement's leadership knew a foreign language, often French. These French-language skills aided the Young Turk leadership in their studies of Western social and political thought put forth by European intellectuals, particularly Gustave Le Bon.[98]

The Young Turks' membership also consisted mostly of state employees or descendants of Ottoman state employees. Among them were teachers in the newly established schools, lawyers trained in Western law, junior military officers trained in the Empire's Western-styled war colleges, journalists, doctors and civil servants. The CUP had a wide following in the Army and many of its members had military backgrounds.[99]

## CUP Central Committee

The leadership of the Young Turk movement is well documented amongst the work of Turkish and Ottoman scholars. Both the civilian and military leadership that emerged in the post-Young Turk Revolution environment came predominantly (48%) from the Balkan region of the Empire with the next highest percentage coming from the capital city of Istanbul (26%).[100] The background of the CUP's leadership played an increasingly important role in the evolution of the movement's ideology. Coming from the Balkan regions of the Empire, many of the movement's leaders and key figures witnessed firsthand the expanding gap between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

After the Revolution the character of the Young Turk movement changed. Despite the fact that the military officers carried out the Revolution, it was the civilians of the CUP that dominated the Young Turk movement's leadership. However, Talat Pasha and Enver Pasha, two of the military officers who carried out the 1908 Revolution,

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[96] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926.* p. 47.
[97] Zürcher, "The Young Turks: Children of the Borderlands?" p. 3.
[98] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926.* p. 131, 238.
[99] Zürcher, "The Young Turks: Children of the Borderlands*?"* p. 3-4.
[100] Ibid. p. 5-6.

played increasingly dominant roles in the CUP. As they rose to prominence within the movement, they pushed aside some of the movement's founding members, such as Ahmed Rıza and Abdullah Cevdet, taking away any "real power" that remained with them.[101]

Despite becoming a political party in 1909 the CUP remained a mostly secret organization whose actions were dictated by its Salonika-based Central Committee (*Merkez-i Umumi*). Throughout the movement's existence its true power remained with the CUP's Central Committee, which consisted of anywhere from three to twelve members and was headed by a General Secretary (*Katib-i Umumi*) who made the most important decisions. The members of this Central Committee were overwhelmingly from the Balkan region of the Empire. [102]

Since the Central Committee worked behind the scenes, a General Assembly that consisted of approximately twenty members enacted the organization's policies. The CUP also set up a network of provincial centers run by party bosses, which they referred to in writings as 'responsible secretaries', 'delegates', and 'inspectors'.[103] The leadership of the CUP was therefore a very small handful of individuals. The majority of members in the greater Young Turk movement were not involved in the CUP's decision making and policy making or implementation. A divide existed not only among the members of the Central Committee, but also within the movement's broader membership. These divisions highlight the need for current scholarship to point to specific factions or individuals within the movement when referencing its influence on the Kemalist movement.

## Young Turk Ideology

> *"The mass basis of the Society [CUP] was amorphous and evolving; this was reflected in the shapelessness of its ideology."*[104]

The ideological divisions within the Young Turk movement are most apparent in a comparison of the ideas of some its notable intellectuals. They include Ziya Gökalp, Abdullah Cevdet, Celal Nuri, and Yusuf Akçura. These individuals were among the Ottoman intellectuals who made the most profound contributions to late nineteenth and early twentieth century ideological discussions. A number of factors, some of which are detailed below, influenced these individuals' beliefs and helped shaped the Ottoman intellectual scene during its final centuries.

### *Outside Turks*

Throughout the nineteenth century there was a noticeable increase in domestic and cross-border communications between Turkish-speaking people. Familiarity with Turks from outside the Ottoman Empire expanded as Turkish-speaking immigrants, many from Russia, came to the Empire. Among the Young Turk movement's earliest leaders, many individuals hailed from the Caucasus, Russian Empire or Russian

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[101] Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*. p. 103-105.
[102] Ibid. p. 103.
[103] Ibid. p. 104.
[104] Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. p. 329.

Transcaucasia provinces. Immigrants from these areas who became active in the Young Turk movement made important intellectual contributions and helped influence the movement's ideology.[105] This was particularly true regarding the CUP's stance on pan-Turkism.

Pan-Turkism (often used interchangeably with "Turanism" and "Turkism") originated among the Tatar peoples in the early nineteenth century and first came to the Ottoman Empire via Russia emigrants. Supporters of pan-Turkism advocated for the cultural and political unification of all Turkic peoples and emphasized their common historical roots. Because pan-Turkism focused on the unification of Turkic peoples also living outside the Empire, some intellectuals believed it was an unrealistic strategy.[106]

Yusuf Akçura, an ethnic Turk from Kazan, was an ardent supporter of pan-Turkism. Akçura campaigned strongly for pan-Turkism, calling for a unification of all Turkic people in Asia Minor, the Caucasus and Central Asia.[107] He reiterated this call in his famous 1904 article "Uç Tarzi-Siyaset" ("Three Ways of Policy") and throughout his journal *Türk Yurdu* (Journal of the Turkish Homeland), which he founded in 1911.[108] Some leaders of the Young Turk movement dismissed Akçura's writings, particularly his 1904 article, as extremist because he called for an identity based on race (*ırk)*. At this time Ottomanism still remained popular with some members of the intelligentsia and promoting an identity based on race would have excluded non-Turkish elements of the population.

Akçura's ideas gained some traction within the movement, but mostly clashed with members of the CUP Central Committee and especially with Ziya Gökalp, who believed in an identity based on a shared culture instead of race. Even though Akçura and Gökalp disagreed on aspects of collective identity, Gökalp's personal ideology was still very much influenced by Akçura and other ethnic Turks from Russia, such as Hüzeyinzade Ali and Ahmet Agaoğlu. Their support for pan-Turkish ideas helped shaped parts of Gökalp's ideas on Turkish identity.

The CUP had close ties to a number of Turkic associations that promoted pan-Turkic ideas throughout the Empire. These associations functioned as a way for intellectuals to put their ideas into action. Among the intellectuals who helped establish these organizations were Turkic immigrants from Eastern countries and proponents of pan-Turkism. Akçura, along with other CUP members, established one of the first associations called *Türk Derneği* (Association of Turks) in 1911. The establishment of *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Hearth) followed shortly after. By 1914 *Türk Ocağı* had sixteen hearths and more than 3,000 members. By 1920, its membership totaled over 30,000.[109] Alongside these association emerged a number of journals (many of the same name), such as *Türk Derneği, Türk Yurdu,* and *Genç Kalemlar.*[110] Turkish-speaking emigrants from Russia, such as Yusuf Akçura and Hüzeyinzade

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[105] Eissenstat, "Turkic Immigrants/Turkish Nationalism: Opportunities and Limitations of a Nationalism in Exile." p. 28-30.
[106] Ibid. p. 25.
[107] Akçura, Üç Tarzı Siyaset." 23-34.
[108] Akçura and Fehmi, "Yusuf Akçura's Uç Tarz-I Siyaset ("Three Kinds of Policy"). p. 1-4.
[109] Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation.* p. 42.
[110] Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923.* p. 90.

Ali, set up many of these journals and some of the main contributors were of Central Asian origin. In the journals, Akçura, Gökalp, and other Ottoman intellectuals promoted pan-Turkism and the collective awareness of the Turkish people.

These associations and journals were spaces where proponents of mainly pan-Turkish ideas met for discussions and shared their thoughts. The work of these associations focused on encouraging the Turkish people to take pride in their culture, heritage, history and language. By the mid 1910's pan-Turkism came to be one of the most dominant ideologies amongst Ottoman intellectuals. For many intellectuals though, pan-Turkism complimented, not rivaled, Ottomanism. Pan-Turkish ideas were confined within the overarching identity of Ottomanism and the desire to rescue the Empire from collapse. However, a distinct shift towards a pan-Turkish identity and away from a unified Ottoman identity picked up speed after the Balkan Wars as the Empire's population dramatically shifted in favor of the Turks.[111]

## Japan as a Model

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many Young Turks paid close attention to the unfolding events in Japan and Russia. This reinforced their criticism of European imperialism and aspirations for the Empire to catch up to Europe. Particularly in the years leading up to the 1908 Revolution, Young Turk publications often referenced developments in Japan, the tactics used by the Japanese to carry out the Meiji Restoration, and how these tactics could be applied to the Ottoman Empire's own struggle.[112] Abdullah Cevdet once referred to Japan's ability to rival Europe by saying: "The West slapped Japan only once; it awakened. We have been slapped a thousand times; if we are still not awake, is it the West's fault?"[113]

In the eyes of Cevdet and other Young Turk members, Japan was a model of how the Ottoman Empire could not only survive, but also become a modern nation respected by Europe. Both Japan and the Ottoman Empire "sought to westernize despite Western imperialism at the same time as they both saw themselves as once part of Asia but no longer of Asia."[114] The Young Turks' admiration for Japan increased in 1902 when Japan signed an alliance with the British, symbolizing to the Young Turks that the Asian country was considered an equal power. Japan became the Young Turks' non-Western model of modernization. Beginning in 1908 some members of the Young Turk movement, including Ahmed Rıza and Nazim Bey, started using the term "Japan of the Near East" when describing the Empire. This term referenced their desire for the Empire to become an "independent, militarily strong, and economically viable Ottoman polity governed by an elite determined to realize their Unionist ideology."[115]

## 'The West', Westernization and Western Influences

[111] Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation.* p. 39-44.

[112] These publications included *Malumat*, *Sura-yi Ummet*, *Mechveret*, *Balkan*, and *Yeni Gazete*. Worringer, ""Sick Man of Europe" or "Japan of the Near East"?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras." p. 207-208, 214, 220.

[113] Cevdet, "Sime-I Muhabbet." *Ictihad*, (1913). No. 89. Referenced in Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey.* p. 357-358.

[114] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 787-788.

[115] Worringer, ""Sick Man of Europe" or "Japan of the Near East"?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras." p. 213.

Frequently referred to by European powers as the "Sick Man of Europe," the Ottoman Empire struggled for respect and recognition.[116] The Empire continued to face financial decline and territorial losses, which contributed to European beliefs that it was incapable of handling its own domestic affairs and increasingly susceptible to outside influences. European encroachment was not unfamiliar to the Ottomans. Since Europeans had traded in the Middle East since the Middle Ages, there was no "dramatic entrance or accompanying culture shock," instead there was a gradual increase in European influences that shifted the Ottoman-European relationship.[117] This progressive European encroachment prompted a shift in Ottoman politics. Instead of focusing on managing inter-relations and ensuring the loyalty of the Empire's subjects, the state increasingly focused on "civilizing subjects on the world stage of modernity."[118]

Makdisi says Ottoman orientalism was a defining characteristic of nineteenth century Ottoman history. He argues that Ottoman orientalism was not an unintended consequence of Western influences but instead a defining trait of Ottoman modernity. In his writings, he defines 'Ottoman orientalism' as,

> "..a complex of Ottoman attitudes produced by a nineteenth century age of Ottoman reform that implicitly and explicitly acknowledged the West to be the home of progress and the East, writ large, to be a *present* theater of backwardness."[119]

Ottomans recognized and responded to the influence of Western powers through a mix of embrace and resistance. Ottoman modernization was both a quest for power and an expression of resistance against Western imperialism.[120] Ottoman reform was part engagement with European influences and part reaction to perceived European superiority.[121]

The Young Turks saw an Ottoman Empire that became increasingly penetrated by and dependent on European powers as Western countries increased their economic and political influence in the Ottoman Empire. Capitulations had given foreign residents in the Ottoman Empire exemption from Ottoman taxes, reduced customs duties, and other privileges.[122] The capitulatory system allowed those receiving these rights to fall under the protection of the countries that granted them, thereby creating a protégé system that undermined Ottoman rule. To many Ottoman intellectuals the European capitulations symbolized Ottoman inferiority to Europe and signaled a broader decline in the Empire's power and influence.[123] They also believed that the capitulations were a violation of Ottoman sovereignty and a barrier to the Empire's progress.

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[116] Tsar Nicholas I of Russia first used this term in the nineteenth century to describe the Ottoman Empire.
[117] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 190.
[118] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 780.
[119] Ibid. p. 769.
[120] Ibid. p. 772.
[121] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909.* p. 1-3.
[122] Kaya, "Western Interventions and Formation of the Young Turks' Siege Mentality." p. 128-129.
[123] Ahmad, "Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations, 1800-1914." p. 6.

A belief that the Ottoman Empire was falling behind and struggling for survival directly influenced the evolution of Young Turk ideology during the late nineteenth century. Some Ottoman reformers felt compelled to counter 'European misrepresentations' of the Islamic East.[124] Ottoman elites also took note of Western military and technological advances, leading them to compare the Empire to European countries. Europe became the standard for measuring the progress of Westernizing reforms. Writings in Young Turk publications, such as *Tanin*, promoted the idea that once Westernization reforms were in place, the West would respect the Empire as an equal power, stop interfering in the Empire's domestic affairs, and cease capitulations.[125]

Intellectual borrowing from Europe contributed to the emergence of ideas and discussions of a reimagined Ottoman society. A mental transformation took place as Ottoman intellectuals faced increasing exposure to western life, culture, and thinking while living in Europe. Westernization became synonymous with modernization and advancement, and many believed it was the only path to overcoming European imperialism and countering the Empire's domestic threats. Members of the Young Turk movement also believed interactions with the West had a significant impact on Ottoman thought. One Young Turk leader, Sabahaddin Bey, commented on this impact by saying, "Since we established relations with western civilization, an intellectual renaissance has occurred; prior to this relationship our society lacked any intellectual life."[126]

While the Young Turks held Western intellectual thought in high regard, they criticized the interventionist policies of the West. Eliminating Western economic penetration and political intervention in the Empire became a driving force behind the development of Young Turk ideology. As areas of the Empire, primarily the Balkans, saw more European intervention in economic affairs, it was the Christians and foreigners under European protections that became the main beneficiaries. By the end of the nineteenth century the wealth, education, and prosperity gap between them and the Muslims had grown considerably larger. [127] The members of the Young Turk movement in the Balkans were increasingly conscious of this divide. The advancements of the Christian and foreign residents of the Empire also provided the Young Turks with examples of modernity to which the Young Turks aspired to achieve. This influenced the Young Turks' ideas of modernity and their interpretation of modernity as being synonymous with European ways of life.

