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WORKINGS OF MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK'S
CULT OF PERSONALITY IN 20TH CENTURY TURKISH MODERNITY
Master's Thesis

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I have written the Master's Thesis independently. All of the other authors' texts, main viewpoints and all data from other resources have been referred to.

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Introduction

Topic and delimitation

This dissertation consists of a study regarding the personality cult constructed in the Republic of Turkey, around the persona of its founding statesman, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Its main effort is to analyse how this cult of personality is conceived, how it is propagated and how it is maintained throughout the history of Turkey for decades, most of which were well after the demise of its object, Mustafa Kemal himself.

This work doesn't necessarily seek to argue on historical events *per se*, but rather discusses how such events and their interpretations have been employed in order to construct various political discourses allowing the acceptance and maintenance of the phenomenon through analysis of visual artworks, ritual behaviour and similar quotidian practices, also employing literary allusions for contextualisation of the case in point. The perpetuity and endurance of the phenomenon in daily life, it is nigh inconceivable to bring all manifestations of this cult of personality to bear in a comprehensive form within the confines of this present work. However, through the position of a "participant-observer", it is nonetheless possible to isolate several examples of varying extension in order to glean upon how this socially constructed object of analysis affects and functions in society.

History of the concept and previous research

Personality cults, as social constructs built around particular public individuals can be traced to Classic eras, such as Ancient Greece or Roman Empire. These manifestations mainly function as apotheosis, deification of an individual through lavish reverence and worship. While not necessarily compliant with the work in this dissertation, ancient cults nonetheless constitute the earliest examples of our current object of study.

The first glimpses of a conceptual similarity to a contemporary cult of personality is encountered in the Romantic "cult of genius", the reverence and admiration of individuals with perceivably superior traits and abilities than their counterparts. This term provides a much closer to the current conception of personality cults, insofar as it

does not necessarily equate the object of admiration to a divine or at least divinely ordained figure. As we reach nineteenth century, it appears that the concept of the cult of personality has attained the meaning that is currently accepted – in a letter to Wilhelm Blos, Karl Marx makes mention of personality cults, *Personenkultus*, in regards to the proliferation of his supporters' bestowals of honour during the Second International (Heller, 2004: 23-33). This, of course, refers to the flocking of various workers unions under the self-description of 'Marxism', to which Marx himself was allegedly distant.

The personality of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk has been the subject of constant debate and controversy both in domestic Turkish academia and politics, as well as abroad. Amongst numerous works about him, the first body of work was the biographical narrative penned by British military historian Harold Courtenay Armstrong, who published his *Grey Wolf: the Intimate Study of a Dictator* in 1937. Not necessarily overtly hostile, it nonetheless claims intimacy regarding Mustafa Kemal's private, familial, and most controversially for Turkish audiences, sexual aspects of life. Though the first and only biographical work concerning Atatürk printed in his lifetime, the book was banned in Turkey for long years due to accusations of seditious and slanderous content. Later attempts of publication of this work encountered heavy censoring, with the redaction of various chapters. This opposition is a key element that separates it from more detailed works such as Andrew Mango's biographical work, *Atatürk*.

During the period, which will often be referred as "the formative years" of the Republic of Turkey (spanning roughly from 1922 to late 1930s), information regarding Mustafa Kemal was highly regulated and controlled: one of the most well-known works is Mustafa Kemal's personal account of the National Struggle period (1919-1922), called *Nutuk* and was actually a six-day speech addressed at the Grand National Assembly, the Turkish parliament in 1927. Furthermore in this period, through state academics, there were political studies that gave accounts regarding Mustafa Kemal. Some of these writers, such as Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, will be discussed extensively in this study.

At this point, one may require a distinction of the body of work about Mustafa Kemal. As the purpose of this dissertation is not a biographical analysis but rather the analysis of the construction of persona through interpretation of history and texts, biographical works will only have referential and mostly tangential presence in this

work. For the purposes of this thesis, related precedent works are academic studies and semi-academic journals dealing with either cult of personality as a semiotic model of ideological communication, such as works written by Andreas Ventsel, who analyses Stalinist cult of personality in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or those that deal with the ideological properties and workings of Mustafa Kemal's legacy, such works by Etienne Copeaux, who focuses on the aspect of nationalism and its manifestations; and of Toni Alaranta, whose comprehensive doctoral dissertation discusses the legitimation practices of Mustafa Kemal's new republic, as well as various sub-formations of his ideology throughout the twentieth century.

Aims

This dissertation's aim is to investigate the processes behind this set of beliefs and practices and attempt to demonstrate development of individual charisma or loyalty transcends the bounds of an individual's lifespan and epoch, transforming him into a sacrosanct object of apotheosis and furthermore, how this construction is employed as means of legitimacy as well as an anchor to an idealised past, and lastly, a substitute for alternative ideological tendencies in vacuums of political representation.

To these ends, the first chapter of this dissertation consists of a brief explanation of the main theoretical elements that are employed in order to demonstrate a proposition of the construction and features of the Kemalist cult of personality. For this purpose, the main focus relies on the political theories of Argentinian Marxist theorist Ernesto Laclau and his concepts of hegemony and empty signifier, developed in collaboration with Belgian political theorist Chantall Mouffe. Although explained in detail further on, this theory defines an empty signifier as the representative of a "chain of equivalence" (conjunction of different yet equivalent demands), which is overtaken by a hegemonic signifier to lend coherence to the remaining whole.

Laclau and Mouffe employ the basic model of signification proposed by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, whose premise for structural linguistics in his *Cours de linguistics générale* (1916), proposes that meaning is only created through the difference of constituent elements, as opposed to elements having inherent values independently. Another influence in this aspect is the theory of the political by German jurist and theorist Carl Schmitt, whose conception of the nucleus of politics relies on the distinction of friend and enemy as the indivisible core of politics at large.

Lastly, Russian semiotician Juri Lotman's concept of autocommunication is employed in order to explain the cultural communication model in relation to the perpetuation of ideals that are associated with Mustafa Kemal. Lotman's concept of autocommunication suggests that communication of already-acquired information with oneself, whether on individual or on communal basis, consists of a change to message itself. Several analyses in this dissertation attempt to explore the role of autocommunicative properties in the construction of national identity.

Structure

The structure of the dissertation is as follows: in the first chapter, Approach and Methodology, theorists and their concepts as they bear on this study will be explained. In the subsequent chapter, focus will be on the historical background through which the circumstances regarding the foundation of the Republic of Turkey and Mustafa Kemal's rise to power will be laid out. Focusing on the abovementioned formative years, it refers to various accounts of several key events, which are then adjusted into the narrative of the Turkish independence. This section identifies some of the primary actors and texts that play major roles in the early years of the republic. The next chapter, Discourses, consists of three subsections that are dedicated to the various discourses through which Mustafa Kemal's personality cult manifests. Briefly, these subchapters are Legitimacy (3.1) and Nostalgia (3.2).

Subchapter of Legitimacy consists of references to previous studies related to this concept as a means of self-justification on the part of the ruling power. This section also consists of two case studies of visual and performative texts by Zeki Faik İzer and Reşit Galip respectively. Zeki Faik İzer's *On the Road to Transformation* (İnkılap Yolunda, 1933) will be analysed in comparison to a thematically similar work by 19th century painter Eugene Delacroix, in order to demonstrate the ambitions and adaptation attempts of European traditions into the Turkish culture. The second case study is concerned with a daily ritual performance known as *Student Oath* (Öğrenci Andı, or Andımız). Composed by Minister of Education Reşit Galip, this text is a short recital of an oath, taken by young students at the beginning of every school day. This oath (whose various translations are also available) will be analysed regarding its ideological functions in view of its autocommunicative function.

1. Approach and Methodology

For the purposes of this dissertation, the methodology consists of delineation of two specific types of discourse related to Kemalism – of legitimacy and of nostalgia. This typology covers the types of adherence and upholding of the personality cult in question through the relationship between the public and the state. The premise of this study is that Mustafa Kemal's cult of personality was built around the image of a benevolent and clairvoyant protector-statesman for the stabilisation of the nascent Turkish Republic in the early 1900s. Building on this premise, the aforementioned categories reflect how the state and the public interconnect and communicate through this image across the 20th century.

Through the author's participatory-observant status in the late 20th and early 21st century Turkey, and through case analyses of texts related to these discourses, the study attempts to reveal communicative mechanics of self-description and political representation in Turkish social and political culture, through the scope of Juri Lotman's concepts of autocommunication and semiosphere, as well as Ernesto Laclau's concepts of empty signifier and hegemony as well as previous theorists who have affected Lotman and Laclau, such as Saussure and Schmitt, respectively. Following the premise above, it is argued here that in the political void at the turn of the century, Kemalism (state ideology named after Mustafa Kemal) became the all-encompassing framework of national self-description by subsuming concepts related to it. Furthermore, the framework became the model of social, cultural and political instruction, manifesting in the form of public rituals, imagery and texts.

Objects of analysis chosen for the illustration of these points are picked from various points in the history of the Turkish Republic – formative years of 1920s and 1930s are focused on for the purposes of the study legitimacy, whereas later periods of 1960s onwards are employed to demonstrate the studies regarding nostalgia. These examples, while not fully representative of the entirety of their respective periods, are nevertheless highly indicative of the norms and conventions as they relate to the personality cult of Mustafa Kemal.

The purpose of these analyses is to demonstrate how various abstract concepts, such as national identity, loyalty, modernity / modernisation are linked together through a self-sustaining attempt at coherence through the construction of a state figure. Therefore, the study does not indulge in counterfactual historiography *as such*, but rather attempts to demonstrate that the current state of affairs regarding the Mustafa Kemal's cult of personality as one of the logical conclusions amongst many possible alternatives, and furthermore explains that the occurrence of one such outcome forms a retrospective justification of the historical process of 20th century Turkish national politics.

Aside from the theoretical frameworks borrowed from Juri M. Lotman and Ernesto Laclau, references consist of various academic works, such as articles and thesis work from Turkish and foreign academics, who have delved into the numerous reflections of Kemalist ideology. The primary function of these works in this dissertation is to provide a historiographical background across which the various propositions and resultant inferences may be tracked and followed. Furthermore, there are various footnotes in numerous points, which, in contrast to annotated quotations, provide contextual data, translations (made by the author unless specified otherwise) and/or brief explanations to assist in the interpretation of the subject matter therein.

The bulk of the dissertation consists of object analyses regarding the main "discourses", which are claimed to be associated with the maintenance of the cult of personality in question. These analyses mainly conducted through close reading of the object, either in isolation or in conjunction with similar works when the context allows.

2. History and background

The period following the First World War (1914-18) in the historiography of the Republic of Turkey, was mostly associated with a particular shame and defeat. The Great War marked the demise of the Ottoman Empire, whose already-embattled existence was further jeopardised after the rebellion and secession of many of its Balkan fiefdoms following the nationalist fervours of the post-1789 movements. At the turn of the century, the Empire faced further losses through the Balkan Wars and finally, the First World War, during which the Ottoman government elected to enter an alliance with the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires in the hope of regaining lost holdings. The war itself was costly and destructive to the already beleaguered empire and the eventual defeat in 1918 led to further humiliation through the planned partitioning of the remaining Ottoman landmass, which consisted of Asia Minor and holdings in the Middle East, alongside the dismantling of the armed forces.

At this point, according to the Turkish state historiography, the figure of Mustafa Kemal appears in earnest. A former officer in the Ottoman army and a veteran of the Gallipoli defence in 1915, he gathers around him a national movement that is instrumental in the arrestment and expulsion of foreign occupiers in the prospective lands of the Turkish nation. The following period of 1919-1922 is generally known as the National Struggle in Turkish history. Throughout the campaign that liberated the country and established the new nation, Mustafa Kemal appears at the forefront, directing the endeavour with an unerring and unwavering tactical genius and comes through the ordeal as the new president of the Republic of Turkey until his demise in 1938. The general tone of the narratives concerning this period are, like emulated above, plainly congratulatory and highly exultant in regards to the nation's new leader and his deeds.

Throughout the period leading from the formative years of the republic in the 1930s, the state ideology, Kemalism, was the essential metanarrative, through which other social, political, economic and cultural shifts would be read and understood. While the newly founded nation itself was trying to get to grips with the sweeping changes across

the cultural landscape, there is a distinct element regarding the cult imagery of Kemal Atatürk himself that accompanied them.

The extensive and all-encompassing nature of this cult rests upon various factors, such as the immediate shift in the powerbases from empire to republic; various roles assumed by Mustafa Kemal that reproduced his aura in numerous areas in the public life and systematic apotheosis from the first generation of the republican intelligentsia. It is therefore impossible to understand the cult element of Kemalism in Turkish society without its links to the National Struggle and the early years of the republic, since it was these years that led to the cult image of Atatürk as a sustained (and sustaining) feature of Kemalist metanarrative in Turkish modernity project. After all, it was the events and discourses that manifested in this period that were elaborated and officialised in this period from which many concepts related to Kemalism draw its power.

Concerning the entry to this topic, it might be necessary to frame the question as to *whether* one there is a cult of personality, or by moving one step ahead in the chain and thus having decided that the cult exists, lining up one's arguments for the chosen premise. For this work, the premise is that there is a profound and extensive personality cult regarding Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and that it sustains itself through a bilaterally engaged semiosis between the state and the people. It's also necessary to delineate what one means by "cult of personality." *Webster's Encyclopaedic Unabridged Dictionary* (1983) defines "cult" as follows:

cult (kult), *n.* 1. a particular system of religious worship, esp. with reference to its rites and ceremonies. 2. an instance of great veneration of a person, ideal, or thing, esp. as manifested by a body of admirers: *a cult of Napoleon*. 3. the object of such devotion. 4. a group or sect bound together by devotion to or veneration of the same thing, person, ideal, etc. 5. *Social.* a group having a sacred ideology and a set of rites centering around their symbols. 6. a religion that is considered or held to be false or unorthodox, or its members. 7. any system for treating human sickness that originated by one usually claiming to have sole insight into nature of disease, and that employs methods generally regarded as being unorthodox and unscientific. [L *cult(us)* tilling, care, refinement, worship, *n.* use of *ptp.* Of *colere* to cultivate, worship, dwell] – **cul'tic**, [...]

Therefore, the “cult” part of this term, despite its numerous variations, appears to focus, nonetheless, a spiritual or intellectual of a group upon a single individual out of various –and possibly overlapping– motives.

Further on, “personality” is defined by the aforementioned source as:

Per-son-al-i-ty, n., *pl.* –**ties**. **1.** the visible aspect of one’s character, as it impresses other: *he has a pleasing personality*. **2.** A person as an embodiment of a collection of qualities: *He is a curious personality*. **3. Psychol.** **a.** the sum of total of the physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics of an individual. **b.** the organized pattern of behavioural characteristics of the individual. **4.** the quality of being a person; existence as a self-conscious human being; personal identity. **5.** The essential character of a person. **6.** something apprehended as reflective of or analogous to a distinctive human personality, as the atmosphere of a place or thing: *This house has a warm personality, with all its chintzes and woodwork*. **7.** application or reference to a particular person or particular persons, often in disparagement or hostility. **8.** a disparaging or offensive statement referring to a particular person: *The conversation deteriorated into personalities*. **9.** a famous, notable or prominent person; celebrity. **10. Geog.** the distinguishing or peculiar characteristics of a region.

