

## REVOLUTION AND NATION BUILDING IN FRANCE AND TURKEY: WITH A FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES AS WELL AS LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICIES

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### Abstract

This paper examines nation building in Turkey and France, looking particularly at the role of the military and language and education policies in national integration. After discussing definitions of 'nation,' and how national identity is formed, it looks at how France and Turkey each initially articulated their concepts of 'nation' and how each formed a clear sense of a shared national identity. It identifies the main factors that aided this process and resulted in nation building. It considers the relationship between revolution and nation building in both countries. It concludes that there is a strong relationship between nation building and the military in both France and Turkey and in addition notes the long term relationship between the two countries.

### Introduction

Today many countries – especially in the developing world – are seeking their identity. It seems that for many countries, the issue of national identity needs to be answered in order to be able to resolve serious cleavage issues as well as get on with the business of daily life. A shared sense of national identity seems to be a pre-requisite for successful nation building. Study of nation building in world history and in comparison with other nations is helpful in order to be effective, objective and just in future political behaviour. Nation building is a continuous process as each nation must continually adjust to new ideologies, new world orders, market situations, population changes, and so on. But the decisions that politicians and bureaucrats make today are influenced by their national heritage. Each nation has its own symbols and stories of origin that are repeated and enacted over and over. National Days are especially important in building a collective memory and identity. Since it is these stories connected to the founding of the modern nation that are emphasized and continue to influence behaviour and decisions today, this study focuses on the revolutionary founding periods of the Republic of France and the Republic of Turkey.

The first section articulates concepts of nation, national identity and nation building and examines different definitions of each. In addition to the

many ways it is defined in the literature, different understandings are apparent from the way each is discussed in the media or in normal conversation. The second section looks at the role of the military in nation building. It discusses whether military force is necessary for nation building and whether it is more deliberate than most social organizations in its teaching of structure-related values. The third section explains the case of France. It examines the French definition of nation and how national identity was formed. It particularly discusses the roles of the armed forces and of language and education in nation building. The fourth section discusses the same issues but in relation to Turkey. The last section offers a comparative analysis of nation building in France and Turkey based on the questions of sections four and five.

## Concepts of Nation and National Identity

A quick glance at almost any newspaper, especially over the past two decades, reveals that the concept of 'nation' is the subject of much debate and a frequent source of conflict. However, confusion over terminology is not confined to the public. An examination of the literature shows that the concept of nation continues to be a topic of debate among scholars. Keitner (2007) is one of the authors who stress the paradoxes inherent in theoretical definitions of nation and their working out in practice. Hobsbawm (1992) asserts from his examination of the literature on the concept that although there are many definitions, no satisfactory standard criteria for what defines a nation have been identified.

The word 'nation' comes from the Romance languages and originally referred to the process of being born or to a group having common characteristics. According to Hobsbawm, before 1884 it referred to inhabitants of a specific region. In 1884, the idea of government was specifically connected to the concept of nation and the idea of 'the homeland' was connected to the state. Although 'nation' originally referred to origin or descent, in early modern times it began to be used to describe a political community. Most writers accept the ideas of nations and nationalism as a relatively modern phenomenon and connect their emergence to the social and political changes taking place during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century revolutions. One of the first modern usages of the term is found in the documents of the French Revolution of 1789.

Smith (2000) argues that the behind the view that nation and nationalism are modern is the basic understanding that nation and nationalism are socially constructed. He therefore refers to the modernist approach as 'constructionist.' Social constructions assume that nations are created from nationalism, that nations are a recent development

deliberately built by elites, and that the nation could only be invented under modern conditions. A continuation of this idea is that the nation will evolve into a new form in the postmodern age. According to Smith, Hobsbawm is an example of a constructionist. Hobsbawm argues that nationalism began around 1830 with a popular democratic and political nationalism that became more divisive, ethnolinguistic and rightist after 1870. Smith however thinks that cultural engineering or the deliberate creation of traditions began in this later period. He argues that nation and national identities were built on sociopolitical constructs in post industrial societies.

Definitions of nation and stories of national identity are important because they have political consequences. Montserrat Guibernau (2001:243) defines nation as "a human group conscious of forming a community, sharing a common culture, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future and claiming the right to rule itself." Anthony D. Smith (2004:129) outlines the ideal type of the modern nation as having a clear geographic territory, authority connected to that territory, a legal community, a public culture transmitted through public institutions, an autonomous community of citizens, a nation that interacts with other sovereign national states on an international level, and a community that developed from the ideology of nationalism. Smith and Hobsbawm both argue that nationalism comes first and that it is nationalists and the state that create nations.

One of the reasons for confusion is because the term 'nation' still has two meanings. Different writers use different terminology but generally the two concepts of the nation are "civic," territorial," or "voluntarist" and "ethnic," "genealogical" or "organic." In the western understanding of the civic conception, nations are formed through territory, economy, law and education. Smith (2004) argues that the fact that this conception is based on modern industrialization shows it is a modern western interpretation. The ethnic conception of nation is more popular outside the west and is often in opposition to the civic conception.