The image of Europe and Western societies had a strong and varied impact on Ottoman thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many Young Turks received their education in Western-style institutions and lived in European countries for at least a short period of time. They valued Western civilization while still opposing Western imperialism; to them the West was both a model and a threat

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[124] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism." p. 769.

[125] 'The West' and the 'Great Powers' became synonymous with countries in Europe who had more advanced militaries, economies and technologies, particularly Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Austria-Hungary.

[126] Mehmed Sabahaddin, "Genclerimize Mektublar: Intibah-i Fikrimiz," *Terraki*, No. 1 (1906). p. 2. Referenced in Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition.* p. 17.

[127] Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism.* p. 6, 17, 118, 143.

to the Empire's existence. Ottoman intellectuals' perceptions of the West—its power, culture, and developments—shaped their ideas on how to reform the Empire.

## *Civilization*

For Ottoman intellectuals the concepts of 'modernity', 'civilization' and 'Westernization' were intertwined. This was increasingly apparent in the nineteenth century when discussions on Westernizing reforms were on the rise. While the term 'modernization' once referred to the goal of overthrowing the Sultan and reinstating the constitution, its definition later shifted to indicate the implementation of Westernizing reforms. Modernity became an overarching goal, which was to be achieved through the adoption of one, or a mix, of the three prevailing ideologies of the time: Ottomanism, pan-Islamism or pan-Turkism.[128]

The concept of 'civilization' also witnessed considerable transformation beginning in the eighteenth century. Ottoman intellectuals in the nineteenth century began to use the term *medeniyet* to reference the emerging concept of civilization. This term was influenced by ideas of enlightenment, known as *akilcilik* (rationalism), and symbolized the compatibility of science and technology with faith. Nineteenth century Ottoman intellectuals used *medeniyet* to signify refinement, grace, order, respect for set rules, and a higher form of living.[129]

As Ottoman thought continued to evolve and the concept of civilization gained popularity among Ottoman elites the concept fused with *muasirlasmak* ("to reach the level of contemporary civilization"). By the end of the nineteenth century all Ottoman elites, regardless of their affiliation as "modernists," "Islamists," or "nationalists," were in agreement that the Empire must attain the status of being a civilized society. However, there was no consensus on the degree of civilization the Empire should adopt.[130]

Two of the most notable Young Turk members, Cevdet and Gökalp, had different views on the Empire's adoption of Western civilization. Early on, Cevdet's ideas had a direct influence on Gökalp's ideological development. Contact between the two began during Gökalp's childhood and continued through the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Cevdet first introduced Gökalp to French thought, particularly sociology and the works of Durkheim, and urged him to join the CUP in its early years. Gökalp went on to join the Central Committee and write many of the CUP's circulars and memoranda in the decade following the 1908 Revolution.[131]

While Cevdet and Gökalp had some overlap in their ideas, their beliefs diverged regarding their stances on the adoption of Western civilization. Gökalp, like other Central Committee members, cast Cevdet off as 'radical' since he promoted the complete adoption of Western civilization and the exclusion of religion. Cevdet argued for the complete and total adoption of Western civilization: "There is only one civilization, and that is European civilization. Therefore, we must borrow western

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[128] Karpat, "Historical Continuity and Identity Change." p. 1.
[129] Ibid. p. 3-4.
[130] Ibid. p. 3-5, 26.
[131] Yilmaz, "Ziya Gokalp's Political Sociology." p. 30.

civilization with both its roses and thorns."[132] Gökalp instead hoped for a nation that would "join the civilization of Europe while preserving its own national identity and culture," though in his opinion these were separate from civilization.

In his writings Gökalp referenced the similarities between religion and civilization, saying that Ottoman civilization would emerge from "Eastern spirituality and Western materialism."[133]

> Those who accept a civilization with all of its principles cannot take only portions of it. And, even if they take it, they cannot digest it. Civilization, just like religion, should not be taken superficially, but internally. Civilization is just like religion. First, it should be believed in and one should be sincerely loyal to it. [134]

By likening civilization to religion, Gökalp emphasized that one could not hold allegiance to both, thereby underscoring the separation of religion in the adoption of Western civilization. Gökalp was not always consistent in this belief though. At times he mentioned the religious foundations of civilization, alluding to the idea that the two were intertwined: "A civilization first begins as a religious community."[135]

## Intellectual Influencers

The ideology of the Young Turk movement reflected many of the traditions of the French Revolution. Many of the movement's early leaders and members spent time in Europe, either living in exile or studying, and many of those individuals lived in France. This was especially true in the years leading up to the 1908 Revolution. The first faction of the Young Turk movement originated in Europe and spread to many larger cities, particularly Paris. During this time the scholarly works of French intellectuals heavily impacted the development of many Young Turk members' beliefs. Auguste Comte and Gustave Le Bon were amongst the most influential intellectuals.

Members of the Young Turk movement not only read Le Bon's works, but also translated by them into Ottoman Turkish. They regularly cited Le Bon's ideas on elitism in Young Turk publications and also in their individual writings. Le Bon's ideas penetrated all strands of thought on the Young Turk movement's ideological spectrum and were some of the most widely referenced by Young Turk members. Inspired by Le Bon's work, the CUP also dedicated part of their efforts to the creation of an intellectual elite that could guide the masses.

The Young Turks familiarized themselves with popular materialist theories of the mid-nineteenth century that focused on race. Despite broad support for Le Bon's ideas on elitism and populism, the Young Turk movement did not underscore the importance of race in their formulation of nationalist ideas. The Young Turks' ideology refrained from creating nationalist aims based on race during the

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[132] Cevdet, "Sime-i Muhabbet," *Ictihad* (January 29, 1914). No. 89.
[133] Gökalp, "Yeni Osmanlilari [New Ottomans]," *Makaleler-I*. p. 64.
[134] Gökalp, *The Principles of Turkism.* p. 39-41. Paraphrased in Daglyer, "Ziya Gökalp on Modernity and Islam: The Origins of an Uneasy Union in Contemporary Turkey." p. 63.
[135] Ibid. p. 63. Referenced in Daglyer, "Ziya Gökalp on Modernity and Islam: The Origins of an Uneasy Union in Contemporary Turkey." p. 63.

movement's formative, early years. Race was an important part of discussions, but not of those regarding nationalism, at least not until after the Balkan Wars.

Because of the Turks' placement in the Darwinist racial hierarchy, and because of the participation of many non-Turks in the Young Turk movement, the CUP leadership opted against pursuing a race-based nationalist ideology in its early years. According to Darwin's theory, the Turks and Asians were placed at the bottom of this hierarchy. However, Japanese modernization prompted the Young Turks to reinterpret their placement in the racial hierarchy. The example of the Japanese indicated to the Young Turks that their location the hierarchy was inaccurate and that they could also compete with Western superiority. [136] This altered perception expanded discussions about the intersection of race and identity within the Young Turk movement.

## Conclusion

Between the Young Turk movement's ascendance to power and the downfall of the CUP leadership during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire numerous factors influenced the movement's ideology. Throughout this period the Young Turk leadership pursued a combination of Ottomanism, pan-Islamism, and pan-Turkism, depending on the circumstances. No concrete platform for the movement's ideology appeared during this time. Instead, the Central Committee attempted to strategically use multiple concepts to arouse support and obedience from the Ottoman population. Members outside the movement's leadership circle, however, did not always support these concepts. The forthcoming chapters will describe the divergence within the Young Turk movement's ideology and this ideology's link to the Kemalists movement.

# Chapter 3: Kemalists

After the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I, leaders of the Central Committee credited with Ottoman entry into the war and the Armenian genocide left the Empire and went into exile. Among them were Enver Pasha, Talat Pasha and Dr. Nazim. This leadership vacuum led, in part, to the accelerated rise of a Turkish nationalist movement that was already in the making.[137] It was after the exile of CUP leadership that Mustafa Kemal came to play a leading role in the Turkish nationalist movement. Kemal's efforts to strengthen the Turkish nationalist movement were supported by military officers, activists, and lower-ranking leaders, many of whom had CUP backgrounds. Among them were Fuat Cebesoy, Kazim Karabekir and Ismet Inounu.

The Congresses of Erzurum and Sivas, both held in 1919, were some of the first decisive steps by the Turkish nationalist movement to advance the goal of creating a distinctly Turkish nation-state. In Erzurum the members of the Congress named Mustafa Kemal, a junior military officer and member of the Young Turk movement, the leader of the national resistance movement. During the Congress in Sivas, Kemal called on those present to unify around the goal of creating a Turkish

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[136] Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition.* p. 210.
[137] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 131-135.

homeland.[138] He also required all attending members to take an oath renouncing the CUP and its policies. This was one of the first major points of departure between Kemal and the CUP leadership. From here on out Kemal took every opportunity to set himself apart from the exiled CUP leadership and their failures.

The Congress in Sivas led to the formation of the National Pact (*Misak-ı Milli*), which the Ottoman parliament went on to adopt in 1920. Among other things, the National Pact outlined the need for a National Assembly that would safeguard the interests of the nation, which did not technically exist yet. After the conclusion of the Congress in Sivas, Kemal and other members of the movement, including Ali Fuat Ceseboy and Rauf Orbay, authored the Amasya Circular, the first document setting the national resistance movement's plan into motion.[139]

The Greco-Turkish War, referenced in Turkish historiography as the Turkish War of Resistance or the Turkish War of Independence, was a military resistance led by the Turkish nationalist movement against the ethnic Greek inhabitants of Anatolia. Kemal and the members of the Turkish nationalist movement portrayed the war as necessary to protect Anatolia, the Turks self-proclaimed homeland. In doing so they emphasized the importance of Anatolia as a homeland for the Turks and underscored that the Turks should rise to its defense.[140] Kemal also used Islam to help mobilize the Muslim population to join the war efforts and as a way to create a sense of unity among those fighting in the war.[141]

The war lasted from 1919-1922 and ended with the Turkish national movement's victory. As a result, Greece released the territory of Eastern Thrace and Western Anatolia, the two sides agreed to a forced population exchange, and the Treaty of Lausanne recognized the national sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey. Kemal became a self-declared hero and the first President of the newly established Republic. In the first decades of the Republic's existence, Kemal and his supporters, known as the Kemalists, enacted a series of sweeping reforms aimed to put the Republic on the path to modernity. Under Kemal's authoritarian leadership the nationalist movement successfully held on to their newfound power, despite multiple attempts by former CUP Unionists to retake control.[142] In doing so Kemal created a monopoly of power for himself and the members of the Kemalist movement.

## Rise of Kemalist Movement

### *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*

Mustafa Kemal's place in and relationship with the CUP is commonly portrayed in one of two ways. In his famous 1927 speech, the *Nutuk*, Kemal described himself as a member of the CUP whose talents were overlooked by its central leadership. According to this account, Kemal would later, by his own ambitions, rise to overtake

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[138] "Erzurum Kongresi'nin Bildirisi ve Kararları" (1919).
[139] "Amasya Genelgesi" (1919).
[140] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 119-121.
[141] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 143.
[142] Ibid. p. 143-146.

Enver and lead the Turkish national resistance that culminated in victory with the Turkish War of Independence. Turkish historiography largely adopts this view.

Outside of Turkish historiography, however, scholars have more carefully analyzed Kemal's relationship with the CUP. Though parts of the above storyline are accurate, Kemal largely exaggerated or downplayed many aspects of his relationship with the CUP to further legitimize his leadership role in the nationalist movement and his separation from the then disgraced CUP leaders. Throughout his ascendance to power he continued to seek out opportunities to discredit those previously involved with the CUP and the Young Turk movement. In the *Nutuk*, and also in his memoirs, Kemal criticized the old CUP leaders and referred to them as doubters, incompetents and traitors. All the while Kemal described himself as the original leader of the Turkish nationalist movement. In his timeline, he disregarded the early years of the Young Turk movement and reframes the national resistance movement as a struggle to establish a Turkish state instead of one to save the failing Empire.[143]

Kemal's involvement with Ottoman opposition groups began in 1905 when he played a role in establishing the Fatherland and Freedom society in Damascus and Salonika. He did not join the CUP until 1908, at which point the organization was well established and had defined leadership. During World War I Kemal held various roles of importance, most notably as the commander of the Dardanelles campaign in 1915.[144] He was known within the army, mostly for being a 'trouble maker' for his constant criticism of the CUP's military decisions and his breaches of discipline. Multiple sources, including Kemal himself, claim that Kemal advocated for the complete separation of the army from politics and that this led to a tense relationship with many members of the CUP who did not agree with this stance. However, there is little evidence supporting this claim.[145]

Though at one time Kemal regretted his lack of authority within the CUP, the distance between himself and the Central Committee later worked to his advantage as Enver Pasha and the other leaders became tied to the Empire's military defeats and the Armenian genocide. Kemal pointed to his 'clean slate' to help legitimize his role as commander of the nationalist movement during the Greco-Turkish war. When he took this role the greater Ottoman public did not know him.[146]

Building on the success of the war, Kemal later emerged as the unrivaled leader of the newly declared Republic of Turkey. Both he and his supporters pushed a narrative that credited Kemal with the existence of the Republic and contributed to the emergence of a personality cult around him. The Turkish state portrayed Kemal as the father of the nation and Kemal even adopted the surname *Atatürk* ("father of the Turks") in 1934. The idea that he pulled the Republic from the ashes of the Empire played a large role in the widespread idolization of him. Turkish schools taught students not only about Kemalist reforms but also about Kemal's personal life and accomplishments. The state erected statues of Kemal in Turkish towns and

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[143] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History.* p. 175.
[144] Ibid. p. 142.
[145] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 134-135.
[146] Ibid. p. 135.

inscribed quotes on buildings and structures throughout the country, many of which are still in existence today.