According to various combinations of these definitions (barring those referring to *ad hominem* arguments of the latter source), any widespread public devotion and/or admiration would constitute a cult of personality. As far as a general definition is concerned, this does not fall beyond our mark. However, such a wide definition may consist of anything between medieval monarchs to modern pop stars, wildly divergent examples, both for whom devotion and admiration are displayed or at least feigned as such. Then, we are required to narrow our definition a step further: cult of personality, as employed and understood in this work, is a mode of authoritarian discourse intended for political legitimacy and reinforced through an institutionalised deification of an authority figure, usually a statesman. With this further delineation, we may home in on political leaders rather than any receiver of public admiration. Another point is that we also glean a particularly religious undertone regarding the cultivation of the cult. In this case, our frame of reference can extend from Roman Imperial Period to twenty-first century states. The turning point for the precision of our definition is the secularisation of the state structures in the wake of the Enlightenment – advocacy in favour of rational and scientific society, and political revolutions in 1776 (America) and 1789 (France) caused the divinely ordained monarchy to lose the authority it once possessed, allowing secular political leaders to supplant religiously legitimate monarchs of the

previous eras. Empowerment of the people, inclusion in administration through elections and parliamentary democracies are possible avenues through which legitimacy is attained – even in totalitarian political structures elections are held, albeit for symbolic reasons, to justify the attainment of power by –the appearance of– public support. Therefore, as far the lease of legitimacy is concerned, it appears that the will of the divine has been replaced with the will of the people. The particularity of the concept of personality cults in the twentieth century manifests itself through the use of non-secular codes and rituals in order to ordain a secular rule.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and its transformation into the Republic of Turkey constitutes the historical background of the creation process of this personality cult. Consisting of the period between 1919-1922, this process, generally called National Struggle, saw to the formation of a national resistance movement in Asia Minor, formation of a new government (as opposed to that of the Sultanate in occupied İstanbul) and battles against the occupation forces. This period also produced its own signs of political power, such as Mustafa Kemal’s elevation to the rank of “commander-in-chief”, as well as his attainment of various honorary titles (which were identified with him further on) as well as the setting the tone of the various social and cultural policies.

It is important to bear in mind that the fruits of these endeavours were not necessarily and solely territorial, in the sense that they were not only pertaining to reclaiming lost provinces, cities and property. These victories were the base upon which the narrative of the National Struggle, as well as that of its actors were constructed. For instance, İsmet Pasha, second-in-command of Mustafa Kemal in the Western front, assumed the surname İnönü¹ after the location of two battles he had won against the Greek forces, while some of Mustafa Kemal’s utterances were integrated into a nationalist discourse as signifiers of national resistance and defiance. Mustafa Kemal’s various sayings throughout the First World War and National

¹ İnönü, as a compound word, consists of “in” (cave or den) and “ön-ü”, which translates as “in front of”. The name originally belongs to a province of the city of Eskişehir and was later adopted as a surname by İsmet Pasha, commander of the Western Front during the War of Independence.

Struggle have entered common Turkish parlance, signifying a sense of grandeur and fatefulness of the endeavour he undertook.²

Admittedly, Mustafa Kemal was not necessarily the only character of his period to see the necessity to form a resistance movement in order to expel occupying powers; according to Hülya Adak (Adak, 2003, 510-7), one of Mustafa Kemal's contemporaries, Kazım Karabekir, who was the commander of the eastern front, wrote in his account of the national struggle, that he was permitted to move eastward in order to organise a resistance movement in April 1919, roughly a month before Mustafa Kemal's celebrated arrival to Asia Minor (Karabekir, 1995, 108-9). This account contradicts the accepted account of the official national narrative, which was formed by Mustafa Kemal personally, in his famous weeklong speech in the Grand National Assembly in 1927, *Nutuk*³, which constitutes the essential foundation of the Kemalist ideology. Yet, it is not only Mustafa Kemal's narrative that takes precedence over that of Kazım Karabekir but also constitutes the *only* narrative regarding this period. The fact that the abovementioned alternative account could only be published as late as 1960 points to a monopoly in the historiography of the National Struggle. Adak further suggests that "[t]he 'book', 'man' and 'nation' trinity came to bear a logocentric authority, which was secured on the grounds the same proper name, 'Father Turk'. Thus the proper name of the author conjoined the text and the self, so that the untouchable status of the author dictated the untouchable status of the book" (Adak, 2003: 517). The unquestionable power possessed by Mustafa Kemal is therefore was thus imparted to his endeavours, lending them the same indisputable authority that the leader himself came to possess. This radiating authority becomes a structural feature of Kemalist rhetoric, so much so that as Alaranta suggests, the attempted critical analysis of one of the constituent elements of "this triangle unity logically leads to a critical assessment of them all" (Alaranta, 2011a: 106). This infusion of the corporeal (the "man", Mustafa Kemal) and the abstract (ideology) has been touched upon in the context of Mustafa Kemal's *Nutuk*, especially in his conjunctive narrative of "I-nation", where Mustafa Kemal recounts the National Struggle in a fashion that implies

² Among such utterances are: "They shall come" (regarding British occupation of İstanbul; "I am not ordering you to fight. I am ordering you to die." (during Gallipoli defence of 1915).

³ Literally, *Nutuk* translated into English as *rhetoric*, carrying the meaning of "good speech" or "well-spoken word". However, it will nonetheless be referred in its Turkish form in this study in order to avoid conflation.

that he [Mustafa Kemal] was the actor of the national will – he assumes the political sovereignty and the position of the enlightened leader whose vision has led the beleaguered people to a new future.

As will be elaborated in this work, Mustafa Kemal's position of the enlightened leader has been an enduring one. It is concretely entrenched and rarely challenged even during regimes that appear ideologically opposed to it. This immovability may largely be attributed to the peculiar position of Turkey in the historical process of the early 20th century. When compared to various cults of personality through this century, such as that of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union, of Niyazov in post-Soviet Turkmenistan, Balkan leaders such as Ceausescu, Mustafa Kemal's cult of personality has a distinction of being constructed on a radically different political landscape, as opposed to self-legitimation through identification to the precedent leader and/or the dominant discourse of the period. This mainly stems from the construction of a new nation, with a new identity, as opposed to the continuation of an on-going one (albeit with the removal of Soviet elements, in case of former Eastern Bloc countries). It is this lack of a comparable precedent within the same political system that enables the entrenchment of the current cult of personality well after Mustafa Kemal's demise.

3. Discourses

3.1. Legitimacy: Secure and Secular

Despite prevention of competing historical accounts of the National Struggle, like the aforementioned ban on Karabekir's writings, it would be simplistic Mustafa Kemal's elevation to the status of an unerring luminary and statesman who embodies the will of the nation is necessarily a cultural putsch that gained dominance *solely* by the dint of political suppression of opponents. While such practices have been attributed to the political legitimization of sovereignty in the formative years of the republic, the hegemony radiating from Mustafa Kemal's persona and the cult of personality constructed around him possesses a much more varied process. In the period consisting of the National Struggle and the early years of the republic, there's a decidedly emphasised endeavour to enshrine Mustafa Kemal in the abstract trappings of a saviour figure of unprecedented vision, courage and benevolence. The impetus of this endeavour has been argued as the filling the void of the sovereign, left in a vacuum following the abolishment of the last Ottoman monarch, Mehmet Vahdettin VI. Considered to be the "shadow of God upon the world" (*zill-ullah*), the Sultanate symbolised the religiously legitimised figure of a paternal power. With the Sultanate and the Caliphate gone, this vacuum was promptly filled by a new father figure (Ünder, 2009: 146). Ünder claims this replacement was not necessarily one of a pragmatic nature, which would simply substitute the divinely ordained Sultan with the secular Mustafa Kemal in order to establish order and stability for time being – the motive behind the exaltation of Mustafa Kemal to a figure of supernatural and somewhat spiritually endowed proportions is suggested to be the religious background of the first generation of republican intelligentsia, who framed the National Struggle as a individual-led process rather than a collective endeavour. This religiously tinted approach may be traced in the titles bestowed, and analogies related to Mustafa Kemal by his peers at the time: apart from titles such as Chief of the Representative Committee, and that of the Grand National Assembly and Commander-in-Chief, he

was also dubbed “*halaskar*”, “*gazi*”, and “*münci-i azam*”, meaning “deliverer”, “holy warrior”⁴ and “great saviour”, respectively.

Mustafa Kemal’s self-entitled role of the executor of national will or perhaps *as* the national will thus rides on a set of various signs, consisting of his military pedigree (as was tested and proven both during the Great War and the National Struggle), which would later be transformed to consolidate his role as *the* statesman of godlike proportions. However, it has been argued (Alaranta 2011a: 116 [Şimşek, 2005: 74]) that the transformation required a legitimacy, for which the victory in the Turkish War of Independence of 1919-1922, was too far in the past to provide. To consolidate legitimacy in order to push through the desired, transformative enlightenment, it was necessary to construct a discourse that would elaborate the epic narrative of the National Struggle into a historically justified culmination of a process. The conception of the *Turkish Thesis of History* constitutes an example regarding this issue. Penned as a response to what was perceived as an antagonistic practice of historiography that painted Turkish history in conjunction with Islam, the *Thesis* was promulgated in 1930 and posited the view that not only Central Asia was the first home to Turks, but to the civilised peoples of the contemporary period, therefore drawing an uninterrupted line of descent through history, of which the Turkic people were the progenitors. Though it has been widely criticised as jingoistic, unscientific and profoundly politically motivated (and therefore, perhaps not the most reliable source) *Thesis of Turkish History* nevertheless provides is an indicator of the ambitions of the republican intelligentsia to provide a “historical” justification of the Turkish revolution.

In continuation of such endeavours, Peker’s *Lectures on the Revolution*, given in İstanbul and Ankara in 1934-5, forms an institutionalised narrative of the modern Turkish state and its position on the world stage. The tendency to treat Turkish revolution as the national manifestation of a universally valued history of progress is further elaborated by Peker through his categorical distinction of revolutions, namely, revolutions of freedom (*hürriyet inkılabı*) and those of class (*sınıf inkılabı*). As the examples of the former, Peker provides English Revolution⁵ and French Revolution, of

⁴ ‘Gazi’ in its modern Turkish meaning generally refers to a soldier who has been wounded in service and therefore assumes a more secular connotation as opposed to its original (and initially intended meaning) of a warrior who fights on behalf of God.

⁵ English Revolution is usually employed to denote two separate events in the history of England. The earlier one, mentioned above and began in 1649, consisted of the Trial of Charles Stuart I and later the

1649 and 1789, respectively. Peker's distinction lies the groundwork for the legitimacy of the republic as follows: Turkish revolution is the refinement of previous revolutions, such as the English or the French ones, by the dint of its unity of representation in one single heart and mind (which converged on the persona of Mustafa Kemal) – not only this revolution secured the liberties of its people, but also stood against what Peker and his contemporaries believe to be the detrimental aftereffects of a revolution, namely parliamentary system (due to the belief that opposing parliamentary factions would impede steady progress of a unitary structure) and class revolutions (or for that matter, the concept of class distinctions as such, due to the belief that these are “maladies” pertaining to degenerate societies.) Another step in the direction of legitimacy comes from Peker's contemporary, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, also an early Kemalist ideologue as well as a former Minister of Justice in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Following John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, Bozkurt criticises and accuses the Mehmet Vahdettin VI with betrayal of his oath of office and collaboration with the enemy (Bozkurt, 1940: 126). He concludes that in the light of such transgressions, the execution of a revolution and the establishment of the republic couldn't be any more legitimate (Peker: 127-8). Peker and Bozkurt serve as examples of the legitimising discourse that replaces the waning legitimacy lent by the War of Independence. The discourse in question attempts to leave no doubts or misgivings pertaining to the necessity and rectitude of the revolution, while also framing the preceding regime as the cause of the collapse. The inferences here as follows: firstly, through John Locke's *Treatises*, Bozkurt (and by extension, the construction of Kemalist ideology) positions the Turkish revolution in the tradition of the great European revolutionary tradition by the right to resist tyranny and secondly, it frames Kemalist movement as the representative of the will that instigates this change (Alaranta, 2011a: 120). Furthermore, a third case is that the enemy, embodied in the persona of Sultan Mehmet VI (alongside the order he represented), is the adversary, against which the collection of republican values are set.

establishment of the Commonwealth. The later “English Revolution” refers to the events that led to “the Glorious Revolution”, where the English Parliament invited William III of the House of Orange in order to coerce then-monarch James Stuart II into reconciliation over his perceived crypto-Catholicism. 1649 differs from 1689 in its conclusion: Cromwellian Parliament eventually beheaded the monarch in the end of the Civil War, whereas in 1689, the English Parliament exercised its power in order to oust James II in favour of William III. However, whether through regicide or “bloodless” means, in either case the legitimate governmental body exercised its will in order to remove a tyrannical ruler. As such, the perceived ambiguity as to which English Revolution is meant is, in this instance is of no practical consequence.

3.1.1 Empty signifiers and national values

The values in question, such as freedom, equality, democracy et cetera, do not exist in vacuum, with predesignated signifieds that exist “out there.” On the contrary, they are solely defined through their differences. The notion of concepts with no inherent, positive designation but only a differential one in comparison to one another constitutes the basis of the linguistic theory of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, whose premises, in turn, immensely influenced the ideas of future structuralists. However, in order grasp such differences, there needs to exist certain limits by which such concepts may be differentiated. According to Ernesto Laclau, the coherence of each set of differences is established via its differentiation with something other than itself – this necessitates the signification of a difference that is fundamentally *different*, i.e. something that is *excluded* as opposed to yet another, neutral element (Laclau, 2005: 69-70; 1996: 36-40). Laclau contextualises this proposition by the demonization of a particular section of a population, against which the rest could establish a sense of coherence. Yet, he writes, this suggests another problem: if a set of differences identify themselves through their mutual equivalence against this outer difference, and since difference and equivalence are mutually subversive, then it is the case that “all identity is constructed within this tension between the differential and the equivalential logics.” (Laclau, 2005: 70).

Furthermore, Laclau suggests that this tension is impossible to resolve, yet necessary to exist. Its insurmountability stems from the insoluble opposition of its constituents, while its necessity is due to its provision of a closure, albeit incomplete – it predicates identity and signification. Therefore, if this unresolved and incommensurable totality is to be represented, then one of the constituent differences within this totality would assume precedence or priority. This is the point where Laclau defines his concepts of *hegemony* and *empty signifier*. It is the assumption of precedence of the particular difference that constitutes the hegemony and due to “the unachievable fullness” of the object, its representation is the empty signifier (Laclau, 2005: 70-71). Lastly, the failure of the totality renders it not a ground (on which the society would stand) but a horizon (towards which they would cohere). As such, lack

of a concrete ground or as Laclau puts it, “a determinate ontic content” such as economy, or spirit of the people, the hegemonic totalisation thereof requires a “radical investment” for there are no determinable a priori (Laclau, 2005: 71). In other words, with indeterminacy caused by the failed totality entails the investiture into the empty signifier that “takes up” the signification on behalf of the whole.

So, how does Ernesto Laclau’s hegemonic empty signifier manifest in the context of the 20th century Kemalist metanarrative of Turkish modernity? What elements constitute the chain of equivalence against the excluded element that is repelled by the system proper? Earlier in this section, there appeared two figures, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt and Recep Peker, members of the first generation Turkish intelligentsia, whose lectures and writings were considered to be the foremost examples of the legitimisation of the Turkish revolution and Mustafa Kemal’s role in it. As mentioned above, Bozkurt is highly critical of the Sultanate, berating various acts committed by Mehmet VI, such as the declaration of a fatwa against the revolutionaries, sentencing Mustafa Kemal to death (in absentia) and desertion after the war had ended (Bozkurt, 1940: 126). Against such betrayal, there manifested a national will to defend the Turkish fatherland and to secure the rights of the Anatolian people. In this narrative, the inevitable protagonist is Mustafa Kemal, who represents this national will. Through the reference to John Locke and therefore to the European tradition of revolution, Bozkurt advocates the legitimacy of the revolution. Peker’s stream also runs close and parallel to this view: his categorical distinction between revolutions of freedom, and of class as well as his inclusion of the Turkish revolution in the former category implies that he perceives the process as a participation in a universal history of progress [Alaranta, 2011a: 122].