Hans Kohn in his 1944 writings was the first to differentiate between voluntarist and organic nationalism. He argued that voluntarist nationalism was prevalent west of the Rhine including Britain and North America and organic nationalism was dominant in Central and East Europe, Russia, the Middle East and much of Asia. The main difference is the relationship between the individual and the collective. According to the voluntarist ideal, the person has the right to choose which nation to belong to. According to the organic understanding, the individual is born into a nation and carries the character of that nationality wherever s/he goes (Smith 2000).

While the concept of nation tends to be more abstract and theoretical, it is made more concrete through the building of national identity. The

concept of nation appeals to the mind but the concept of national identity appeals to the heart. National identity is presently one of the strongest forms of collective identity. As Guibernau (2001:243) explains it, "national identity is based upon the sentiment of belonging to a specific nation, endowed with its own symbols, traditions, sacred places, ceremonies, heroes, history, culture and territory."

Analyses of revolutions and nationalist movements change according to current academic perspectives. Gary Marks and Doug McAdam (1996) note that in the 1960s and 1970s, the collective behavior perspective was dominant. Movements were thought to be temporary and to originate from psychological stresses. They were studied more by sociologists than by political scientists. However, events of the 1960s and 1970s made scholars rethink social movements and revolutions from a more political perspective. The new approach assumed there was a close tie between institutionalized politics and social movements. Marks and McAdam suggest that social-political movements usually develop parallel to state structures and that causation moves in both directions. Again the French case is the classic example. They (Marks and McAdam 1996: 99) suggest that this interaction "is perhaps clearest in the French case, where prototypical movement groups and/or political parties – as represented by the various revolutionary factions – coexist with embryonic state structures."

### The Role of the Military in Nation Building

Literature on the role of the military in nation building has generally focused on the economic and political role of the military in development. Nicola Ball (1981) examined the role of armies in nation building in the third world. She notes that most of the studies have focused on the new nations coming out from colonial rule in the years after World War I. Although these are studies of more modern cases, they discuss some of the different roles of the military, especially in the transition period from monarchy or empire to nation. Many Western social scientists writing in the 1960s and 1970s considered the military to be the most important influence in nation building and suggested this was due to their organizational capabilities, technical training, nationalism, and refusal to cater to the political elites. Other important factors were the education of soldiers in modern attitudes, in use of money, scheduling, and understanding bureaucracy. The structure, discipline and organizational skills of the military were thought to be the right combination needed to effect the necessary changes. However, coordination of government policies uses different skill sets.

Diane E. Davis (2003) found that the literature on the relationship between armed forces and political development focused on the relationship

between the military and regime type more than on the military and state formation. She also notes that studies have been on the role of military or the transition from military regimes to other forms of government in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Davis notes several problems with these studies. The first is that analysis has focused on regime types as democracy or authoritarianism or totalitarianism. It is generally held that the military is under civilian control in a democracy. It was therefore assumed that the military was therefore not a significant political actor in democratic regimes. But she concludes that the military's power and political influence do not fit so exactly into categories of regime types. Newer studies assume military and state will separate as a country moves from authoritarianism to democracy. Another limitation Davis finds in the literature is that it assumes the military is led by elites and that its main role is external security. It ignores the reality that armies can be used in civil society in many ways. A third problem is lack of recognition of the influence of military personnel in various social, political and economic institutions.

Christopher Clapham and George Philip (1985) discuss the relationship between regime type and the military. The category that is more relevant to this paper is what they call the breakthrough regime. Although neither France nor Turkey started their republics with military regimes, some of the characteristics of the breakthrough regime also fit Revolutionary ideology and actions. The breakthrough regime is the radical reforming regime. It often involves lower level officers of the military and coups against monarchies are the clearest examples. In a breakthrough regime, the military attacks a social order that it views as a threat to its radical nationalism. The breakthrough regime is offensive and there is usually some mobilization of citizens. This is also a tool for unity as others then takes on the values of the military.

According to Davis, the military is more deliberate than most social organizations in its teaching of structure-related values. Militaries generally have more authoritarian values related to hierarchical structures. They also tend to value discipline, efficiency, group unity, nationalism, and the particular type of group dynamics that come from spending time together in isolation from the rest of society. But their hierarchical structure makes it difficult for them to implement more than basic political organization.

## Nation Building in France

In the late 1780s the French monarchy was facing serious financial problems. This was partly because of its military support of the American Revolution. It was compounded by severe bread shortages caused by a very bad harvest in 1788. Louis XVI decided to try to get the support of the people. He summoned delegates from the three estates made up of the

nobles, clergy and the general masses for the first time since 1614. The deputies from the Third Estate made up the biggest group. They wanted a voice that was more proportional to their size. On June 17, 1789 they passed a resolution making national consent a requirement for government action and calling themselves the National Assembly. Keitner (2007:1) asserts that this recognition of "the political power of nationhood" changed French and world politics forever.