Baskan says that the image of a new Turkey and its civilized leader was "wholeheartedly accepted abroad." Kemal portrayed himself as an icon of Western culture and civilization: a well-dressed, well-mannered, well-educated, multi-lingual individual. [147] He presented himself as the sole creator, and often the sole implementer, of Kemalist ideology. By pushing this image to the public, Kemal and his supporters further contributed to the formation of a personality cult around 'Atatürk'.[148] Dogan attributes the formation of the Atatürk personality cult to Kemal's ability to establish a direct relationship between the leader and the masses, his personification as a bearer of collective hope, and his symbol as the future of the nation.[149] Kemal's image as 'Atatürk' helped personify his political power and solidify his authority as leader of the Turkish Republic. Kemal leveraged his position of power to cement his role in the creation of the Republic in the minds of the people.

Kemal became a leader with the ability to exercise dictatorial powers. Until his death he remained at the forefront of the Republic's leadership, which consisted of approximately ten other individuals. Throughout his time as president, having a close personal relationship with him became one of the most important instruments of power. Unlike the Young Turk movement, which scholars do not attribute to one individual, this Kemalist movement is in many ways directly tied to Kemal. While Kemal did not single-handedly implement the radical reforms of the 1920s and 1930s in Turkey, he is portrayed throughout Turkish historiography and academic works as the sole figurehead of the movement.[150]

### Kemalists

Despite his role as leader of the state and his ability to dictate decisions to his party, Kemal did not run the day-to-day operations of the Republic. One of Kemal's closest associates, Ismet Inonu, headed seven of the thirteen cabinets and ensured the implementation of Kemal's policy decisions.

Similar to the breakdown of the Young Turks, the Kemalists were mostly young, Muslim males from urban areas. A large majority of them spoke more than one language, received a Western-style education, and previously served in the Ottoman military. The biggest shared traits among them were that none received a religious education at a *medrese* and none had come from a peasant or working class background.[151]

Amongst the fifty most powerful individuals, one-third had Balkan origins and eighty four percent came from the most developed areas of the former Ottoman Empire. Additionally, more than half of the leaders of ruling Republican People's Party (RPP)

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[147] Baskan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible." p. 144.
[148] Dogan, "Comparing Two Charismatic Leaders: Ataturk and de Gaulle." p. 80-81.
[149] Ibid. p. 76-78.
[150] Adak, "Who is afraid of Dr Rıza Nur's autobiography?." p.131-132.
[151] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 107.

came from the areas of the former Ottoman Empire that were lost in 1911-1913. [152] This had a profound impact on the development of Kemalist nationalist ideology during the early years of the Republic.

## Kemalist Opposition

Early divisions of the Turkish nationalist movement appeared with the establishment of the Grand National Assembly (GNA) in Ankara in 1920. Its members held different views on the functions and leadership of the GNA. Halide Edib, a member of the nationalist movement, described this divergence as a split between upholders of the "Eastern ideal" and those of the "Western ideal."[153] During the proceedings of the GNA another nationalist described it as "a point where two great floods are meeting."[154] Some believed the GNA should be an institution that lasted only for the duration of the national movement, while others believed it should follow the path of the Ottoman parliament or become a permanent institution.

Kemal's leadership did not go unchallenged. He had the support of only 197 of the 215 members of the first Turkish Parliament. While the members of the GNA united around the goal of securing Turkish independence and territorial integrity, following the Turkish victory in the war its membership split into two factions: the First Group, which consisted of Kemal and his supporters, and the Second Group, made up of Kemal's opponents and many former CUP members. [155] The First Group established the Republic People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası* [RPP]) in 1924, which went on to dominate the second parliament and elect Kemal as the first president of the Republic. The RPP was the only legal political party in Turkey until 1946.[156] The party began as a conglomerate of local and regional resistance groups. Prior to the Greco-Turkish War, Kemal sought to unite these groups around the common goal of establishing a homeland for the Turkish people of Anatolia. These groups formed the basis of the RPP. The majority of the RPP's leadership consisted of committed Turkish nationalists who became involved in the resistance movement early on. In its early years the RPP operated as an extension to the state and later became its main tool for indoctrination and mobilization.[157]

The Second Group represented a very real threat to Kemal and his circle of supporters. The two groups differed the most on the abolishment of the Sultanate and Caliphate, an issue that fueled the power struggle between them. In 1924 the members of the Second Group formed the Progressive Republican Party

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[152] Zürcher, "The Young Turks: Children of the Borderlands?" p. 6-9.

[153] Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal.* p. 170. Referenced in Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey.* p. 438.

[154] *T.B.M.M. Zabtt Ceridesi*, I, 258. Referenced in Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey.* p. 438.

[155] Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Volume II: Reform, Revolution and the Republic.* p. 380-383.

[156] There was one exception to this one Serbest Firka (Liberal Party) founded under the direction of Kemal in 1930. The party emerged as a response to the widespread discontent that surfaced in the wake of Kemalist reforms and as a way to give the ruling party more legitimacy. The party gave the illusion of a multi-party system and was greeted with widespread enthusiasm. Once the party started to gain a base of support Kemal promptly shut it down.

[157] Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Volume II: Reform, Revolution and the Republic.* p. 380-383; Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 146-147.

(Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası [TCF]), but its existence was short-lived. In 1925 the Kemalists banned the party and the government returned to a one-party system. The Kemalists' decision to ban the party fell in line with their broader goal of eliminating opposition from former members of the Young Turk movement, which they sough to disconnect themselves from. The involvement of Rauf Orbay, Kazim Karabekir, and Ali Fuat Cesboy in the TCF represented a clear, direct link to the Young Turk movement, which the Kemalists sought to eradicate.[158]

Kemalists used a one party system to create an environment that was conducive to Kemal and his immediate circle governing all aspects of the state. To preserve this environment the Kemalists proceeded to liquidate all existing opposition, beginning but not ending with the former members of the CUP. The Kemalists sought out and eliminated these individuals, both literally and figuratively, in the first decade of the Republic.[159] The Angora Trials exemplified Kemalist efforts to discredit and eliminate any opposition to their authority.

In 1926, a plot to murder Kemal was uncovered in the Turkish city of Izmir after one of the plotters came forward to the authorities.[160] An investigation was conducted after which the court accused twenty-nine members of the former CUP of plotting the murder of Kemal and organizing a coup d'état against the Kemalist regime. Through a subsequent investigation, the state sought to uncover the post-war activities of the accused CUP members.[161] In the end the state concluded that a number of members from the Unionist Party and other opposition groups conspired to form an organization that would, at the opportune moment, attempt to replace the Kemalist regime.[162] At the end of the trial the court charged the accused with premeditated murder and planning a coup d'état.[163]


## Kemalism

Kemalism, also known as Atatürkism, was the all-encompassing ideology of Kemal and his supporters. The Kemalists sought to bring about a civilizational shift in which a secular, Turkish nation would replace the religious community inherited from the Ottoman Empire.[164] Kemalism evolved over the first decades of the Turkish Republic but always centered on six intertwined components, also known as the Six Arrows: republicanism, populism, secularism, nationalism, revolutionism, and étatism/statism. In 1937 the Turkish parliament officially incorporated these Six Arrows into the Turkish constitution.[165] These core principles guided Kemalists in their efforts to transform state, education, law, religion, and social life in the early Turkish Republic. Kemalists believed these concepts represented the keys to modernity. All six Kemalist arrows had indisputable roots in the Ottoman era and in many cases amongst the Westernists, also known as the *garbcılar*, of the Young Turk movement.

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[158] Özbudun, "The Nature of the Kemalist Political Regime." p. 79-102; Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 10-12.

[159] "The Turkish Trials: Kemalists and the C.U.P." p. 11.

[160] Ibid. p. 11.

[161] "The Angora Trial: Undefended Prisoners". p. 9.

[162] "The Turkish Trials: Kemalists and the C.U.P." p. 11.

[163] "The Angora Trial Ending: Prosecutor's Speech, Appeal for Drastic Sentences". p. 10.

[164] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 139-146.

[165] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History.* p. 182.

At the time of the Turkish Republic's establishment, the question of 'who was a Turk' had yet to be answered. In the years that followed, the foundation of the Republic the Kemalist regime did not offer a clear definition of Turkish nationality. In neither the *Nutuk* in 1927 nor in his speech on the tenth anniversary of the Republic in 1933, Kemal's two biggest speeches, did Kemal offer up a solid definition of Turkish national identity. Kemalist era Turkish nationalism was characterized by a conceptual overlap of race, ethnicity, and nation. However, Turkishness continued to be defined independently of race and ethnicity until as late as the 1920s.[166]

Turkish nationalism did not gain immediate and universal acceptance after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Differing views on which direction the new Republic should take still existed and after 1923 debates continued to take place on which ideological path to pursue.[167] These differences led to a flexible understanding of Turkish national identity in the Kemalist Era. The 1930 RPP program described the Turkish nation as a "social and political formation comprising citizens linked together by the community of language, culture and ideal."[168] Elaborating on the Kemalists' concept of a 'nation,' the then RPP party secretary said:

> We consider as ours all those of our citizens who live among us, who belong politically and socially to the Turkish nation and among whom ideas and feelings such as "Kurdism," "Circassianism" and even "Lazism" and "Pomakism" have been implanted. We deem it our duty to banish, by sincere efforts, those false conceptions, which are the legacy of an absolutist regime and the product of long-standing historical oppression. The scientific truth of today does not allow an independent existence for a nation of several hundred thousand, or even of a million individuals…. We want to state just as sincerely our opinion regarding our Jewish and Christian compatriots. Our party considers these compatriots as absolutely Turkish insofar as they belong to our community of language and ideal.[169]

Kemalist nationalism was therefore strategically all encompassing in its broad definition of who qualified as Turkish citizens. This allowed the Kemalists to continuously mold Turkish nationalism to meet their needs and the present conditions. Going into 1930s there was a gradual shift towards reframing Turkishness in terms of ethnicity and race, yet the Kemalists never stopped attempting to force inhabitants into accepting a Turkish identity through the adoption of culture and language.

## *Sculpting Turkish National Identity*

Kemal was extremely cautious in the early phase of the Turkish nationalist struggle when describing the national basis of the movement.[170] In the 1930s, the Kemalists reframed Turkishness by claiming all of Turkey's past and present inhabitants were ethnically and racially Turkish. However, in reality this was not the case, as there were many minorities and non-Turks that resided within the borders of the Empire.

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166 Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s." p. 86.
167 Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 166.
168 Tunaya, *Turkiye'de Siyasi Partiler.* p. 585.
169 Recep Parker, quoted in Dumont, "The Origins of Kemalist Ideology." p. 29.
170 Karpat, *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey.* p. 167.

In an attempt to shift this reality, the Kemalists forcefully pushed Turkish identity onto the Republic's population.

The Kemalists did this despite failing to settle on concrete definition of or requirements for Turkish identity. This included the Kemalists' use of terms such as 'Turk' and 'Turkish'. While the Kemalists gradually stopped using the terms 'Ottoman' and 'Muslim', replacing them with 'Turk' and 'Turkish', there was no clear indication of what these terms actually meant.[171] Heper notes that Kemal used the term 'Turkish' as a name, and not as an adjective. He also used 'Turkish' as an umbrella term that referred to people of different religious and ethnic identities. Thus, the term had more than one connotation and did not only denote one's ethnicity.[172] The Kemalists never provided clear meanings of 'Turk' and 'Turkish', but they did differentiate between the two terms in their perceptions of the Republics inhabitants. In the minds of the Kemalists, one could be born a 'Turk', but one must earn the right of being 'Turkish'. Being 'Turkish' depended on an individual's acceptance and acquisition of a set of secular, nationalistic beliefs and rituals.

While the Kemalists put forth a legal framework for Turkish citizenship that included all the Republic's subjects, they also made distinctions between 'citizenship' and 'belonging'.[173] Thus, non-Turks and non-Muslims could in become Turkish citizens, but not fully Turkish. Turkishness thus became a category that included some, but not all, Turkish citizens.[174] The legal framework for Turkish citizenship did not exclude any communities in the Republic's borders, however in practice this was not the case. The state viewed some communities as unwilling to adopt Turkishness and excluded them in their perceptions of 'belonging'. Turkishness was therefore a process that depended on the willingness of the state *and* the individual. This further complicated efforts to define the requirements of 'Turkishness'.[175] A discussion in the Turkish Parliament on the population exchange project during the early years of the Republic highlighted one Turkish official's concerns regarding this challenge:

> When we want to send the Greeks and Armenians, what will be our answer if they say, 'These people are Turkish according to the law accepted by your parliament…they cannot be Turks'. The parliament cannon make these fugitive Greeks and Armenians Turks. They do not want to be Turks, no way.[176]

## An Environment for Reform

When analyzing how and why the Kemalists were able to implement such radical reforms in the early years of the Turkish Republic one must understand the unique circumstances of this time period. First and foremost, the demographic changes that took place beginning in 1912 were momentous. The loss of the predominately

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[171] Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 166.

