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NARRATIVES OF THE IDEAL TURK IMAGE IN TURKISH COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Bilkent University 2018

NARRATIVES OF THE IDEAL TURK IMAGE IN TURKISH
COLLECTIVE MEMORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TV DRAMAS
“PAYİTAHT:ABDÜLHAMİD II” AND “MEHMETÇİK KÛT-ÜL
AMÂRE”

A Master’s Thesis

by
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Ankara

July 2018

To My Family



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MEMORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TV DRAMAS “PAYİTAHT: ABDÜLHAMİD II”
AND “MEHMETÇİK KÛT-ÜL AMÂRE”

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

of

İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

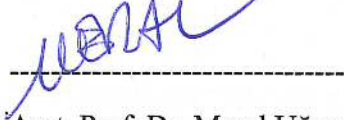
ZEYNEP GEYLAN

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

July 2018

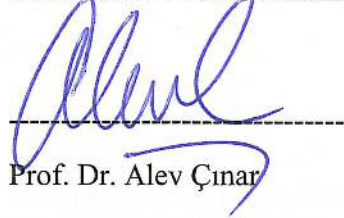
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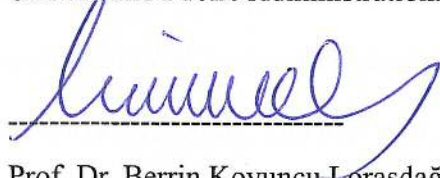
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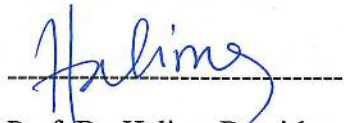
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ABSTRACT

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July 2018

This thesis analyzes the construction of the ideal Turk images by the television dramas “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*” and “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*” in relation to the production of collective memory. They are examined within the framework of JDP’s nationalism project, in particular the similarities and differences of the JDP’s ideal image from the initial concept of ideal citizen constructed during the years of the early Republic. The aim of this thesis is to show what kind of an ideal citizen the JDP government constructs and implies it through re-visiting the existing elements of the ideal citizen which exists in Turkish collective memory in relation to their nationalism project. The characteristics of the represented ideal image is analyzed based on the four most repeated notions in both series. The ideal Turk’s understanding of what their national duties are, their relationship with Islam, the West and the internal others have been determined as

categories of analysis. After that, the changes and continuities between this narration and the official narration that is constructed during the first years of the new Republic is acknowledged with relation to the present government's doctrine.

Keywords: Citizenship, Collective Memory, JDP, Nationalism, Ottomanism



ÖZET

TÜRK KOLLEKTİF HAFIZASINDA İDEAL TÜRK ANLATILARI: “*PAYİTAHT: ABDÜLHAMİD II*” VE “*MEHMETÇİK KÛT-ÜL AMÂRE*” DİZİLERİNİN BİR ANALİZİ

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Temmuz 2018

Bu çalışma, “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*” ve “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*” dizilerindeki ideal imge anlatısını kollektif hafızanın inşası bağlamında incelemiştir. Bu diziler, AKP’nin ulusalcılık projesi bağlamında, oluşturdukları ideal vatandaş imgesinin, Cumhuriyetin erken yıllarında oluşturulan ideal imge’den farklarını ve benzerliklerini göstermek üzere analiz edilmiştir. Bu tezin amacı, AKP’nin ulusalcılık projesi bağlamında nasıl bir ideal vatandaş imajı çizdiği ve bu imajı Türk kollektif hafızasında halihazırda bulunan belirli algıları değiştirerek topluma tanıttığını göstermektir. Dizilerdeki ideal imge anlatısı, en çok tekrarlanan temalardan çıkarılan dört kategoriye göre analiz edilmiştir. Bu kategoriler, anlatılan ideal vatandaşın ulusal görevleri ile ilgili algısının ne olduğu, bu vatandaşların İslam, Batı ve makbûl olmayan vatandaşlar ile ilişkisi olarak belirlenmiştir. Daha sonra, bu anlatı ile erken cumhuriyet döneminde inşa edilmiş ideal imge anlatısı arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar, günümüz hükümetinin politikaları dikkate alınarak tanımlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AKP, Kollektif Hafıza, Osmanlıcılık, Ulusculuk, Vatandaşlık



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I wish to express my deepest gratitudes to my supervisor Assistant Professor Meral Uğur Çınar for her labour, guidance and patience with me and this thesis. Also, I must thank Professor Alev Çınar for her valuable contributions and comments. Their lectures and guidance were what shaped this work.

A special set of thanks must be addressed to Professor Mehmet Akif Kireççi, for his valuable comments, guidance and belief in me not only with this work but also with my academic decisions. I deeply cherish every moment with which he contributed to my intellectual and personal development.

I am especially thankful for my parents' and sister's unconditional love and support, not only during the writing of this thesis but for every decision I made in my life. My father's insights and guidance, my sister's friendship and support and my mother's endless cheering were the grounds of my motivation for this work. Last but not least, I must thank my dears; Birce Beşgül and Onurhan Savi with all my heart for their immense patience, support, feedback and belief in me both in the process of writing this thesis and in other aspects of my life.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyzes two television dramas “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*” (Aydın, 2018a) and “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*” (Konuk & Akar, 2017) with regards to the production of the ideal Turk image in relation to the collective memory. As a result of this analysis, this thesis aims to answer in what ways the JDP government’s ideal image as they are represented in the selected television dramas are different from the initial ideal citizen image¹ described by the establishing elite. This thesis aims to explore the importance of constructing an ideal image for transforming a nation through re-visiting the existing notions in the collective memory. By selecting two television dramas which narrate the last years of the Ottoman Empire, due to television’s significant altering impact on collective memory, this thesis aims to understand how these television dramas revise the timeframe which the founding fathers of the new Turkish republic had been dominant. To sum up, this thesis will examine the characteristics of the ideal Turk image that are narrated by these television series in relation to the production of collective memory.

¹The version of ideal citizenship constructed by the founders of the new Turkish Republic. The Kemalist elite implemented a set of new cultural rules in an effort to construct a new nation, which included a new version of ideal citizenship (A. Çınar, 2005; Kandiyoti, 1997; Özyürek, 2004; Zürcher, 2009)

As it will be elaborated in the next chapter, construction of an ideal citizenship concept carries vital importance for a nation. Most important function of a common national identity is to tie individuals together and constitute a sense of nationhood. The sense of 'being the same' or 'belonging to the same whole' is what changes a collective of individuals from a group of people to a nation. In addition to the certain definition of an ideal citizen, the nation's shared memory also carries importance for becoming a nation. The context of an ideal image produces a sense of sameness when it is placed within the collective consensus of a society. In other words, while it is important to define the boundaries of what is ideal as a citizen in building a nation, it would be useless unless the same boundaries are recognized and embraced by all the individuals who constitute the society.

Certain tools of nation building emerge within the above described intertwined relationship between collective memory, concept of ideal citizenship and nation building. Within this context, one of the most important tools in shaping the nation emerges as the means of mass media. Amongst them, television is one of the most widely adopted and used mean of mass communication. Given its ability to reach out to far ends of the society and propagate the same context to all at the same time, television is often used to define the contents of nationality. Within this framework, this thesis examines the usage of television with relation to the attempts of building a new nation in Turkey. By examining the definition of the ideal citizen broadcasted in exemplary television dramas, this thesis aims to show how the ideal Turk image in collective memory is attempted to be changed in definition by using television in correspondence with the nation-building project of the current government.

This thesis argues that the JDP government builds an ideal image in order to increase their doctrine's legitimacy. In correspondence with their attempt to infuse Ottomanism into the Turkish nation, JDP constructs an ideal image which adopts Ottomanism and demonstrates it through the selected television series. Thus, the ideal image the JDP constructs reverses most of the changes the establishing Kemalist elite did in relation to the ideal citizen image during the first years of the Republic. When the important effect of ideal image construction on defining a nation, the JDP's attempt to re-visit the characteristics of the ideal image carries great significance in understanding their approach to Turkish nationalism. In this context, this thesis aims to define the main elements of nationalism which the JDP government desires to adopt by analysing the ideal image they construct.

While approaching television as a tool for altering collective memory, the literature is full of examples of different approaches to the issue with different methods. As it was mentioned earlier, some scholars conducted their studies using narratological and semiotic methods (Brunson & Morley, 1978, 1978; Fiske & Hartley, 1978; Kaplan, 1983). On the other hand some scholars used quantitative methods (Cassata & Skill, 1983; Lopate, 1977). In addition to these studies, there are examples of critical discourse analysis methods in examining character constructions (Zulkifli, 2015). Also, some scholars evaluated the effectiveness of the television with regards to its ability to change the collective memory by focusing on the consumption side. Scholars who want to discover how the audience is actually making meaning of television adopted ethnographic audience studies and applied various ethnographic

methods to reveal the true consumption of television (Haralovich & Rabinovitz, 1999, p. 7).

For the purposes of this thesis, quantitative methods fall short in interpreting the whole meaning of the narration. As Fiske and Hartley also state, some methods television uses in order to connote meaning such as camera angle or music cannot be evaluated fairly with quantitative methods (1978, p. 45). Critical Discourse Analysis on the other hand, albeit the ambiguities of its applications, requires effective theories which must ‘prove to be working’ in order to be considered successful (Dijk, 1995). For the aims of this thesis, I will adopt an interpretive analysis approach. Interpretive approaches to qualitative methods allow researchers to organize and depict the categories of analysis as they see fit while allowing enough flexibility for various interpretations (Timulak & Elliott, 2005, pp. 156–157). In this thesis, knowing what the Kemalist narrative of an ideal image is, an interpretive approach would provide me with enough flexibility to determine the categories that are to be compared with the Kemalist and the selected television dramas’ narratives of the ideal Turk.

As the JDP government initiated their social engineering project after they consolidated their bureaucratic hegemony in 2011, television dramas which narrate the Ottoman History gained importance in reaching out to the public and re-identifying them. President Erdoğan’s reaction to the famous television drama

'Muhteşem Yüzyıl' (The Magnificent Century)² indicates the importance he gives to television dramas' effects. President Erdoğan harshly criticized the women's appearance as well as Suleiman's constant involvement into their drama by stating that "Suleiman the magnificent spent his life on a horse, conquering lands. Not like *that* television drama which depicts our ancestors wrong" ("Başbakan Erdoğan'dan Muhteşem Yüzyıl'a ağır eleştiri," 2012). Given this, Eren was obviously a right fit of a general director for TRT, considering that he largely accelerated the production of television dramas which narrated Turkish ancestors in a way that the JDP approves, which could be designed partially as a response to *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*.

In order to better evaluate the changes and continuums of the ideal image JDP narrates through these television series, the dramas which narrate the final years of the empire were selected.³ As it was discussed earlier; the Young Turks, who gained dominance during the last years of the Empire was later transformed into the establishing elite. The ideal citizen image of the establishing elite mostly represented the Young Turks, and the sense of continuity in the ideal citizenship was narrated as if it started from their emergence. Therefore, choosing the television dramas mentioned earlier would serve the purposes of this thesis better, in order to evaluate how the JDP narrates the times when the Young Turks were dominant in an effort to

²The series broadcasted by another channel between 2011 and 2014; narrated the rule of the Suleiman the Magnificent together with his conquests as well as his *harem*. Audience showed immense interest to the show due to the power struggle between Suleiman's wife Hürrem Sulan, his mother and his other partner.