The new activists formed the idea of nation as a legitimate alternative to the monarchy. Louis XIV had centralized power under the monarchy more than most other kings. The *parlements*, law courts made up of aristocrats, reacted by trying to protect their power. The political concept of the nation as separate from the king and state gradually developed during these conflicts between the king and the *parlements*. In earlier usage, the Crown, the State and the Nation were used interchangeably. The idea of the nation was first in reference to the general French population. Later it developed more into the idea of the nation as a source of legitimate political power to challenge the exclusive power of the king. Keitner (2007:25) examines an early French definition of nation that appeared in the 1789 *Catéchisme national*. This definition included the ideas of freedom, selection of leaders and submission to law. Everything that belonged to the nation was considered national. This therefore included everything from dress to dinnerware to language to rituals. Language and symbols were very important in creating the new sense of national identity.

The ethnic or organic definition of nation emphasizes historical genealogical kinship relations as well as common language and culture. The civic or voluntarist definition was influenced by the Enlightenment. It was based on rational connections between citizens and polity. France is usually considered to be an example of a voluntarist nation. But several writers argue that nation building in practice is not as straightforward as theory makes it seem. Using the ethnic-civic dichotomy can be useful but it can also add confusion. Kaufmann (2005), for example, thinks that those involved with constructing the nation also construct understandings of state and of nation. Some nations focus more on the civic aspect and some on the ethno-cultural aspect. Some try to work with both. He suggests that pre-modern political traditions tend to have a more ethnic interpretation whereas more recent traditions tend to have a more civic interpretation. France is an example of a nation where the two interpretations were expressed at the same time. The 1789 Revolution was a modern civic expression of nation-state. But the canceling of citizenship of foreign revolutionaries by Jacobin authorities in 1792-94 was based on an ethno-cultural interpretation.

Kaufman stresses the limitation of the civil-ethnic paradigm and

instead suggests that the “real” national identity is tied to the dominant ethnic group. He argues that the key is found in the interpretation. For example, language can be a sign of either civic or ethnic nationalism. The motivation behind the French policy of linguistic homogeneity after 1793 might, for example, have been to exclude non-ethnic French as well as to draw in the ethnic French in the peripheries. But since language has a voluntary element, it can also be used to argue for the liberal or civic interpretation of nation. Kaufman concludes that the French idea of nation can be interpreted either way – “It all depends on how much emphasis you place on the ‘civic’ moments—the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the participation of foreign revolutionaries—versus the ‘ethnic’ ones. Such as territorial demarcation, linguistic standardization and the expulsion of foreigners.” (Kaufman 2005:47)

Hobsbawm’s discussion of the French concept of nation also shows the confusion between the ideal and practice. He states that in the French concept, nation was linked to territory, not to ethnicity or language. French experts refused to make spoken language a criterion of nationality. They argued that nationality was based on citizenship. But at the same time, Hobsbawm acknowledges that in practice, the Jacobins were suspicious of those who did not speak French. Ideally, French identity was not based on having French as mother tongue but on “the willingness to acquire this, among other liberties, laws and common characteristics of the free people of France” (Hobsbawm 1990:21). In order to become a member of the French nation and a citizen, it was necessary to learn French.

Many writers have claimed that France’s borders are ‘natural.’ This substantiates their conviction that their borders are unchangeable. The phrase “France is one and indivisible” was first expressed by the revolutionaries in 1793 but then enshrined in the constitution. France is therefore not only the people but also the land and scenery within its territory. But establishing the territorial boundaries is one of the first requirements of nation building. The first function of the territory is that it provides an identity. It is the shared heritage of all citizens. The second function of the territory is to unify. At the beginning of the Revolution 86 departments of the same size with equal access to authorities were created. This continues to be an important aspect of territorial equality today.

French nationality was based residence within the established territory. Therefore the fact that some citizens spoke other languages was not important to their identity as French people. Del Pup (2005) uses the terms revolutionary-democratic and nationalist instead of the more standard civic-voluntarist or ethnic-organic to describe the new nation. He argues that the French concept of a nation, at least at the time of the French revolution,

was contrary to any standard definition of nation. The revolutionary-democratic perspective was unusual for its time because it did not consider common ethnicity or language as necessary for the definition of a nation.

Keitner (2007) however argues that voluntarist states actually have to start with some kind of ethnic or organic group. The idea of ethnicity can be invented but there needs to be something to use as a basis for building national cohesiveness. There must be a sense of common identity and commitment for members to be willing to obey the rules set up by its leaders. One of the ways to create cohesion, commitment and compliance is through revolution. Revolution challenges the political and territorial make-up.

During the years of the French Revolution, the idea of nation was strongly connected to the idea of self-determination. The connection between nationhood, political legitimacy and civil liberties is generally attributed to the French Revolution. However the French Revolution also showed the struggle between ideas of nationalism and liberalism. The Revolutionaries claimed to follow liberal and inclusive principles but used oppressive measures to bring about change. Voluntarist definitions of nation can be manipulated for political ends. Since the French concept of nation was newly developing, they needed to build internal policies that would help create a strong national identity. During the Revolution, unity often came at the price of inclusiveness. There was a high cost to homogeneity and unity. Policies like language homogeneity meant that there was forced compliance to use the new national language.