[172] Heper, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation.* p. 129.

[173] Ergin, "'Is the Turk a White Man?' Towards a Theoretical Framework for Race in the Making of Turkishness." p. 829-830.

[174] The example of the Dönme, a group of Jewish converts to Islam, illustrates how the Turkish state distinguished between these categories. For more information on the *Dönme* see Baer, *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks.*

[175] Aydingun and Aydingun, "The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness." p. 416, 425-428.

[176] Gözübüyük, and Sezgin, *1924 Anayasasi Hakkinda Meclis Görüsmeleri.* p. 437-438. Cited in Ibid. p. 425.

Christian Balkans, coupled with Muslim immigration from the Balkans and resettlement in other parts of the Empire, led to an environment the Kemalist felt was optimal for rapid reforms. In the early years of the Republic Kemalists gave the most attention to reforming the overt and visible aspects of Ottoman and Islamic culture, such as language, appearance, and institutions.[177]

Kemalist reforms are defined throughout current scholarship as 'radical'. Dumont explains that, "the rhythm of innovations was so rapid and so noticeable from the outside, observers in Turkey and abroad came to believe that the Kemalist Revolution was by its very nature profoundly different from all past processes of change in Turkish society."[178] Kemal himself also underscored the pace at which this transformation took place, referring to the changes as "grandiose movements, more sublime and intense than what is commonly meant by the word revolution."[179]

Migration was one of the most powerful factors influencing Ottoman identity transformation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although migration was not new to the Ottoman Empire, the last years of its existence were arguably some of most turbulent regarding population shifts. Ottomans constantly moved throughout the Empire and persons from outside the Empire resettled inside its fluctuating borders. These population shifts led to noticeable changes in the areas of the Empire that saw some of the largest influxes of migrants, such as Anatolia. Years of successive wars, migration and internal violence allowed the Kemalists to inherit extremely weakened social and religious institutions. Between 1919 and 1927 the population of Anatolia dropped from 15.3 million to 13.6 million. Out of the population of 13.6 million, a mere 2.6 percent were non-Muslims.[180] This shift towards religious homogenization provided the Kemalists with an entirely different population than the one presented to the Young Turks leadership.

The Kemalists saw this new demographic environment as an opportunity to enact a radical nation-building project. Through a series of rapid, ruthless reforms based on the Six Arrows, the Kemalists sought to transform individuals living within the borders of the Republic into their ideal version of loyal Turkish citizens. The state incorporated cultural, linguistic, and religious elements into the policies it set forth. Refusal to adopt any or all aspects of Turkish identity was not tolerated, and the state did not hesitate to crack down on non-ethnic Turkish and non-Muslim groups. As one British diplomat observed in 1934: "hundreds of persons were arrested for speaking languages other than Turkish," especially in Mersin where there were large populations of non-Turkish speakers.[181]

Kemalists sought to completely transform society by creating a cognitive revolution in the Republic.[182] Each reform put forth by the Kemalists was an attempt to sever ties with the Republic's Ottoman past, to which the Kemalists claimed no links. For

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[177] Haig, "The Invisibilisation of Kurdish: The Other Side of Language Planning in Turkey." p. 6.
[178] Dumont, "The Origins of Kemalist Ideology." p. 35.
[179] Kemal, quoted in Ibid. p. 35.
[180] This was because of the migration and deportation of non-Muslim and the immigration of Muslims during this period. Baskan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible." p. 151.
[181] BFO Archives, London, BFO 371/17958/ E4912; BFO 371/16985/E2053; BFO 371/16985/E2053; BFO 371/17958/E4912. Referenced in Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s". p. 95
[182] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 141.

example, the official day of rest moved from Sunday to Friday, just as in European societies, and official titles like 'Pasha', 'Bey' and 'Efendi' no longer permitted.[183] The state also introduced and required the use of the European clock, calendar, measurement and weight systems, and numerals.[184] An overarching desire to disconnect from the former Empire was evident in all aspects of Kemalism and also frequently stated by the Kemalists: "The new Turkey bears no relation to the old Turkey. The old Ottoman government has passed into history now a new Turkey has been born."[185]

Educational authoritarianism enabled Kemalist leaders to further eliminate links to the Republic's Ottoman past and separate religion from the public sphere.[186] The Kemalists' belief in education and their depicted roles as teachers of a 'backwards population' were central elements of the new Republic's guiding ideology. For the Kemalists, education also went hand in hand with the creation and enforcement of a shared Turkish identity. Primary education became mandatory for all children, meaning there was less time for them to attend religious lessons elsewhere. Kemalists only allowed those seen as 'dependable' followers to remain in teaching positions and promptly dismissed others. This tight control of the state's education allowed the Kemalists to seamlessly weave their principles into students' curricula throughout their academic careers.[187]

The construction of a new education system allowed the state to incorporate its secular goals through school curricula. To the Kemalists, secularism was not only the separation of the Turkish state from Islam, but also the separation of Islam from individuals' thought and reasoning.[188] Religion was therefore not a core component of Turkishness for the Kemalists. This rejection of religion as part of Turkish identity directly contrasted with the ideas of Turkishness put forth by Gökalp. Gökalp's version of Turkishness underscored the importance of religion as a key element of Turkish identity.[189] In Gökalp's mind, religion could act as glue that could help bind society together under a common identity.

To expand the distance between religion and reasoning the state implemented a number of reforms that reinforced the separation between religious symbols and daily life. Under the 1924 Law on Unification of Education the Kemalists eliminated religious lessons at public schools and either abolished religious schools or placed them under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The law also banned the

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[183] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey.* p. 198.

[184] Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Volume II: Reform, Revolution and the Republic.* p. 385.

[185] Kemal, quoted in Parla, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Kültürün Resmi Kaynakları: Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri.* p. 52.

[186] Aksan, "Ottoman to Turk: Continuity and Change." p. 25.

[187] Köksal, "Rethinking Nationalism: State Projects and Community Networks in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire." p. 1498-1515.

[188] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey.* p. 148-150.

[189] Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s." p. 96.

teaching of languages other than Turkish. By eliminating the education of other languages the government also limited expressions of non-Turkish identities. [190]

The Kemalists' use of language reforms aided their efforts to mold the population into loyal Turks, but the Kemalists faced significant resistance to these reforms. Many ethnic and religious groups in the new Republic resisted the state's Turkification policies and instead sought to hold on to their individual identities. This resistance to accepting a Turkish identity was particularly evident in the use of languages other than Turkish. By continuing to use other languages, ethnic and religious minority groups attempted to preserve their long-standing status as semi-autonomous communities with their own culture. That this resistance to Turkishness was so visible, domestically and internationally, was particularly troubling to the Republican leadership.[191] The Kemalists took a number of steps to crack down on the use of languages other than Turkish in response to this display of perceived defiance. The Republic's adoption of harsh language policies became one of the Kemalists' most important strategies for enforcing a collective Turkish identity.

The Turkish Language Society (*Türk Dil Kurumu*), founded in 1932, carried out Turkish language-related activities in support of the state's official ideology. The Turkish Language Society also played a significant role in the politicization of language during the Republican period.[192] Its foundation was one of the main turning points of the Kemalist language revolution. Among the Society's responsibilities was the purification of Turkish language through the purging of Arabic and Persian words.[193] By replacing the Arabic script with the Latin script and eliminating the use of Arabic and Persian words, Kemalists sought to correct the faults of the Ottoman past. To justify these changes, the Kemal described the Arabic script as a barrier to the modernization process and the influence of Arabic and Persian as 'destructive' and 'unenlightened;[194]

> So long as Turkish was written from right to left, it could never properly express the ideals of European civilization. The picturesque involutions and intricacies of Arabic script afforded a psychological background to the Oriental mentality, which stood as the real enemy of the Republic.[195]

The script reform was thus a tool the Kemalist government used to force Turks to forget their Ottoman-Islamic past. Through the standardization of language the Kemalists tried to weaken non-Turkish identities. Turkish became the official language of the state and thus the official language of the education system.[196] That Turks' language was no loner written in the script of the Quran also distanced them from religion. The script reform enabled the government to exert more control over the spread of information through restrictions on the publishing and re-printing of documents. As the government gained more control over the publishing process, writings and publications critical of the government declined until a point where they

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[190] Zeydanlioglu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 7-8.

[191] Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 173.

[192] Colak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey." p. 67.

[193] Ibid. p. 74.

[194] Ibid. p. 75.

[195] Kemal quoted in Wortham, *Mustafa Kemal of Turkey*. p. 188-189. Referenced in Ibid. p. 73.

[196] Ibid. p. 72.

were basically non-existent. This decline in criticism went hand-in-hand with an increase in state-sponsored knowledge production.[197]

Immediately after the script reform and language purification process the Kemalist government swiftly pushed the new Turkish language on the population. In 1928 the Turkish Parliament passed a law that stated citizens had no more than one year to switch to the new language. The government then embarked on a nation-wide campaign to rapidly educate the public by enforcing the new alphabet in primary schools and establishing a system of mandatory adult education (*Millet Mektepleri)*.[198] The 'Citizen! Speak Turkish!' campaign also pushed the new language on the population and attempted to eliminate minority languages from the public sphere.

The speed at which the government carried out this transformation caused significant problems for the public. In the decade that followed the script reform and purification process much of the population was unable to understand the new version of Turkish. The language reformers removed many Arabic and Persian words before finding suitable replacements. However, these practical challenges did not stop the government from forcing the public to use the new language. In the 1930 the government arrested hundreds of people for speaking languages other than Turkish. Turkish speakers also harassed non-Turkish speakers and violently forced them to speak Turkish. The strict timeline for the public's adoption of the new Turkish language was non only a problem for those who did not previously speak a version of Turkish. While the state forced non-Turkish speakers to learn a new language, it also forced those who spoke the old version of Turkish to relearn a language that had once been familiar to them.[199]

The Kemalists largely overestimated and disregarded the willingness of non-Turks to adopt Turkishness. It was not enough for the state to force its linguistic, social, and cultural policies on the population. Non-ethnic Turkish communities had their own identities and were not passive actors whose identities could be easily molded by state policies. For the state's Turkification policies to be effective, there needed to be a 'readiness' of the people to redefine themselves as Turks and adopt state-defined values of Turkishness. These persistent, harsh policies wore down pre-existing identities and led to the adoption and resistance of different levels of Turkish identity among the population.[200]

## Conclusion

The Kemalists sought to bring about a civilizational shift in which a secular, Turkish nation would replace the religious community inherited from the Ottoman Empire.[201] In their efforts to do so, the Kemalist enacted a series of rapid, ruthless reforms that are often described as 'radical.' In comparison to the reforms of the Young Turk era,

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[197] Zeydanlioglu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 9.

[198] Colak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey." p. 72.

[199] Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s". p. 91

[200] Aydingun and Aydingun. "The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness." p. 416, 425-428.

[201] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 144-145.

the Kemalists often took their policies further and implemented them faster. Ideologically speaking, the Kemalists also pursed the most extreme versions of many concepts popularized during the Young Turk era. The following chapter will compare each movement's stance on some of these concepts in an attempt to highlight the differences and similarities that existed between them.

# Chapter 4: In Comparison

This chapter compares and analyzes examples of discontinuity in the ideology and practices of the Young Turk and Kemalist movements. Through a comparison of key concepts, this chapter aims to show the inconsistencies in the Young Turk movement's thought and practices; the main dissimilarities between the two movements; and the commonalities between the Kemalists and the *garbcılar* faction.

## Ziya Gökalp's Link to Kemalism

When retracing the path from Young Turk to Kemalist ideology, one must note that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ideas constantly fluctuated as a result of the changing circumstances and influences of the time. Scholars often point to Gökalp as one of the main influences of Kemalist ideology. But which Gökalp, and when? Gökalp's personal ideology underwent numerous transformations in the latter part of his life. As Heyd's research on Gökalp shows, Gökalp was not consistent or systematic in his thoughts. In reviewing the writings from different points of his life, one can see several changes in his opinions as well as inner contradictions.[202]

Initially, Gökalp was not a staunch supporter of Westernization. Even once he leaned into adopting more aspects of Western civilization and culture, he never advocated its absolute adoption. Early on Gökalp also embraced the development of a Turkish culture alongside the continued allegiance to the Ottoman Empire, just like many of his CUP colleagues. He argued for a form of Ottoman unity that incorporated aspects of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism. He believed these concepts not only complemented each other, but also were necessary for the survival of the Empire. He later shifted his view as the Empire suffered losses in the Balkan Wars and the Turks became an even larger majority of the population. At this time Gökalp moved farther away from Ottomanism and increasingly focused on the formation of a distinctly Turkish shared identity. From this point forward Gökalp's contribution to Turkish nationalism very much influenced the development of Turkish national identity under the Kemalists. It is therefore important to emphasize that Kemalist links to Gökalp's ideology were at their strongest point after he departed from his original beliefs.