So far, we can list various concepts that are applicable to the modelling of the empty signifier – these concepts are either directly referred to through writings of ideologues, such as Bozkurt and Peker, or through Mustafa Kemal’s *Nutuk*, or they are inferred through their references to figures such Locke, who appears to bestow the sense of legitimacy for the occurrence of the Turkish revolution. As such, in the chain of equivalence, we may count national will (or, broadly nationalism), freedom (of speech,

of assembly, of press and so on), as well as what came to be known as the Six Arrows⁶, the fundamental principles of Kemalism. Then, there's the excluded elements against which the chain would self-describe – for Peker, the most strident adversaries in this fashion are the Sultan and the European Powers with whom he is accused to have collaborated. The relationship between the two sides of this boundary exists within the context of an antagonism – the supremacy of one would mean the eradication of the other, rather than a dialectic synthesis, which would be better than both. Of course, this coherence against the Sultan and/or the Allies was not a constant opposition – after all, by the time the republic celebrated its tenth anniversary, Ottoman royalty was already in exile, and therefore it was necessary to redefine/re-establish the element of exclusion.

Discourse, as it is used in this context, refers to “practice”, as well as ways of signifying, as it is suggested by James Gee in as follows:

Discourses, then, are ways of behaving, interacting, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles (or ‘types of people’) by specific *groups of people*, whether families of a certain sort, bikers of a certain sort, business people of a certain sort, lawyers of a certain sort, church members of a certain sort, African-Americans of a certain sort, women or men of a certain sort, and so on through a very long list. Discourses are... ‘ways of being in the world’; they are ‘forms of life’. They are, thus, always and everywhere *social* and products of social histories.

James Gee (1996, viii)

As such, the term ‘discourse’ is employed not only as the verbal and/or oral way of address, but furthermore as process of signification through which meaning is derived from a particular set of signs. Further along this study, I attempt to delineate certain types of such discourses as they relate to the personality cult of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk within the metanarrative of Kemalism. While this is by no means a closed system, i.e. consisting only those henceforth analysed, they are nevertheless indicative of how the

⁶ The Six Arrows Doctrine, also known as Atatürk Principles consist of six principal ideas: republicanism (*cumhuriyetçilik*), as the method of rule; nationalism (*milliyetçilik*), with the definition of nation as the ensemble of people living on the same soil and sharing a unity of language, culture and solidarity; populism (*halkçılık*), supremacy of the people over specific power groups such as oligarchies, theocracies and so on; secularism (*laiklik*), separation of state from religion; statism (*devletçilik*), securing state control on economy and the employment of a protectionist economic policy; and reformism (*devrimcilik*), which encourages reforms and in pursuit of modernity. These principles were declared in the Third Party Congress of the Republican People’s Party in 1931 and codified into the constitution in 1937 – the image of six white arrows on a red field is still the official emblem of the RPP.

posthumously evolved (and evolving) features of devotion to a socially constructed image of an individual and his perceived legacy.

Signifiers of such a legacy are relatively easy to notice in the quotidian life in the Turkish society. The air of legitimacy is bestowed not only upon a political individual or institution, such as a political leader or party, but also upon professions, abstract concepts and so on. It is not necessarily an uncommon sight to encounter an inscription of many busts and statues of Atatürk, extolling the virtues of postmen, lorry drivers or hotel chefs. Of course, it is perhaps too obvious that such commendations of excellence are apocryphal or even fictitious. But then again, the falsity of the statement paradoxically proves the argument that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk lends tremendous degree of legitimacy to the people. The idea of a nation-building statesman to extol a particular section of the working class (not as a class *per se*, but a particular profession therein), while not impossible, is quite peculiar, whereas fabrication or at least far-fetched appropriation of such extolment could only be construed as a desire to be “mentioned” in such a context would be to share a bond with the memory and, perhaps, the ideals of the Great Leader (*Ulu Önder*). The pervasive nature of such appropriations suggest one of the elements that constitute Atatürk’s cult of personality, in which an annotated and referenced body of text is accompanied by a vast array of hearsay, apocryphal quotations and such, which in turn facilitate the self-appropriation all the easier. While it is not the case that any particular individual or institution *requires* Atatürk’s commendation, but possession of such a commendation, genuine or fake, provides a whole new layer on their social being. In its unrequired, yet desirable existence, Mustafa Kemal’s semiotic being is similar to holy relics coveted and displayed by Medieval monasteries – just as a relic, whether a personal effect or the interred body of a saint, is not *mandatory* for a monastery to function, possessing such a relic invariably raises the status of a monastery in comparison to its counterparts elsewhere. It is worth mentioning that in the order of signification, such commendations are tertiary at best. Functional values, such as the competence or compatibility of an institution; or economic (or exchange) values, such as the worth or fees for goods and services, do not alter in accordance to their status in relation to Atatürk. Instead, the receiver of such a mention would attain a symbolic value, which may provide not a material leverage but a symbolic sense of belonging. This sense of belonging, which constructs the legitimacy, pertains to not one, but multiple signifieds

that are associated to Atatürk – it's not a strictly singular attribution but a chain of associations, contents of which are correlative to the set of values that are generally – albeit vaguely– ascribed to his image. However, the attribution is not strictly devoid of historical process; in view of throngs of landmarks, squares, streets and other objects named after Mustafa Kemal, the distinction of legitimate connections are usually drawn through historical contact with the statesman himself. While an act of vandalism on, say, a bridge named after Atatürk would and does provoke local and limited response, even the –retrospectively falsified- claim of the destruction of the house of his birth in modern Greek city of Salonika, in 6-7 September 1955, caused irrevocable destruction and violence against Greek minorities of the populace.⁷ While attribution of such violent reactions cannot necessarily be directly linked to Atatürk's cult of personality in a strict causal connection, the ignition of the pogrom is attributed to it and lends a legitimacy to induce violence of an organised scale without necessarily being the cause.

⁷ The event in question, generally known as 6-7 September Pogroms, were allegedly caused by a unsubstantiated rumour, which claimed that the house in which Kemal Atatürk was born in 1881 was firebombed by Greek radical nationalists. The following days bore witness to acute and widespread violence against lives and property of the Greek populace in İstanbul, who constituted a substantial amount of the city's minority. After two days of lynching, expropriation and pillaging, victimised Greek citizens emigrated abroad. Photographic images of the event display looters holding gilded frames of Atatürk's portraits during the riots.

3. 1. 2 Object Analysis: *On the road to transformation* (*İnkılap yolunda*, 1933) by Zeki Faik İzer

This section pertains to the visual analysis –and inferences thereof– of a work of art created during the early years of the Republic of Turkey. The argument regarding the individual work to be studied is that the collection of various motifs constitute a set of visual codes that frame the discourse within which the social and political meaning is created, derived and understood.

With the establishment of the new republic and the gradual elimination of the signs of its precedent, it was perhaps inevitable that the new nation would require its own works of art in order to develop and maintain its newfound modes of expression. Due to the aversion to the visual representation of the human body in the Islamic doctrine, Ottoman Empire initially lacked the school of traditional painting that were encountered in European countries, such as Italy, France or the Netherlands, whose artists had dominated the discipline for centuries. The traditional easel painting arrived relatively late to the Ottoman Empire, after the reform efforts in the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was not until 1882, the capital city of İstanbul would have its first and then-only academy of fine arts, under the guidance of Osman Hamdi Bey, who was the first director of *Sanayi-i Nefise Mekteb-i Ali* (High School of Fine Arts).

The first decade of the new republican regime bore witness to far-reaching changes in the cultural structure of the post-Ottoman polity; various novelties in numerous areas, ranging from economic policies to social reforms transformed the country substantially. Many of the defining elements of the previous, imperial regime were effaced to a considerable extent; Sultanate, which was abolished in 1922, was followed by the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924. The country underwent an overarching and protectionist statism, in order to construct a national economy. Parallel to these endeavours, were the cultural enterprises for the commemoration of these reforms on the tenth anniversary of the republic. Perhaps the most renowned manifestation of

these efforts is the Tenth Year Anthem, written by F. Nafiz Çamlıbel and B. Kemal Çağlar and composed by Cemal Reşit Rey, and celebrates the victory attained by the Turkish people, as well as referencing to Atatürk's leadership throughout the struggle. In the political discourse, first generation republicans such as Mahmut Bozkurt and Recep Peker provided copious text that constructed the metanarrative of Kemalism, which was the state ideology until the end of the single-party period in 1945. Even then, Kemalist cannot be considered completely vanished, as it remained as the underlying ideological framework that defined various aspects of Turkish politics.

As far as the visual imagery is concerned, the similarities to the Western schools of thought and representation in the later periods are relatively more strident. Due to the aforementioned taboo concerning visual representations in the Muslim faith, visual arts, by necessity, had diverged in the direction of calligraphy, miniature painting and ornamentation. With the advent of Western schools of art in the Late Ottoman and Early Republic period, however, the taboo on these practices seems to have somewhat loosened. In 1933, on the tenth anniversary of the republic, it was decided to host a celebratory exhibition that consisted of the works of art that symbolised the nascent nation. Amongst these works is one of the objects of analysis of this dissertation: *On the road to transformation* (Figure 1) by Zeki Faik İzer, a member of the Early Republic Period art group, *Group d*.



Figure 1. Zeki Faik İzer, *İnkılap Yolunda*, 1933

The painting in question is highly indicative of the structure and workings of the Turkish nation during and after the National Struggle of 1919-23. As explained below, it consists of various clues regarding the social and political climate of the republic at the time of anniversary.

Process of the analysis

For the initial analysis, the iconographical method of analysis proposed by Erwin Panofsky will be employed in order to lay the groundwork concerning the formal properties of the painting. This initial stage of this method bears or intends no semantic connection within the motifs depicted therein. Insofar as it is possible, even ostensibly self-evident ascriptions will also be averred and the sole analysis will first be confined on the non-cultural and what Panofsky calls the “pre-iconographical” phase of the overall analysis. According to Panofsky, who refers to Heinrich Wölfflin, states that this stage can be defined as follows:

“‘Formal analysis’ in Wölfflin’s sense is largely an analysis of motif and combinations of motifs (compositions); for a formal analysis strictest sense of the word would even have to avoid such expressions as ‘man’, ‘horse’, or ‘column,’ let alone such evaluations as ‘the ugly triangle between the legs of Michelangelo’s David’ or ‘the admirable clarification of the joints in a human body.’” Panofsky, 1962; 6-7.

While it is possible to frame each motif herein by the basis of their least culturally significant description, this “strictest sense of the word” would not provide a distinct benefit to the depth of the analysis at hand, but rather extend its length.

On the second stage, the previously averred cultural significances will be established. This secondary or conventional stage of the analysis is the phase where cultural significances are related how particularities affect the understanding of future signs and, by extension, develop the discourse within which they’re interpreted. This distinction of the inside / outside is concerned with whether a motif, through its formal features refer and combine with other motifs within the painting to create meaning, or whether it refers to extratextual signs.

Ultimately, the work will be observed not as an isolated artwork, but as an indicator of its period, of how it is positioned within the process of history and how it affects the creation and/or comprehension of signs further along the line. This is the phase where the ideological elements and how they are affect the discourse of national identity are inferred and discussed.

In conjunction with this three-tiered method of analysis, a parallel reading will accompany the painting in question. The secondary object is the painting, *Liberty Leading the People* (Figure 2) by French painter Eugene Delacroix, whose work is similar in composition and theme, though it is also argued here that the latter, that is the thematic point of similarity is partly a desired outcome for the Turkish work of art. İzer's painting will be compared and corresponded to its thematic antecedent and through their similarities and differences, observations pertaining to the processes of meaning-making will be made.



Figure 2. Eugene Delacroix, *La Liberté Guidant le Peuple*, 1830.

The main argument of this section is that by the adaptation of a work of art that is thematically linked to the concepts of enlightenment, revolution, as well as historical event of supplanting of an old, corrupt and oppressive regime through a popular movement that defines itself via values such as liberty, fraternity and equality. İzer's

painting attempts to import these values into itself by which means it could lend the same values to the social transformation that it represents – either the establishment of the republic or societal reforms thereafter or perhaps both.

Primary analysis

The painting at hand depicts a trapezoid composition on its foreground, which consists of eight figures. Behind these figures, there are three more figures that are mostly obstructed by foreground composition. The backdrop consists of a landscape, also partially obscured, and depicts a hilltop encampment on the top-left and a single mountain on the top-right. For the close reading, the figures and objects on the foreground will be treated as the primary signifiers, while the elements on the background will be treated as contextual elements. The figures on the foreground, in clockwise order: a woman in a deep blue dress and hat; a clean-shaven man with a tie and suit, holding a fedora hat; a young female child bearing a large tome; a blonde and blue-eyed man in a dark suit, pointing forward; a woman in a white garb and a yellow bandana, carrying a flag emblazoned with a white star and crescent on a red field; a man wearing a helmet and bearing a bayonet-attached rifle; and a pair of old, bearded men in brown robes.

The directionality of the first four figures appears to concentrate on the blonde man's index finger, while the tome-bearing girl looks up at the white-clad woman in the middle. On the right-most half of the frame, the bayoneted man appears to be situated as a counterweight to the old men in the corner, with his rifle and bayonet parallel but pointing opposite directions with the dagger at the bottom-right of the frame, which was ostensibly dropped by one of the pair. Still on the foreground, it is possible to observe typographical inscriptions on two occasions; one on the large, red tome carried by the young girl, reading "Turkish Language and History" and another, reading "1923", inscribed on the slab/plinth upon which the flag-bearing woman is positioned. On the immediate background (as opposed to the left-most section or the landscape even further) there can be discerned three figures, two of them beneath the red flag and a third individual behind the rifle-toting figure. This third figure bears a blazing torch in his left hand, which can be seen clearly from the foreground. In the less detailed background, there is what appears to be a massive crowd, with flags and other tall objects, such as a scythe and a pitchfork. The most discernable element in

this layer is a woman of indeterminate age, forcefully removing a piece of fabric from her face.

At this point, with the lack of cultural references notwithstanding, it is still not totally impossible to glean as to what the driving signifiers are in the painting. The commonality of the gazes upon the outstretched index finger, the inscriptions, and perhaps the most strident by the dint of her contrast against her darker background, the white-clad female in the middle offer an albeit limited sense of importance in comparison to their surroundings.

However, with the addition of the cultural signification to the motifs and thereby combining them in a coherent narrative through second tier of the analysis, the painting assumes its function of conveying the process of the reforms and transformation.

The collection of motifs in this text serve as the codes for the comprehension of further signs regarding the representation of modernity, as well as its opposing elements in a manner that would allow for a sharp distinction between the reformative endeavours and their adversaries. Although this painting, created in the early 1930s may be considered rather more contemporary compared to other texts that serve as a point of departure for the establishment of cultural codes, it is also worth bearing in mind that the attempted social, cultural, political and economic severance from Ottoman Empire allows a particular timeframe for the construction of archaism, which is a necessary element for culture (Lotman, 2001: 103). This archaic function is to set the tone, so to speak, and to establish the baseline of the cultural norms and practices. While chronologically it is within the delineation of recent history, its ambitions of legacy predicate the production of such texts to ensure its posterity.