³In addition to *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* and *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, there is another show which narrates the final years of the Ottoman Empire. "*Seddülbahir: 32 Saat*" was a mini-series consisted of four episodes, broadcasted in TRT in 2016. This show narrates the story of the Dardanelles War and based on its plot, it should be included in this study ("*Seddülbahir 32 Saat*," 2016). However, due to the fact that it's a mini-series, the show appears as more of a documentary than a television drama. Therefore, it was excluded from this study's scope.

build their own ideal Turk image that still conveys a sense of continuity throughout the history.

Considering both television dramas still continue, a new episode is released every week which carries many of the same implications on the ideal Turk narrative. It is impossible to mention every scene that carries relevant meaning to above analysed categories. Instead, the early scenes were mostly chosen as examples because they come as the most striking ones to the audience. Strong feelings and statements are expressed in the early episodes even when the plot was not fully developed. Since the early episodes of these television dramas mostly focus on introducing the characters and developing the story, in other words, do not carry much ‘drama’, strong expressions of certain notions strike the audience more than the ones at the later episodes, which are more carried out together with the drama attached to the developing plot.

Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare and *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* will be analysed based on four categories that are derived from the most repeated notions in their episodes. These categories are characters’ understanding of national duty, their relationships with Islam, the West and with internal others. This thesis is only concerned with the ideal Turk narrative told in these television dramas, and the changes and continuities between them and the Kemalist narration of the ideal image. Whether the JDP’s attempts to change the context of Turkish nationalism in collective memory were successful or not is not included within the scope of this study. Given the large literature of television studies which is mainly concerned with the audience; whether

the audience receives the message and whether they embrace it or not could easily be a subject for another work.

As a result of this analysis, the ideal citizens' understanding of national duty emerges as a strong love of nation, patriotism and military heroism. The ideal citizen is narrated as a heroic soldier who is ready to do anything for their nation which includes dying if he's male. If she's female, she appears as a mother, daughter or a wife who willingly sends the male in the family to their death as long as he's fighting for their nation. Dying for the sake of the well-being of the nation is desired for the soldiers and their family finds compensation in knowing that they died for a noble cause. All in all, devotion to nation appears very powerfully in both male and female ideal characters. As it will be discussed in the relevant chapter, this characteristic shows parallelism with the current government's emphasis on the militaristic spirit of the Turkish citizens.

The ideal citizen's relationship with Islam appears very positive. In the context of this thesis, the ideal characters' relationship with Islam refers to their attitudes towards Islam as well as their level of adoption of Islamic practices. Both dramas emphasize the spirit of Islam as something that boosts their love of nation as well as something that ties other Muslim nations together. Similar to the relationship between citizenship and nationalism, Islam is narrated as it provides a sense of sameness for the Muslim nations which brings them together at a certain level. In addition to describing the ideal citizen as they embrace the spirit of Islam, they are also demonstrated while performing Islamic practices. As it is described in both

dramas, the ideal Turk should be performing Islam publicly, in addition to including the sense of Islamic spirit into their lives.

The dramas describe the ideal relationship with the West in correspondence to the ideal relationship with Islam. Considering that the West is non-Muslim, the West has a negative connotation to its meaning to begin with. In addition to emphasizing this connotation, both dramas describe the West as evil, corrupting and provoking. When brought together, these hostile elements unite with the already negative approach to the West due to them being non-Muslims, the West appear as the sole enemy in both television dramas. Definition of the West as the main enemy and the suggested positive relationship with Islam shows correspondence with the elements of the current government's nationalism project. As it will be discussed in the following chapters, these characteristics support the government's desire to 'rise a pious nation'.

Finally, the ideal character's relationship with the internal others is also defined through the previous three characteristics. First of all, while being a Muslim is a prerequisite of being an ideal citizen, it is not the only criteria to be fulfilled. In addition to maintaining the ideal approach to Islam as it is described, the ideal citizen should also show the elements of an ideal relationship with the West and understanding of national duties as they are described. As a result, while some non-Muslims could appear as examples of ideal citizens, some Muslim characters may also appear as internal others. The ideal citizen is narrated as approaching these internal others as the enemy in both television dramas, regardless of the Islam's spirit which unifies

them at a certain level. This characteristic emphasises the love of nation and the cautious approach to the West and makes them just as critical as adoption of Islam.

In an effort to bring it down and explain in detail, this thesis is divided into chapters in the following manner. Second chapter serves the purpose of providing the necessary background which will assist the reader in grasping the importance of this analysis within its scope. Chapters three, four, five and six focuses on the detailed analysis of the ideal character's understanding of national duties, the ideal approach to Islam, the ideal relationship with the West and the ideal relationship with the internal others correspondingly by providing specific examples. Chapter seven will summarize the findings and conclude this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

IDEAL CITIZEN, NATIONALISM AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY

An ideal image of a Turkish citizen was constructed during the first years after the establishment of the Turkish Republic with the same purpose of constructing a new nation. Along with a set of new socio-cultural rules and notions, an ideal Turk was described in order to provide a sense of a nationality to the Turkish society.

Similarly, Justice and Development Party (JDP) government had been trying to construct an ideal Turk image as well. Considering their long-lasting rule in Turkish political history which still continues, the JDP government has had the opportunity and time to attempt to construct a new ideal image. Considering the ideological differences between the founding fathers of the new Turkish Republic and the current JDP government, it is possible say that their definition of how a nation should be is quite different. The initial ideal Turk image constructed with the establishment of the Republic does not serve well to the ideology of the present JDP government. Therefore, they are creating an alternative ideal image that could serve the purpose of increasing their legitimacy.

2.1) Memory and Nation Building

Creating an ideal image and serving it as a model for citizenship is at the heart of nationalism. As it can be connoted from Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as well,

establishing a citizenship model into the collective consensus of a society serves the purpose of unifying the individuals under a common notion of nationality (Anderson, 1983).

In other words, defining a common identity and drawing an image of an ideal citizen significantly contributes to the sense of being a nation. Therefore, altering the ideal image becomes a tool for political actors in shaping the meaning of nationality.

Similarly, in an effort to re-define nationalism, the JDP government is infusing their version of the ideal citizen into the socio-cultural setting, which consequently will alter the collective understanding of nationalism.

2.1.1) National Identity, Citizenship and Collective Memory

Concepts of memory and remembering became subjects to social science studies after the emergence of industrialization. Scholars like Nora (1989), Hobsbawm (1983) and Yates (1966) agree that industrialization resulted in with one of the biggest changes memory discussions had undergone. Before industrialization, individuals experienced less gradual changes in their lives since their heritage was ingrained to the place they lived and to their fellow citizens who shared the same location. Thus, identity and solidarity were relevantly less important subjects for the society. Consequently, memory was just about personal history and remembering before the industrialization (Nora, 1989). However, after the emergence of industrialization, memory studies gained a political connotation as the mobility of the people simultaneously increased.

As industrialization increased immigration, the once obvious collective identity started to fade for both people who left their location, and for people who hosted the immigrants. Scholars like Hobsbawm who focused on these new changes in societies claimed that in order to maintain the solidarity within the changing societies, new traditions needed to be invented. While these traditions would meet the needs of the new societies, they would also be constructed in a way that they would identify a new identity through commemorations (1983, pp. 1–14). Scholars like Nora and Yates (1966) on the other hand focused on the effects of these constructed traditions and memories Hobsbawm talked about. Nora argued that “real memory” was edged out by the creation of the “historical accounts of the past” (1989). As opposed to arguing that memory constructions were beneficial, they criticized it by stating that it suppressed the real individual memory.

These two different views on memory which emerged after industrialization, enabled Halbwachs to develop the concept of collective memory while responding to this debate. Halbwachs gives credit to both the memory of the society and the individual memory, while separating the historical memory from the collective one. He argues that historical memory is scientific and objective, while collective memory refers to the cultural context of a group which is fluid and is a collection of individual memories, traditions and perspectives of the society. Individual memory, is never fully subjective because every individual is affected by the collective memory in which they live in (1992). Instead of arguing whether constructing memories is beneficial or not, the term collective memory approaches the memory debate on a

different level by claiming that the collective consensus affects the individual memory while individual memories simultaneously contribute to the collective memory.

The literature consists of various certain approaches to how collective memory affects and what its nature is; which some of them are accepted by the majority of the scholars. There are two major approaches to the nature of collective memory that aims to explain how it comes to be. First one describes collective memory as a collection of events that a nation remembers collectively, without much further questioning on how masses end up remembering certain events more than the rest. In the context of nationalism, Anthony Smith argues that the events which are seen as worthy of remembering by the majority of a nation, shapes their nationality (2000, pp. 52–58). In other words, collective memory is created naturally, by the collective individual remembering of the citizens. Respectively, as more members of the society remember the same past events, the stronger the identity of the community becomes (A. Smith, 1991, pp. 174–179). In other words, remembering of certain events by the masses infuses them into the collective memory, which eventually constitutes a part of their definition of nationalism.

The second approach to the nature of collective memory, on the other hand, argues the opposite. By focusing on why certain events end up being remembered rather than the others, this approach claims that the collective memory is somewhat constructed by the society, and is mainly adopted by the scholars who turned their focus on collective memory after the memory boom. “Memory Boom” began

approximately 20 years after Halbwach's contribution to memory studies as a response to narratives of modernist welfare states of Europe in 1970's (Olick, Vinitzky-Seoussi, & Levy, 2011, pp. 3–4). While the modern states were building their legitimacy on promises of future advancement, a new narrative emerged that turned to past in order to build present legitimacy. This trend also transformed memory from the knowledge of "*how*" certain things happened to "*what happened*" in the past, which carried political connotations (Hacking, 1998, p. 209). Following the line of Hobbsbawn, it was claimed that memory did not offer information about the activities one inherited from their ancestors anymore. It rather offered narratives about certain things that happened in the past which served to the present purposes. Many concepts were developed which are examining the relationship between the collective memory and nationalism, as well as efficacy of collective memory in building common identities for the nations (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, & Tipton, 1985, pp. 153–158; Berger, 1963, pp. 54–65; Çınar, 2005, p. 34; Çınar & Taş, 2017; Olick, 1999; Y. Zerubavel, 1995, pp. 6–12). To summarize the mass literature in this topic: It was argued that identity was maintained with a sense of sameness and continuity over time (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001, pp. 1–7). Individuals needed what Zerubavel called "*mental bridging*" which allowed them to feel connected to their past in order to maintain their identities (2003, pp. 39–40). This sense of continuity was provided by the narratives about past that told individuals about what happened in their history.

Another one of the connections between the collective memory and nationality is the notion of identity. Regarding this relationship, Anderson claims in his "*imagined*

communities” that nations exist as mental images in individuals’ minds. The image of a common identity is placed in the citizens’ minds through collective memory which causes individuals to assume that all their fellow citizens have the same identity. This perception results in the unification of individuals and building of a nationality (1991, pp. 62–65). In addition to bolstering nationalism, adopting a formula of citizenship also provides with a sense of continuity for the individuals. The importance of building an ideal image for the nationalism is also stated by Heywood who claims that the concept of citizenship carried great political significance in the making of the nations (2007, p. 114). In addition to unifying the society, providing a format of citizenship for members of the nation to identify with also gives them a certain sense of mental bridging with their ancestors. An idea of adopting the same common identity generations over generations contributes to the sense of continuity through history.