Just like many Young Turks, Gökalp's ideology underwent many transformations. Gökalp's ideology certainly influenced that of the Kemalists, particularly regarding the development of Turkish identity, but Kemalist ideology in turn influenced Gökalp's. While Gökalp's views on Turkish nationalism grew stronger throughout the

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[202] For more details on Ziya Gökalp's life and ideology see Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp.*

late years of the Ottoman Empire, his original beliefs (a mixture of Ottomanism and pan-Turkism) did not fall in line with the ideology later adopted by the Kemalists. Gökalp also remained supportive of the inclusion of non-ethnic Turks in the state's definition of Turkishness, despite the Kemalists' shift towards an identity where race and ethnicity were core components:

> There are fellow citizens in our country whose ancestors have come from Albania or Arabia sometime in the past. If they have been educated as Turks, and have become used to working for the Turkish ideal, we must not set them apart from other citizens. How can we consider as aliens those who have shared not only our blessings but also our misfortunes? In particular, how can we say, "you are not Turks" to those among them who have made great sacrifices and have performed great service for the Turkish nation?[203]

This is not to say that Gökalp did not make significant contributions to the development of Kemalist ideology and practices. Instead, it shows the need for current scholarship to acknowledge the areas where Gökalp and other contributors to Kemalist ideology differed and where they made compromises in their personal beliefs.

## Embracing Western Civilization

There was a wide variation between the members of the Young Turk movement regarding the necessary extent of Westernizing reforms. Berkes divides supporters and opponents of westernizing reforms into three schools of thought: Islamists, Turkists, and Westernists (*garbcilar*).[204] If we place these groups on a spectrum, the Islamists would be at one end, the Turkists in the middle (but closer to the Westernists), and the Westernists at the other end.

The stance of the Islamists on Westernization can be best summarized by the following quotes, both which appeared in the Young Turk publication *Sırat-ı Müstakim*:

> European behavior is utterly contrary not only to Islam but to the principles of any social life…What painful wounds the European civil laws have opened on social life in terms of morals and ethics is obvious…It is true that we have…to benefit from European civilization, industry and knowledge; and yet it is absolutely imperative for us…not to allow their customs, morals and conduct to enter into our countries.[205]

> …If we ever run our affairs according to European principles, the moral degeneration, which has fallen upon them will be inevitable for us.[206]

The Islamists strongly opposed the Empire adopting anything but science and technology from the West, as they believed Western morals were contrary to Islam and would ruin the Empire. In discussions of the Ottoman Empire embracing Western civilization, supporters of different schools of thought often placed aspects into "good" and "bad" categories. One Islamist, Musa Kazim, even attempted to

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[203] Gökalp, *The Principles of Turkism.* p. 16.
[204] Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. p. 337-346.
[205] *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, No. 28 (1908). Referenced in Ibid. p. 354.
[206] *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, No. 32 (1909). Referenced in Ibid. p. 354.

create an "Islamic formula" to determine which aspects of Western civilization the Empire should and should not adopt.[207]

Throughout the nineteenth century anti-Western sentiments appeared in publications such as *Sura-yi Ummet* and *Türk,* where authors described European powers as imperialistic and enemies of the Ottoman Empire.[208] The West's stance during the Balkan Wars reinforced many of the anti-Western views already held by members of the Young Turk movement. European powers' reluctance to intervene on behalf of the Empire was widely criticized in Young Turk publications and later in its members' memoirs.[209] Enver Pasha, one of the most prominent military leaders in the CUP, was amongst those who believed that the West was the primary cause of the Empire's misery and suffering.[210]

The stance of the Islamists was drastically different from the Westernists, who believed not only in the adoption of Western technologies and sciences, but also culture and morals. The Westernist movement fell under the leadership of Abdullah Cevdet, the most ardent secularist of the Yong Turk movement. Following the Balkan Wars, the Westernist movement split into two wings: one under the leadership of Celal Nuri and the other under Cevdet. Nuri was critical of the West but supported partial Westernization, that is, the "adoption of Western science and technology and preservation of Ottoman culture, a major component of which was Islam."[211] In the aftermath of the Balkan Wars Nuri's views on the West continued to grow apart from Cevdet's and the two began a widely publicized argument. In 1913 Nuri wrote in *İctihad* that, "friendship for the West is the vilest of all crimes I can imagine. A nation incapable of hating the West is doomed to extinction."[212] In response, Cevdet published an article in which he said:

> We deemed every good thing coming from them bad. We are the culprits of all our plights. We are to be accused…The relation between Europe and us is the relation between strength and weakness, between science and ignorance…Yes, Europe means supremacy; let hatred of it be far from me. My hatred is turned against those things that are the obstacles to our attaining power equal to that of Europe…Our mortal enemy is our own inertia, ignorance, fanaticism, and our own blind following of tradition…The West is our teacher; to love it is to love science, progress, material and moral advancement…We have to understand one thing—there are not two civilizations, there is only one to which to turn, and that is Western civilization, which we must take into our hands whether it be rosy or thorny…[213]

Although Nuri recognized that the Ottoman state needed to adopt Western material improvements, he rejected Western cultural, social, and spiritual values. This was in stark contrast to Cevdet, who believed in the complete adoption of Western civilization and the complete separation of religion and state. Cevdet and his fellow

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[207] Ibid. p. 362.

[208] Türkiye'de Almanlar, *Türk* (22 February 1906). No. 119.; Türkiye'de Almanlar, *Türk* (29 March 1906). No. 124.

[209] Such as Cemal Pasha's *Memories of a Turkish Statesman: 1913-1919*; Cahit, *Tanin* (10 September 1914).

[210] Hanioğlu, *Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Pasha [Enver Pasha in his own letters]*. p. 242.

[211] Buzpinar, "Celal Nuri's Concepts of Westernization and Religion." p. 249.

[212] Nuri, "Sime-I Husumet," *Ictihad* (1913). No. 88.

[213] Cevdet, "Sime-i Muhhabet," *Ictihad* (1913). No 89. Referenced in Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. p. 357-358.

*garbcılar* also believed Islam created a mental barrier that kept Muslims from understanding both their own ills and Western civilization.

Cevdet himself was well known among Ottoman intellectuals for his idea of a Westernized society where religion would play no role.[214] As Cevdet continued to publish these seemingly extreme views in his journal, *Ictihad*, the CUP distanced themselves from him and his anti-religious stances. Nuri and Cevdet's stances represent the divide that existed even among the *garbcılar* and further highlight the multiple strands of opinions that existed within the broader Young Turk movement. Not only can its members be divided into three broad schools of thought, but also by their extent of support for concepts within each school of thought.

It is important to emphasize that Nuri was not the only supporter of partial westernization; other intellectuals, including many prominent leaders of the Young Turk movement, also shared this attitude. This idea was widely accepted among Turkist (and Islamist) intellectuals, while Cevdet's appeal for total westernization was cast off as 'radical'. Berkes, notes that:

> The Westernists' ideas deviated radically from the prevalent view of Westernization, formulated by Ahmed Midhat. The essence of Westernization in their eyes would be a radical moral and mental transformation. The greatest problem was to cast aside the old system of values in order to develop a new morality based upon the Western system of values. In other words, modernization was to the new Westernists a cultural and moral issues far more than a material one.[215]

Neither overly anti- nor pro-Western, the Turkists partially accepted Western civilization but also believed the 'radical' Westernists views promoted by Cevdet and his followers were a threat to the development of a collective Turkish identity. However, the Turkists believed in the adoption of far more aspects of Western civilization than the Islamists. The Turkists opted for Turkish culture that was neither overtly Western nor Islamic and believed that without Turkish culture there could be no genuine reform or modernization of the Empire. The Turkists also did not flat out reject religion and thought it would still play a limited role in their vision of a secularized society. Gökalp identified himself as a Turkist but also shared the views of some 'moderate' Westernists.[216] He embraced a Turkish identity that had Turkish, Islamic, and European characteristics.[217]

Unlike Gökalp and other moderate Young Turks, the Kemalists did not differentiate between civilization (in their minds: science and technology) and culture. The Kemalists thought it was 'unnecessary and difficult' to separate the two from each other and advocated for the complete adoption of Western civilization, thus aligning their beliefs with Cevdet and the *garbcılar* more than Gökalp. The many Kemalist reforms aimed at adopting Western cultural exemplify how they embraced the culture and norms of Western civilization.

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[214] Hanioğlu, "Garbcılar: Their Attitudes Toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic." p. 133-158.
[215] Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. p. 338.
[216] Gökalp, *Principles of Turkism.* p. 390-391.
[217] As Gökalp describes in "Uc Cereyan" ("Three Currents," which became *Muasirlasmak. Islamlasmak. Turklesmek [To become modern, Muslim and Turk],* 1918*)* p. 16-23.

As detailed above, the vast majority of Young Turk intellectuals believed in some form of Westernization, yet there was much debate as to what type and extent of Westernization reforms should be implemented. If we look at the Young Turk members' support for Westernization on a spectrum, Kemal and his supporters would appear at the far end with the *garbcılar*. The Kemalists described themselves as the most extreme Westernists and believed in the total and complete adoption of Western civilization, just like Cevdet and his fellow *garbcılar*.

The CUP's Central Committee widely perceived Cevdet to be the most radical member of the Young Turk movement with regards to his stance on Westernization. As Cevdet continuously published his ideas in journals and other publications the Central Committee attempted to distance themselves from him, as his views did not fall in line with theirs. The CUP felt that Cevdet's extreme stance on the complete adoption of Western civilization and the exclusion of religion from a unified identity would threaten their efforts to appeal to greater the Ottoman population. Cevdet and his fellow *garbcılar* aligned more closely with the members of the Kemalists movement than the leaders of the CUP. Cevdet's wing of the *garbcılar* undoubtedly influenced Kemalist reforms of the early Turkish Republic.  Kemal himself even acknowledged this, telling Cevdet in 1925: "Doctor, until now you have written about many things. Now we may bring them to realization."[218] Kemal also publicly spoke of the Kemalists desire for the total and complete adoption of Western civilization:

> We have to be civilized persons in every aspect…Our opinions, our thoughts will be civilized from head to toe. We shall not take heed of nonsensical words. Look at the entire Turkish and Islamic world, in what grave and difficult situation they are because their ideas and thoughts are not adapted to the reforms made by imperative civilization…[219]

The Westernization plan put forth by the *garbcılar* in 1913 laid out many of the 'radical' ideas the Kemalist regime would later adopt during the early years of the Republic.[220] In their plan, the *garbcılar* criticized 'outdated' practices and manners they believed did not fall in line with Western civilization. The plan's recommendations included: abolishing dervish lodges, *medreses* and the *fez* (and replacing it with a European style hat), adopting modern clothing and European 'good' manners, and the emancipation of women. Shortly after the establishment of the Turkish Republic the Kemalist regime began implementing many of these ideas and in some cases took them one step further.

In their pursuit of modernity the Kemalists "openly and wholeheartedly chose to imitate the West, even in purely superficial things."[221] A central aspect of Kemalist reforms was the desire to change the outward appearance of society. Kemalists' insistence on changing the people's appearances was tied to their belief that one's outward appearance reflected their inner feelings and thoughts. Kemalists hoped to create a transformation in society's manners and reasoning ability by implementing stringent rules on individual's clothing, language, and overall style.[222] In 1925 the government enforced a strict dress code that forbid individuals from wearing

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[218] Kemal, quoted in Hanioğlu, "Garbcilar: Their Attitudes Toward Religion and Their Impact on the Official Ideology of the Turkish Republic." p. 147.
[219] Kemal, quoted in İmece, *Atatürk'ün Sapka Devriminde Kastamonu ve İnebolu Seyahatleri*. p. 18.
[220] Kiliczade Hakki. "Pek Uyanik Bir Uyku" ("A Very Vigilant Sleep"), *Ictihad*. (11 March 1913). No. 55.
[221] Zürcher, "The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish Republic: An Attempt at New Periodization." p. 238.
[222] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 141.

traditional Ottoman headgear, the turban, and fez, and instead required them to wear Western-style hats. For women, the state strongly discouraged veiling. To inspire the expansion of Western clothing styles the government increased imports of European goods and spread images of Europeans.[223] During the 1920s, the Kemalist-aligned newspaper *Cumhuriyet* frequently published images of men and women dressed in Western-styled clothing to show the public examples of how they should dress.[224]

Kemalists tied the embrace of Western clothing styles and appearances directly to the success of the nation: "There is no way to be successful with turbans and robes, now we have proven to the world that we are a civilized nation."[225] The same went for Western morals and traditions: "…nations cannot maintain their existence by age-old rotten mentalities and by tradition-worshipping…Superstitions and nonsense have to be thrown out of our heads."[226] The Kemalists' stance on adopting all aspects of Western civilization was very clear and reforms in the early Republican era directly supported this stance.

## Violence and Forced Assimilation

Regarding the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities, both the Young Turk and Kemalist leadership carried out violent, inhumane policies with the intention of homogenizing the population. However, their motivations for carrying out these policies and the extent of them differed. While the Young Turks carried out genocide against the Armenian community with the aim of further homogenizing the Empire by physical eliminating them, the Kemalists carried out harsh, violent measures aimed at forcibly assimilating minority groups and eliminating their identities. This does not mean, however, that there was no overlap in the intentions and policies of the Young Turks and the Kemalists.

For the members of the Young Turk movement, the primary goal was saving the state, which they attempted to do through strengthening the position of the Ottoman Muslims, and later the majority Turkish population. The Balkan Wars contributed to the Young Turks' growing mistrust towards religious and ethnic minority communities, who they saw as disloyal to the Empire. The CUP leadership used this goal to legitimize their violent measures against the non-Muslim populations of the Empire, particularly the Ottoman Armenian community. According to Ottoman population censuses from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Armenians and Greeks were the two largest ethnic groups after the Turks.[227] The size of the Armenian community, along with its perceived resistance to CUP policies and desire for autonomy, deepened the CUP leadership's pre-existing belief that the Armenians posed a threat to the existence of the Empire.