One of the key thinkers of the Revolution was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He was influential in the reconceptualization of legitimate political authority. Rousseau thought that governmental institutions emerged from the will of the people. He saw the people as a single, unified entity. The French concept of solidarity, based on Rousseau's ideas, ended up defending an idea of popular sovereignty that limited diversity and individual freedom. It tended to be exclusive and to enforce conformity. Keitner (2007:41) identifies the ideological struggle underlying Revolutionary thought: "The French Revolution was torn between individualist and collectivist principles and priorities." But the emphasis on the collective took priority. They believed that the community, which emphasizes social networks, actually blocked the individual's absorption into the republic. The Revolutionaries thought it should be the state, not the community that creates the social bond and social structure. In order to build the kind of single society they envisioned, the Revolutionaries expected exclusive allegiance to the Revolutionary nation. Associations with guilds, the Church, the province, and other community social structures were discouraged.

The new ideology also separated the concept of nation from that of

state. This made it easier to mobilize the people. According to the French Revolutionary model, the nation-state represented the collective national will. The concept of the nation was originally developed to create a viable alternative to oppose the state as represented by the monarchy. They needed to create a new national identity to appeal to the hearts of the people in order to bind them together. Before the Revolution, the main bond was allegiance to the king. The nation had been defined by the kings. The territory was based on the boundaries of the king's administration. The Revolutionaries now assumed that those with a French "heart" were willing to live together in the new nation of France. Revolutionary leaders intentionally created a sense of national solidarity. They used symbols, ceremonies and festivals. But they also used executions, purges, and exclusion to get rid of the people they decided were undesirable.

The French nation started with an emphasis on voluntarism. But when the Revolutionaries moved from theory to practice, they found that in order to build the necessary cohesion, they had to include nonvoluntarist definitions. One example of this was the need to define and defend the territorial boundaries. In theory, the boundaries were established according to the wishes of the people. But in practice, the boundaries were set by the people in power. Once the boundaries were set, they were considered inviolable. The concept of national unity meant that no part could be separated. The Revolutionary leaders wanted to block any possible internal threat so they preached the idea of France as a unitary nation. Sovereignty now existed in the unitary body of French citizens instead of in God or in the king. This model does not allow for diversity. Leaders of the new republic did not want to follow the more liberal model of the US that allowed for pluralistic institutions. The conceptual separation of king, nation and state in France emerged out of the political ambition of the French aristocrats and the rational thinking of the Enlightenment. Over time, the new understanding of nation gradually redefined the state.

One of the roles of the National Assembly was to deliberately form policies that would help create a sense of national identity. Legislation was one of the essential tools used to achieve social and legal uniformity. The Revolution began in 1789 and the Republic was proclaimed in 1792. One of their first steps was to put laws in place to bring all of France under one common law. Another important change was to recognize the citizen as a political player and the embodiment of the nation. In France, the law has the highest value. The citizen is the source of the law but the law also says the citizen is 'sovereign.' Some of the measures that were introduced by The First Republic and continue in effect today are:

- The Declaration of Human and Citizen's Rights;
- Reorganization of land that allowed centralization of power; and

- Introduction of the *Code Civil*.

The Code Civil of 1804 had several important aspects. One of the additional objectives of each of these was to bring standardization that would first allow opening of the national market and then the external market. The Code Civil led to the adoption of the metric system, to monetary stability, to linguistic and administrative policies with French as the common language, and to the destruction of the old province system.

National identity was defined by both ideological and cultural criteria. One of the most important of the cultural criteria was to make French the national language. Even before the unilingual emphasis of the Revolution, there had been attempts to increase centralization through usage of French. The first official common usage of French dates back to a 1539 edict making French the required language of official communications. Identifying a common language is one of the first priorities in nation building. The Revolution focused on two aspects of standardization. The first was to only allow French in public places and on billboards. The second was to divide the country into roughly equal 'departments.' These measures helped everyone feel that they belonged to the same nation and that they were equally citizens of a republic and capable of input. Another early priority was education. Education was critical in ethnic assimilation. Education and language policies were closely linked. Only French reading and writing were taught. Since none of the other dialects were in written form, they lost their influence.

Keitner (2007:77) argues that enforcement of language policies was another area where nonvoluntarist elements were evident. She states that, "campaigns to enforce linguistic uniformity became a central means of promoting and disseminating the new regime's policies. Language was envisioned as an essential tool for forging unity and concretizing identity." The universal use of French was to make communication easier as well as facilitate recognition of members of the nation from non-members. Language was chosen as one of the marks of membership and considered to be the main tool of assimilation. Language homogeneity was also needed to ensure understanding of and compliance to the new laws. Enforcing language homogeneity also made it harder for counterrevolutionaries to operate since they tended to use other dialects. Education and language policies were essential in creating national identity. But they were also essential in training a populace that could participate in political life. Language and education were tools to help reach the new objective of equality.

Three of the objectives of the 1789 Revolution that took many years to put into practice were secularization, mass education, and equality. Although one of the goals of the Revolution was to break the power of the

clergy, the Church and State were not officially separated until 1905. Primary education was not compulsory for both boys and girls until the laws of 1881 and 1884. As part of the same laws, civic instruction replaced religious instruction in the schools in 1882. This was another step towards secularization. Religion, language and other differences became part of the private sphere. Secularism was restated in the 1958 Constitution. In spite of the emphasis on citizen rights and equalities and the 1789 Declaration of Rights, women's suffrage did not take place in France until 1944.