Üstel traces the changes the changes made regarding the idealness of citizenship models from the late years of the Ottoman Empire until the emergence of the multi-party system in modern Turkey. In her book, she claims that certain elements of the concept of “ideal citizenship” shows differences which corresponds to the changes of the dominant political notions (2008). Similarly, Rıfat Bali also examines the concept of ideal citizenship during the early years of the republic and reaches a similar conclusion (2012). Such examples from the literature may be multiplied which suggest that Turkish political history contains the usage of ideal citizenship construction for political purposes. In other words, in an effort to adjusting the existing definition of nationalism to their ideologies, political actors had been

defining boundaries for the ideal citizenship. Within this framework, in the scope of this thesis, the concept of citizenship is taken in relation to the nation-building.

In addition to these approaches on collective memory's nature, it is possible to identify two different approaches to how collective memory effects the society. While some scholars defend the "strong version", some defend the "distributed version" of collective memory, which this thesis also accepts (Wertsch, 2004, p. 21). The strong version assumes that collective memory subsists beyond and above the society like a cloud. Scholars who support this idea focus on how the individuals are affected by this collective memory (Bartlett, 1995, pp. 293–297) or how this collective memory is shaped (Halbwachs, 1992). Both of them accept collective memory as a distinct entity that is separate from the society and yet is affecting the individuals. On the other hand, the distributed version supports the idea that the past is distributed to the members of the society and that the members choose to identify with it. For example, all members may share the same representation of the past, or their memories of the past may differ which could complement each other or compete with one other (Wertsch, 2004, pp. 23–24). This version does not perceive collective memory as something that befalls on society and alters the individuals' minds. Rather, it recognizes collective memory as something which individuals voluntarily adopt. Due to its voluntariness, it allows for different versions of the past to exist within the same society.

The main reason why this thesis will accept collective memory as a distributed consensus is because it fits into the Turkish context. Turkish society contains a deep

cultural cleavage⁴ which originated during the Ottoman Empire. The Empire functioned over a deep gap between the ruling elites, or the center and the ruled masses, or the periphery. The center segment was isolated from the periphery through the culture of the Sultan, which was established on the cultural, political and economic levels. The common folks' access to this high culture, its symbols and languages was restricted (Mardin, 1973, pp. 170–173). As modernization reforms were implemented by the Empire, this cleavage was further intensified since the center segment easily adopted them while the periphery could not. (Çınar, 2005, p. 47; Göle, 1996, p. 92; Kadioğlu, 1996, pp. 188–190; Özyürek, 2006, p. 117; Zencirci, 2014, pp. 5–6). In addition, at the same time a liberal and westernized generation emerged which were named as 'Young Turks'. These Young Turks were definitely not members of the periphery. However, they did not completely fit in with the center segment due to their lowered allegiance to the Sultan (Ahmad, 1995, pp. 25–37; Karpas, 2012, pp. 9–10; Zürcher, 2009, p. 86). This generation embraced the westernized values of liberty, secularism and modernity. Their dispute with the traditional Ottoman regime motivated them to politically mobilize and establish the Committee of Union and Progress, which albeit the troubles it experienced, managed to gain political dominance towards the last years of the Ottoman Empire. The CUP was instrumental in the construction of the new republic and most of its members were merged with the establishing Republican People's Party (Kayalı, 2012; Zürcher, 2009, pp. 85–100). In other words, the establishing Kemalist elite were

⁴The term cleavage in political science refers to the existence of particular persistent factors such as demographics and party choices of the citizens that create structural divisions in the society (Girdwood, 2012). Founding fathers of cleavage research define two causes that result in four different cleavages. See; "Lipset, S.M., & Rokkan, S. (1967). *Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction. Party Systems and Voter Alignments; Cross-National Perspectives*, 1-63."

members of this Young Turk generation who mobilized under the CUP and started to affect the political system.

Thus, a particular notion of modernity was implicit in the historical context of the modern Turkey. This sense of modernity was shaped by the Kemalist elite's idealization of the western modernization as "civilization", and their desire to become a part of that civilized world (Ahıska, 2005, p. 37; Bozdoğan, 1997, p. 136; Çınar, 2005, p. 14; Göle, 1999, p. 40; Kadıoğlu, 1996, p. 186). When it comes to the reason why the Kemalist elite adopted a westernized model of modernization, the contains two different answers. On the one hand, some argue that the westernized version of modernization was the only mode of "modernization" at the time, thus, it was only natural for the Kemalist elite to see it as synonyms (Göle, 1999, p. 44). On the other hand, some argue that the Kemalist elite followed Edward Said's Orientalist views and internalized it. In its broadest terms, Said argued that the description of the *orient* was constructed by the west in an insubstantial way (1985). For Kemalist elite to follow this falsely constructed image of the *Orient* resulted in its internalization, therefore, a fantasy of the west while enabling a dislike of the East (Ahıska, 2005, p. 37; Bora, 2017, p. 196). Regardless, the Turkish nationalism consisted of a certain understanding of modernity.

However, this historical context created by the Kemalist elite does not support the concept of nationalism that is desired by the JDP government. This is evident in their self-representation as the "true representatives" of Turkish nation (Çınar, 2011, p. 540). This claim indicates that the JDP government does not approve of the existing

context of Turkish nationalism and wants to revise it in order to produce an alternative one. The rhetoric of “new Turkey” was first mentioned by Morris in 2005, referring to the what seemed like a democratization process⁵ in Turkey under the JDP rule (2005). Despite its positive connotations, the JDP government started to actively use this rhetoric after 2010, indicating that the new Turkey was going to be a rising nation which appeals the people *rightfully*. This rhetoric of new Turkey, which reminds the establishing elite’s doctrine of new Turkey, develops within a conservative framework (Bora, 2016).

For example, JDP leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan states that the old Turkey no longer existed while adding that they had to change what needed to be changed (“‘Artık eski Türkiye yok,’” 2017). This concept of new Turkey which addresses to the establishing ideology emerges as a new nationalism project (Çınar & Taş, 2017, p. 659). In correspondence with the JDP’s ideology, the party attempts to construct a new context for nationalism, which is genuinely different than the one which exists in Turkish historical context. Erdoğan’s explicit statement which reveals his government’s desire to raise a pious youth (“‘Dindar bir gençlik yetiştirmek istiyoruz!,” 2012) does not leave any room for a different interpretation.

2.1.2) Criteria for the Ideal Citizen

The concept of ideal citizen this thesis refers to is the description of a Turkish citizen that is represented in both of the selected television dramas. Despite the fact that their

⁵ In his book, Morris examined the changes in the acquires with regards to Turkey’s status of European Union candidacy.

‘idealness’ is a matter of debate, both television series demonstrate the approved characters the same way. Based on the mostly repeated notions in both series, the ideal citizen appears to have four main characteristics. Both dramas offer a clear definition of an ideal understanding of what the national duties are as well as the ideal relationship the citizens must have with Islam, the West and the internal others. The ‘good’ characters in both shows adopt the same approach in first three of these categories, while the ones who fail to fulfill the descriptions in them appear as ‘internal others’, or the ones who are not ‘ideal citizens’.

2.1.2.1) Understanding of National Duty

In the context of this thesis, the national duty refers to what the characters in the selected television dramas understand from serving to their nation. It describes their subjective sense of duties which they need to fulfill because they are citizens. As it is narrated in both television series, the ideal Turk has a strong sense of patriotism which consists of military bravery and a strong will to die for their nation. Turks have been represented as heroic soldiers who are devoted to their nation regularly in both series. For example in “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*”, the soldiers are shown while attacking to their rivals with a Turkish flag on the background (Aydın, 2018f). Such scenes are very useful when it comes to providing an image to the audience to remember and be motivated. Soldiers often explicitly tell that their duties is to “die for the next generations” (Aydın, 2018b). The similar description of what the national duties are also given in “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*” as well. Same admiration to martyrdom is expressed by Abdülhamid’s own words (Akar & Konuk, 2017d), or devotion to the nation is strikingly emphasized in another scene which shows

Abdülhamid, deciding by prioritizing the nation (Akar & Konuk, 2018b). In sum, both series emphasize the same notions of patriotism and a strong military spirit and represents the same understanding of what the national duties are.

2.1.2.2) Relationship with Islam

Appearance of Islam in both television series is not surprising, given the fact that these series narrate the last years of the Ottoman Empire. However, instead of just mentioning the dominance of Islam in politics, these series emphasize Islam's place both in the public and private sphere. In addition to considering the element of Islam in politics, the ideal characters also adopt its daily practices and the mentality it provides. The audience can see many examples on how they should be approaching Islam. For example in "*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*", all the main characters associates Islam with their nation, thus, they are fighting for both as it is explicitly told as "we must fight with our Khalifah, the issue here is the permanence of Islam" (Aydın, 2018e). In "*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*", in addition to the dominance of Islam in the public and private spheres, Turks are described as a part and the protector of the Muslim states (Akar & Konuk, 2017b). In both series, the ideal citizen is described as someone who gives importance to the unification of Muslim nations, associates the continuity of their nation with the continuity of Islam and practices Islam regularly in their daily lives.

2.1.2.3) Relationship with the West

Together with the appearance of Islam as a positive aspect, the ideal Turk's relationship with the West is described as very negative. In correspondence to the public and private visibility of Islam, the non-Muslim West is often narrated as the main enemy. In addition to their infidelity, the West is also described as carrying many negative aspects such as being cruel, disloyal, provoking and imperial. On top of these, due to their imperialism they are described with a strong hatred towards the Turks, which is often narrated together with the previous two characteristics. For example in "*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*", the Turkish army fights bravely against the West who is trying to reach the middle eastern region (Akar & Konuk, 2018a). "*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*" emphasizes the same image of the West as well. For example in one of the marches they sing, they say that they "are willing to die in order to protect Islam from the enemy (the West)" (Aydın, 2018d). Overall, the ideal Turk is described as perceiving the West as the enemy due to their devotion to Islam and their understanding of national duties.

2.1.2.4) Relationship with the Internal Other

Despite the ideal citizens are often Muslims, some of them also appear as representatives of the internal others. The borders of internal others are not necessarily drawn by the citizens' religion. In other words, there are many non-Muslim characters in both series which are representatives of the ideal citizen. Similarly, many Muslims appear as internal others as well. The criteria for being an internal other is the characters' adoption of the previous three characteristics. For example, the character *Melike* in "*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*", is a non-Muslim which

represent the ideal citizen. However, the character *Sayit* in “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*” and the character *Mahmut Pasha* in “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*”, appear as internal other despite being a Muslim. The ideal character’s relationship with these internal others is very hostile. Due to their disobedience to the remaining three characteristics, the ideal citizen sees them as an enemy and approaches them with caution. These four categories will be elaborated further by providing corresponding examples from both television dramas.

2.2) JDP’s Doctrine

The New Republic was established with an official state ideology which represented the full detachment from the Ottoman Empire and emphasized the emergence of a new state with a clean slate (Bora, 2017, p. 213; Keleş, 2007, p. 7). According to the Kemalist elite, Islam was not able to provide the right kind of mind to carry the New Republic to the goal of western civilization. (Karpas, 2012, pp. 38–39; Uğur Çınar, 2015, pp. 16–17). In their minds, civilization was something more than modernity. It was more of a state of mind, an ability to see things differently. Thus, in order to improve the new Republic towards that goal, the establishing elite implemented series of reforms to secularize and westernize the masses. These reforms worked in favor of replacing the Ottoman culture with a modernized one. Erasing Islam from the public sphere and imposing secularism was especially important for the ruling elites due to their desire to provide the right mindset for modernization.