As early as 1909, merely one year after the revolution, members of the Young Turk leadership—namely, Talat Pasha, Doctor Nizam Bey and Behaeddin Sakir—began

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[223] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 112.

[224] *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi.* Daily editions from 7 May – 31 August 1924. Basbakanlik Kutuphanesi.

[225] Kemal quoted in *Cumhuriyet* (17 September 1928). No. 1566, p. 1.

[226] Kemal quoted in *Türk Yurdu* (1924). No. 1.

[227] These censuses only showed data for the Empire's three largest populations: Turks, Greeks and Armenians. "Proportions des populations musulmanes, grecques et armeniennes en Asie-Mineure d'apres la statistique du Livre-Jaune, 1893-1897" and "1914." FO 371/7873.

discussing the possibility of forcefully homogenizing Ottoman territory. The Young Turks discussed this idea in detail until 1914, when they put it into action. In 1910, the CUP held a secret conference Salonika where its leaders produced a document outlining the decision to proceed with violent measures against the Empire's Armenian population.[228] The document, which officials at the British Foreign Office gave the name 'The Ten Commandments', outlined a number of actions to be taken:

> Close all Armenian societies, and arrest all who worked against the Government at any time among them and send them into provinces such as Baghdad and Mosul, and wipe them out either on the road or there;
>
> Apply measures to exterminate all males under 50, priests and teachers, leave girls and children to be Islamized;
>
> Carry away the families of all who succeed in escaping and apply measures to cut them off from all connection with their native place;
>
> On the ground that Armenian officials may be spies, expel and drive them out absolutely from every Government department or post;
>
> Kill off in an appropriate manner all Armenians in the Army.[229]

Additionally, the document emphasized the need for these actions to be done simultaneously, in order to leave the Armenians no time to defend themselves.[230] While a number of CUP officials attended the conference mentioned above, there is still much debate as to whether or not lower-ranking CUP members and members outside the Central Committee were aware of the plan proposed in 'The Ten Commandments', and if they were, to what extent.[231]

The ruling CUP's view of the Armenian population as a barrier to progress and a threat to the Empire's security sharpened after the Balkan Wars. The CUP observed the Armenian community's increasing desire for autonomy and feared their possible separation from the Empire, something that was unthinkable to the CUP after the territorial losses in the Balkan Wars. The Balkan Wars amplified the CUP leadership's efforts to save the Empire through weakening the positions of the Empire's religious and ethnic minority communities.

The procedures outlined in above-mentioned document were well under way by 1914. The CUP chose to respond to the challenged presented by the Armenian population in the most inhumane way, with the Armenian genocide. By 1916 the Armenian population of the Empire drastically decreased due to widespread massacres, forced emigrations, and violence against the Armenian community.[232] As part of these measures against the Armenian population the CUP leadership enacted the Deportation Law in 1915, under which they forcibly exiled any subjects that opposed the government during times of war. The Deportation Law largely

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[228] Dadrian, "The Secret Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the World War I Genocide of the Armenians." p. 178.
[229] BFO/London, FO 371/4172/31307. 10 February 1919. Referenced in Dadrian, "The Secret Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the World War I Genocide of the Armenians". p 174.
[230] Ibid. p. 191.
[231] Ibid. p. 178.
[232] Ibid. p. 182-183, 190-191.

targeted the Armenian population, but also affected other religious and ethnic minority groups, Assyrians and Kurds.[233]

The Kemalists justified their nation-building project as one of necessity. They saw the creation of a homogenous nation-state as a requirement of Western acceptance and the key to joining the Western world.[234] However, the population of the new Republic, while overwhelmingly ethnic Turkish and Muslim, was still far from homogeneous. This prompted the Kemalists to embark on an increasingly intense program of Turkification throughout the first two decades of the Republic.

The 1924 Constitution's proclamation that, "The People of Turkey, regardless of religion and race, are Turks as regards citizenship," evidences the government's first attempt to include ethnic and religious minority groups in its vision of Turkishness.[235] The Kemalists envisioned the creation of a unified population whose identities aligned with a state-produced definition of Turkishness. Since the population of the new Republic was by no means homogenous, the Kemalists attempted to consolidate minority groups with the expectation that they would willingly assimilate. Kemalists hoped that the inclusion of ethnic and religious minorities in their vision of Turkish national identity would strengthen the state's authority.[236] This directly contrasted with the Young Turks, who opted for the exclusion of ethnic and religious minorities instead of the consolidation of them. The Kemalists viewed the Kurdish population of the Republic similarly to how the Young Turks viewed the Armenian population: a challenge that needed a solution. However, the Kemalists and the Young Turks approached these challenges in different ways.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Ottoman state had an ambivalent attitude towards the Kurdish population. At that time the Kurds had an indisputable public presence in the Empire; they had their own political, social, and cultural organizations. Following the proclamation of the Republic in 1923 there was a definitive shift in attitude towards the Kurdish population. In attempting to mold the population into a homogeneous body of loyal, Turkish citizens, the government made the decision to ignore the multiplicity of identities that existed in the Republic, particularly Kurdish identity.[237]

The Kemalists used the language in the Treaty of Lausanne to justify their actions towards the Kurds and Kurdish identity. The Treaty protected the rights of minorities, including their right to language. However, the Treaty defined minorities in terms of religion, not ethnicity. This meant that only non-Muslims, such as Orthodox Greek Christians, Armenians, Assyrian Christians, and Jews, officially received protections under the Treaty. The Kemalists used the fact that the Kurdish community was not protected as a minority under the Treaty to legitimize their harsh attempts to forcibly assimilate the Kurds and effectively reduce their visibility in the new Republic.[238]

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[233] Cagaptay, "Population Resettlement and Immigration Policies of Interwar Turkey: A Study of Turkish Nationalism." p. 17.
[234] Zeydanlioglu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 1.
[235] *Türk Anayasası [Turkish Constitution]* (1924), Article 88.
[236] Zeydanlioglu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 1-6.
[237] Ibid. p. 4-6.
[238] However, as evidenced by the Republic's implementation of policies such as the Citizen, Speak Turkish! Campaign the government consistently violated the rights of minorities as well. Haig, "The Invisibilisation of Kurdish: The Other Side of Language Planning in Turkey." p. 4.

As the Kemalists attempted to unify the new Republic under one identity they tried to prohibit the Kurds, and other groups, from operating outside of this identity. Through increasingly intense Turkification policies the Kemalists sought to eliminate non-Turkish identities from the public sphere. These measures applied to all ethnic and religious minorities, but overwhelmingly targeted the Kurds.[239] In the most heavily populated Kurdish areas of the Republic the government inscribed nationalistic symbols and slogans on buildings and destroyed monuments that referenced the Kurds. The state closed Kurdish schools and institutions, ceased Kurdish-language publications, and banned references to 'Kurds', 'Kurdish', or 'Kurdistan'.[240]

The Kurds were the largest non-Turkish speaking community in the new Republic. They were also the ethnic community that showed the most visible resistance to Turkification reforms. Between 1923 and 1938 eighteen rebellions broke out, 17 of which took place in the Republic's Kurdish provinces.[241] The Kemalists responded to the Kurdish community's defiance with strict, violent policies and crackdowns. However, unlike the Young Turks before them, the Kemalists did not resort to genocide when taking action against the Kurdish community. This points to the Kemalists' underlying belief that the government could succeed in forcing the Kurds to assimilate, which they believed would in turn strengthen their authority. The Young Turks resorted to more violent measures in part because they realized they would not be able to succeed in homogenizing the population through a shared identity. The Young Turks' inability to come to a consensus on whether to pursue Ottomanism, pan-Turkism, or pan-Islamism certainly contributed to the difficulty they faced in attempting to unite the Ottoman population under a single identity.

The Kemalist government's systematic denial and oppression of Kurdish identity through violent Turkification policies concentrated on what Haig refers to as the 'invisibilisation' of the Kurdish identity.[242] The evolution of the Kemalist narrative on Turkish identity also shows how they never fully gave up on this goal. By the 1930s the Kemalist narrative implied race and ethnicity were core components of Turkishness, yet the government continued to force the Republic's ethnic and religious minorities to speak, appear, and behave as 'Turks'. Cagaptay points out that while Kemalist ideology focused on Turkish race and ethnicity, the government "kept the avenues of assimilation open to those who were not ethnically Turkish."[243]

In his research Zeydaniloğlu says the government treated the Kurds as Turks who had forgotten their Turkishness. This was the Kemalists' solution to finding a way to include the Kurds in their version of Turkish national identity. This hope to integrate the Kurdish population into the nation-state guided Kemalists' forced Turkification policies.[244] While the Kemalists suppressed Kurdish rebellions and resistance, often violently, they did not seek to physically eliminate the Kurds from the Republic. Instead, they sought to eliminate their identity.

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[239] Ibid. p. 1-6.
[240] Zeydanlioglu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 8.
[241] Ibid. p. 8.
[242] Haig, "The Invisibilisation of Kurdish: The Other Side of Language Planning in Turkey." p. 3.
[243] Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s." p. 97.
[244] Zeydaniloğlu, ""The White Man's Burden": Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey." p. 9.

The Kemalists anticipated that ethnic and religious minorities would assimilate and follow the set guidelines of Turkishness put forth by the state. These individuals were expected to declare their allegiance to the state, adopt Turkish culture and language, and embrace their Turkish national identity. However, this did not happen. Not surprisingly, these groups pushed back against the state's harsh Turkification policies in an effort to hold on to their ethnic and religious identities. The Kemalists did not tolerate this and used the defiance of the Republic's minorities as justification to implement policies that were even more extreme and restrictive. The Kemalist regime also cracked down on any and all of its opponents – especially Kurdish religious leaders and former members of the CUP.

In 1925, Shekih Said, a Kurdish religious leader, led a rebellion in Diyarbakir and Mardin that aimed to revive the recently abolished Caliphate. To mobilize support, Sheikh Said drew on elements of Kurdish nationalism. The Kemalists quickly and violently suppressed the rebellion, sentencing nearly fifty people to death for their involvement. The Kemalists used the Sheikh Said Rebellion as an opportunity to further consolidate the concept of Turkishness as a modern, secular, national identity.[245] After the rebellion the Kemalists imposed stricter regulations on the Kurdish population, expanding limitations on their language and culture. As part of these restrictions the state issued the "Breakdown of Turkish Unity" circular, which forbid citizens from using the names 'Kurds', 'Laz', 'Circassian', 'Kurdistan', or 'Lazistan' and from discussing these topics.[246]

To expand control over the Republic's religious and ethnic minority populations the state enacted two different resettlement policies, similar to their Young Turk predecessors. The first Resettlement Law, enacted in 1926, prohibited non-Muslims from the former Empire from immigrating to the Republic.[247] The second, enacted in 1934, stated that anyone the state believed was not fully Turkish could be resettled by the state.[248] This law categorized the country into zones tied to different levels of 'Turkishness'. The state used this law to strategically resettle ethnic and religious minorities in distinctly Turkish areas, thus dispersing concentrations of non-Muslim, non-Turkish communities throughout the country.[249] Article 11 of this law directly targeted the Kurds and ordered them to be distributed so they made up no more than ten percent of a district's population.[250]

On top of these measures, the Kemalists arranged a forced population transfer between Greece and Turkey in 1923. The agreement was based on religion and ethnicity and did not take language into consideration. As a result, many Greek-speaking Muslims and Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox Christians were forced from their homes. Approximately 1.2 million Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox Christians were sent to Greece while 600,000 Greek-speaking Muslims came to

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[245] Aksan, "Ottoman to Turk: Continuity and Change." p. 25-26.
[246] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 232.
[247] "İskan Kanunu," no: 885, 31/06/1926, *Düstur*, Tertip: 3, Cilt: 7, pp. 1441-1443.
[248] "İskan Kanunu," No: 2510, 14/06/1934, *Düstur*, Tertip: 3, Cilt: 15, pp. 1156-1175.
[249] Ülker, "Assimilation, Security and Geographical Nationalization in Interwar Turkey: The Settlement Law of 1934." p. 7-8.
[250] Ibid. p. 10; p. 16.

Turkey.[251] Here we see similarities with the CUP, who ordered the exchange of 200,000 Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians from Western Thrace and Anatolia in 1914.

## Boundaries of Nationalism

The Young Turk movement constantly evolved. The CUP took on multiple identities based on transformations in its ideology, leadership, and membership. Taking into consideration the size of the Young Turk movement, it was inevitable that not all its members would be in agreement on many of the issues championed by the CUP's Central Committee. Early on the CUP proposed a multiplicity of solutions to the Empire's demise as a way to attract more support. The CUP strategically used rhetoric that catered to the Muslim/Turkish population, non-Muslim/non-Turkish population, or the Western powers.

The frequent contradictions of decisions and ideas within the Young Turk movement evidence the disconnect that existed between the Central Committee, the CUP's executive branch, its provincial branches, and smaller factions and offshoots. The CUP's official publications and communications include numerous examples of members promoting one policy while the Central Committee simultaneously attempted to implement a contradicting policy. [252] In British Foreign Office documents, British officials noted the use of conflicting rhetoric. They observed that while the Young Turks did endorse Pan-Islamism in many parts of the Empire, it was "discouraged in regions where it might endanger Turkish authority."[253] Numerous memos between British foreign officials between the years 1914 and 1919 further highlight the confusion over the CUP's ideology and practices.