The military also played a significant role in the early years of nation building. Feigenbaum argues that the linguistic and national integration of France began with the army. He asserts that. "The French Revolution was surrounded on all sides by hostile powers, and the solution to the defence of the republic was a conscript army" (Feigenbaum 1997:66-67). This was an innovation. Most armies in Europe were mercenary and captained by aristocrats. But in order for this conscript army to be able to work, they had to be able to understand their orders in French. Thus the army became a vehicle for both mass education and language learning.

The French Revolutionaries also thought that they had found the ideal model of nationhood. They thought that they had legitimate reasons to try to force their nationalist movement on other nations and to bring their version of liberty to those oppressed by monarchies. The army was not only important in putting down counterrevolutionaries and defending the territory, it was also active in spreading the political vision of the Revolutionaries through military campaigns. This led to instability in Europe and a decade of war.

One of the important military and political leaders was Napoleon 1 (1769-1821). He was a general during the Revolution and in 1799 led a coup to become the First Consul of the French Republic. Later he declared himself Emperor. He led the armies against almost every European power. Through military victories and alliances, he led France to gain control of most of continental Europe until an unsuccessful invasion of Russia in 1812. He was finally defeated by the British in 1815 at the Battle of Waterloo. Napoleon is remembered especially for his military successes and the Napoleonic Code or *Code Civil* of 1804 mentioned above.

The army played a significant role in nation building in France that is still celebrated today. Elgenius (2005) describes what can be learned about a nation from its National Day. She argues that the National Day is central to nation building because its collective rituals help build collective identities. National Days are usually connected to historical events symbolizing the birth of the nation. Everything from the location of the ceremony to the flags, emblems, music, and other aspects of the celebration is significant in rallying people emotionally to an idealized standard of national identity. Her

analysis of the 14 July celebrations in France shows that the importance of the military in nation building is reenacted every year. Elgenius states that the focus of the French National Day celebration is almost warlike, with a solemn military parade demonstrating the strength of French defence and solidarity. She argues that French military strength and military victory have been associated with 14 July since its official establishment as National Day in 1880. She (Elgenius 2005: 368) claims that "the French National Day has been drained of its original political and historical substance." It symbolizes the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the Republic. The national anthem, the Marseillaise, calls the citizens to battle. The focus on 14 July seems to be to show that France is ready to deal with aggression. She observes that the precision of the parades of armed forces and emergency services as they march down broad streets gives the impression that they can deal with any domestic violence and that they were historically able to deal with the many internal fights after the Revolution. The wide boulevard that today's soldiers march down were originally designed to allow room for the army to manoeuvre against any domestic revolutionary forces.

### Nation building in Turkey

According to the ethnic conception, a nation is a population with a story of common descent, history, culture and territory as well as a sense of solidarity. According to this definition, the population does not necessarily have to be of same ethnicity. Ethnic categories can be broad and stories interpreted to bring a sense of common kinship. For example, many pre twentieth century residents of what is now Turkey were basically unaware of their ethnic ties but they had a strong sense of solidarity. Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, took this concept and tried to build a common story of origin for the people of Anatolia dating back to the Hurrians and Hittites of the second millennium BC.

In Turkey, the French model of nation building was predominant but some aspects of the German model can also be seen. Atatürk is highly revered by Turks. He is seen as the savior of the Turkish people from their enemies. Atatürk is considered by Turks and many non-Turks as the greatest nation builder of modern times. His vision was optimistic and humanist. His nationalism was against segregation and integrative. Atatürk's main nationalism orientation is political. (Andrew Mango 1999; Emre Kongar 1986)

What is a definition of a nation in Turkey? Atatürk gave the shortest definition as "a Turk who is anybody who lives within the borders of the

Turkish Republic.' This is the same voluntarist type of definition as used by the French Revolutionaries in their definition of nation. The emphasis is on those who live within the designated territory as well as on the land itself. Others have emphasized the importance of common culture and common goals. Identification of common culture and goals leads to a more subjective definition and a cultural description of a nation ( Emre Kongar 1986; Ergün Özbudun 1997). Atatürk's definition of nation, however, does not emphasize roots or race. The Turkish understanding of nation is as a political and social community representing the unity of people with common language, culture and goals. The Turkish nation is also made up of the individuals who built the Republic of Turkey. In this definition, Atatürk deliberately used the singular for "person" rather than the plural for "people." His concept of national identity is communicated as a personal statement of identity as a Turk, but yet a personal identification with the collective whole. This emphasis on primary personal identification with the nation as a Turk was also intended to break down the identification with subgroups and emphasize the individual's allegiance to the nation. This means that being Turkish does is not connected to religion, race, or language. The main religious communities of Turkey include Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims; Alevis; Yezidis; Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians; Jews; and Zoroastrians. The main racial groupings include ethnic Turks, Kurds, Caucasians, Romans (Gypsies), Rums (Anatolian Greeks), Assyrians, Armenians, Persians, and Arabs. Yet the concept of 'ethnic' hardly exists in Turkey. The fundamental ideology is, " Ne mutlu turkum diyene" [How blessed is the who says "I am a Turk."] is fundamental ideology. This ideology is based on the French ideal of national identity, "Ben Fransızım diyen herkes Fransızdır" ["Everyone who says "I am French" is French."] According to this definition, voluntary nationalism is a fundamental right and freedom (Emre Kongar 1986; Ergün Aybars, 1997).