When the Kemalist elite established the New Republic, they were aware of the existing social fragmentation in their new society. While the members of the center

segment embraced the new state's culture, periphery segment experienced difficulties with the new notions. In order to enable the periphery to transform as well, Kemalist elite started to shape the public consensus to accept a westernized mindset and reject the traditional Ottoman lifestyle (Çınar, 2005, p. 34). They hoped that then members of the periphery would eventually be transformed into 'westernized' individuals with the effect of the public consensus. The establishing elite conducted the reformation of the public sphere through many channels. For example, they established Ankara as the capital due to Istanbul's abundant mosques and religious symbols (Çınar, 2005, p. 101), established various institutions such as Turkish Historical Society that would reinforce the center's doctrine (Uğur Çınar, 2015, p. 18), forced a language reform (Yılmaz, 2011, pp. 677–683) and bolstered the western versions of clothing, social behaviors and entertainment (Mahir, 2005). All these reforms attempted to reshape the public consensus and developed around the aim of implementing the new cultural norms defined by the fathers of the New Republic.

Cutting-off the Ottoman past completely served the Kemalist elite's purpose of building a new modern nation. Given that the sense of continuity in history was very important for nationalism and that the Ottoman cultural heritage did not fit into the new Turkish nationality, the Kemalist elite announced the beginning of the Turkish history as the establishment of the new Republic in 1923 (Çınar & Taş, 2017). By starting the history with the new Republic, the Kemalist elite eliminated all connotations that the Ottoman history dragged from the new nation, including the public visibility of Islam. Disappearance of the Ottoman past also assisted to

implement a full-scale secularism, since the times when Islam was a part of the society was not included in the new nation's history anymore.

In the process of erasing the Ottoman heritage which was still abided by the periphery, an image of the ideal Turk was drawn by the Kemalist elite so that it can set an example for the Turkish nation. The ideal Turk expressed the “western consciousness” (Göle, 1996, p. 58) who was wearing western clothes, read European literature and listened to European music, preferred European ceremonies for entertainment, spent time together with women in public, preferred European cuisine, or in sum, adopted the Western lifestyle (Çınar, 2005, p. 23,25,27,41; Göle, 1996, pp. 57–62; Mahir, 2005). It was expected by the citizens of the republic to “prove their state of civilization” by applying the westernized models into their lifestyle and daily habits (Göle, 1996, p. 60). This ideal image, which the founding father Atatürk was the biggest representative of (Özyürek, 2004, p. 377), represented the westernized Young Turk generation. This generation had abandoned the Islamist way of thinking and adopted the right kind of lifestyle and mind to modernize. The image constructed by the Kemalist elite also represented a right way to live and think for the citizens as westernism.

In addition to the understanding of modernity as westernization, the ideal Turk also represented a strong military spirit. This way, it was possible to claim that the Turks had been the way they were since the beginning of their history. The enmity of Turkish nation and their will to revenge the enemies was emphasized by the establishing elite (Bora, 2017, p. 208). Military service was considered as the most

sacred duty of Turks and martyrdom was described as a sacrifice which provided a position so prestigious that it came right after being a prophet. The notion of national duty referred to military bravery and devotion (Bora, 2017, p. 238). Atatürk, as the main representative of the ideal Turk image was portrayed as a brave soldier who fought fiercely in the independence war (Çınar & Taş, 2017, pp. 675–678; Özyürek, 2004, p. 377). Turkish nation's heroic military culture claimed such an important place that the appearance of the term military-nation in 1999 did not surprise anyone (Altınay, 2004, p. 3). However, today we can see that the JDP government is attempting to change this ideal image, as well as the established context of nationalism.

As opposed to the historical context established by the Kemalist elite, the JDP government is turning further into Turkish past while revisiting the existing context. In his work, Ongur argues that Turkey is going through a re-identification process under the JDP's emphasis on the concept of '*Ottomanism*' (2014, p. 416). Despite the changes that took place in the definition of Ottomanism through Turkish history, JDP's Ottomanism indicates a desire to construct a society which includes aspect of Ottoman heritage in people's daily activities, media as well as politics (Övünç Ongur, 2014, p. 417). This desire is evident in the reforms implemented by the JDP. Similar to the Kemalist reforms which penetrated into the public and private spheres in an effort to erase the Ottoman heritage, the JDP reforms also penetrate into both spheres with the opposite purpose. For example, the number of mosques as well as the restoration of old mosques, old Ottoman buildings and public buildings significantly increased during the JDP rule. The party leader Erdoğan's regular usage

of Ottoman Turkish words also indicate the party's attitude towards Ottomanism (Övünç Ongur, 2014). Moreover, the claims stating that the new generation will be learning Ottoman Turkish (IHA, 2014) also reveal the JDP's policies of penetrating into the private sphere in order to infuse their version of Ottomanism.

JDP's Ottomanist attitude also became obvious during the Gezi park protests. The protests took place on May and June 2013 as a reaction to government's decision of removing the park to build an historical artillery barrack. While it seems as if these protests primarily have environmental concerns, the size, the length and the intensity of this objection shows that it was initially a reaction to the conservative JDP government. Gezi park was strongly associated with the establishing Kemalist government because it was demolishing a park built by the Kemalist government to replace it with an artillery barrack which was there at the time of the Ottoman Empire ("Gezi Parkı'nın tarihi," 2013). As a result of the JDP government's decision to reverse this change, the Gezi park protests gained a sociological meaning with respect to the existing social cleavage in Turkey. People who have felt the oppression of their relatively conservative government revealed their reactions at the Gezi park protests (Dalay, 2014). The decision to rebuild the artillery barrack is an example of JDP's initiations of restoration of the Ottoman buildings. The public's response to this particular restoration, on the other hand indicates the aggressiveness of the JDP's Ottomanist approach.

In addition to these attempts targeting the private sphere, the JDP conveys numerous changes which aims at altering the public sphere. The JDP doctrine underlines the

importance the party gives to democracy, equality, human rights, rule of law, tolerance and pluralism. They claim to adopt a “passive secularism” which refers to the state’s neutrality towards different religions and allows for religion to be publicly visible. In addition, JDP describes itself as a ‘conservative democrat’ party which refers to a notion of cultural conservatism rather than of a political ideology (Hale & Özbudun, 2010, pp. 20–25; Türk, 2014, p. 211). However, the party’s actions do not indicate that they follow their claims. Despite claiming that they are open to diverse opinions and embrace plurality, the JDP puts forward its own version of social engineering. The biggest contradiction with the JDP’s claims appear to be the changes on lifestyles they implemented. On the contrary of the interpretation of JDP’s ‘conservative democracy’, Türk argues that the JDP stands out as a full-conservative party (Türk, 2014, pp. 310–328). For example, the party leaders’ words on regulating the houses where male and female students live together (“Kız ve erkek öğrenciler aynı evde kalabilir mi?,” 2013) or limiting the commerce on alcoholic beverages after a certain hour (“Alkol yasakları başlıyor...,” 2013).

Most of the literature agrees on that the JDP increasingly became more authoritarian in their doctrine, especially after 2011 (Bora, 2017, p. 499; Çınar, 2011, p. 532). Çınar argues that changing their policies towards more cultural issues by utilizing the social cleavage in the society after consolidating their political hegemony was a part of JDP’s agenda from the beginning (Çınar, 2016, p. 1217). In other words, the JDP doctrine was shaped with the aim of winning with an overwhelming majority for long enough to consolidate their hegemonic power so that they could start re-shaping the context of nation in Turkey. In an effort to build a new nation which embraces

the Ottoman heritage, the party also attempts to change the beginning of Turkish history. Similar to the Kemalist elite's decision to start the Turkish history with the establishment of the Republic to build a new nation from scratch, the JDP starts the Turkish history with the Ottoman Empire. This way, it becomes easier for the party to establish connections with the past and provide a sense of continuity in their nation building project (Çınar & Taş, 2017). By emphasizing the Ottoman past, the party conveys that the Turkish nation has and always had Ottomanism in their nature. Thus, while they try to convince the society to embrace the nationalism as they define, the party also turns the Kemalist elite into a simple political actor rather than the 'establishing elite' (Çınar, 2005, pp. 1–33; Özyürek, 2006, pp. 121–122; Zencirci, 2014, pp. 5–6). This way, they aim to suppress the Kemalist notions established in Turkish nationality while simultaneously building connections with the Ottoman past.

In the conduct of this nationalism project, the television constitutes an important place. Mass media tools in general provide their audience with the information they cannot obtain on their own. This provided information, however, is regulated by certain actors. This leaves the audience without another choice but to receive the regulated information (Millis, 1974, p. 398). Therefore, mass media becomes a major tool in 'selectively informing' the masses. Due to its easy access and common usage in all segments of the society, television's effects in reaching the citizens is more than cinema, or the written media (Güllüoğlu, 2012, p. 75; Schramm, 1961). Therefore, television is actively used by the JDP government in order to help them infuse their version of the Turkish nation into the collective memory.

The first television channel was *TRT* (Turkish Radio and Television) which was established in 1964 with the purpose of providing broadcasts for television for the government (TRT, 2018). Until the founding of the channel *Magic Box / Star 1* in 1990, TRT was the only available television channel. While it was illegal for a private company to broadcast on television at the time, it was made legal with a regulation in 1993, which kindled the appearance of many other channels in Turkey (Ünlüler, 1999). Today, television is a part of the daily life in Turkey and offering a rich variety of programs such as dramas, talk shows, several competitions, news, and political debate shows. IPSOS, in their annual report, evaluated the Turkish audience's preferences in 2017. Their report indicates that the television dramas are the second most preferred programs with a 62%, falling second with a small gap after the news shows which are at the top of the list with 65% (IPSOS KMG, 2017). Based on these numbers it is possible to say that the television dramas constitute a significant place in Turkish daily life.

Even though the TRT was defined as an “objective public body” with the 1972 constitution, their objectivity is a matter of debate. Since 1972, political actors' interest in the channel increased and attempts to influence it intensified relating to the budget and appointment issues (Aziz, 1999, p. 34). Today, TRT's budget is largely consists of the income that is generated from the tax labels on the electric bills (Türenç, 2010). In an article co-authored by a TRT charter member states that regardless of what the law indicates, the TRT cannot be objective as long as its budget depends on the government (Hafizoğulları & Tarakçıoğlu, 1998, p. 9). TRT's

budgeting is a hotly debated topic, and given these facts, it is evident that the government holds their hand on TRT's funding.

Besides the issues of funding, the appointments to the TRT's corporate structure also indicates a significant government influence. It had been argued for a long time that the charter members of the TRT recruit their friends and family members. Given that the general director of TRT is appointed by the president Erdoğan himself, such favoritism in the recruitment highly effects TRT's nature. For example, the present general director of TRT, İbrahim Eren who is President Erdoğan's friend from high school was appointed by him despite the fact that Eren did not fulfill the twelve-year experience prerequisite for the position ("Yarkadaş: 'TRT'deki atama geçersizdir'", "2017). After Eren was appointed to his position in 2013 anyway, he initiated many television dramas which narrate the Ottoman history ("TRT Genel Müdürü İbrahim Eren oldu! İbrahim Eren kimdir?", "2017). As a result, such television dramas increased in number while being produced by large crews and gaining popularity.