Secondary analysis

This time, for the purposes of narrative coherence, the sequence of description will be counter-clockwise. The pair of bearded and robe-clad old men are meant to represent older and reactionary order that dominated the Ottoman Empire with what the republican narrative defined as the backwardness and ignorance. In their opposition with the bayoneted soldier and through their vanquished appearance, toppling figures and dropped dagger, they also signify the defeat of a particular system of belief –to which they belong(ed)– and the supremacy of the new and young order, signified by the soldier. There is another reference, albeit oblique, to the choice of arms on each side of this micro-conflict within the painting: while the old men are armed with a

dagger, which may ostensibly be construed as the choice for a rather deceptive intention, the opposing soldier is armed with a bayonet – the distinction here may appear to be solely about what type of blade was being used, yet bayonet, as a weapon of close combat in the age of mechanised warfare, not only serves as a signifier of a stalwart disposition, but also refers to the Gallipoli defence of 1915, where ill-equipped defenders were ordered to fix bayonets for melee. This conflict is therefore transformed into a particular opposition, where the old order is now equated to the invading forces of the First World War.

Further along the composition, in the middle of the painting, there is the white-clad female figure bearing the Turkish flag. In the stark similarity between the position and thematic function of this central figure to its counterpart in Delacroix's *Liberty*, one can attempt to figuratively "superimpose" these two figures, which is an operation that may prove useful in the distinction of motifs in both paintings, exposing parallels and divergences in the narratives. While the most obvious distinction between the two female figures is the style with which they're represented, for the purposes of the thematic study, this distinction is useful for the next step of the analysis. In Delacroix's painting, the central figure represents Liberty and despite the abstract nature of this concept, its incarnation is a battered and bruised woman, with all the visible marks of a very earthly struggle – her torn gown exposes a naked breast, reminiscent to the Renaissance Period representations of Greek goddesses, while her left hand grips a musket with a bayonet attached. In comparison, İzer's representation of the central female figure is not only chaste in her depiction, as can be observed from her spotless gown and her legs in ankle-length leggings, but her "signified" is somehow at a loss. If not by the virtue of her depiction as a radiant, central figure, then by the virtue of a paratextual denotation (borrowing from Gérard Genette's terminology, 1987) as "Liberty", it is made certain what Delacroix's central figure represents. However, İzer's image is not particular on these fronts – neither the text, nor the paratext offers any clues as to what the figure signifies. American historian Carter V. Findley, posits the signified as nationalism (Findley 2010; 273), an observation that may perhaps be reinforced by the plinth upon which she stands – the inscription of 1923, the year of the inauguration of the Republic of Turkey, provides a possibility for an inference to the effect that the white gowned flag-bearer is Turkey or the embodiment of the new country. The said plinth is another twig in the branching divergences from İzer's

adoption of Delacroix: while Liberty in Delacroix stands on what appears to be the corpses of the fallen –either murdered civilians or slain royal troops– İzer’s Nationalism (as it hereby be called for the sake of practicality) stands on a plinth, almost like a statue, where it is a passive, receptive object of admiration, striking stark contrast with Delacroix’s active and propellant Liberty. This particular switch, materialisation of an idea in Delacroix as opposed to its return to a receptive abstraction in İzer, provides one of the pivots regarding the argument of this dissertation – idealisation (both as rendering *ideal* in the Platonic sense, and in the sense of beautification) of that which is material, as the signifier of an abstract state of mind or an ideology is, in its essence, a concomitant mechanism of the cult of personality constructed around Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, which is the next figure in the analysis at hand.

In Delacroix’s depiction of Liberty (also known as Marianne), the abstract ideas of freedom and independence are depicted via the body of that has been subjected to the effects of a physical struggle: dirt and dishevelment, as well as the physical implements of the revolution such as the musket are present and visible upon it. Regardless of the “ideal” connotations of the values espoused by Liberty, the figure nonetheless bears the signs of a corporeal struggle. Then, what inferences does this provide for the conceptualisation of liberty as a concomitant of a popular revolution? One assumption may be to the effect that despite the sacred nature of the concept of liberty, physical exertion and exposure to detrimental effects of combat are necessary. We could take one step further in this chain and suggest that even the sacred idea of liberty is not exempt from the violent and potentially destructive aspects of revolution. The abstract concept has thus been grounded with signs of temporality and earthly wear – it has been secularised in the sense that liberty is on the same level with those who yearn for it. In this projection, it is essential to observe that it is the representation of the abstract idea that is “descending” into the secular space and assuming the signs of such materiality. Furthermore, the spatial relationship of Liberty with the surroundings is also indicative of this corporeality: marching over a barricade, with slain bodies strewn about, Liberty appears as a concrete figure that immerses itself into the struggle that is being given in its name.

As we return to İzer's depiction of enlightenment, nationalism, one of its most strident differences to the representation of the leading idea to Delacroix's work is its chaste and sanitised appearance. Stylistic differences pertaining to differing schools of painting notwithstanding, İzer's depiction of nationalism incarnate is decidedly sanitised from its immediate surroundings: unlike Delacroix's *Liberty*, she bears no marks of struggle and combat. Furthermore, her outfit is markedly different from its French counterpart – whereas Marianne was clad in a torn gown and fluttering sash, Nationalism wears a single-piece clothing that not only covers her breasts (again, unlike Marianne) but her breeches clasp tightly around her legs, down to her ankles. This choice is indicative of the conventions regarding the depiction of women, which comes across as a conservative depiction as opposed to the bare-breasted Marianne, who may be interpreted as a reference to nude painting as well as a display of femininity.

The blonde man with the outstretched hand is the representation of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Turkey's commander-in-chief during the National Struggle and its first president. His depiction in this painting is peculiar in various aspects, which are relevant within both strata of analysis – formal and semantic – that are employed so far. If and when İzer's work is taken as an isolated text (as opposed to being comparatively analysed with Delacroix's piece or other texts), the primary distinction regarding Atatürk's depiction is its remarkable fidelity to its original subject: the fidelity in this case can be constructed as an opposite to expressiveness; for other figures in the painting, anatomical fidelity has been traded-off in favour of the possibility of an expressive depiction of an emotion or a state of mind. While a preference of expressivity seems to have triumphed over fidelity for the most part in İzer's work, it also seems to have shifted drastically for the opposite in its depiction of Atatürk appears unmistakable as who he is – he is not *a* person, but he is a very specific person, as opposed to the rest of the figures, who are practically interchangeable with anybody in accordance to the viewers' preference or perception. This degree of desired precision in the depiction is necessary – on the part of the addresser, the artist – for the establishment of a desired message pertaining to the painting, and by extension to its subject matter: as mentioned above, four of the foreground figures have their lines of sight converge on Atatürk's outstretched index finger – even the embodiment of Turkish nation, ostensibly an adaptation of Delacroix's *Liberty*, is subordinated to the

Turkish statesman in the matter concerning the trajectory of the transformation of the nation. Atatürk's role as the essential guide and protector, not only of the people (as can be seen behind and beside him) but also the abstract notions, of ideas (as can be seen from the searching look from the central figure) is asserted through this example of artistic text of his period.

As his name suggests, Atatürk's relationship with the nation is situated on a position of paternalism. His name, bestowed by the Grand National Assembly following the Surname Law of 1934, which required citizens to adopt surnames instead of using honorary titles, is a compound name that consists of the word *Ata*, (tr. father, ancestor, antecedent) prefixed on *Türk*. As such, Mustafa Kemal's eventual surname became one that signified such paternal and almost ancestral position he occupies. This role of the father of the nation is also referred to in the painting. If we once again superimpose our compared objects of analysis, one would see that the armed men in Delacroix's painting correspond to what appears to be a couple in İzer's work. The inferences here are two-fold: firstly, if our premise in both painting concerning this section is that the figures depicted herein are the beneficiaries of the revolutions, i.e. those who would gain from the upheavals and in whose name such events unfold, then the foci in each painting point to vastly divergent situations: Delacroix's "beneficiaries" are the townsfolk, the bourgeoisie, the opponents of French aristocracy – they are armed with sabres, muskets and pistols and they march to the tricolour French banner, which represents equality, fraternity and liberty. There appears to be a class-consciousness that is harnessed and directed via the values of the future French republic. In its Turkish counterpart, the marching masses are by no means amiss. But the counterparts of the urban bourgeoisie are replaced by a couple, dressed in European attire of the period, looking up to their leader's direction. The first divergence is the shedding of the class mentality: there is still a conflict, certainly, but this conflict is not based on the uprising of impoverished lower classes against their complacent and indifferent royalty. The conflict in the modern Turkish narrative was the conflict between the new and enlightened against the old and reactionary. Therefore, it is possible to extend the opposition to what we earlier called a micro-conflict between the soldier and the old men, to position the new society (represented by the couple) against the old society of the reactionary old order. The omission of the concept of class is further complicated by the discourse of the period by the rejection of class conflict as being a "malady" of

excessive libertarianism, which led to authoritarian state (Peker, 1984: 27) In his work, Recep Peker distinguishes “freedom-revolution” from “class-revolution” and asserts that while freedom-revolution consists of the defence of liberties in the fields of speech, publishing, assembly, employment and travel, amongst others, “class-revolution” is a degenerative outcome of the constant endeavour of revolution. Therefore, the connotation of class as unit of social transformation is downplayed in favour of transformation for freedom. Turkish Revolution following the Anatolian Independence Struggle of 1919-22 has been defined as a fusion of enlightenment and democracy (Aravanta 2011:11 [İnsel, 2002: 38])

The second divergence is switch from the individual to the communal –although Delacroix’s armed townsfolk are united in the purpose of their endeavour, they are united as individuals, not predesignated communal units. Their outfits, even armaments are distinct, in a way suggesting the convergence of distinct members of the community united under the said cause through their independent means. In comparison, the corresponding figures in the painting paint a rather different picture: the man and woman, linked in the composition, suggests (or perhaps implicitly propose) the beneficiaries of the social reforms being undertaken during the period. This implicit proposal as to who the beneficiaries are and how they relate to the dominant political discourse of the time is further elaborated by Atatürk’s right hand resting on the woman’s shoulder, therefore almost literally sheltering the new “family” under his wing. At this point, it is possible to conjecture that there is a particular expectation or perhaps a model for who should inherit from the fruits of this endeavour in the social reforms. Admittedly, this “core unit” of society –as family was defined in national education curriculum– is also constituted by individuals, but by the depiction of this unit as a composite and as a protégé of the iconic national leader, the meaning is further developed into a more “instructional” degree – an instruction that is occasionally taken quite literally, as can be observed from incidental, newly married couples visiting Atatürk’s mausoleum at Anıtkabir in Ankara, to pay homage and vow loyalty to the deceased statesman, seemingly immediately after the wedding ceremony, which can be inferred from the couples’ outfits.

The place of the family in this nascent national discourse is further developed by their outward appearance, which is in tune with the contemporary outfit donned by the couple in question. While the representation of the reactionary section of the society,

which is positioned as antagonistic to the transformation narrative, is depicted in the flowing robes and long, unkempt beards, hinting at the clerical outfits of the Ottoman society, these incarnations of the new social order are dressed in modern attire, consisting of articles of clothing that were introduced in the Attire Law of 1934. As such, the depiction of the model society in the painting arguably bears a dual function: it's not only indicative of who the beneficiaries of the reforms are (as the case was made in conjunction with Delacroix's work) but also it serves as an imperative as to who stands on the so-called "right side of history", as seen from the perspective of those in favour of the transformation: this discourse is espoused in this work of art, as its historicity places it as a congratulatory position in relation to the social reforms.

The question of modern attire in the modern republic exceeds the question of fashion as the signifier of politics, in terms of trade; technology, in terms of textile development— while choice of attire has always been an index of social mores, financial power and/or that of other positions that an individual has within the society (Lotman, 2013; 99), the same question pertains to a more political issue in the modernisation of Turkey. First of all, fashion in the context of textile attire in the republican modernity has a dominancy as to signify on which side of modernity an individual stands. Furthermore, donning/preferring the attire of the "pre-modernised" society signify an opposition to the modernisation that sits on a legislative level, where desired mores and customs within the society are codified into laws that are enforced by institutions, rather than on the level of fluctuating conventions of social acceptance or rejection. In other words, whereas the conventional social mechanics of fashion are calibrated within the confines of social feedback, ostensibly from bottom-up, with no consequence of legislative or punitive reprisal, the concept of "fashion" in Turkey of the early 20th century consists of legislative and punitive response from institutional quarters, in a top-down basis. It can therefore be inferred that fashion in this context is not necessarily an extension of personal choice or taste of an individual's self-representation within the society, but instead a legislatively controlled, confined and officially delineated sphere of culture, to remain outside of which is not only a figurative type of spatial exclusion from the cultural core of the society, but also a temporal displacement in relation to the espoused values of modernity – i.e. to be confined to the fringe of the contemporary culture so far that one is no longer included with the timeframe of the modern culture.

It is possible to trace a glimpse of the representation of such relations between the core and the peripheries of this national discourse in the İzer's work through the background imagery underlying the foreground: the premise to the following section of this analysis is the overall narrative directionality of the painting is from left to the right, which can, by itself, be construed as a nod to the left-to-right directionality in literacy, following the introduction of Latin alphabet with the Letter Reform of 1928, which instituted a Turkified version of the Latin script, as opposed to the right-to-left directionality of the previously dominant Ottoman script. In view of this premise, the landscape in the backdrop, consisting of a hilltop settlement and a barren mountain, on the right and left, respectively, can be construed as the projection of the dichotomy between the "urban" and the "provincial", the source and the destination of the reforms, respectively. The juxtaposition of the "enlightened" masses (enlightened whether by the incarnation of the new national spirit or by Atatürk's guidance) against the reactionary society on the foreground, coupled with an albeit small urban settlement against the bare mountain on the background proposes the physical landscape of these opposing factions compounds the associative tendencies of provinciality and backwardness.

At this point, it is possible to conflate the signified(s) of the seemingly barren landscape with the signified(s) of the ragged old men that appear to be in the same thematic sub-composition: empty, seemingly untouched landscape of rural Asia Minor may appear to be the so-called "domain" of the representatives of the "pre-modernised" society and therefore the barrenness of the landscape is simply the non-human counterpart of the barrenness of the culture pertaining to this outmoded form of society. However, a more comprehensible interpretation, that which steps outside apparent composition and into a latent spatiality of the theme of social transformation (which is, after all, the explicit attempt of the artwork), would provide the following proposition: the reactionary society is not the "representative" of the barren landscape, but instead the obstacle that should be surmounted in order to bring enlightenment to the said landscape and to the people therein. As opposed to the marching masses behind Atatürk, this landscape consists of no retaliatory response that would match the presence of the old men – it harbours no correspondent elements for the considerable amount of people, who bears flags and other implements.

As the “superimposition” of the abovementioned works of art by Eugene Delacroix and Zeki Faik İzer suggests, the similarities and disparities between these works are highly indicative of the ambitions of the new Turkish nation. The choice of *Liberty Leading the People* as the source of adaptation, as well as the implementation of several key elements of this work can be considered an index, pertaining to the values that are espoused by the Turkish republic – yet, various alterations on the structure of the painting are also implemented in order to illustrate the Turkish national narrative to the extent that they construct the discourse of the social and political interpretation of the new society thereafter. Amongst these interpretations are the acceptance/rejection of the veil and hijab (full-body covering for women) as well as the social semiotics concerning facial hair, an example of which can be seen on the old men in the painting. While such depictions were not necessarily novel by themselves, it is the paratext and the context surrounds the work in question that builds the frame within which it attains its social meaning. First of all, the fact that this work of art was created for, and displayed at a state occasion lends it a particular authority and credence – framing of this work of art amongst other works of art in an event endorsed by the state for the latter’s anniversary may lead to a multiplicity (or at least an ambiguity) as to who the addressee is: it may well be considered the society at large, due to the depiction of the events composed in a allusive narrative may also function as a chronicle. On the other hand, the addressee may also be the state itself, as a display of loyalty, or a bequeathing of an art object for the purpose of constructing a collected body of works to be expanded throughout the state’s own lifetime.