The consolidation of the nation-state system was at its peak during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially after World War I. Atatürk and his colleagues used the principle of revolution rather than social evolution to build the new nation of Turkey. Biray Kırılı (2002) states that the goal of the nation-state is an integrated population of active citizens with common culture, laws, and policies.

The Republic of Turkey was proclaimed on 29 October 1923. The Republic was a new nation forged out of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. After the Ottomans sided with Germany in World War I, the Allied powers occupied different parts of what was to become Turkey as a prelude to carving it up. However, Atatürk rallied the people and successfully led

the War of Independence to oust all the occupying powers. Atatürk and his supporters first determined what they considered to be the enviable borders of Turkey. İsmet İnönü, as the Foreign Minister of the Republican Assembly, negotiated and signed (24 July 1923) the Treaty of Lausanne which established the modern boundaries (other than the province of Hatay that joined by referendum in 1939). Shortly after these settlements, the Republic was declared with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the founding President and İsmet İnönü as the founding Prime Minister. The Republic of Turkey was founded on the French Revolutionary model.

In order to be able to strictly focus on nation building and creating a nation identity, they started with a single-party system. The CHP (People's Republican Party) was founded by Atatürk and was the only party for the first number of years. Its goal was to form, apply and defend principles of revolution. They wanted to be able to plan and implement quickly and to avoid the long, drawn-out process of change. The Secretary General of the CHP Recep Peker, at the Party Congress of 1936 and in lectures at the University of Istanbul, stated that energetic, joint action was necessary. Kırılı (2002) also stressed that they particularly wanted to avoid what they saw as the wastes and struggles of individualism and liberalism. Atatürk stressed that they were following a European rather than an American perspective with a system other than liberalism as their goal. He emphasized that the revolution was both in Turkey's institutions and its ideas.

Like the members of the French Third Estate, the original goal of the Jön (Young) Turks was reformation within the system, rather than revolution. However, pre-Republican attempts at reform did not last. A constitution and parliament were set up in 1876 but only lasted for 14 months. The Jön Turks were officially called the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). With their visions of nationalism, they took over what remained of the Ottoman Empire in a military coup in 1908. They had ideas of pan-Turkism and some had ideas of pan-Islam. Some writers claim that their attempts to impose a Turkish rather than an Ottoman identity on other remaining regions of the empire was one of the factors in other versions of nationalism growing through the region. In 1908 the Constitution and parliament were restored. This did not have much effect on the life of the people but did give the reformers a chance to gain education and experience. They held power until 1918, during the turbulent period of World War I. Growing ethno-cultural nationalist movements, promises by members of the Allied Nations to support post-war bids for independence, post-war occupation of parts of Turkey by Allied forces, and struggles for national identity were all factors in the deportations, wars, and purges of religious and ethnic minority groups during this period. Like French

Revolutionaries, Turkish Revolutionaries sometimes took a strong position against those they considered to be working against the nation that was being defined.

Ottoman culture was characterized by the centrality and totality of the state. Most authority was feudal although there was some elementary democracy in the villages. The people basically had high taxes and long periods of military duty but no real benefit from the state. They lacked security. Nevertheless, the people tend to be strong and very loyal to their leaders. This was a significant factor in Atatürk's success. Once he was able to win the community and spiritual leaders over, they in turn drew their people behind Atatürk and continued to support him with fierce loyalty.

Webster (1939) writes from personal observation of the first years of the Republic and concludes that the main differences between the Ottoman constitutional period and the Republic are that:

- 1) The Republic leadership is remarkable,
- 2) The Republic leaders have learned from the mistakes of their predecessors, and
- 3) The Republic leadership has the advantage of a national integrity as opposed to the disintegration of the Ottoman constitutional period.

The fact that the state had been highly centralized under the Ottomans meant that the people were used to the state taking responsibility for everything. It therefore made sense for Atatürk and the reformers to use grand legislation to initiate changes. The earlier attempts at parliaments had not managed to move beyond debate to action. This made it practical to begin the Republic with a single-party system. The Republican Constitution was adopted within six months of the declaration of the Republic. Part of the reason this was possible was that the reformers had had fifteen years of experience first with the Hamidian constitution reinstated after the 1908 coup and then with the Constitutional Act of the 1920 Kemalist (Atatükist) provisional government.

The reforms of the first three years focused on acceptance of the constitution, law codes and separation of state and religion. Although several languages were (and are) spoken in Turkey, the constitution named Turkish as the language of the nation. The change in the workweek, alphabet reform and adult education followed by compulsory state primary education raised literacy and education levels and changed work patterns. This prepared the way for the economic reforms with the adoption of the metric system and then fixed-price merchandising instead of bargaining.