Since the beginning of the JDP rule in 2002, TRT broadcasted a total of 17 television dramas, 16 of which came out after 2011 which narrate the Ottoman history. While some of these dramas are comedies which narrate the story of a love story or a small neighbourhood during the Ottoman times, most of them narrate significant events from the Ottoman history. Regardless, all these television dramas represent the JDP version of Ottomanist elements which show parallelism with the JDP's nationalism project. As a part of this, these television dramas often describe an ideal portrait for the Turkish identity from the history, providing the audience with an image to

identify with as a continuum of the history. In order to determine the ideal image which is drawn through the television dramas, two of them were selected for analysis. Both dramas are broadcasted by TRT and are narrating the last years of the Ottoman Empire. The analysed television dramas are “*Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*” (Aydın, 2018a) and “*Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*”(Konuk & Akar, 2017). The first one is a fairly new series, started in 2018 and broadcasted a total of 15 episodes so far while the latter started in 2017 and broadcasted 54 episodes divided in two seasons.

Payitaht: Abdülhamid II narrates the last 13 years of Sultan Abdülhamid II.

Abdülhamid was the third Ottoman Sultan from the last. During his rule, the Young Turks were at the peak of their political activities and Abdülhamid’s rule was ended when he was forced to leave the palace (Aksun, 2010). After his displacement, Sultan Reşat claimed the title of Sultan whom was followed by Sultan Vahdettin. Both Sultans were far from being effective in politics, but the CUP hold the unofficial rule in their hands (Sakaoğlu, 1999). *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*’s plot narrates the struggle of Abdülhamid during his reign. The West constitutes his main problem, since it is described as the evil power which wants to destroy Abdülhamid’s sultanate. The West and its followers are in constant conflict between Abdülhamid and his followers, which are pious Turks who are devoted to the Ottoman Empire and Abdülhamid himself.

Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre, on the other hand narrates the historical Kut-ül Amare war that started in 1915 and lasted about 5 months. The Kut-ül Amare war took place in the Iraq front in World War I, where the Ottoman Empire fought against the British

and defeated them despite numerous attempts of British army to take the front (BIK, 2017). According to the newspaper articles about the show, the Kut-ül Amare war was unknown by most of the society until this show started to be broadcasted (BIK, 2017; “Kut’ül Amare nedir? |Kut’ül Amare’de neler oldu?,” 2018; “Metmetçik Kut’ül Amare nedir? Kut’ül Amare savaş tarihi!,” 2018). The show is especially about a young Ottoman, Mehmet, who is a very brave and successful soldier. The show starts with the series of unfortunate events which prevented him to get accepted by the Ottoman army. However, Mehmet manages to serve as a high-ranking official at the Kut-ül Amare war. Chronologically, this show narrates the times after the rule of Abdülhamid II. During the World War I, Sultan Reşat, the descended of Abdülhamid II was ruling the Ottoman Empire. However, he does not appear in the show. Almost all characters represented in the show are brave soldiers who are fighting for their freedom against the West.

2.3) Television and Memory

After rapid advancements in technology, mass media became easily accessible, thus, proved itself as one of the most effective tools in reaching out to many people. As opposed to textual media which is quite commonly used, the language of visual media reaches out to the consumers in a different way by appearing as a natural representation of the world (Fiske & Hartley, 1978, p. 15). Rather than solely depending on the text, visual media uses camera angles, music, background décor, dialogues and many other methods in order to communicate with the consumers. Which is why it’s also a lot easier to consume than textual media since it can reach out to illiterate individuals and children who are not fluent readers yet. Considering

the different types of visual media, television is arguably one of the most commonly used tool. Due to its popularity in everyday life, its effects on the collective memory and culture had been studied by many scholars. During the late 70's and early 80's, the television started to be perceived as an '*instrument for culture*' and a '*mass persuasion*' tool (Haralovich & Rabinovitz, 1999, p. 2). In order to reveal the tricks of television in shaping the collective culture, some scholars conducted their studies using narratological and semiotic methods (Brunson & Morley, 1978; Fiske & Hartley, 1978; Kaplan, 1983) while some used quantitative methods (Cassata & Skill, 1983; Lopate, 1977). Fiske and Hartley, one of the first scholars who looked into television research, emphasize the importance of television with regards to collective memory by stating that "it (television) shows us not our names but our collective selves" (1978, p. 17). In other words, what is seen on television either represents the collective identity or attempts to change the collective consensus which creates the collective identity.

Within the literature of television studies, television dramas claim a big space. The reason for that is because they do not fall under the 'news' category such as some ideological and political shows and yet television dramas are still politically and culturally effective (Morley, 1992, p. 8). Even though they do not carry any 'news' material and are often fiction, they can still convey meaning and place them within the collective culture. Like Fiske and Hartley argued, television represents the collective selves and television dramas prove to be very useful at doing so while also passing on ideological messages and norms (Alexander & Cousens, 2004, p. 3). Television studies are also popular in the Turkish context and it varies in terms of

approaches. For example; some scholars examined the representation of the gender roles in television advertisements and television dramas (Çetin, 2015; Milner & Collins, 1997; Uray & Burnaz, 2003). Other studies examine the effects of food advertising on childhood obesity (Guran et al., 2010), the effects of the quiz shows on Turkish social structure (Gürkan, 1994) or how television in Turkey represents different versions of identity under the notion of transnationalism (Aksoy & Robins, 2003).

There are not many scholarly works which focus on the ideal image construction through television in Turkey. The closest example would be Öncü's article where she examines the increasing emphasis on "Secular Muslims" in Turkish media by taking Yaşar Nuri Öztürk as a subject (2006). While she acknowledges the changes in the official narrative of modernization, she does it only over one subject rather than focusing on the description of a collective identity. Studies specific to TRT broadcasts, on the other hand, mostly focus on topics such as historical changes (Dönmez, 2010) or cartoons' effects on children (Ünlü, 2017). On the one hand, the studies which focus on collective memory often neglect the efficacy of television dramas on altering its context. On the other hand, the studies on television dramas do not examine them with relation to collective memory.

Television dramas affect the collective memory through the narratives they tell. The narratives are arguably the most important mediums that individuals use, thus, have the biggest influence on collective memory. For example, MacIntyre defines humans as "story-telling animals" to emphasize the importance of narratives for people

(1984, p. 216). Almost all forms of human action such as thinking, speaking or remembering involve narratives (Wertsch, 2004, p. 56). In other words, humans unintentionally or intentionally use narratives before speaking, thinking or performing any other action. The reason for that is because they help us to make sense of the information we have (Ricoeur, 1981), carry-out the organizing for us to make the information easier to understand. Especially in the account of historical narrations, narratives bring together seemingly disconnected historical events and organize it in a sequence while establish connections between the happenings in the past and the present conditions (Wertsch, 2004, p. 57). The importance of history for collective consensus, and efficacy of narratives in revision the past comes together and narratives become a powerful medium in effecting the sociocultural setting.

According to Wertsch, this function of narratives that refer to actual or imaginary historical setting and helps us to ‘grasp’ what happened by organizing the events is the ‘referential’ function of the narratives (2004, p. 57). In addition to this approach to the narratives which had been widely acknowledged by the scholars of the memory boom, Wertsch defines another function. He describes the ‘dialogic’ function of the narratives which is concerned about the relationship between the different accounts of narratives rather than their accountability regarding the past events. (2004, p. 58). In other words, Wertsch argues that a narrative of an historical event is not solely an attempt to make that past useful. Rather, a narration or a re-narration of an historical event responses to the other narrations of the same event by re-organizing it, correcting it or filling its gaps.

Wertsch defines the second function of narratives by applying Bakhtin's analysis of "trio of characters" which involves three notions: *text*, *voice* and *remembering*.

According to Bakhtin, *text* is the basic element of narratives which structures and organizes the meaning. *Text*, in this context has two types. One type is the reproducible text, while the other one is the specific usage of that text which is unique. The second character Bakhtin defines is the voice, which refers to the 'ghost' of the culture within which the text was produced. Similar to the notion of *text*, *voice* also has two types. While one can depict what Bakhtin calls as voice type which refers to the generalizations about what a member of a culture would say, voice can be also unique and unrepeatable when it is in an individuals' own speech. Bakhtin identifies the third characteristic as *remembering*, because due to the effects of the voice and the text, what is remembered becomes more meaningful than memory itself (Bakhtin, 1986).

The second characteristic in Bakhtin's trio, the voice, is fundamental in examining the dialogical function of the narratives. The notion of voice appears relevantly more abstract than the notion of text. While each text naturally has a speaker and a listener, Bakhtin also adds the voice as the third actor and states that the voice is "heard in the world before the actor comes upon it" (1986, pp. 121–122). The voice is the meaning of the text which was put there by other peoples' contexts and their intentions (1981, pp. 293–294). In other words, the voice is the 'connotation' of a narrative which tells something without saying it. This thesis aims to contribute to the intersecting literature of collective memory and television studies by providing a dialogical approach to the relationship between the collective memory and television dramas.

CHAPTER 3

IDEAL TURK'S PATRIOTISM AS NATIONAL DUTY

In both television dramas, the notion of national duty is highly emphasized. Both dramas draw attention to the notions of a strong national spirit and military bravery by narrating them as the 'national duties' of every Turk. As a result of this national spirit and military bravery, a strong wish to die for the nation often stands out and consequently, martyrdom is narrated as a high achievement all soldiers aim for. The ideal citizen's understanding of national duties is the first category for analysis. As it was mentioned earlier, the militaristic side of the Turkish nation had been emphasized since the times of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, it is not surprising that one of the main characteristics of the new ideal Turk image appears as love of nation fueled with a strong military spirit. This characteristic also constitutes an important element in JDP's nationalism project since it bolsters the devotion to the nation, which consequently ties the individuals together in a way that it contributes to the context of their nation-building project.

Considering that its narrating an active warfare, especially *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare* is full of examples of such narrations of national duty. However, despite the fact that *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* is narrating mostly political struggles, the same narration of

national duty is observable in most of its episodes as well. With the purpose of better organizing this section, the soldiers' and others' understanding of the national duties will be separately examined because both television dramas emphasize the same national duties both for soldiers and for the others separately.

3.1) For Soldiers

In *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare*, the narrations of national duty appear as a strong patriotic feeling and a will to die at the battlefield starting from the very first episode. In the early minutes of the first episode of the show, the main character Mehmet gives a moving speech in public about the coming war and he quotes “if the flag falls, our lives are over. We will defend our nation, religion and honour”(Aydın, 2018b). Mehmet gives his speech with such a passion, and states these words with such determination that makes it obvious for the audience that he does not see it as being alive if his country is a captive of the enemy West. Instead of being colonized and bowing down to the West, Mehmet would much prefer to die. His passion and persistence on the subject sets an example on how the ideal Turk should be feeling about the national duties they need to fulfill.

This notion is repeated both by Mehmet and by other soldiers many times in the following episodes as well. For example, in the third episode a soldier who was a father of a two-year-old dies (Aydın, 2018d). His friend who also has a newborn baby says “When it is about the nation, fathers or mothers are of no account”. The soldier can empathize with the death of his friend very easily. He too misses his baby and his wife, however, the thought of never being able to see them again does not

frustrate him because he thinks that the nation is far more important than his family. Moreover, he also knows that his family shares the same feelings with them. If the nation falls, his family would also prefer to be dead rather than to live as a Western colony. Therefore, he willingly spends his days at the battlefield, fighting for his nations' freedom. The fact that this soldier is neglecting his biggest motivation –his family- to stay at home, due to his approach to national duties reveals how strongly he feels a responsibility for his national duties. In addition, by describing this passion as something above his love for his family, the show also gives a measurement to the audience so that they can fully evaluate the power of this feeling.