3. 1. 3. Object Analysis: the Student Oath (1933, 1972, 1977-2013)

One of the primary examples of these practices is the Student Oath (*tr. Andımız; Our Oath*), which is composed and instituted by the Minister of Education Reşit Galip in 1933. The Student's Oath had been in use for decades, having been revised twice, in 1972 and 1997 before being abolished in 2013 due to criticism targeted at its assimilatory connotations towards ethnic minorities. Later alterations to the Oath inscribed in 1972 nevertheless consists of an address to Atatürk himself, to whom the reciter symbolically calls out and gives her word to follow his example. It is noteworthy that the Oath has various versions –translations of which are provided in the Appendix section of this study– only second and third of which consist of a direct address to Atatürk himself. The first version (1933), instituted during Atatürk's tenure as President does not include such an appellation.

The aforementioned variety of Oaths is displayed below⁸. As shown below, the later versions, with the subtraction in 1997 update notwithstanding, introduce a large amount of new phrases into the Oath, so much so that the body of text practically doubles after the modifications of 1972.

Verse No.	A:1933-1972	B: 1972-1997	C: 1997-2013
1	I am Turkish,	I am Turkish,	I am Turkish,
2	I am righteous,	I am righteous,	I am righteous,
3	I am conscientious;	I am conscientious;	I am conscientious;
4	My law is to;	My law is to;	My principle is to;
5	Protect the young,	Protect the young,	Protect the young,
6	To respect the old,	To respect the old,	To respect the old,
7	To love my country,	To love my country,	To love my country,
8	my people,	my people,	my people,
9	more than my own self.	more than my own self.	more than my own self.
10	Let my being be a gift	My ideal is to rise and advance.	O, great Atatürk;
11	to that of the Turks.	O, great Atatürk, who has	I vow to tread incessantly,
12		secured our present;	Upon the path you paved,
13		I vow to tread incessantly,	Towards the goal you
14		Upon the path you paved,	marked.

⁸ While the motive behind the changes in wording may be interpreted as an attempt to reinforce the presence of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk further, the timing of these changes can also be speculated on. It is nonetheless rather coincidental that both changes happened at the period of what were known as “coup(s) by memorandum”, in 1971 and 1997, where the military forces' perception of a deviation from Kemalist principles were acted on by the correspondence of memorandums to the governments.

15		Within the ideal you built,	Let my being be a gift to
16		Towards the goal you marked.	that of the Turks.
17		Let my being be a gift to that of	Happy is the one to
18		the Turks .	say 'I'm Turkish!'
19		Happy is the one who says	
20		'I'm Turkish!'	

3.1.3.1. First version (1933-1972)

Let us begin with the first version from 1933. This first version, originally composed to be recited on April 23rd, 1933, can be divided into three sections: first three lines (A1-3) are self-descriptive, as they delineate the identity of the reciter him/herself. In this case, the reciter self-describes as Turkish, righteous and conscientious. However, these three descriptions are not necessarily at an equal level. I argue that there is an implicit assumption of causality, insofar as righteousness and conscientiousness are causally related to be the result of an individual being Turkish.

It should perhaps be mentioned that the adjective translating as “righteous” into English, is originally “doğru”, literally “right” – however, the translation as “righteous” transmits this sentiment along the lines of a moral rectitude. Similarly, “conscientiousness” has been preferred over “hard-working” in order to emphasise the element of awareness of the necessity of work, of discipline and vigilance as opposed to solely working in ignorance of surrounding circumstances of labour.

If we return to the Oath, following the first three lines, we reach to the section where the reciter declares his/her duties as a citizen. These duties are social, placing the given individual at a middleground between those younger and older than him/herself and imparting the mission to protect and respect them, respectively. Furthermore, the reciter vows to love the country and its people more than oneself. In isolation from its context, this proclamation displays little more than an overwhelming affection to an abstract idea – after all, it’s not solely the soil in its physical being but the amalgamation of a variety of social, cultural and historical elements that constitute the object of such affection. Yet, I shall elucidate further on, one must not lose sight of the fact that this poem was introduced into the educational system on a daily basis, and therefore exiting the incidental and, due to the commemorative context of the tenth anniversary of the Republic, it enters the domain of national culture in a fashion that it would thereby mould the self-description of the individuals it affects.

The final section of this version, consisting only of its last phrase, bequeaths the reciter's being to that of Turks or Turkishness. This section, which has survived the Oath's various alterations, is perhaps one of the most controversial phrases of the Oath. Its congratulatory exclamation of an ethnic group was deemed to be discriminatory in view of the revival of explicit representation of various ethnic groups that were previously subsumed under the overarching Turkish ethno-national identity.

3.1.3.2. Second and third versions (1972-1997, 1997-2013)

The second version of the Oath, introduced in 1972, maintains the entirety of its preceding version and furthermore, interjecting numerous verses between the preceding text and its final section. The first and arguably the most obvious addition is the rhetorical address to Mustafa Kemal himself. The word "rhetorical" here is employed not strictly in the sense of rhetoric as a method of persuasive speech or writing, but in a more limited sense similar to the expression of "rhetorical question", where the inquirer asks a question whose answer is obvious, but yet uttered nevertheless to reinforce a point. In the context of the Oath, this addressing to Mustafa Kemal contains in itself that such an act is symbolic – it is not literally towards the deceased statesman, but to his commemorated presence. The perceived causality between "our present" and it having been secured by retroactively by Mustafa Kemal suggests that there is perhaps an epiphenomenal fallacy, insofar as the effects caused directly by Mustafa Kemal themselves set in motion a chain of myriad causes that eventually led to "our present" – yet direct link causality between the eventuality and its arguably original cause not only performs an almost literal counterpart of the empty signifier (by subordinating less dominant elements to the dominant one) but also implies that this "present" is construed to be one with solely positive qualities. The poem and the Oath being texts that are directly linked to an ideological state apparatus, it would perhaps be simplistic and naïve to assume the "present" would be construed as an objective and potentially critical state of being. The present, as it is socially (and politically) constructed is the unfolding of ever-improving set of conditions that are made available solely by the dint of Mustafa Kemal's intentions and actions.

The following verses (B13-16) mark the reciter's political mission, in addition to the social role in the previous verses: this political mission is to follow the path shown by Mustafa Kemal. What this path entails is not revealed in the Oath itself, yet it is certainly taken as granted that it would be towards a better, agreeable one. The lack of

definition as to what this ceaselessly trodden path actually is, coupled with a boundless conviction to follow it nevertheless, is revelatory with regards to the devotion expected and devotion dedicated. As argued in the previous chapter, the adapted Enlightenment in Turkey predicated various reforms and shifts whose totality is tentatively cohered by an empty signifier. The hegemonic power of this empty signifier, which is in our case image of Mustafa Kemal, overtakes and subsumes its related concepts. As such, the trust and devotion to Mustafa Kemal's image appears strong enough to ensure loyalty, even the these tentative aims are obscured.

Lastly, the final verses (B19-20) are the concluding addition to the 1972 alterations. Originally uttered by Mustafa Kemal as the closing phrase of his *Nutuk*, the phrase 'Happy is the one who call themselves a Turk' remains a controversial exclamation. Similar to the assumed causality between Turkishness and righteousness / conscientiousness in the opening verses, there is yet another coupling of ethnicity and intrinsically positive values. This perceived causality between an arbitrary biological condition, such as ethnicity and traits of moral and psychological resilience or wellness, such as happiness may (and were, in fact) construed as discriminatory – after all, this argument was amongst those that led to the abolishment of the Oath. The ideological implication of this last section is by no means exclusively related to ethnicity and race. Once again, in tune with the concept of legitimacy, the potentially controversial connotations of the phrase are softened due to the fact that it was Mustafa Kemal from whom it was first quoted. Therefore, not only the provenance and legitimacy of the "author" is carried across from one text to the other (as is the purpose of quotations by and large), as well as its ideological implications therein.

As can be observed by the comparison of the second and third versions, the only difference between the two texts is the subtraction of two verses (B11-12) that linked the original verses to the added ones in 1972. The wording and the function of the Oath remains the same throughout this last stretch until 2013, where it was abolished due to sustained criticism regarding the connotations of ideological "Turkification" of minority groups. This tendency is parallel to both the original tenets of Kemalist nationalism, which denoted Turkishness as the overarching ethnic identity of the new nation, as well to the post-1980 induction of Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, which, following the same lines along the nationalist discourse, further entrenched Islam as a preferred factor of stability against perceived threat of atheistic Soviet discourse. With the lexical aspect of these revisions aside, the continuity of this text in the sphere of

scholarly activity is its fulfilment of an assertive function regarding this assimilatory practice. The telos of such a practice is analysed further on.

As a reaffirmation of loyalty of the young generation, the Oath is ostensibly a solely linguistic act, which symbolises the younger generations' allegiance to the state. This act of the oath-takers, who are mostly young students, however, also bears an investiture of power on behalf of the state – the symbolic act of quotidian oath-taking consists of a semiotic act pertaining to power whose properties are debatable. It is possible to posit two differing views concerning the vestige of power within institutions as pointed out by Katya Mandoki, comparing definition of institutional power by Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu (Mandoki, 2004). Whereas Bourdieu states that power *rests* within institutions and that “agents possess power [...] in proportion to the recognition they receive from a group” (Mandoki, *ibid* [Bourdieu: 1991: 106, 119]), Foucault's definition positions power as less of an accumulative resource, which cannot be hoarded and stored but exercised through practice and discourse: “[Power] is never localized here or there, it is never in the hands of some, it is not an attribute as wealth of a good.” (Mandoki, *ibid* [Foucault 1979: 144]).

While these two approaches seem to oppose one another in the sense that they disagree on the source and residence of power, they can both be useful in the explication of the semiotic act of adherence to a personality cult in general and in the case of the Oath in particular. On the one hand, there's the act of recital within the confines of a certain edifice (while the original locations were schools, following the abolishment, various protestors recited the Oath in Anıtkâbir, where Atatürk had been interred in 1953): reciters do not simply take the Oath as a random act of display – there is a facet that rests upon a certain location and perhaps even a certain time such as early morning, before the start of courses.

One must keep in mind that the Oath is written and introduced *for* students. Therefore it's perhaps inconceivable (or at least impractical) to attempt grasping the topic in isolation from spatial components. In the physical sense, the school building, with its classrooms, corridors, courtyards and offices are subject to exactly the same laws as the other places that are located outside this institution; they are subject to the same social and legal conventions. Yet, there're also certain codes of conduct, conventions of speech and behaviour that set schools apart from other locations such as a public house, a private residence or even from other educational institutions such as universities or professional places of learning, such as art studios and language centres.

These sets of conventions set a particular tone and meaning to the acts undertaken within their premises. While they're subject to myriad consequences of fallibility such as economic shortcomings, underperformance and/or simply ineptitude, the concept of school (in this sense, schools on the primary tier of education) ideally constitute the basis of further education and equips its pupils with the fundamental sets of skills and knowledge. In conjunction with the Oath, which vows lifelong duty to uphold and reinforce a particular ideology, one can assume that the aim is to cement this vow firmly into individuals early in their lives and that it is a fundamental value for them to withhold. Furthermore, it is also viable to consider the educational communication processes within primary education establishments.

On the other hand, there is an element of transverbal acts in which power is produced and transferred through discourse and practice – the power in question is not invested *to* the institution *per se*, neither is there a ruling element, class or community that benefits from the accumulation of the power therein. The reciters are essentially pre-political individuals with no representative political power whatsoever; the accidents of their position in the political spectrum are a result of their familial conditions. Therefore, there is an essential question as to why these non-representative individuals commit (or are committed to) a representative act in a representative locale.

It is necessary to understand the directionality of the discourse and the power to which it pertains. First of all, it would be overly reductive to consider the act of recital as a unilateral manifestation of a vocal performance, denoting to patriotic self-dedication. Though ostensibly addressing Atatürk, in essence the addresser and the addressee are the same – the students (or any reciter) are essentially taking the Oath by and for themselves with the symbolic presence of Atatürk as witness.

The use of such verbal practice so early in a citizen's lifetime brings along another point of discussion concerning its relevance and the meaning. In her *Between Past and Future*, Hannah Arendt briefly touches a point that bears upon a similar issue. Explaining the multiplicity and lack of consensus of the concept of authority, she writes;

The most significant symptom of the crisis [regarding the modern conception of authority], indicating its depth and seriousness, is that it has spread to such prepolitical areas as child-rearing and education, where authority in the widest sense has always been accepted as a natural necessity, obviously

required as much by natural needs, the helplessness of the child, as by political necessity, the continuity of an established civilization which can be assured only if those who are newcomers by birth are guided through a pre-established world into which they are born as strangers.

Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, p. 93-94.

While obviously prepolitical conditioning is liable to spread to many different spheres such as ethnic, national or class-consciousness, economic power and cultural influences, for the purposes of this dissertation, its parallels with the subject matter will be prioritised. Due to their lack of individual representation in the political sphere, these individuals live by and large under their parents' political tendencies – with the social spheres such as domicile, neighbourhood and other geographical attributes of their background determined to great extent by their families. With the legal threshold for political representation beginning at the age of eighteen, the individual receiving formal education up to high school graduation possesses no rights to vote, to be elected or to officially participate in political bodies (with the possible exception of youth groups organised by political parties). At an average of five to seven hours per week day of a student is spent in educational facilities – a simple calculation would reveal twenty-five to thirty-five hours per week, brushing up quite close to the average working hours of forty per week. While working conditions vary in accordance to the skill of the worker and demands by the market, most of the work force pass through at least the mandatory primary education, which consists of the verbal practices of the Student Oath, alongside textual, pictorial and plastic representations of Atatürk.

Delineating the political

At this point, it is necessary to define and flesh out this adjective “prepolitical” as being *political* is not necessarily a strictly defined term. As far as the nomenclature referred to in this dissertation, there are two definitions, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and are perhaps consecutive. The term pre-political requires a brief description of what *is* political – in order to denote the prior state of being political, it is necessary to define what the given state is. In this sense, the “political” stands as the act and/or being representative of an object that pertains to the *polis*, the public. As such, it is not a prerequisite to belong to a structured body such as a party, group or movement, which intends to self-define as a collective of like-minded individuals for a

purpose. However, the boundaries of such movements are not concretely defined and drawn – one does not necessarily claim membership in a given group and yet act, think and self-define along parallel lines with a set that holds said beliefs. As will be touched upon in the following chapter about nostalgia, Carl Schmitt’s definition of the political consists of the distinction of the friend and enemy (1996: 26), and in the vein of our current analysis, this distinction and the ability to make it necessitate one’s immersion into a field of communication in which such a distinction is contextualised.

The second sense of the “prepolitical” is in a way more practical, in the sense that refers to representation in a political basis – denoting the right to vote, to be voted for, to claim membership in a given political body without overt conditioning. While this “overt conditioning” does not render coercion, propaganda or subtle persuasion impossible, the act of self-committal itself (i.e. the actual act of voting itself and so on) is nonetheless accomplished by the individual, rather than the individual being acted for by other in her/his stead. Therefore, this sense of political is related to its Schmittian conception, insofar as it denotes the stage *after* friend-enemy distinctions can be acted upon. In the arguments hereby dealt with, both definitions apply. Prepolitical individuals in question are both unaware of and unrepresented in the political sphere despite being communicated through ideologically loaded discourse.

Returning to Arendt’s statement, one can now revisit the idea of a certain political ideology, which embodies a certain authority, being indoctrinated to students of pre-representative age and position. Curiously enough, Arendt’s series of circumstances concerning the application of authority upon the young meshes rather suitably with the case in point – first of all there’s the case of natural necessity (subtly subordinated to a political one), which structures the motive of the education therein. Introduction of the concept of submission of the self to political cause begs the question of why such a mandatory act is necessary – in other words, why would a political regime require its youth to submit themselves to its cause of longevity while the said youth are bereft of political deliberation?