One document notes that while the CUP adopted a Pan-Islamic program by 1911, one of the party's official organs also said that, "the pursuit of the Pan-Islamic designs...would be contrary to our dearest interests."[254] Another memo received from the British Foreign Secretary in 1917 states, "To my certain knowledge, the Pan-Islamic ideas are being taught at schools…this gives us an idea of the vast efforts being made to advance the gospel of Pan-Islamism."[255] Another memo to the Foreign Office in 1919 discusses an article published in the Cairo-based, Arabic-language monthly publication *Manar* and said that Enver Bey Pasha was "quoted for the declaration that a new constitution would have nothing to do with Pan-Islamism".[256] Yet another set of memos discussed British officials' understanding that "a number of prominent Young Turks were actively working with the Khedive and Nationalist party along Pan-Islamic lines" and that "Pan-Islamic activities have become more intensive." The same memo also noted that,

[251] Zürcher, "The late Ottoman Empire as laboratory of demographic engineering." p. 12.
[252] Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Ataturk's Turkey.* p. 111.
[253] "BFO/1914 Pan-Islamic Movement and Turkish Sultans." In Burdett *Islamic Movements in the Arab World, 1913-1966: Volume I 1913-1924.* Sec.1.2-1.3.
[254] Ibid. Sec. 1.2-1.3.
[255] BFO/1917, "A Note on the Mohammedan Question." In Burdett *Islamic Movements in the Arab World, 1913-1966: Volume I 1913-1924.* Sec.1.2-1.3.
[256] BFO/1919, "Pan-Islamic Movements and Turkish Sultans." In Burdett *Islamic Movements in the Arab World, 1913-1966: Volume I 1913-1924.* Sec.1.2-1.3.

> The Young Turks…who are far from devout Moslems, found the Pan-Islamic force ready made and assert that they have to use it internally to counteract national tendencies among the Mohammedan Arabs and Kurds of the Empire, and in foreign affairs as a lever to compel foreign governments, e.g., that of Great Britain, to hesitate when there is a question of brining pressure to bear in the case of a conflict of interest.[257]

These documents provide examples of the confusion that surrounded the aims and ideology of the Young Turk movement during this time. An analysis of *Türk Yurdu* provides additional examples of how CUP leadership simultaneously promoted aspects of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkish nationalism. In their study on Turkish nationalist content in *Türk Yurdu,* Balkilic and Dolek note that,

> …one can see the articles which stated Islam was historically a vital element of Turkish identity and the idea of religion was not by definition against the idea of nationalism, and the articles which elaborated Islam as one of the causes of the disappearance of Turkish nationalist identity at the same time in the journal.[258]

Throughout the journal's publication there was no clear departure from the ideas of Ottomanism or Islamism, though there was less of a focus on these ideas after the Balkan Wars. The lack of a distinct rupture in the CUP's ideology contributes to the ongoing difficulty in identifying and analyzing the Young Turk movement's official ideology. It also points to the many variations in the movement's ideology since some of the journal's authors, like Yusuf Akçura, used it as a platform to express their personal beliefs while others used it to cater to non-Turkish or non-Muslim readers. [259]

More than anything, the multiplicity of ideas put forth by the CUP evidence their opportunism, a trait they have in common with the leaders of the Kemalist movement. Just like the leaders of the CUP, Kemal and his colleagues used Islamic rhetoric and undertones to mobilize Ottoman Muslims to join the nationalist movement's efforts, which they said were in support of defending and protecting the Sultanate and Caliphate. Among the goals they outlined in the declaration of the Sivas Congress in 1919 and the Turkish National pact were the "conservation," "safeguarding" and "continued existence" of the Sultanate and the Caliphate as well as the "defense of the rights of the Caliphate and the throne."[260]

However, the Kemalists' use of Islamic rhetoric came to an abrupt halt upon the establishment of the Republic. Upon the proclamation of the Republic they promptly dissolved the Caliphate and Sultanate and with it their need to gather support from the Muslim conservatives. From this point on the Kemalists were clear about their intentions to create a Turkish nation state and increase the separation between religion and society. They no longer attempted to appeal to the population's religious sentiments. Instead, the Kemalists wanted to call attention to the population's link to its ethnic-Turkish ancestry. In doing this the Kemalists strategically produced broad

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[257] BFO/1914, "Telegram Requesting Information on Young Turk Involvement with Egyptian Nationalist Party"; BFO/1914, "Forwarded Telegram"; BFO/1914, "Response to Telegram." In Burdett *Islamic Movements in the Arab World, 1913-1966: Volume I 1913-1924.* Sec.1.2-1.3.

[258] Balkilic and Dolek, "Turkish nationalism at its beginning: Analysis of *Turk Yurdu*, 1913-1918." p. 322.

[259] Ibid. p. 316-318.

[260] Halabi, "Liminal Loyalties: Ottomanism and Palestinian Responses to the Turkish War of Independence, 1919-1922." p. 23-24.

definitions of Turkishness and Turkish identity, leaving them open for interpretation as they saw fit.  The two statements that follow exemplify the Kemalists' use of broad language to appeal to the Republic's population:

> "The People of Turkey, regardless of religion and race are Turks as regards citizenship."[261]
> *- Türk Anayasası, 1924*

> "Any individual within the Republic of Turkey, whatever his faith, who speaks Turkish, grows up with the Turkish culture and adopts the Turkish ideal, is a Turk."[262]
> *- Tarih IV Turkiye Cumhuriyeti, 1931*

During the Ottoman era the boundaries of pan-Turkism and Turkish nationalism were not always clearly defined. Often the difference between the two was a matter of emphasis rather than a sharp division.[263] When the Kemalists rose to power, this was not the case. Kemalists firmly rejected all notions of pan-Turkism, choosing instead to adopt full-on Turkish nationalism.

Even prior the proclamation of the Republic, in 1921, Kemal spoke of a new policy that would include Turks living within the "national frontiers" of Turkey, effectively shutting down the idea that Turkish nationalism would extend beyond the country's borders.[264] This marked a distinctive shift away from pan-Turkism and towards a form of civic nationalism based on one's loyalty to the state.[265] The state's focus on the Republic's borders as a requirement of Turkish identity and citizenship was arguably one of the most consistent aspects of Kemalists national identity. While there was some flexibility in the racial and ethnic requirements for Turkishness, the territorial requirements remained fixed. In choosing to tie Turkish nationalism to the boundaries of the Republic, the Kemalists closed the door to pan-Turkism. Kemalists flatly rejected Ottomanism, pan-Turkism, and pan-Islamism and instead pursued a version of Turkish nationalism that centered on lifting up and developing the inhabitants of Anatolia, the proclaimed homeland of the Turks.

The Kemalists remained conflicted over two main aspects of Turkish nationalism. They wanted to appeal to the emotions of Turks living within the Republic's borders but did not want to over-emphasize cultural links to Turks living outside the Republic. The Kemalists did not support pan-Turkism, but struggled with how to connect Turks in the Republic to their Turkish heritage and history without also appealing to Turks in Central Asia. While the Kemalists took decisive steps to rid the Republic of pan-Turkist sentiments, they simultaneously made an effort to create a collective consciousness about Turks' links to their ancestors.[266]

The Kemalists did not want to promote a strictly ethnic definition of Turkish nationalism since it would extend to Turks outside the Republic's borders. Ethnic requirements for Turkish nationalism would also exclude the Republic's non-Turkish groups, particularly those in Anatolia, which the state sought to include in its vision of

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[261] *Türk Anayasası [Turkish Constitution]* (1924), Article 88.
[262] *Tarih IV Turkiye Cumhuriyeti* (Istanbul, 1931).
[263] Eissenstat, "Turkic Immigrants/Turkish Nationalism: Opportunities and Limitations of a Nationalism in Exile." p. 25.
[264] Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*. p. 74-110.
[265] Heper, "Kemalism/Atatürkism." p. 145.
[266] Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 172.

Turkish national identity. Kemal and his supporters believed their inclusion in this vision would help strengthen the legitimacy and authority of the Republic.[267] During the Turkish-Greek War Kemal and the nationalists received the support of many Turkish and non-Turkish Muslims living in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. They helped fight for the area that would go on to become the Republic of Turkey, which they saw as their homeland.[268] These inhabitants included many Muslim refugees from the Balkans and Caucasus who resettled in Anatolia during the nineteenth century. For these inhabitants who had fled inter-religious war and violence, it was important for them to claim and defend their Anatolian homeland.[269]

The Kemalists actively suppressed pan-Turkism because it emphasized unity with Turks outside of the Republic's borders, a collective identity that the state had less control over. The restriction and eventual disbandment of the Turkish Hearth organization's activities in the early years of the Republic exemplifies one of the steps Kemalists took to tightly control the spread of pan-Turkist sentiments. The Turkish Hearth organization, originally established in 1912 to promote a mix of Turkism and Turkish nationalism, was essential in the spread of pan-Turkist ideas. The activities of the Turkish Hearth had no defined boundaries, as the territory of the Ottoman Empire consistently shifted during the centuries leading up to its collapse. Its efforts were therefore not tied to the borders of the Empire at all times.[270]

After the Greco-Turkish War the Kemalists brought the Turkish Hearth under the control of the government and shifted the focus of its activities. The Kemalists firmly believed in a Turkish nationalism that did not extend beyond the borders of the Republic, thus they did not support pan-Turkism. To bring the Turkish Hearth in line with this belief the Kemalists redefined the role and purpose of the Turkish Hearth to focus on two main areas: defending the values of nationalism and promoting the new reforms. The new overarching goal of the Turkish Hearth centered on educating the Turkish people on Turkish nationalism.[271]

In 1924, the second article of the Turkish constitution stated the official purpose of the Turkish Hearth as working "to develop Turkish culture while strengthening national consciousness among all Turks, to work towards…cultural progress and towards the development of the national economy."[272] In the following three years the state took measures to scale back the Turkish Hearth's activities and in 1927 officially restricted its activities to the boundaries of the Republic.[273] By 1931 the state officially disbanded the Turkish Hearth organization.[274] The decision to shut down the Turkish Hearth organization represented an attempt to further eliminate pan-Turkist sentiments. Ironically, parallel to this the state began crafting the Turkish

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[267] Ibid. p. 166.
[268] Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s." p. 86.
[269] Canefe, "Turkish Nationalism and Ethno-Symbolic Analysis: The Rules of Exception." p. 149.
[270] Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 170.
[271] Ibid. p. 171.
[272] *1340 Senesi Nisaninda Toplanan Birinci Turk Ocaklari Umumi Kongresi Zabitlari* (Proceedings of the First General Congress of the Turkish Hearths Meeting in April of the Year 1924. Ankara: Yeni Gun Matbaasi, 1341 [1925]).
[273] *Turk Ocaklari Yasasi* (Constitution of the Turkish Hearth).
[274] Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks." p. 175.

History Thesis, which drew on a degree of pan-Turkist sentiments to rally citizens around Turkish national unity.

The Turkish History Thesis tied Turks to their ancestors of Central Asia and made the claim that Turks were the first great civilization. It claimed all civilizations could be traced back to the Turks, except the Ottomans. The Thesis explained that Central Asia was not only the foundation of the Turks, but of all of humanity. From Central Asia, the Turks then spread across the world. The Thesis also argued that Anatolia was one of the most 'racially pure' areas of Turkishness. [275] This helped the Kemalists legitimize the foundation of the Republic as it created a strong link between the citizens and the land they inhabited.[276]

This narrative decisively left out any ties to the Ottoman-Islamic past in an attempt to separate the Turks from the perceived failures of the former Empire. The references to the Ottomans that did appear painted them as responsible for breaking the Turks' ties to the Western world, thus making Ottomans directly responsible for the Republic's problems. [277] This narrative helped the Kemalists further legitimize their struggle against the Republic's Ottoman-Islamic past and their insistence to eliminate all traces of it from the collective public consciousness.

## Education and Language

The rapid spread of printed material helped facilitate the simplification of language, particularly during the late decades of the Ottoman Empire. Early attempts to reform the Empire's written and spoken language began in 1911 with a literary group called the Young Pens (*Genç Kalemler*), who published a journal by the same name. Their goal was to eliminate the distinction between the Empire's written and spoken language. Among the authors of the group's journal was Ziya Gökalp. In the journal he opposed the continuation of separate spoken and written languages and advocated for the two to be condensed. As part of this plan he promoted the 'purification' of the Turkish language. In his version of language purification, he called for the removal of some, but not all, foreign words.[278] Efforts by the Genç Kalemler and other Ottoman intellectuals aimed at simplifying and reforming the language, not intervening in the structure of the state. This directly contrasted with the efforts of the Kemalists, who changed not only the Turkish language itself but also its symbolism and usage.

The CUP attempted to push Ottoman Turkish on the Empire's population through the Turkish Hearth. For the CUP though, language did not represent a prerequisite for identity in the same way the Kemalists' new version of the Turkish language did. While the CUP pushed Turkish instruction and education on Ottoman subjects, it still permitted the establishment of some minority schools that provided language and

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[275] Ayas, "Turkish History Thesis as a Legitimizing Instrument in Music Debates of Early Republican Turkey." p. 1060.

[276] Aydingun and Aydingun. "The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness." p. 421.

[277] Ayas, "Turkish History Thesis as a Legitimizing Instrument in Music Debates of Early Republican Turkey." p. 1059.