One of many references to strong love of nation can be seen at the eighth episode of *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare*. One of the soldiers who were taken hostage by the British army states while planning an escape attempt “Instead of dying as a hostage, I’d prefer to die on my way to freedom. As Enver Pasha said: We will either succeed or die trying” (Aydın, 2018h). This statement is especially significant since it gives a reference to Enver Pasha, who is leading the army. This reference to Enver Pasha displays him as the leader of the Turkish nation, and excludes the Sultan Reşat who was the official Sultan of the Ottoman Empire at the time. In addition to not referring to the rule of the Sultan at all throughout the show, the show displays Enver Pasha as the leader. Considering that Enver Pasha was a Young Turk, it is expected of the soldiers who see him as their leader to appear as Young Turks as well. While the show does not explicitly tell whether the soldiers are Young Turks or not, they definitely do not show the exact same characteristics like the Kemalist definition of the Young Turks.

The emphasis on martyrdom is repeated in *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare* very often as well. Martyrdom's status as the highest of the dead and that all soldiers think they would "die at the battlefield if they are fortunate" appears regularly throughout the show. These exact words are repeated in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*'s fifth episode as well (Akar & Konuk, 2017d). For example, in the third episode of *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare*, after some soldiers die as a result of an unexpected attack, all the remaining soldiers gather to bury them. At the burial, Mehmet thinks to himself: "We have given countless martyrs, we reached the way of right by burning with the flames of our love of nation. We give our blessings to you" (Aydın, 2018d). Mehmet's obvious pride and determination while thinking reveals how highly he feels of martyrdom. This emphasis on the desire to die at the battlefield motivates the soldiers to fight for their nation while also shows us that the national duties are so important that even *Allah* is rewarding the ones who fulfill their duties with a blissful status after they die.

Payitaht: Abdülhamid II also repeats the narration of national duties as military bravery, strong love of nation and a wish to die. Similar to *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare*, these notions can be observed from the very first episodes of the show. In the first episode, Abdülhamid describes four rooms of the British royalty palace and commands a soldier to travel thorough them the way Abdülhamid described to reach a secret chamber. While explaining how he received such a detailed picture of the enemy's palace, Abdülhamid says "Four others have died at this mission before you, each saw only one of the rooms I mentioned" (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). Abdülhamid's

story strikes the audience from the first episode because in addition to revealing his cleverness, it also reveals the sacrifices Turkish soldiers willingly made for their nation. They travelled to England to investigate these rooms, knowing they would eventually die doing so. After the soldier accepts the mission and leaves the room, Abdülhamid says to his closest Pasha: “I wish I was not the Sultan, I wish I was a soldier who fought with the enemy” (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). This statement demonstrates that Abdülhamid himself also feels the obligations of the national duties the same way. It shows the audience that it is not only the soldiers who feel the weight of the national duties they must fulfill, but it is also felt by the Sultan himself, who has other obligations for his nation. Despite his political responsibilities, sitting at his palace comes as wrong to him.

3.2) For Others

In addition to the soldiers’ strong love of nation and the will to die for the nation, the dramas also narrate others as sharing the same feelings with the soldiers. For example in *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare*’s fourth episode, Mehmet’s father states that “I would sacrifice all of my thousand sons, if I had them” (Aydın, 2018e). This scene is an example of many others that emphasizes the parents’ will to raise good sons who carry the notions of national duty. The sacrifice of the parents is repeated in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*’s second episode as well. Abdülhamid states that “This nation stands today because of our sons who died, and our fathers who brought their second sons after the first of them dies” (Akar & Konuk, 2017b). Narrations such as this one imply that the responsibilities of national duties are felt by the parents as well as the soldiers themselves. This means that the ones who stay at home do not think that

their responsibility towards their nation is inapplicable because they are unable to go to the battlefield. They carry the same responsibilities as the soldiers, if not more for not being able to fulfill them.

In addition to parents' sacrifices, in the sixth episode of *Mehmetçik Kut-ül Amare* women cook halvah and distribute it to people, asking them to pray for the soldiers in return (Aydın, 2018f). In the context of the show, women are helping the nations the best way they can by collecting prayers for the soldiers since they cannot go to the front and fight, or raise their sons with a strong sense of national duty. In this respect, citizens who are not able to go to the war to fight and die for their nation either send their sons to do so, or pray for the army if they do not have any sons to sacrifice for their nation. In other words, women do not remain silent and wait for men to fight and save their country. On the contrary, they are actively involved in the warfare by doing the best they can to support their army. Their willingness to sacrifice their loved ones to the army is emphasized in the fourteenth episode of the series as well. Regarding the subject, an Ottoman soldier states "An Ottoman soldier cannot come to be without love. A soldier who is loved has four eyes and four ears. And I have never seen a wife or a mother of a martyr who has her head down" (Aydın, 2018j).

Women's will to give their lives for their nation is also narrated in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* as well. For example, in the second episode, Abdülhamid's favorite woman states "May God take from my days and add it to yours" (Akar & Konuk, 2017b). Considering her devotion to her Sultan and her nation, and the fact that the

Sultan and the Empire are almost synonyms, she explicitly says that she is willing to give her life for the well-being of her nation.

Another example can be seen in the third episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. The scene first explains that Sultan's favorite woman was not an original Turk, but was a minority when she was given to the palace for education. While sending her away, her father advises her that if one day she becomes the Sultan's wife, she should think of the benefit of the Ottoman Empire and her Sultan. This scene is striking because it demonstrates that even the minorities of the Ottoman Empire were deeply devoted to their nation and described themselves as Turks. They also carry the same sense of national duties as the soldiers and the citizens of the Ottoman Empire. In the following episodes, she also remains silent when Abdulahmid's other partner arrives to the palace with his baby (Akar & Konuk, 2017d). Her love for her nation and for her lover, Abdulhamid is so intertwined that she greets Abdulhamid's other partner and makes sure that she and her baby are comfortable at the palace. This shows that while she despises the fact that Abdulhamid is in love with another woman, making sure that Abdulhamid is happy is the best way for her to support her nation. Which is why her priority is Abdulhamid, which is equal to the Ottoman Empire. For an originally foreigner woman to prioritize the Ottoman empire this much shows the audience that the responsibility of national duties are the same for everyone who are the true members of the Ottoman nation.

The place of patriotism associated with military had been a vital part of the Turkish nation since the beginning of their history. The history in question here is not just the

history that begins with the establishment of the Republic but the history which includes the Ottoman empire as well. Strong army and powerful patriotism had been dominant for Turks for centuries (İnalçık, 1964). As Altınay also argues, the idea of a military-nation also become a state ideology in the first years of the new Republic (2004, pp. 11–13). In correspondence, the Kemalist description of an ideal citizen also consisted of a strong love of nation merged with military bravery. Despite the Kemalist elite started the history anew, this aspect of the ideal citizen was not a new concept for the nation. Approaches to the national duties were engrained with militarism and patriotism. Not spoiling the consistency, the JDP ideal image drawn by these television dramas also include the same notions of patriotism. In the JDP narration that can be seen from the above examples, the ideal Turk's understanding of national duties is the will to fight and die for the Turkish nation with an emphasis on the importance of Turkish freedom. Both the soldiers and the ones who cannot participate in the army show their own way of supporting the militaristic spirit of the nation through the sacrifices they can make to best of their abilities.

Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre is rich in such examples considering its plot narrating a historical victory of the Ottoman Empire. The war of Kût was won against all odds, thus it makes a perfect topic for the glorification of the militaristic sides of the Turkish nation today. Even though the plot acknowledges a minor defeat at the front of Kût, it is not narrated in the series. The audience sees that Turkish soldiers are attacking their enemies at the end of the sixth episode (Aydın, 2018f). The seventh episode, skips the scenes which should be showing how they get defeated and instead starts by showing the soldiers as a captive in the enemy military camp (Aydın,

2018g). *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, on the other hand has many examples of the understanding of national duties for others. In addition to rarely demonstrating active warfare, the series regularly emphasizes sacrifices of the ideal Turks fueled by their love of nation. In this context, albeit the major differences in their ideologies the concept of militaristic patriotism as a national duty appears as a continuum from the times of the Ottoman empire, to the establishment of the new Republic and the JDP government.

An example of such description of the ideal Turk as a heroic soldier can be seen at the 15th of July coup attempt.⁶ This attempt and the public's reaction to it had been narrated to emphasize the heroic side of the Turks and emphasize their bravery, strong sense of patriotism and togetherness. For example, one of the songs composed for the 15July coup attempt states that “the Commander gave the order: go out to the streets, protect the flag and the nation, -everyone- followed the order, defended the nation holding the flag and saying *Allahuekber*.. some are old, some are young, women, children and girls...” (Çiçekçi, 2016). This song implies that Turks are a unified nation with a strong attachment to their patriotic tendencies as well as their religion.

Number of examples that support this characteristic can be multiplied with examples both from the selected television dramas, as well as other television shows that are not included in this thesis. Such frequent emphasis on this characteristic, as well as

⁶As a result of a fraction within the Turkish armed forces made a coup attempt which failed as a result of high public resistance. This was also encouraged by the President Erdoğan, as a result of this resistance, 248 people died while 2196 got injured (“15 Temmuz’da kaç kişi şehit oldu?,” 2017)

its contribution to the current government's nation building project indicates its importance for the ideal citizen image. This characteristic is so important that the ideal relationship with Islam, as it is narrated in these dramas, also carry elements which bolsters the citizen's devotion to their nation. For example, Islamic spirit motivates the soldiers who are fighting at the battlefield and gives them resilience. Similarly, this love of nation further demonizes the enemy West since its purpose is narrated as to devour the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, limited love of nation constitutes an important element in appearing as an 'internal other' as well. Some characters appear as internal others because they betray their nation even though they are Muslims. Next chapter will analyze the ideal relationship to Islam, which also includes providing a motivation for the army.

CHAPTER 4

IDEAL TURK AS EMBRACING ISLAM

The second theme which will be analyzed is the characters' relationship with Islam. This characteristic constitutes the main pillar of the ideal citizen image because it reflects on the remaining three characteristics. Besides feeding the devotion to nation which is expressed through a wish to die for it, strong adoption of Islam also prescribes the West as the enemy. Being an ideal Muslim also constitutes the pre-requisite of being a desired citizen. In correspondence to the JDP government's desire to increase Islam's visibility in the public sphere, this characteristic described in the television dramas carry great significance.

As it was mentioned earlier, Islam constitutes an important place in the sociocultural environment in Turkey. After the Kemalist elite extracted religion from the public space due to their aim of reaching the western modernity, appearance of Islam became a part of the existing social cleavage. As Çınar also states, "Islam and secularism are issues that are deeply ingrained in the public and private lives of citizens in Turkey" (A. Çınar, 2011, p. 530). Due to Kemalists' connection of absence of Islam with modernity, these television dramas' approach to Islam gains importance because it reveals the position of the ideal image narration of these dramas towards the Kemalist one. Narrations of the relationship with Islam were

examined in order to assess the represented narration of ideal relationship with Islam in these television series. The dramas narrate Islam as having two main functions. It provides motivation for the soldiers' bravery and unites other Muslim nations. In both functions, the characters have a very positive relationship with Islam. They are attached to both its spirit and its practices.