One answer could be that the regime requires such submission as the basic necessity for the longevity of the ideology. Without the critical perspective required to question the practice, the receiver of the indoctrination would absorb the concept of submission as a fundamental element of the educational process and in turn, perpetuate the same process to further generations. This act of perpetuation is reminiscent of Arendt’s reference to the continuation of established civilisation – the children are essentially

newcomers to the society and their formation, consisting of the perceived necessity of the political ideology is indispensable in order for the this civilisation (i.e. the established state of affairs where reverence to Atatürk and submission to the national survival) to continue.

Recapitulating the propositions so far, the production process of power relations concerning Atatürk's personality cult relies on a ritual process that is not necessarily static and consists of a transverbal circulation of a predetermined text in a predesignated locality, endowing the sender with a sense of empowerment by forming a transcendent bond with the state, for which the individual is prepared to commit self-sacrifice if necessary. We have so far established that while the act does not remain bound to a particular location, due to the ritualistic aspect of the act, it assumes a new layer of meaning when committed in a certain location (i.e. educational buildings)⁹. This layer of meaning in question is such that, while there are no concrete preclusion as to where the Oath can be recited, the primacy of fundamental educational premises suggest that the indoctrination of the ideology in the initial stages of socio-cultural development are prioritised over the act being committed in other locales (see footnote). Therefore, it is possible to argue that the location plays a peripheral role in the process – it's not fundamental to the extent that the essential properties of the semiosis remain intact in its absence. However, its presence in the process contextualises it in such a way that the educational context adds a facet upon the process, concerning its doctrinal properties in the prepolitical segment of the society.

⁹ While the essential ritual behaviour concerning the act of oath-taking is confined at educational establishments, following the abolishment of the Student Oath in 2013, various individuals have protested the abolishment by reciting the Oath in various public spaces. While this certainly precludes the distinctions of school being the sole locale for the Oath, it does not contradict the connection between the act and the location, as (i) the location is often Anıtkabir, where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk has been interred in 1953 or (ii) various public spaces where the act assumes the role of a public performance in protest of the erasure of what is considered to be a vital element of Turkish culture.

3. 1. 4. Autocommunication: joint conclusions

In its portrayal of what can be the loose summation of the republican turn of the 1920s and 1930s, *On the road to transformation* is itself a summary of the Kemalist reforms of its period. The triumphant transformation, under the helmsmanship of Atatürk and his westernised, secularised and rationalised discourse, which he elaborated in his weeklong address in the Grand National Assembly in 1927 (Atatürk, 2007), are posed in opposition to the religiously-legitimised old order of the Ottoman Period. As such, the conflict here is not one of agonistic nature, where each opponent is equally legitimate in their endeavour for superiority, as befitting the conception of democracy, where opposing factors are negotiated and reconciled on the basis of a general consensus. Through the depiction of this religiously self-identified fraction of society, the former order is positioned at a place that is fundamentally inimical to the conception of the modern, laicised and rational nation and therefore defined in antagonistic terms to be dismantled and replaced by a better and more just order. For the justification of this desired removal, this older order is depicted by the signifiers of decrepitude and deceit, such as fraying beards and daggers, respectively.

It is by no means unprecedented for an artist of a particular period to create works of art in order to set forth a congratulatory depiction of his/her period. After all, a great deal of art history is a chronicle of such relationships between the artist and a patron of a particular orientation. Portraiture is amongst those specific disciplines where the immortalisation of an individual (of wealth and influence) frames the relationship between the artist and the patron, who, respectively, are the one that can create and one that can subsidise. Furthermore, comparing the obvious lifespan of a human being to the rather lengthier one of a painting, it can be conjectured that these works of art are not necessarily created for the personal vanity of the sitter, (although for his/her lifetime that might be case) but for a representation for posterity: portrait paintings, with their encapsulation of their subject in established aesthetics conventions are constantly-viewed time capsules, which accumulate authority through time in behalf of

their object, the sitter. Even in our current period where visual imagery is remarkably easier to create and proliferate in comparison with even fifty years ago, the practice of painting retains its authority.

Outside the reasonable bracket of time, within which an artist or his/her sitter would enjoy their respective contribution to the cultural object at hand, the position of the addresser and addressee shifts, insofar as it is no longer the artist or the sitter communicating with the spectators. The communication in these instances, ostensibly of a 1st-to-3rd person in nature (I-s/he, according to Lotman), are transformed into 1st-to-1st models, where the addresser and addressee are one and the same:

When we speak of communicating a message by the 'I-I' system we are *not* thinking primarily of those cases where the text fulfils a mnemonic function. When that happens the perceiving, second 'I' is functionally equivalent to a third party. The difference comes down to the fact that while in the 'I-s/he' system is transferred in space, in the 'I-I' system its is transferred in time.

Juri Lotman, 2001: 21

In the section, "Autocommunication: 'I' and 'Other' as addressees", Lotman initially formulates the model through literary examples, where the sender and receiver are individuals. However, further on, he posits the model in a fashion that would allow its contemplation in terms of societies and cultures, instead of only individuals within those societies and cultures (Lotman 1977: 9). Here, the attempt is to establish a society as the sender and receiver of a message. Ostensibly, in consideration of the historicity of the object of abovementioned analysis, the painting, the model is 'I-s/he': the artist transmits a message to the spectators at large – the longevity of the painting itself, as well as its framing as an artistic text that has been endorsed by a state exhibition, one can also posit the painting as a text that acquires an autocommunicative function. For the following section, two points by Lotman will be taken as the basis for this autocommunicative function of the painting is question:

- Transference of information through time (as quoted above).
- Elevation of the rank of the message, leading to an increase of authority (ibid).

Juri Lotman's example pertaining to this increase of authority through the elevation of rank is a young poet who reads his poem in print – the poet's handwritten manuscript "is translated in a new system of graphic signs." The content of the message is essentially the same, whereas its transcription in this new graphic sign system bestows an authority to the poem that its manuscript did not possess. If we attempt to inspect our object of analysis in the framework of autocommunication, then it is necessary to define its addresser/addressee. It is possible to argue that the text can be read on an "I-s/he" pattern, as mentioned above, between the artist and the public. However, the alternative to this view is that of a pattern of 'I-I' in which, the addresser and the addressee is the society that is depicted in the painting – the depiction of societal mechanics of the new nation affects and influences the discourse of the following periods. This proposition does not necessarily negate the preceding one; the context of the 'I-s/he' model is furthered by that of the 'I-I' model in view of the painting's social and political connotations.

The discourse regarding the signs of the preceding socio-political landscape of the Ottoman Empire constitute a boundary that deems said signs as reactionary and incompatible with the aspirations of the new republic and the society it predicates. With the implied support in favour of the modernised society, the painting therefore assumes that the –desired– future receivers to be westernised and secularised society, rather than the reactionary one. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to conjecture that this preference has been realised in the sense that the post-republic society leans more towards the former than the latter. However, this retrospective justification notwithstanding, the model of communication therein has somewhat changed. Though this object of analysis is by no means the deciding factor and sole determinant of the socio-political shift following the republican period, it exemplifies its concomitants as a token of the political ideology of its period. As such, we could assume that while the message in the 1930s could be one that transmitted a hitherto unknown (or at least generally accepted) information regarding the clash of opposing cultural modes, in the later years, this opposition and the justified victory of the modernised society is an accepted and "known" fact. This shift in accepted knowledge befits the reception of autocommunicative function of the text. In other words, in later periods of the republic, the superiority of the modernised society is a generally-accepted fact and as such, its further transference to/from the society fulfils a further

function than simply depicting the adversaries of modernity, or other elements of the Turkish cultural transformation that are discussed above. It enforces a discourse constructed by the first generation Kemalist scholars and writers, in which Mustafa Kemal was the guiding leader of the beleaguered nation and single-handedly created a modern society.

A further point is that, in consideration of the historical background of the period in question, the image of Mustafa Kemal imparts a particularity to the painting: as seen in the previous sections, the construction of the new Turkish nation and its constituents were for the great part, causally connected to the effort and endeavours of Mustafa Kemal. Furthermore, his presence, lending credence and authority, is inserted into the composition as to reinforce the idea of the visionary leader and the nation he built. Therefore, it is possible to consider the collective effect of these points as they apply to the painting at hand: it is not necessarily an account of “what happened”, but rather “how the account should be remembered” – rather than solely providing content, the message that this painting transmits also defines the context within which the message should be comprehended.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the creation of the new nation necessitated the creation of various forms of legitimacy in order to justify and normalise the regime – while some of these manifested in the form of oratory works, such as Atatürk’s *Nutuk*, historiographies, such as Peker’s *Lectures*, or artworks, such as İzer’s work above, such practices are by no means confined to texts of inanimate nature. In the process of legitimacy, as studied so far, the trajectory of the communication is from figures and institutions of authority towards the rest of the public. Also, considering the literacy level in Turkey in the formative period is around 17% (Findley, 2010: 277), it is also debatable as to how penetrative such written works would be for the general population. One of the concerns in the formative years of the republic was that the population might not be able to absorb the tenets pertaining to the revolution. The suppression and closure of various political contenders, such as the suppression of Turkish Communist Party in 1922, the outlawing of Progressive Republican Party in 1925 or the closure of the Liberal Republican Party in 1930 were attributed to such concerns. The codification of Kemalism as an official ideology in the 1930s may be seen as a consequence and response to these fluctuations. Admittedly, this concern was not provoked by a unitary reaction from all this political bodies. As quoted from Peker earlier, the concept of socio-economic “class”, was deemed as

subversive to the Turkish revolution; Liberal Republicans were later accused of connections with Sheikh Said Rebellion and attempted assassination of Mustafa Kemal; and lastly, Liberal Republican Party was closed after garnering unexpectedly popular support. They nevertheless led to a wide-ranging set of policies, which aimed at integrate the state ideology into the public life.

3. 2. Nostalgia: Beautification of the past

With the demise of Mustafa Kemal in 1938 and with the drastic shifts in social and political scene following 1950s onwards, one social fact is the amount of people with no personal memory of the Great Leader himself. Statistically, the population growth in Turkey between 1935 and 1960 indicates that the national population has almost doubled in the intervening twenty-five years. One inference we can draw is the potentially incongruous representations of Mustafa Kemal as he is remembered and as he is represented. Considering the necessity of Mustafa Kemal's image in the construction of the narrative of modernity, it was also necessary to extend this imagery beyond the lifespan of its object. In terms of those who had no memory of their own regarding the National Struggle itself, this past was required to be constructed.

Nostalgia, defined as a longing for homeland, initially suggests that it is a phenomenon related to a spatial distance. Swiss physician Johannes Hofer first coined it as a medical condition in 1688 (Boym 2007: 7). It was after all "diagnosed" in expatriates, who yearned for their homes during their travels and/or residence abroad. Yet, nostalgia exceeds the spatial exclusion – it is also, and perhaps moreover, a temporal phenomenon: it is the yearning for not only a different land but for a different time in the past. This "different" time, an idealised past in our case is the aforementioned Golden Age (of Kemalism). Especially in view of the rapid development of technological facilities throughout the twentieth century, which brought with it a wide array of alternative views of history more accessible, the necessity of a symbolic anchor became even more essential. Kemalist ideological constructs themselves were not unaware of such necessities either. Cultural projects, such as the *Turkish Thesis of History* or *Sun Language Theory*, which provided nationalist historiographies, are examples of such endeavours. Though these works have been deflated as being pseudo-scientific, the rationale behind them remains interesting nonetheless: it is an enterprise to construct a common heritage as a source of communality and heritage. Michael Kammen remarks, somewhat dismissively as follows: "Nostalgia... essentially history without guilt. Heritage is something that Such

selective perception of favourable elements in the history of one's own country, while not in the monopoly of a particular group, may explain the attempted revisionism of the distant Turkish past in the early republican period.

As mentioned earlier, Mustafa Kemal exerts a particular power, which bestows legitimacy to those who claim to represent it. This phenomenon has manifested through Turkish political history via various political parties of varying inclinations have appropriated him into their discourses. One can suggest two propositions in regards to this convenience of appropriation: either 1) Mustafa Kemal and his legacy, in terms of political discourse, are above conventional discourses and therefore are applicable through an adaptive operation, or 2) this legacy is confined in a particular period in the formative years of the Republic of Turkey and one's given political discourse is its logical [the legacy's] continuity. Admittedly, both propositions have been actualised following the end of the single-party period (1925-1945). It was the first opposition government, Democrat Party, who issued Lira banknotes with Mustafa Kemal's portrait only, as opposed to those with the portrait Atatürk's successor İsmet İnönü. Further along the line, it was military interventions, who removed elected governments at various points in the late 20th century to define political life in accordance with the principles of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

With the aforementioned strength of this borrowed legitimacy notwithstanding, one of the most strident aspects of such discourses is the indelible trust bestowed on this legacy, its applicability and perhaps most importantly, its treatment as a point of safe return in the events of discord and disintegration. Such trust in the formative years and their formative ideology were affected mainly through the extensive projects of social engineering in the 1930s, consisting of various texts by the leading ideologues of the period as well as the establishment of various institutions to reinforce the dominant narrative.

Through a narrative of national salvation¹⁰, which was later followed by one of enlightened progress, the metanarrative of Kemalism effectively created the perception of a "Golden Age" – this perception is reinforced in view of the comparisons between the unstable economy in Western nations, who were struggling with the Great Depression, and the state-executed, protectionist Turkish economic policies, which sheltered the nascent nation from a comparable financial collapse. This constant

¹⁰ The period between 1919-1922, which has so far been referred to as National Struggle (*Milli Mücadele*), is synonymous with the term War of Salvation (*Kurtuluş Savaşı*).

reinforcement, lacking in critical retrospection, has arguably led to a highly sanitised perception regarding the foundation of the Turkish modernity within the Republic of Turkey. It is analogous, in a way, to a self-assured distinction between content and form: it is not the content(s) of this discourse but how its form / representation is displayed. The object of criticism is rarely –if ever– the content of the discourse, but how its implementation (or its lack thereof). As can be witnessed from either discursive justification of Kemalist ideology or from military coup-d'états of 1960, 1971¹¹ and 1980, which attempted to restructure public life through a Kemalist perspective, there appears to be an ideal as to what constitutes an unblemished, almost non-revisionist understanding of the Kemalism of the past and these attempts of reconstruction appear to hark back to it. At this point, the object of our following analysis homes in on what this past is.

Admittedly, one of the principles of Kemalism of 1930s was that of reformism, which stated that the modern Turkish nation should constantly strive for modernising and renovating itself in order to reach what was deemed to be the contemporary civilisations. It is noteworthy to observe the structure of these reforms and how they are implemented. Obviously, the most strident of these constituents is the physical presence of Mustafa Kemal himself. Amongst the various titles bestowed upon him throughout his tenure as president were not only those denoting a military tone, but also those with a cultural tinge – for instance, one can refer to his title of *baş öğretmen*, which translated as “head teacher”, and his ubiquitous photograph while teaching the Latin script of the Turkish alphabet in Gülhane Park [FIGURE 3] demonstrate his inclusion into the discourse of modernity. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the reforms of the 1920s-1930s have the distinct concomitant of a leader that led by example, so to speak. However, following Mustafa Kemal's demise in 1938 and the end of the single-party period, not only the semiotic singularity of Kemalism was deprived of its most prominent signifier, but was also confronted with alternative interpretations of its legacy. If one assumes Mustafa Kemal to be the Weberian “charismatic” leader, then it is possible to argue that he represented the visage of the reforms inducted during his administration. Furthermore, after his demise, this visage

¹¹ The military intervention of 1971 differs from those in 1960 and 1980 by the fact that it did not consist of a physical military presence, but rather the handing of an memorandum to the Prime Minister of the period, warning him about the ensuing presence of a mounting armed conflict between the left-wing and right-wing political factions. However, the memorandum –comparable to an ultimatum in function– nonetheless culminated into the governmental collapse.

doesn't recede to the historical chronicles of the Republic but instead, continues the same function of being the representative of a political doctrine.