Kırlı attributes the fact that these dramatic social political changes did not lead to a counterrevolution largely to both the decadence of Islam and the prestige of the CHP government. Religion and state had strongly overlapped under the Sultanate-Caliphate. With the abolishment from the

Constitution of Islam as official state religion in the fifth year, there was a clear separation of state and religion. Loyalty to the republic became stronger than loyalty to God. Gradually other laws were put in place that transformed the religio-cultural behaviour of the people. These included adoption of surnames and abolition of religious dress in public.

The Republican government was quick to make legal changes to provide equality under the law. Although the law gave equal civil status to non-Muslim and Muslim Turks, Webster observed that there was some cultural lag in the application of this. Under the Civil Code, women received equal property, marriage and divorce rights in the third year, municipal voting rights in 1930, and national voting rights in 1935. Women were elected to the First National Assembly in 1935. In addition there were women village presidents and city council members. Almost all women voluntarily cast off the veil as being outmoded.

When the CHP met for their Congress in the fourth year, they focused on 4 main principles:

1. Republicanism,
2. Nationalism,
3. Populism, and
4. Laicism.

At their next Congress four years later, they added:

5. *Étatism*, and
6. Revolutionism.

*Étatism* was adopted because of the failed attempt the previous year to form the Liberal Party. Atatürk and the CHP thought that the nation was ready to move into multi-party politics and so had approved the formation of an opposition party. However, when they realized that some thought that this was an opening for counterrevolutionary activity, they delayed the establishment of the multi-party system so that they could give more time for the people to understand democracy. At the same time, continuation of the single-party system allowed them to continue the positive efforts required for the speed of the reforms.

The military has played a significant role in Turkish nation building throughout its history. The Jön Turk movement was essentially made up of military officers. They were active during the last years of the Ottoman Empire in trying to implement reforms. They set up a military government starting with a coup in 1908 and ending in 1918. In addition, the popularity of the leaders of the new Republic such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü and Enver Paşa was largely based on their legendary military successes. Although ethnic differentiation (the *millet*s) was important to the Ottoman economy, it was an obstacle to building a modern, integrated

nation. The military with its conscript and professional soldiers played a significant role in achieving linguistic and national integration.

Although Atatürk had courted the support of the religious orders, guilds, and other politico-organizational groups for support in the preparation period for the War of Independence and establishment of the Republic, he also knew these organizations had their own loyalties. Like French Revolutionaries, he was concerned that these groups would perpetuate their own socio-religious cultures and allegiances. The reformers wanted to eliminate many of the old institutions, symbols and traditions associated with Ottoman culture and Islam. Their goal was to create a secular, western society. Therefore all religious orders were outlawed in 1925. These were groups that had been part of the initial shaping of the nation but were closed down to make sure they did not become centres of unrest or challenge to the new regime.

### Comparison of French and Turkish cases

Many writers have argued that Turkey is struggling to find its identity, especially because of its unique geo-political position between Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Even during the Ottoman Period when Istanbul was the capital of an empire that for a time encompassed most of the Middle East, the Ottomans had strong connections to Europe and a desire to be more Western. This was natural since the mothers of many of the Sultans were from European royal families. However, since the beginning of the Republic, Turkey has had a very intentional policy of westernization. Atatürk and the Republicans equated westernization with modernization. They built institutions and formed many of their policies to help meet these objectives. For a long time Turkey has tried to be accepted as part of Europe. Under the Republic, Turkey has tended to define its national identity in relation to Europe. More recently this has been in relation to the European Union. However, it is important to go further back in history and consider that perhaps it was first the Europeans who began to form their identity in relation to the Turks.

A thousand years ago, when the Turks and Vikings were invading mainland Europe, Europe limited government other than the Roman Catholic Church which at that time had finally formally separated from the Orthodox Church centred in Istanbul (then Constantinople). The Holy Roman Empire was essentially a religious system and did not provide the government structure that was needed for dealing with local affairs. Turks on the other hand have a long history of governmental and military organization. It was the success of the Vikings and Turks that forced the Europeans to organize some kind of a defence system. This was one of the factors leading to the development of the feudal system. Over the next

thousand years, Europe continued to create its identity in relation to the different groups of invading Turks and eventually the Ottomans. Because Europe formed its identity in relation to the Turks, Europeans have always identified them as the enemy, as the other, as the barbarians.

Meanwhile, as the Europeans came out of their Dark Ages and began to gain identity and power, and to build their own empires, the Ottoman Empire began gradually to collapse. Over time, just as the Europeans had shaped their identity in relation to the more powerful Turks, as Turks began to lose their power, they began to shape their identity according to the ascending Europeans. Briefly, at the end of almost 900 years of Turk-European struggles for power, the Turks finally found themselves decisively on the powerless side at the end of World War I. The Ottoman Empire had finally collapsed. However, the imminent break-up of all remaining territories among various European powers was too strong a blow to what remained of Turkish identity. Atatürk, the leader of the victorious defence of Turkish territory against Allied attack at Gallipoli, became the natural 'saviour' to lead the peoples of Anatolia and part of Thrace to establish their own independent nation. The new Republic of Turkey on the one hand challenged the prevailing perceptions that Europe had finally rendered Turks powerless. On the other hand, it bowed to the reality that Europe was, at that time, more progressive, prosperous, and powerful and so chose to now try to shape its identity according to that of Europe.