4.1) Islam Motivates

This function of Islam is especially apparent in *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* due to its plot about the Kut-ül Amare war. For example, during Mehmet's memorable passionate speech in the first episode, he mentions that if the nation falls, the *azan* will also stop. He ends his speech by stating "May God be on your side in your fight for the nation" (Aydın, 2018b). In addition to his bravery due to his understanding of national duties, a portion of Mehmet's motivation for the war is his desire to freely practice Islam. His emphasis on Islam in his speech seems convincing to his audience, as we can see that they start to nod and mumble amongst them as soon as Mehmet refers to their religious freedom. This scene shows that it is not only Mehmet who is motivated to defeat the enemy by the idea of being able to freely practice Islam, but it is the whole nation.

Also, in the second episode, Mehmet's attitude after he injures his leg comes as very striking. He states his desperation about his injury which prevented him to join the army and prays "My God, you gave this love of nation to my heart. Allow me to follow it. Allow me to pass this test successfully"(Aydın, 2018c). Even though joining the army was the only thing Mehmet wanted the most, he describes the

unfortunate events which caused his leg injury and prevented him to go to the battlefield as a ‘test’ given by God. He does not even show a subtle sign of frustration. He trusts that his desire to fight for the nation had been given by God and this reciprocity must have a meaning for him. In other words, he trusts God that he will soon be at the battlefront with his fellow soldiers. Mehmet’s calm and trusting response to this unfortunate event indicates that the ideal Turk trusts their God in an unfortunate situation because it is either for their own good or a challenge to get stronger.

Another striking example of the motivation Islam provides for the soldiers in *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* can be seen in the seventh episode. The scene shows the Turkish soldiers whom are being held as captives by the British army eating water gruel. All of them seem like they have lost their hope and will to fight. One of Mehmet’s good friends realizes that and shouts out to his friends: “Why are you eating all alone? This gruel is not the most delicious food, but it is still food. We must be thankful to God. Gather around, let’s make a dinner prayer” (Aydın, 2018g). This way, he gathers all soldiers together and conducts the prayer. After the prayer ends, the soldiers start to eat together and chatter. They seem much happier and radiant than they did before the prayer. This scene demonstrates that the soldiers find strength in Islam even when they are at their most desperate. Islam gives them the motivation to be thankful for even the smallest thing they have, which lifts their spirits up.

A similar notion is repeated in the next episode as well. In the eighth episode, one of the soldiers responds to another soldier, who says he is losing hope, by stating that: “We are Muslims, hopelessness is a sin for us” (Aydın, 2018h). He reminds the soldier that as long as they are still breathing, there is still hope. Therefore, they must trust God and do their best. In their worst times, soldiers remind themselves that the God is on their side with their missions of national duty, thus, they keep their motivation and hopes high. This notion also supports the idea that the ideal Turk trusts his God no matter what. Being hopeless is demonstrated as a sign of not trusting the God, which counts as a sin.

Another striking scene that demonstrates Islam’s power of motivation both for the soldiers and for the love of nation can be seen at the fourteenth episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. In this scene, the main enemy Theodor Herzl engages in an argument with one of the top-level soldiers of the army. As a response to Herzl saying that a Jewish state will be established in the Ottoman lands, the soldier states “this is the land of the lucky people whom were blessed with victory by Allah. In case of an attack to Jerusalem, the Muslims who do not fear death will greet your forces and send them back to where they belong” (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). This scene sets a good example to many notions. First of all, it recognizes the military spirit of the citizens. Empowering that spirit with Islam, it connotes the motivational function of Islam. Finally, by assuming that all Muslims would fight together with Herzl, it also implies the unification function of Islam.

4.2) Islam Unites

The second function of Islam appears as a unification factor for all the Muslim nations. This notion is especially emphasized in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, due to its plot regarding state politics. The show starts by narrating that the Ottoman Empire is conducting the railway construction which will connect the Ottoman territory with Makkah. In the very first episode, the importance of this railroad is explained by Abdülhamid: “This railway will connect the Muslims together. Therefore, it is at most importance for us.” (Akar & Konuk, 2017i, p. 1). The railroad construction is expected to strengthen the already existing ties of the Muslim nations with the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire positions itself as the only non-colonized Muslim Empire. Therefore, by connecting its Muslim brothers better, Abdülhamid hopes to guard their freedom much efficiently. In the context of the show, despite Abdülhamid’s own problems regarding the strength of his rule, protecting the other Muslim nations is still a priority to him which shows the audience the unifying spirit of Islam.

Another example of the help of Ottoman Empire to other Muslim nations can be seen a few scenes later in the first episode. After hearing about the British attacks to Muslim parts of India, Abdülhamid helps the Muslims in India by sending the locations of secret British hideouts. He commands them to hoist the Khilafah flag so that “their brothers would know that their Khalifah is supporting them” (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). Abdülhamid sees himself as the most powerful Muslim leader and considers the protection of other Muslim nations as his duty because they are bonded by Islam. The very same notion is repeated in *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* more

explicitly in the first episode. The show starts by the Turkish Commander's speech where he describes Turkey as the "Savior of the Muslims" (Aydın, 2018b). Again, since Turkey remains as the only non-colonized Muslim nation, it is narrated as if it naturally holds a responsibility to protect the other Muslim nations.

Similarly, in the second episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, one of his pashas describe Abdülhamid as "the last stronghold before the collapse of Islam" (Akar & Konuk, 2017b). This statement refers to the Western colonies in the Muslim nations and grants a big responsibility to the Ottoman Empire as a non-colonized state. The same episode also demonstrates that other Muslim nations are helping the Ottoman Empire the best way they can, with a scene where all other Muslim nations collect money and send it to Abdülhamid for the railroad construction. This scene proves that the understanding of unity is not solely Abdülhamid's concern, but all Muslim nations share the same responsibility towards each other. The unifying power of Islam is also emphasized in *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* as well. For example, in the seventh episode when a soldier collects everyone to pray for dinner he starts his words by saying: "Turkish, Turkoman, Circassian or Arab; we are all Muslims. Why are you eating all alone?" (Aydın, 2018g). The fact that many different ethnicities fought in the real Kût-ül Amâre war, this notion of unification for Islam's continuity is repeated multiple times in the series.

4.3) Islamic Practices

In addition to such significant scenes, *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* also demonstrates countless of prayers and Islamic practices. Some of the scenes that show Islamic

practices support a particular function of characters' relationship with Islam. For example, in the sixth episode, the Ottoman Empire and Muslims in Palestine enter into a conflict together against the British. The scene shows both the Ottoman Soldiers and Muslims in Palestine pray for their fate (Akar & Konuk, 2017e). While these prayers are held for the help of God at this mission, they also show that regardless of nationality, all Muslims pray, think and hope the same way. Therefore, it also suggests a certain level of connection and unification.

While some scenes carry a subtle implication, some others are purely descriptive. For example, almost in all episodes of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, the audience can witness soldiers reciting *Bismillah* before getting up, attacking, eating or praying. In addition to the daily language of Islam, scenes that represent collective prayers are repeated rather often. For example, in the first (Aydın, 2018b), third (Aydın, 2018d) and fourth (Aydın, 2018e) episodes of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, the audience can see collective prayer scenes. Similarly, besides its adoption of the daily Islamic language, *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* also demonstrates scenes of Islamic practices. The very first episode, for instance, ends with a collective prayer session Abdülhamid himself also joins (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). Considering the storyline, this scene does not carry any contributions to the plot other than showing that Islam is out there and freely practiced. It only served the purpose of showing a practice of Islam. Similar scenes appear in the following episodes as well.

The persistence on abiding Islam also appears in both shows. For example, in the sixth episode of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* the Ottoman soldiers gather to pray when

they were being held as captives by the British. When British soldiers see this, they start to beat the Ottoman soldiers up, reminding that “religious practices are forbidden”. Despite collapsing after the many hits they have taken, none of the soldiers stop praying and they all get back up on their feet to continue. The scene goes on for a while until Mehmet responds to the British soldiers by saying “We did not start because you said so, thus, we will not stop because you said so” (Aydın, 2018f). Despite their bad conditions, all soldiers persistently continue their prayer until they are done. This dramatic scene emphasizes the soldiers’ determination and devotion to Islam. While showing the respect they carry towards the action of prayer, this scene also supports Islam’s function of motivation because praying at the risk of getting beat up is the best revolt they can conduct at the time.

Another striking example of persistence on Islam can be seen in Payitaht: Abdülhamid II’s eighth episode. In this episode, one of the corrupted Turks who is also a Pasha at the palace talks to a British representative. The Pasha wants to adopt the western values of liberty, secularism and freedom by ending Abdülhamid’s rule. He is also described as less religious than other characters. The British representative says that the Ottoman Empire will soon be transformed into a part of British Empire and that the Pasha will be the King of this new land. Albeit the supports he has given to the British spies, the Pasha responds by saying: “Stop there. We are after our freedom, we do not want to change our religion” (Akar & Konuk, 2017g). This scene is especially striking because the Pasha is one of the enemy characters in the show. He does not practice Islam to the fullest and in helps foreign powers to demolish Abdülhamid’s rule. Thus, for such a pro-western character to persist on his religion

tells the audience that all Muslims are devoted to Islam, whether they are friend or the enemy.

In the process of building an ideal image in order to build a new Turkish nation, the Kemalist elite simultaneously created an unideal image as well. As Çınar also mentions, while their ideal image emphasized the Kemalist understanding of modernity and westernism that is adopted by the center segment, the present situation of the citizens of periphery naturally became undesirable (2005, p. 23). Given that the republic was established with a society which lived by the Ottoman traditions and dominance of Islam at the public sphere, Kemalist unideal image naturally occurred as the devotion to the Ottoman tradition, which the establishing elite promised a full disengagement from (Bora, 2017, p. 213). Therefore, the establishment of the new Republic erased the public appearance of Islam completely (Karpat, 2012, pp. 14–15; Mardin, 1973, p. 178). In correspondence with the demeaning connotation of Islam, the Kemalist ideal citizen did not show any devotion to it. The Kemalist Turk was narrated as a westernized modern individual who naturally adopted secularism, because Islam did not serve the purpose of full modernization.

In contrast, both of the series narrate the ideal Turk as being in a positive relationship with Islam. In addition to Islam's functions as motivating the military spirit and unifying other Muslim nations, Islam also appears as a lifestyle since it is represented as apparent in the public and private spheres. In *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, Islam's function of motivation is especially emphasized. As the examples also demonstrate, the soldiers gain their spiritual motivations for the battle from their attachment to

Islam. Both series are rich in examples of Islam's function of unification. *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* emphasizes this notion by demonstrating the variety of ethnicities in the army, who albeit their ethnic differences are united because they are all Muslims. *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, on the other hand regularly refers to the importance of political unification of the Muslim nations.

This characteristic of the JDP image reverses the changes conveyed by the Kemalist elite regarding the application of secularism and public visibility of Islam. For the citizens to embrace Islam supports the context of the new nation JDP wants to construct. The motivation function of Islam finds itself a ground in the JDP ideal image due to its placement as a bolstering factor behind the military spirit. The visibility of Islamic practices attempts to reverse the Kemalist initiations by demonstrating it as a part of the ideal Turk. The unification function of Islam, on the other hand can also be seen in Erdoğan's present policies regarding the other Muslim nations of today. Demonstrating the Ottoman Empire as the leader of the Muslim world provides a sense of continuity for the nation with regards to Erdoğan's claims of becoming the leader of the Muslim nations.⁷

The ideal approach to Islam as it is described is also in relation to the other characteristics. In addition to motivating the devotion to nation, public appearance and acceptance of Islam marginalizes the non-Muslim West while also setting the ground rule for not being an internal other. The importance JDP government gives to a positive relationship with Islam can be seen both from the television dramas as well

⁷The JDP supporters often describe Erdoğan as the leader of the Muslim nations, due to his policies regarding the region. They claim that the advancements that took place during Abulhamid II's reign in becoming the leader of the Muslim World which were disrupted by the interference of the Young Turks is continuing with Erdoğan (Ay, 2017).

as President Erdogan's speeches. Considering that this characteristic improves the remaining three, it is possible to say that a positive approach to Islam constitutes the main pillar of the JDP narration of the ideal citizen. Since such obvious adoption of Islam also contributes to their Ottomanist doctrine, it is vital for the ideal citizen to adopt such an approach to Islam in order to infuse Ottomanism to the context of nationalism.