This may be envisaged as the point of divergence in the representative aspect of Mustafa Kemal as a signifier of Kemalism: if we briefly compare his relationship with his period to his contemporaries, who also had similar constructs, we arrive at a very marked difference. Whereas a dominant leader of the same period, such as Joseph Stalin's demise led to the dismantling of the cult of personality soon afterwards by his successor Nikita Khrushchev, the trajectory of Mustafa Kemal's cult of personality takes the exact opposite direction: promulgation and proliferation of Mustafa Kemal's imagery not only survives his physical demise, but achieves the status of a "given" – it is not a matter of choice to follow and accept his memory, but a mandatory aspect of the socio-political life thereafter. His ad hoc appropriation of the European revolutionary tradition (as referred by Peker earlier) expands to include and become appropriable to left-wing politics in 1960s, right-wing politics of the 1970s, as well as the military-induced Turkish-Islamic synthesis of the post-1980 regime. The function of such continued representation has been argued earlier in this study and therefore, further focus will be on the motives of this process.

3. 2. 1. Mapping of historiography

In his brief typology on the historiographical narratives, Hayden White provides a three-tiered structure regarding the transference of historical data (White, 1975: 5-29) into a narrative sequence. This typology follows as such:

Mode of Emplotment	Mode of Argument	Mode of Ideology
Romantic	Formist	Anarchist
Tragic	Mechanistic	Radical
Comic	Organicist	Conservative
Satirical	Contextualist	Liberal

Our aim here is to draw parallels between these abovementioned inclinations and tendencies, and the representation of Mustafa Kemal and the ideologically driven historical revisionism of his adherents (and occasionally, of his opponents).

For the purposes of this study, the main argument regarding this section will confine itself with the "ideological" mode of this typology. However, we can nonetheless refer

to modes of emplotment and argument as they relate to our topic. As White notes, this typology is by no means a rigid and inflexible structure, but rather a guide in which various histories may be located with varying degrees (White: 1975: 29). Briefly, “Romance is fundamentally a drama of self-identification symbolised by the hero’s transcendence of the world of experience, his victory over it, and his final liberation from it [...]” (White, 1975: 8). Therefore, it focuses on the triumph of a select individual and his/her achievement against odds, and ultimately extrapolates its narrative from this point. As applied to our object, it is possible to project similar endeavour to Mustafa Kemal through the post-1919 National Struggle – admittedly, the triumph in this case does not necessarily constitute transcendence from world of experience, but the demonstrably radical shift from the precedent state of affairs may be an analogous counterpart. Both through the narrative structure of the Turkish National Struggle and through individual titles bestowed on Mustafa Kemal during this period, he appears as a unique character who is almost solely responsible for the reanimation of a defeated people – he is analogous to a saviour figure, whose role was indisputably vital to the Struggle. This perception is so strong enough in the public opinion that there is almost a direct causal connection between his existence and that of the nation, which has recently resurfaced in a public debate concerning countering opinions regarding two press advertisements (Figure 3 & 4), which were published on November 10 2014. Captioned with the phrase “We would not be, were it not for him” and “We would [still] be, [even] without him”, respectively, these adverts represent two opposed approaches regarding the perception of the causal relationship between Turkish nation state and Mustafa Kemal: the former, arguably in favour of this view, regard Mustafa Kemal as the indisputable progenitor of the nation. Furthermore, proponents of this view do not view Mustafa Kemal as “dead” insofar as his legacy is maintained as guiding principle – the vertical rotation of number “8” in reference to his year of death (1938) to attain an infinity sign is a shorthand example of such convictions.

Admittedly, this dispute does not pertain to an ontological problem as to whether there is a literal causality regarding the (physical or symbolic) presence of Mustafa Kemal. Therefore, the arguments for the so-called “causality” or its lack thereof are not concerned with this phenomenon in the first instance. What does appear is the continuation of a legacy across an ideological imperative: in other words, it’s not about the person, but the ideology he represents that is argued to have engendered the current

state of affairs. Certainly, this cannot necessarily be reduced to a simple construction of a discourse that is fronted by an individual – we have so far observed that there was a systematised narrative that depicts Mustafa Kemal as the saviour figure that brought salvation to a beleaguered people.

Concerning the type of argument, figure of Mustafa Kemal can be placed in the formist section. Formism opts for the individual actors and events as the driving forces, and makes generalisations to construct its meaning through extensive claims that are not necessarily confirmable or deniable on empirical basis. Furthermore, this position stems not only out of the focus on the manifestation of events through individual agency that is employed by the formist approach, but also from Mustafa Kemal's self-descriptive narrative style in *Nutuk* that was appropriated from Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, which advocated that history advanced by the dint of powerful men of superior traits, as opposed to such men being a product of their societies, which are in turn product of long and arduous processes of conventions and transformation.

White suggests that this empirical ambiguity in formist style is often compensated through colourful and vivid writing. Such an investment into the vivacity, while not necessarily set against facticity, attributes occurrences to the sole endeavours of its subjects due to the simplification of narrative.

The placement of our object of study in the framework of ideological implication is rather more tentative and perhaps more contentious. According to White, these types “serve as designators of general ideological preference rather than as emblems of specific political parties.” As such, their differences rest in where/how they define “the paradigm of society's ‘ideal’ form (1975: 24). In this view, Anarchists and Radicals are in favour of dramatic and structural changes in the status quo, as opposed to Conservatives and Liberals who are mostly contented with the structure of the society at hand and opt for changes to be made in particular parts in terms of what might be called “fine-tuning”. That being said, where the abovementioned ‘ideal’ form of society resides differs according to these ideological inclinations: whereas Conservatives opt for currently prevailing paradigm and its progressive elaboration (White, 1975: 25), Liberals posit this ideal state to be in remote future, which in turn differs from Radicals, whose conception of the ‘ideal’ in the future is an imminent one. Ultimately, Anarchists differ from the other three by their conception of the ‘ideal’,

which is positioned in remote past, where society was uncorrupted and unblemished by the effects of the social state.

In view of this typology, the ideological stance stood somewhere between Radical and Liberal types through the period of National Struggle to the 1930s, where Kemalism as a state ideology was codified into the Turkish Constitution. The break from religiously legitimised monarchy and the move towards a republican state does constitute a radical shift in terms of the manifestation of political power. As such, the ideal state of society, which was then conceived to be in the imminent future, was then acted upon and brought to bear in the form of the republican state. While the following reforms in public life were by no means miniscule, in comparison to the republican transition, they are geared towards the finesse of an established mode rather than a structural change. After all, with the establishment of the republic and its auxiliary structures predicate the trajectory of further changes, which were not subversive to the establishment at hand, but were unfolded in progression in accordance to a set of reforms. This change of pace is attributable to Atatürk's designation of the mission of "reaching the level of contemporary civilisations", which was (attempted to be) attained by the introduction of a Civil Code brought from Europe. With the structural equivalence achieved through the revolution, it was then necessary to employ incremental reforms to reach the desired level of progress. However, how far these incremental reforms have been realised is nonetheless a debatable topic. As quoted from Halil Karaveli, despite its direction towards Western secularism, Turkish secularism shows no signs of advancing along liberal lines and "Kemalism has during the last decade [post-2000] dug itself even deeper behind walls of xenophobic nationalism, animated by hostility towards a Western world that is perceived to be scheming to partition Turkey." (Alaranta 2011: 12 [Karaveli 2010: 88]) This presents an ironic set of affairs, where civilised norms of statecraft and culture are inspired by foreign counterparts, who are in turn also considered to be potential enemies.

Despite its various difficulties, such as the nominal mobilisations during the Second World War affecting the distribution of goods and labour, the early years of the republic nonetheless constitute a romantic expression of –if not prosperity– hope. State-introduced programmes such as Village Institutes provided educational and ideological input for the far-flung provinces of the country and statist economy providing a relative stability while systemisation of Kemalism, through its principles and practices offered a sense of unity, albeit a tentative one. This image of weathered,

yet expectant nation constitutes the idea behind the Golden Age of Kemalism, which in turn leads to another discourse regarding Kemalism and its relationship to Mustafa Kemal: that of nostalgia.

3.3. Construction of Yearning

With the advent of parliamentary multiplicity and the election of the Democrat Party government, which ended with the military coup-d'état in 1960, the interpretation of Kemalism is subjected to a particular shift, where adherence to its ideology is no longer mediated by a single authority – simply put, if the state is the total mechanism of society as it applies to politics and the government is the representative body to run this mechanism, then the existence of a single-party regime suggests that these two elements are one and the same. However, if the state mechanics consist of one or more oppositional bodies, then there needs to be a description regarding the relationship between the multiplicities within politics. Following the differential logic of the previous sections, I would like to employ the dichotomies proposed by Carl Schmitt in order to delineate the oppositional properties of the political. Schmitt argues that if we consider various spheres of human thought and endeavour to have their distinct polarities, such as those of good and evil regarding morality; of beautiful and ugly regarding aesthetics; or profitable and not profitable for economics, then the dichotomy regarding the sphere of the political would be that of the friend and enemy (Schmitt, 1996: 26). One distinction that must be made is that *enemy* is not *foe*, in the sense that whereas *foe* denotes a personal opposition via individual enmity, animosity and/or hatred, the concept of *enemy* concerns itself with a public opposition due to an existential threat (1996: 28). It must be said that the enemy does not have to be ugly, immoral or economically destructive; i.e. one's position in any one of these dichotomies does not predicate its position in any of the other ones. That being said, on the emotional level, negative connotations do tend to follow the appellation of the enemy without the friend/enemy distinction losing its autonomy (1996: 27). Schmitt hints at the differential logic in politics, which is further developed by Ernesto Laclau in the concept of empty signifier:

Words such as state, republic, society, class, as well as sovereignty, constitutional state, absolutism, dictatorship, economic planning, neutral or total state, and so on, are

incomprehensible if one does not know exactly who is affected, combatted, refuted, or negated by such a term.

Carl Schmitt, 1996: 30-31

We can thus surmise that such appellations and their connotations are contingent on the differences against which they're put. This roughly locates the definition in the concept of the equivocal signifier, i.e. a signifier that can be attached to different signifieds in different contexts (Laclau 1996: 36). The issue of the differential logic, where concepts assume coherence via their contrast with other concepts, is the essential point that bears on the analysis at this stage.

In the previous section, where I have elaborated the concept of the empty signifier in regards to the hegemony of the cult image of Mustafa Kemal upon the various needs and demands of the National Struggle, mention was made to the "excluded element" against which the chain of equivalence with cohere. If we briefly recapitulate on that argument, it proposed that the numerous concepts that relate to the National Struggle and the establishment of the subsequent republic were subordinated to the persona of Mustafa Kemal, who impart a sense of unity to the enterprise of the reforms undertaken at the time. As such, this chain of equivalence initially converged on the figure of the Sultan and occupying Allied forces as their mutual opposition. Therefore, following differential logic, the chain of equivalence (and by extension, its constituents) would define themselves in contrast to values ascribed to the monarchy and the occupiers. However, during the period previously called "the Golden Age", neither of these excluded elements were no longer an imminent threat, leading to the establishment of a new mutual enemy, in the form of reactionaries, who supported the restitution of monarchy, of the caliphate, or the pursuit of an alternative political conviction. If we also remember that (1) the categorical distinction in favour of freedom revolution as opposed to class revolution, and (2) the cessation of alternative political parties during the period, the political landscape revolving around the a one-party state with a self-avowed mission for progress and modernisation, whose self-legitimation predicates its singularity. This singularity is pregnant to another issue, which forms the "capsule" of nostalgic discourse – the beginning of the new Turkish nation also constitutes the beginning of the nostalgic period as well. The function of this common point of origination is not only to pinpoint the emergence of the discourse in the historical process, but also hints at the possible point of its ending. The

properties of this period, such as statist economy, a transformative and modernising inclination “for the people, despite the people” (Alaranta, 2011a: 14) also define where this period would be “capped” and confined from the later stages of political discourse.

The hypothesis upon which I’d like to build here is that the perception of the Turkish nation under the rule and guidance of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is employed, following White’s wording above, as the “paradigm of the society’s ‘ideal’ form”. As such, this ideal form provides a communal nostalgia amongst the people and acts as an idealised past. At first instance, it may appear that to be contradictory that a nation whose founding ideas consisted of reformism and modernisation to also idealise a past state of being. Following the narrative of Enlightenment, future and its constituents such as development, advancement and modernity would certainly make the past even better, rather than dissolve and diminish it. This perception of the past, however, is not necessarily confined in the period where it originally occurred. Svetlana Boym points out (2007: 8) that nostalgia does not need to be retrospective – it has prospective properties as well. Through reflections of the past –imaginary as they might be– present is predicated. As such, we can reasonably assert that the present is the future of past.

However, this assertion requires further elaboration due to certain ambiguities. First of all, the penetrability of the past needs to be explicated: is this past a rigid and inflexible construct, which directly and explicitly predicates its subsequent “future”? Or is this past potentially subject to retrospection, revision and reiteration? The former would suggest, at first instance, that there is an implacable consensus as to what the past is, what it entails and under what conditions and circumstances it applies to its future, the present. As such, it appears more as an instruction manual for an inanimate object or a physical practice. The latter contingency, that of a revisited and revised past, offers leniency and flexibility in its retrospection.

This leniency and flexibility allows a view of the past in hindsight, that is, after the events related to a historical junction have come to pass and when the spectators of the process have less uncertainty regarding the unfolding of events. One consequence of this hindsight is that the ascription of values upon objects and events through and more importantly, *due to* this retrospection. An example of this ascription is elaborated by John Berger’s comments on the *Wheat Fields with Crows* by Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh – after showing the painting, Berger discloses that it was the last painting Van Gogh created prior to his suicide (Berger 1972). This extratextual fact

inadvertently shifts the viewer's perspective, regarding various points such as the interpretation of the motifs in the work or the meaning of the work in relation to the artist's other creations.

Juri Lotman briefly touches upon this issue, by referring to the fatal duel of Russian poet Alexander Pushkin. His duel, concluding with his demise, effectively puts an end to what Lotman is certain to have continued to flourish (Lotman 2013: 65). However, due to the reduction of all possible historical contingencies into the one where Pushkin perishes, our historical knowledge is necessarily shaped with this particular fact, while alternative possibilities are invariably confined into a category of counterfactual history.

So, how can we adjust this to the retrospection of Mustafa Kemal's memory? If we briefly remind ourselves the historiographical method in the narrative of the National Struggle, it was the case that not only the Struggle was inevitable, but also that the role of Mustafa Kemal in it was undeniable and crucial. In this point of view, the actor and the scene are inseparable bound, so much so that Mustafa Kemal's existence is perceived as directly and causally connected to the existence and survival of the Turkish nation and its constituents.