[278] Aydingun and Aydingun. "The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness." p. 423.

literature classes.[279] The Kemalists not only pushed, but forcibly required subjects of the Republic to adopt and use the new Turkish language. In 1935 Prime Minister İsmet İnönü bluntly stated: "From now on, we will not keep quiet. All citizens, who live with us, will speak Turkish."[280]

Kemalists conceptions of nationalism had firm roots in language, culture and common ideals. Kemal and his associates emphasized the role language played in the new Republic and how the adoption of the Turkish language fit into national identity. The Turkish language became an integral part of Turkish national identity. Being Turkish meant speaking only Turkish, and non-Turkish speakers were viewed as foreigners in the eyes of the state:

> "One of the significant characteristics of the nation is language. One, who regards himself as a member of the Turkish nation, should first of all and in every case, speak Turkish. If, someone, who does not speak Turkish, claims membership to Turkish culture and community, it would not be right to believe this."[281]

> One of the obvious qualities of nationality is language. He must first speak the Turkish language who says that he belongs to the Turkish nationality. If the one does not speak the Turkish language it is not true to believe that a person who claims his devotion to Turkish society and culture.[282]

The issue of language was one of the areas where Gökalp, the proclaimed father of Turkish nationalism, and the Kemalists did not completely agree. The idea of reforming the Ottoman language had firm roots with the *garbcılar*. Both Cevdet and Nuri advocated for the adoption of the Latin alphabet during the Second Constitutional period of the Ottoman Empire. Gökalp, on the other hand, rejected the replacement of Arabic and Persian words with Turkish ones and only supported eliminating foreign words that existed alongside Turkish synonyms.[283] He believed that eliminating Arabic and Persian would destroy the language and that all the imported words had already become Turkish since the Turks were using them. The Kemalists surpassed Gökalp's ideas on language reform in choosing to discard all Arabic and Persian words and replace the Arabic script with the Latin alphabet.

This move was in line with the Kemalists' efforts to invoke a full-scale break from the Republic's Islamic and Ottoman past. According to the Kemalists the Arabic script set Turkey apart from the West and remained a link to the Ottoman Empire. The Kemalists forced the new language on the country's population suddenly and with minimal warning. Publications quickly appeared in the new language and the state implemented a ban on the printing of Arabic and Persian publications, including religious texts.[284] Cities and towns received new, Turkish names. Street signs in the

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[279] Ülker, "Contextualizing 'Turkification': Nation-building in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918." p. 620.

[280] *CHP Dorduncu Buyuk Kurultayi Gorusmeleri Tutulgasi* [Records of the sessions of CHP's Fourth General Congress] (Ankara: 9-16 May 1935).

[281] Kemal, quoted in Arar, "Ataturkun Gunumuz Olaylarina Isik Tutuan Baki Konusmalari." p. 23-24. Referenced in Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s."

[282] Kemal, quoted in Toros, *Atatürk'ün Adana Seyahatleri*. p. 39.

[283] Aydingun and Aydingun, "The Role of Language in the Formation of Turkish National Identity and Turkishness." p. 418-210.

[284] Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey: Volume II: Reform, Revolution and the Republic.* p. 376.

new language appeared overnight and Turkish education began in state schools. The country had a mere six months to read, write and speak a new version of Turkish stripped of its Ottoman vocabulary and written in an unfamiliar script.[285]

Accompanying legislation forbid the use of languages other than Turkish, preventing the Republic's inhabitants from reading and writing the language of their Ottoman past. Those who did not read, write, and speak Turkish received fines and even punishments.[286] The state also forced citizens to adopt Turkish surnames, mandated by the Law of Surnames passed in 1934.[287] This reformation and use of the new Turkish language pushed the Republic further away from its Ottoman past and closer to a cohesive Turkish national identity, fostered by state intervention and restrictions.

> *"Writing history is as important as making history."*
> *– Mustafa Kemal Atatürk[288]*

Another important aspect of the Kemalist reform package was the rewriting of Turkish history. In the official narrative of the Kemalists, and largely by Kemal himself during his seven-day speech (*Nutuk)*, Turkey was described as a brand new state with no ties to the former Ottoman Empire. The state claimed Turkey inherited nothing from the Ottoman period and described the Empire as "backwards." In conjunction with this, Turkey was likened to a phoenix that had risen from the ashes of the deceased Empire.[289]

The creation of a new Turkish history became one of the primary projects of the new Turkish state. Kemalist hand-picked scholars to write the Turkish History Thesis, which aimed to show that the Turks were and had always been a civilized nation and that they had priority over other ethnicities (namely Greeks and Armenians) in their Anatolian homeland.[290] The goal was to make the history of the Turks known to the world and to serve as a source of national inspiration, especially for the Turkish youth. The Turkish History Thesis signified that Turkishness consisted of racial, ethnic, historical, and linguistic elements.

## Secularism

The Kemalists' secularizing reforms went far beyond those promoted by the CUP, and in some cases even by the *garbcılar*. Kemalist efforts went beyond separating state and religion, as the leaders of the Young Turk movement envisioned. The Kemalists aimed to also reduce the influence of religion from public life and placed religious institutions under the control of the state. Instead of attempting to eliminate religious influences, the state instead sought to give itself more control over religious influences. These efforts began in 1922 with the abolishment of the Sultanate and Caliphate, which the Kemalists saw as a lingering attachment to the Ottoman

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[285] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey.* p. 276-279.
[286] Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s". p. 95.
[287] Türköz, "Surname Narratives and the State-Society Boundary: Memories of Turkey's Family Name Law of 1934." p. 893.
[288] Kemal, *Atatürk'ün Büyük Nutuk'u* (The Great Speech). p. 4.
[289] This depiction has since remained a staple in Turkish historiography. Aksan, "Ottoman to Turk: Continuity and Change." p. 19.
[290] *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları* (1930).

Empire. The elimination of Islamic courts followed in 1924. The government then abolished the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations, replacing it with Directorate for Religious Affairs (*Diyanet Işleri Müdürlüğü*) and the Directorate-General for Pious Foundations (*Evkaf Umum Müdürlüğü*).[291] The state tasked these Directorates with the "interpretation and execution of an enlightened version of the Islamic religion."[292]

In addition to eliminating and replacing religious institutions the state enacted measures to remove religious symbols from the public sphere. As recommended in the *garbcılar*'s Westernization plan, the state closed down all shrines (*türbes*) and dervishes (*tekkes*)*.* Hospitals and social centers operated by religious organizations moved under the administration of the state. The prohibition of the Ottoman *fez* and the adoption of the European calendar, Italian penal code, Swiss civil code and Latin alphabet all affected religion's place in the Turks' identity. Though symbolic and tied mostly to Westernization efforts, the adoption of these Western cultural and social elements also impacted the role of religion in Turkish society.

Turkish national identity, and by extension Kemalism, attempted to fill the void Islam once occupied. In 1945 the Turkish Language Association even began defining religion as: "A strongly held idea or ideal. Kemalism is the religion of the Turk."[293] In many ways Kemalism became a political religion, which Mateescu explains as:

> …profoundly revolutionary—it arises in times of political collapse to build a new establishment on the ruins of a former one. It is also poised for an attack on the traditional religion aiming at either appropriating its domain or simply eliminating it from the public realm…A political religion revolves around the image of a charismatic leader whose name and image become associated with the deification of the state as defined by the revolutionary political establishment.[294]

Indeed, Mateescu's description of political religion can be directly applied to the example of Kemalism. The Kemalists capitalized on the religious void, which they intentionally exacerbated, hoping to fill it with Turkish national identity. Through a strategic combination of rapid, radical reforms the Kemalists promoted their Six Arrows, and particularly Turkish nationalism, at the expense of religion, and at times even as a religion. According to the Kemalists, Turkish nationalism was not only an integral part to a Turk's identity, but it was something Turks should whole heartedly believe in.

## Conclusion

The ideologies and policies of the Young Turks and the Kemalists certainly overlap; this thesis does not attempt to debate that statement. Instead, this thesis seeks to highlight the areas of discontinuity between the two movements and show that there is not a direct line between them. While both movements carried out similar policies,

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[291] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History.* p. 187.
[292] Seker, "Vision of Modernity in the Early Turkish Republic: An Overview." p. 52.
[293] *T.D.K. Türkçe Sözlük: Türk Dil Kurumu Lugat Kolu Çalismalariyle Hazirlanmistir.* (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Basimevi, 1945). p. 153. Referenced in Hanioğlu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography.* p. 193.
[294] Mateescu, "Kemalism in the Era of Totalitarianism: A Conceptual Analysis." p. 229-230.

their motivations for doing so differed. The extent to which they carried out these policies also differed. Moreover, if one were to trace the roots of Kemalist ideology and policies back to the Young Turk movement, this would point to a strong influence from the movement's *garbcılar* faction versus its central leadership.

Gökalp, often referenced in current scholarship as the 'father of Turkish nationalism', certainly influenced Kemalist ideology. Yet there are also areas where he diverged from Kemalist thought, such as the adoption of Western civilization and the inclusion of religion in Turkish identity. In these areas, we can see a stronger influence from the ideas of Cevdet and the *garbcılar*, whose beliefs arguably formed the basis for the radical measures put forth during the Kemalist era.

The Young Turk movement's preservationist mindset directly contrasted with the creationist mindset of the Kemalist nationalist movement, which strived to construct a new homeland out of the ruins of the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Had the CUP leadership remained in power and successfully overcome the challenges of World War I, it is unclear how they would have chosen to continue running the Empire. It can be assumed from the ideological shifts occurring at that time that the CUP would have continued efforts to forcefully and violently homogenize the remaining Ottoman population and enforce a shared identity, but the extent and speed at which they would have done this remains unknown. Since the CUP's central leadership did not agree with the stances of the *garbcılar*, which influenced the radical reforms of the Kemalists, it is unlikely that its future measures would have mirrored those of the Kemalists.

In conclusion, the links between the two movements are extremely complex and cannot be summarized as merely a continuation from one to the other. As this thesis has attempted to highlight, there were links to different groups within the Young Turk movement as well as discontinuities between the ideologies and policies of each movement. Kemalist ideology can certainly be traced back to many ideas that gained prominence in the Young Turk era, but it is necessary to dig deeper to show the links between specific ideas, individuals and time periods. This thesis hopes to shed light on the need for further scholarship on these discontinuities and the reasons behind them.

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# Appendix

## Turkish Translations

| **Türkçe** | **English** |
| --- | --- |
| Ahali Fırkası | People's Party |
| Altı Ok | Six Arrows (of Kemalism) |
| Amasya Genelgesi | Amasya Circular |
| Atatürkçülük | Kemalism |
| Aydınlar | Intellectuals |
| Cumhuriyetçilik | Republicanism |
| | |
| Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası | Republican People's Party |
| Devletçilik | Statism/Etatism |
| Devlet-i Osmaniye | Ottoman State |
| Devrimcilik | Revolutionism/Reformism |
| Diyanet Işleri Müdürlüğü | Directorate for Religious Affairs |
| Dokuz Umde | Nine Principles |

| | |
|---|---|
| Evkaf Umum Müdürlüğü | Directorate-General for Pious Foundations |
| Fedakâran-ı Millet Cemiyeti | National Unionist Federation |
| Garbcılar | Westernists |
| Garbcılık | Westernization |
| Halkçilik | Populism |
| Halk Evleri | People's Houses |
| Halk Fırkası | People's Party |
| Halk Odaları | People's Rooms |
| Hars | Culture |
| Hakimiyet-i Osmaniye | Ottoman Rule |
| Heyet-i Müttefika-i Osmaniye | Ottoman Committee of Alliance |
| Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası | Freedom and Accord Party (Liberal Union, Liberal Entente) |
| İskan Kanunu | Resettlement Law |
| İslahat-ı Esasiye-i Osmaniye Fırkası | Ottoman Fundamental Reform Party |
| İslamcılık | Islamism |
| İttihad-ı Muhammedi Fırkası | Mohammadin Union |
| Ittihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti | Society of Ottoman Union |
| İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti | Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) |
| Irk | Race |
| Jön Türkler | Young Turks |
| Katib-i Umumi | General Secretary |
| Kemalizm | Kemalism |
| Köy Enstitüleri | Village Institutes |
| Kurtuluş Savaşı | Liberation War |
| Laiklik | Secularism |
| Medeni | Civilized |
| Medeniyet | Civilization |
| Merkez-i Umumi | Central Committee |
| Millet | Nation (also: group organized by religion) |
| Milli | National |
| Milliyetçilik | Nationalism |
| Mutedil Hürriyetperveran Fırkası | Moderate Liberal Party |
| Milli Mücadele | National Struggle |
| Misak-ı Milli | National Pact |
| Muasir | Modern |
| Muasirlaşmak | Modernity, Civilization |
| Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası | Ottoman Liberal Union |
| Osmanlı Demokrat Fırkası | Ottoman Democratic Party |
| Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti | Ottoman Freedom Society |
| Osmanlı İmparatorluğu | Ottoman Empire |
| Osmanlı Sosyalist Fırkası | Ottoman Socialist Party |
| Osmanlıca | Ottoman (language) |
| Öz Türkler | True Turks |
| Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası | Free Republican Party |

| | |
|---|---|
| Tehcir Kanunu | Relocation Law |
| Terakki | Progress |
| Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası | Progressive Republican Party |
| Teşkilat-i Mahsusa | Special Organization |
| Türkiye | Turkey |
| Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi | Turkish Grand National Assembly |
| Türk Derneği | Turkish Association |
| Türk Ocağı | Turkish Hearth |
| Türk Yurdu | Turkish Homeland |
| Türklük | Turkishness |
| Türkçülük | Turkism |
| Vatan | Country |