Since the times of the Crusades, there have always been enclaves of peoples with French sympathies in Anatolia. Throughout much of the Ottoman Empire and even into the 1980s, many of the elite and the religious minorities spoke French. During the activist period of the Jön (Turkish spelling of the French *jeune*) Turks, many were in exile in France and busy translating French pamphlets and literature to send into Turkey. The elites were fascinated with French culture and literature. This long term fascination with France and with the Enlightenment made the French Revolutionary model of nation building a natural choice for Turkey.

Issues of nation building in both France and Turkey centre on the challenge of including different cultural, religious, linguistic, ethnic 'nations' in the first usage of the word in the formation of the territorial, political 'nation' according to the second usage of the word. There were both similarities and differences in the processes of centralization, language and education reform and general nation building in France and Turkey. As Keyder (1987) points out, the Young Turks who took control in 1908 were trained in military schools and were strongly influenced by French republicanism as well as the French Comtians. The historical and ideological link between France and Turkey makes a comparative study logical.

In their study of causality in the democracy – regime type relationship, Mousseau and Shi (1999) consider how anterior, concurrent and posterior war may affect democracy. They conclude that war involvement might lead to post-war change in leadership, especially in democracies, and that war might actually have a positive affect on the development of democracy at the systemic level. France and Turkey are both examples of the anterior war effect leading to shifts in regime type and leadership. Clapham and Philip's findings on the breakthrough regime (mentioned in section two) also fit here. The 1908-1918 Jön Turk government could be classified as a breakthrough regime. The breakthrough regime tends to come from lower level officers who are more intent on changing the social order and in establishing rights for the people. This applies to both revolution situations in France and Turkey. Both countries practiced selective mobilization by conscripting civilians into the army and then using the conscript army in nation building. After the end of the Jön Turk regime, Turkey had five years of transition to establish the Republican government and to begin separation from direct military involvement in the government. France's military was not so directly involved in instigating the French Revolution but Napoleon's 1799 coup gave greater importance to the military and Napoleon used his position as military and political leader to engage in wars throughout Europe. France took some years to transition to a more democratic type of government.

In Turkey and France revolutionaries maintained a strong hold on government for the first years of nation building. France's political centralization started under the absolutist kings. It was continued by Napoleon I basically because it made it easier to efficiently run and control a diverse country. Atatürk also chose to initially maintain the strong centralization that had been present under the Ottomans.

The French Revolution (1789) that led to the establishment and building of the Republic of France had a significant effect, even during that period, on reforms in the Ottoman Empire. Davison (1988) notes that many consider that the Ottoman process of westernization began under the reign of Sultan Selim III (1789-1807). He claims that Turkey's westernization began with military reforms using France as the model and with French advisors. Both countries began their nation building with revolutionary ideas and single parties. After national identities had been established, civilian education improved, and a common language established, both countries were able to move to multi-party systems with more democratic popular participation. It seems however that both France and Turkey are swinging from a more leftist cycle with emphasis on social issues to stronger central authority and more rightist tendencies.

Turkey and Atatürk principles and France refuse to recognize minorities based on race, language, etc. They are strongly against any segregation and any division of territorial integrity. Because of historical issues, Turkey has specific recognition of the rights of Christian and Jewish religious minorities in order to protect them. But the state is officially secular. Both countries also restrict religious dress as part of their secularization policies.

## Conclusion

Smith (1991) comments that scholars usually date the beginning of nationalism to the period surrounding the French Revolution or, alternatively, to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both of these periods are significant in the development of conceptual models of 'nation' and the dominance of the nation-state throughout the twentieth century. As one of the first examples of the nation-state, the political, economic, cultural and linguistic revolutions that transformed France became a model for many other emerging nations. Turkey was one of these. As the Republic of Turkey struggled to rise out of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century, Turkey's elite relied heavily on the French revolutionary model. In order to better understand the contemporary relevance of the concept of nation, it is important to look at historical cases such as France and Turkey. France is an early model of the modern nation-state. Since France had little in the way of models to draw on, it took almost 150 years to process from revolution to full popular participation in nation building through mass education and women's suffrage.

During World War I, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the Young Turks began building a new nation. World affairs plus internal political, ideological, social, and economic factors came together to trigger a huge revolution. Since the eighteenth century, reforms under the Ottomans had generally followed the French example. It was therefore natural for the emerging nation of Turkey to take France as its model of both revolution and nation building. It took France 150 years to build the nation from Revolution and declarations of liberty and equality to their mass application. Using France as a prototype, Turkey was able to implement many of the same elements of nation building in only fifteen years.

France and Turkey are both examples of intentional nation building with concepts of nation and national identity formed by the elite with the goal of building better societies. Both have transformed their respective societies. There have been gains and losses. Setting national standards has often meant the loss of regional cultures, languages and traditions. This study on the early stages of nation building in France and Turkey only provides an

introduction to the processes of nation building that will continue as long as nations exist.

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