It appears to be case that the eventual outcome of a particular event indelibly transforms our perception. The examples given by Berger and Lotman follow this logic insofar as this transformation doesn't preclude an "uninformed" inference. That is to say, it is possible to draw inferences from Van Gogh's work without Berger's commentary or from Pushkin's without Lotman's commentary. However, in the case of the nostalgic retrospection of Kemalist historiography, the ideological state apparatus, as described by Althusser (2008:16) constructs a particular narrative through the outcome and then resettles the course of events that is divorced from alternatives. This practice, while no means unique, bestows upon the addressee an assurance of consequence – this assurance, which precludes criticality, aides the construction of a pristine and sanitised version of the past that is bereft of controversy, guilt or shame, as pointed out Michael Kammen earlier. We may posit two purposes of historical record at this junction. The first, as outlined above, is free of negative connotations and problematic issues. As a pristine account of selective historical elements, its purpose is to congregate a population into a group of shared historical background – it serves a unifying element not unlike the Laclauian empty signifier. There is the case of a dominating hegemonic element subordinating the various differences amongst the

various other elements within its chain of equivalence and assumes overall representation. The second purpose, where history is to, quite simply, record past events in order to avert past mistakes, follow favourable pursuits and create a record upon which one could return for reference. Of course, these distinctions are by no means mutually exclusive nor they are constructed in such ideal circumstances that there is an unequivocal and accessible fount of knowledge for all involved. If anything, the case might be that the former position subverts the latter, i.e. ideologically endorsed history masquerades as definitive historical records in order to sustain a particular political status quo. Therefore, it is possibly the case that most historical records and discourses are subordinate to the relations amongst the power structures and their teleological aims at a given time, ultimately distorting the “actual” events from their representations. Furthermore, it is necessary to emphasise that a “true” history does not exist, insofar as there is an “uncontaminated” or “uncorrupted” history, which is later perspectives yank and stretch to accommodate to one’s needs – by and large, history itself is a discourse of power, as pointed out by Michel Foucault as the following:

History is the discourse of power, the discourse of the obligations power uses to fascinate, terrorize, and immobilize. In a word, power binds and immobilizes, and is both the founder and guarantor of order; and history is precisely the discourse that intensifies and makes more efficacious the twin functions that guarantee order. (Foucault, 2003: 68)

An analogous demonstration of this phenomenon appears in a short story by Turkish satirist and journalist Aziz Nesin (1915-1994). In his story “What a Beautiful Machine” (Ne Güzel Makine, 1986:), Nesin tells the story of a junior office clerk in a desolate government department. Following the news of the imminent visit of a senior government figure, the entire personnel begin preparing their office worthy of merit for the inspection of the senior official. The unnamed protagonist, having been issued with an old and clunky typewriter for his duties, begins to reassemble it with minute care and attention. As weeks go by and as the visit is constantly postponed, the clerk goes further and further in his endeavour, re-painting the keyboard and periodically varnishing the typewriter’s body. This elongated process, through which the clerk pursues the caretaking of his typewriter with profound dedication, culminates with the typewriter becoming a completely unique piece of machinery that no longer resembles

any of its counterparts in the office. When the senior official finally appears for his inspection, his meandering gaze briefly settles on the junior clerk's now-unique typewriter. He mutters, "What a beautiful machine" before walking off.

Although its theme appears as a critique of bureaucratic inanity, it is possible to analyse *What a Beautiful Machine* as the analogy of beautification. The anomalous typewriter, as the symbol of the communication between the representation / representative of power (senior official) and its distant tendrils (junior clerk), is in this way similar to Mustafa Kemal's perception, which mediates the communication between power structures and the people beholden to them. The constant, almost religiously followed rituals of readjustments on the typewriter are not so distant to the systematic and ideologically driven revisions and revisitation to the near past for in the officialised history of the nation.

3.3.1. Object Analysis IV: November 10 Commemorations

Towards the end of his fifteen years of office as President, Mustafa Kemal was in poor health, due to the exacerbated cirrhosis he developed. As a result of his protracted illness, he died in the Dolmabahçe Palace in İstanbul, on November 10, 1938, at 9:05 A.M. Unsurprisingly, his demise brought about a torrent of mourning across the country and has set the date of an annual commemoration event that is still in practice after more than seven decades.

November 10 commemorations are one-minute practices, consisting of various and disjointed elements as an act of remembrance – these are, though limited to, Turkish flags (occasionally superimposed with Mustafa Kemal’s portrait) on houses or motor vehicles; special events in schools, such as poetry recitals and most importantly, 60-second air raid sirens to demarcate the very minute where Atatürk breathed his last, at exactly 09:05 A.M. Though there is certainly an element of officialdom in such proceedings, such as state ceremonies, it is necessary to point out that there is no “official” necessity, i.e. a punitive retaliation, for the non-adherence to these practices. There is nonetheless a voluntary participation to these events; traffic comes to a standstill for that particular minute, while schools, workplaces and such display momentary respect for Mustafa Kemal’s demise.

One premise I’d like to build on in this chapter is as follows: the merging of the national identity with Mustafa Kemal’s personality caused the memory of Mustafa Kemal to be kept alive as an addressee of omnipresent proportions, prompting his admirers to refer to his actions, thoughts and behaviour in face of opposition. One example of this has already been mentioned in Chapter 3.1, with newly wed couples taking oaths of allegiance at Atatürk’s mausoleum, Anıtkabir. Furthermore, this construction of Mustafa Kemal as a posthumously omnipresent “court of appeal”, it is arguably the case that on a symbolic basis, he is still alive. Indeed, this proposition does dovetail with various sayings, to the effect that he lives in his people’s hearts. But this survival is not necessarily and solely on a purely symbolic level, which only felt but never acted on.

One distinctive element of the November 10 commemorations is that they consist of various practices that are not rigidly interconnected in a sequential fashion. The practices undertaken during this day consist of flying flags adorned with Mustafa Kemal's portraits, commemorative ceremonies in schools in the form of poetry readings and/or painting exercises with themes on Atatürk's demise and his subsequent legacy. The brief analysis of this section focuses on the minute-long vigil at the hour of Mustafa Kemal's demise, 09:05. The reason behind this choice is mainly the all-encompassing nature of the ritual, due to its distinct and extra-spatial auditory element. Whereas all the aforementioned practices are confined into spatial limits, such as institutions, the vigil employs blaring air sirens throughout urban spaces in order to instigate the local populace to the observation of the ritual.

Compared to previous examples, particularly that of the Student Oath, where enactment of the ritual required a particular space, at first glance the blare of air-raid sirens at 09:05 may appear to efface this spatial necessity by allowing reception regardless of the receivers' position. While on formal grounds, this is not necessarily false – after all, the essential purpose of an air-raid siren is to be heard at all possible conditions for the potential victims to seek shelter. Perhaps due to its presence as a messenger of imminent destruction, air sirens are not necessarily in possession of charitable sentiments.

Then, what are the implications of air sirens as the messengers of a commemorative ritual? If we grapple with the latter issue of the incongruity of an ostensibly wartime method of mass communication (air siren as warning) and a method of mass communication for the mourning vigil, it is possible to argue that the sirens of November 10 have been divorced of their intended use value, while their functional value is re-appropriated into a different “warning”. In connection with the spatial necessities of the vigil, it is actually not the case that the sirens effacing these necessities: on the contrary, the pervasive extent of the sirens render all receivers an unwitting members of the vigil, regardless of their intent to be so.

This overarching reach of sirens is essential to our understanding of the ritual of this commemorative vigil. As opposed to previous demonstrations of respect or loyalty to Mustafa Kemal, such as the Oath, the November 10 vigils induce a particular peer-pressure upon those who hear it in the presence of others members of society. What this means is that, once heard, receivers are expected to stand to attention for a full minute, until the sirens die down and previous actions may be resumed.

Of course, compliance is not *mandatory*; in other words, it is not a legally enshrined practice to stand vigil for sirens, which in turn makes non-compliance possible. However, the non-legality of this division between compliance and refusal is the case in point regarding this issue. The repercussions of the non-compliance are not legally codified, but rather socially enforced. The aforementioned peer-pressure amongst the adherents against non-adherents constitutes a version of the Schmittian friend-enemy distinction. While not necessarily violent in its manifestation, the distinction nonetheless derives from one individual's decision of non-compliance as a threatening behaviour to the values espoused by the individual for whom the vigil is being held. It is the case that non-compliance is a deviation from the accepted behaviour, and such deviations are, by extension, related to values opposing those endorsed by the Kemalist discourse. If we briefly return to Ernesto Laclau's concept of the empty signifier, we can further the model of the chain of equivalence by counter-posing the pro-Kemalist chain of equivalence with a mirror image, which consists of a set of perceived values that are opposed to it. For all intents and purposes, this mirror image also consists of irreconcilable values or demands that are subordinated by their own empty signifier. Yet, since the legitimacy of the former chain is derived not from its analysis of the latter but by its flat rejection on the grounds that it [the former chain] is the sole representative of the modernising nation-state, the constituent elements of the latter chain of equivalence are subject to constant change and interpretations that position the latter chain into ground of a justified exclusion – this opposition and rejection are not necessarily due to a sustained critique, but they rather stem from a preconceived judgment that takes its values as irrevocable and unchangeable, therefore rendering its opposition redundant and defeated before the related arguments can be posited.

This stance is related to the aforementioned reference to the steady shift towards ideologically conservative approach in Turkish politics, as well as the axiomatic adherence to the conditions from which the republic was constructed. If we assume conservatism to be the belief for the ideal state of society to be in the present, and that incremental changes to maintain that current state of affairs are the preferred method of statecraft, we can then observe that the entrenched loyalty and longing to an idealised past where the accepted values of the society were predicated. Furthermore, not only this constructed image of past is perceived to be the essential point of origination; the deviations from it are taken as the reason behind potential ills that may befall the nation.

4. Conclusions

The arguments and the analyses that support them in this work are by no means the final word on the controversial issue regarding the deification of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the national memory. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, not only these discourses regarding Mustafa Kemal's image may be further elaborated, even the discourses hereby argued may be subjected to views, through which their meaning may be reconstructed, i.e. "legitimacy" in terms of construction of symbolic proximity to Mustafa Kemal may also be construed as loyalty to his memory, and so on.

However, these alternative views notwithstanding, it appears to be case that the apotheosis at hand largely stems from the transition of a set of values, conventions and judgments that were constructed in a period of exception and gradually coming to reside as norms. The image of a strong and resourceful leader, spearheading far-reaching reforms may be considered necessary to "jumpstart" a nascent nation, which, in many ways, fell behind its contemporaries. However, nearly a century after the construction of this nation, the cult reverence to Mustafa Kemal remains as axiom for the understanding and perhaps even to the execution of the Turkish modernity. If we were to contextualise this so-called transition, we might argue that the stability of the new political structure around a republican Turkey was initially related to the deified image of Mustafa Kemal, as elaborated in the historical background and the discourse of legitimacy – this act, arguably one of necessity, eventually became a cause in itself and practically equated Mustafa Kemal *as* the eternal linchpin of the project of Turkish modernity instead of an important, yet transitory point of the process.

The posthumous presence and entrenchment of the "eternity" of Mustafa Kemal's guiding leadership and its various representations may constitute a furthering in the understanding of personality cults by expanding their definition. Though many manifestations of personality cults are, by and large, limited to the lifespan of their object, the cult representation of Mustafa Kemal exists long after his demise and therefore opens the possibility of a broadening of definition: therefore, personality cults are not necessarily vehicles of power but also anchors of communal identity.

Power relations of personality cults are thereby able to bestow a power upon its adherents as well as their objects. It is, for instance, not only Mustafa Kemal's person or his posthumous image that garners reverence and respect through the cult adherence, but also the followers as well – the cult bestows an albeit marginal glimpse of respectability to those who follow it.

The power thus bestowed does not consist of the sole function of reverence, either. There is also an exclusionary function that may be defined up as a variably aggressive stance that places non-adherents of various convictions, ranging from the indifferent to the hostiles, into a general category of reactionary attitude. The elevation of Mustafa Kemal to a densely congratulatory level consists of potentially vindictive behaviour against those who do not afford a similar veneration. This reaction consists of both legislative and non-legislative repercussions, examples of which may respectively be observed in codified laws in the constitution, which penalise insults to Atatürk's memory and through public outrages against thoughts or deeds against Mustafa Kemal's representation.

These conditions demonstrate that Mustafa Kemal's personality cult constitutes not only a designator of power relations, but also a precondition of modernity in Turkish context, without which it is deemed impossible and furthermore, illegitimate to assume representation. The perceived necessity to encapsulate the project of modernity and reverence of Mustafa Kemal as mutually inclusive concomitants has been inducted into individuals within society at an early age, as mentioned in Analysis II, and are therefore rendered non-disputable and unquestionable by the dint of their early adoption. This position of immunity to critical inquiry appears strong enough to sustain itself even through the late 1990s and into the 21st century, where Kemalism is no longer as pervasive, and where traditionally Kemalism-oriented institutions such as the armed forces were largely isolated from active politics.

One of the most strident demonstrations of this sustained presence of adherence is perhaps the recent public protests in the mid-2013, which started from central İstanbul and engulfed the majority of the country within weeks. Although one of the leading discourses of the demonstrations were their inclusivity of highly variant identities and ideologies, ranging from far-right to far-left and from secularists to communities of religious orientation, imagery of Mustafa Kemal nonetheless assumed a central role, especially in the form of the rallying cry, "We are soldiers of Mustafa Kemal", which adopted by various groups of nationalist inclinations. While not necessarily the only

slogan that was uttered throughout the protests, this cry is indicative as to how demands for progressive social values and equality in representation, amongst others, still manifests through Mustafa Kemal. A further indication, even in this short phrase, is that despite the advocacy for a fairer society –as was the case, by and large, in the 2013 demonstrations- the call for such a demand manifests through a symbolic self-giving to the military aspect of Mustafa Kemal’s personality, therefore creating an ironic situation where one’s demand for individual liberties are voiced through the hierarchical structure of a martial institution. While the fact the republic was established mostly by an elite cadre of military officers and bureaucrats may provide the possible inspiration of such an utterance, it also appears that the anchor of a struggle of liberty is still lodged in the setting of a military setting, in which Mustafa Kemal is the supreme commander.

Such utterances are valuable indicators of the direction towards which the cult of Mustafa Kemal is set. Though ostensibly nostalgic and retrospective, as studied in this work, the cult’s sustenance rests in a hypothetical mirror-image of its past, projected into the future, where the exceptional conditions of the Golden Age, of Kemalism would remain the norms upon which the society would be constructed. It is the assumption that the “ideal” society rests on the founding principles of the republic that bestows this conviction that perceives adherence to Mustafa Kemal and his constructed legacy to be the “pure” or “untainted” foundation of such an enterprise.

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Mustafa Kemal Atatürki isikukultuse toimimine 20nda sajandi Türgi modernsuses

Käesolev magistritöö esitab uurimuse Türgi Vabariigi rajaja Mustafa Kemal Atatürki isikukultusest. Töö peamiseks eesmärgiks on analüüsida, kuidas seda isikukultust Türgi ajaloo vältel – millest enamuse jooksul kultuse objekt Mustafa Kemal ise juba surnud oli – mõtestatakse, levitatakse ning alal hoitakse. Töö ei põhine ajaloolistel sündmustel kui sellistel; pigem uuritakse, kuidas ajaloolisi sündmusi ja nende tõlgendusi on poliitiliste diskursuste loomisel rakendatud, võimaldades nii kultuse tunnustust ja säilitamist kujutavas kunstis, rituaalses käitumises ning teistes argipraktikates; samuti kasutatakse töös ilukirjanduslikke allusioone argumendi illustreerimiseks. Arvestades kultuse alalisust ja vastupidavust igapäevaelus, oleks pea võimatu selle kõiki esinemisviise käesolevas töös koherentselt esitada. Siiski on tänu siin omandatud „osaleva vaatleja” positsioonile võimalik eritleda välja mitu selle sotsiaalselt konstrueeritud uurimisobjekti olulisemat aspekti ning näidata, kuidas see objekt ühiskonnas toimib ja ühiskonda mõjutab.

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