CHAPTER 5

THE ENEMY WEST

Narrations of the relationship with the West constitutes an important place in the ideal image narratives of these television series. The approach to the West is as important as the approach to Islam since secularism, Islam and western modernity had been a defining part of the social cleavage in Turkey; which started with the establishment of the New Republic. Thus, the narration of the ideal relationship with the West is significant in the narration of the ideal image these television dramas put out because it somewhat reveals their narrative's position towards the Kemalist ideal image narrative.

In addition to its contribution to JDP's current nationalism project, the appearance of the West as the main enemy also bolsters certain notions of the remaining categories. First of all, the West's narration as the enemy who is crafty and cruel improves the ideal citizen's devotion to their nation. The dangerous characteristics represented with the West such as evilness, cruelty and lying; increases the level of danger the West portrays for the Ottoman Empire. Such a serious threat to the well-being of the nation further motivates the ideal citizen to fight fiercely for their nation, while giving more reasons for women to sacrifice their loved ones in the army. Secondly, above mentioned negative characteristics are merged with the infidelity of the West,

which as a result improves the emphasis given on Islam's appearance and adoption. Moreover, unification of the West as the main enemy also bolsters the unifying spirit which is suggested by Islam within the borders of the narration of this conflict between 'the West and the East'.

The West is one of the most focused notion in both of the series and the relationship the citizens have with the west is strikingly hostile. Except from the enemy 'corrupted Turk' characters in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* who have a positive relationship with the West, both shows demonstrate a negative and hostile relationship. For the purposes of the analysis in this section, the West refers to the Western countries as well as their spies, because Western spies are one of the main enemy characters in both shows. In sum, both shows describe the West as cruel, colonizers and provokers.

5.1) The West as Colonizers

Description of the West as colonizers strike the audience from the very first scene of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*. The first scene of the first episode starts with the Turkish army commander's speech where he states: "The enemy is imperial, provoker and greedy". He continues his words by claiming that the West is attacking the Ottoman Empire from within and without and that the Turks are the protectors of the Empire, as well as the Muslims (Aydın, 2018b). This scene, as well as many more scenes in the show imply that the West is trying to devour the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire is a major power in the Middle East which is where the West has established colonies. Therefore, the West is portrayed as the enemy power which wants to defeat the Turks.

A few scenes after the first scene of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* implies that the West dislikes the Ottoman Empire because it behaves as a barrier between them and their colonies, Mehmet explicitly repeats that implication. In his memorable public speech, he states that: “The brutal West is greedy and furious. They do not like us because they see us as an obstacle for plundering Asia, Africa and the rest of the Muslim nations” (Aydın, 2018b). With this statement, the implication gains clarity. Mehmet explains how the Ottoman Empire stands against the colonizing West, which is why gains the absolute hatred of them. He continues his words by encouraging his audience to stand against this hatred and fight with the West, both for their own nation and other Muslim nations. This scene emphasizes the importance of Turkish citizens’ unification and togetherness because the West is narrated as it poses a constant threat.

The same notion is one of the most emphasized notions in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II* as well. As it was mentioned earlier, the main plot of the series is about Abdülhamid’s struggle against the West. Again, the West is described as colonizers and Abdülhamid appears as the last barrier between the West’s desires and its colonies in this show as well. Similar to *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, this notion is emphasized in the very first episode of the series. The scene shows a soldier Abdülhamid sent to Britain reporting back. He reports: “The West’s future plans are not pleasant. They are planning to establish a new Palestinian state. There was a big orthodox cross over the Constantinople on their future maps. The maps show that they took Izmir as well. The map also shows Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Syria, Iraq

and Tunus as colonies. They left the middle Anatolia for the Ottoman Empire.”. As a response, Abdülhamid fiercely states that they will not let them achieve their goals (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). The detailed description of the devouring plans of the West informs the audience about the evil nature of the West. It also shows proof that the West is really trying to destroy the Ottoman Empire and the citizens’ unification as well as their strength against the West is crucially important.

Apart from the countless implications of the same notion, another example of such an explicit statement of it can be seen in the eighth episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. In this episode, Abdülhamid repeats the same notion by saying: “The enemy knows that the Ottoman Empire protects the oppressed. That is why they dislike us” (Akar & Konuk, 2017g). In addition to repeating the Ottoman Empire’s standing against the colonizing West, this scene also places the Ottoman Empire above the other Muslim nations. Similar to the unification power of Islam which was discussed earlier, the fact that the other Muslim nations are oppressed by the West allows the Ottoman Empire to see them as weak and in need of help. Due to their shared religion, Ottoman Empire feels obligated to stand against the West both for the sake of other Muslim nations and for the sake of itself.

Due to the fact that *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* is about a specific battlefield in the World War I, the ‘colonizing West’ appears as the main reason behind the war. However, in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, the main plot is around the notion of the colonizing West. Throughout the show, Abdülhamid is in constant conflict with the West in order to protect the Ottoman Empire, both for the sake of the rest of the Muslim nations and for the sake of the Empire itself. For example, Abdulhamid is

concerned about constructing the railroad to Makkah in a way that it would not allow the West to interfere with the region or he is constantly thinking about the British plans of devouring the Ottoman Empire and so on. In the first season of the show, Abdulhamid's fight against the West result in the 1897 Greek War (Serbestoğlu, 2013). The Greeks appear as the main pawn of the British to end Abdülhamid's rule but the Ottoman army defeats the Greek. As a result, the British locates a new spy very close to Abdülhamid to continue their attempts of ending the Ottoman Empire. As the series still continue, the struggle between the new British spy Parvus and Abdülhamid continues.

The West's hatred towards the Ottoman Empire is also demonstrated in the fourteenth episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. The scene shows the main pashas of Abdülhamid while examining the cartoons at the British daily newspaper. The cartoons show Abdülhamid's head attached to a snake's body, demonstrate him walking towards the gallows or point o gun towards his head. When Abdülhamid discovers these cartoons, he prevents his pashas from collecting them and states "this is how our slavish enemy fights with us. Let my people see how low, cheap and frightened they are" (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). Abdülhamid and his supporters perceive these attempts of the British newspaper as a sign of their fear from the Ottoman power. They claim that instead of directly fighting with the Empire, the British try such means to weaken Abdülhamid's legitimacy in the eyes of the public while attempting to provoke the minorities.

5.2) The West as Provokers

As a part of their colonizing plans, the West is also narrated as provokers in both of the shows. They lie to the minorities and promise them freedom under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, or other Muslim nations. These minorities are narrated as very important, yet disposable for the West. For example, in the first season of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, Theodor Herzl appears as the main enemy. He is chosen as the leaders of the Jews and works together with the British to establish a Jewish empire. Herzl influences the Armenians and starts a rebellion (Akar & Konuk, 2017h). Herzl and the British Empire hopes that this rebellion will motivate the others and weaken Abdülhamid's rule. However, their plans fail with the Ottoman army's success in suppressing this rebellion. Despite his defeat, the scenes which narrate Herzl provides vivid descriptions of West's function as provokers.

The fact that the West is provoking the minorities is repeated every time when the topic of the railroad construction is discussed in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*.

Abdülhamid especially wants this railroad to be built in the way the Ottoman Empire sees fit. Abdülhamid and his Pashas are careful not to build the railroad close to the multicultural areas, because they think that this would make it easier for the West to provoke the minorities. This notion is stated in the very first episode (Akar & Konuk, 2017i) and is repeated numerous times later in the series. Abdulhamid's careful considerations regarding the exact route of this railroad indicates how big of a threat the West poses with their provocations. It also supports the idea of protecting the other Muslim nations and prevent provocations because in the case of a serious

conflict in the region as a result of the West's provocations, the Muslim nations would be the ones who get hurt the most.

Another repeating example that demonstrates the provoking characteristics of the West is narrated between the corrupt Turks and Abdülhamid's own son in *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. Prince Abdülkadir, who is targeted by the western-supporting Pasha is shown as under the constant influence of the West. The corrupt characters convinced him that his father is far too authoritarian and that western liberty must be achieved for the Turks. As a result of this constant influence, Abdülkadir makes many mistakes throughout the series. For example, he sells some land to the Jews in the twenty second episode (Akar & Konuk, 2017k). Apart from his minor lies and the information he somewhat unwillingly leaks out from the palace, the mistake he makes in the twelfth episode shakes Abdülhamid deeply. Abdülhamid feels unsafe and violated, due to the fact that his own son is working against his government. This scene demonstrates how tricky the West can get with their provocations while also implying that they can target anyone they see fit, no matter how close they are to the Sultan himself.

The West's extreme provocation is also emphasized in the twenty first episode of the series. Mahmut pasha, the closest pasha to the Sultan also starts working with a German company. When Abdülhamid finds out, he commands Mahmut pasha to resign. As a response, Mahmut Pasha says: "I am no longer only a pasha to this nation, but also a top bureaucrat in a German organization. Germany would not allow other nations to interfere with their domestic organizations and their employees"

(Akar & Konuk, 2018b). Even though Abdülhamid explicitly says that he is aware of Mahmud's infidelity, Mahmud finds the courage to ignore him and openly disobeys him due to his position in the German company. Moreover, the reason he was employed by the German company was to protect Mahmud against Abdülhamid. In other words, in addition to provoking, the West also protects Mahmud because of his high-ranking position.

Mehmet the same way in the tenth episode of the series as well (Aydın, 2018i). This disturbing scene successfully demonstrates the West as wicked and cruel. The fact that Cox is not hesitant to hurt one of his soldiers just to have fun torturing the Ottoman soldier is a very dramatic detail. The fact that the scene continues for several minutes gives the audience a good chance to absorb the West's wickedness and cruelty.

In the seventh episode of *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, another rather long torture scene takes place. This time, the torturer is the British soldier, who Cox tortured together with the Ottoman soldier in the above-mentioned scene. The tortured British soldier tortures Mehmet by whipping him at the hostage camp, just because he got tortured because of Mehmet's fellow soldier and he wanted to get his revenge (Aydın, 2018g). Since Mehmet did not do anything wrong to cross the British soldiers and the fact that he is already kept under captivity by the British army, this scene only shows the corrupt side of the West. In addition to such scenes, the show demonstrates how the West kills both their own and their enemy easily without

hesitation numerous times. Such scenes explicitly demonstrate the West as heartless and cruel who do not hesitate to hurt or kill just for the pleasure of it.

For example, in the first season of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*'s seventh episode, Theodor Herzl attempts to detonate a train full of innocent people as a part of his many plans of destroying Abdulhamid's rule (Akar & Konuk, 2017f). Taking the lives of hundreds only as a small part of his plan appears so easy for him to do. He feels such great joy for the plan he describes as very smart and goes to celebrate his success. In other words, this scene demonstrates the enemy while celebrating after murdering hundreds of people. Also, the first episode of the show informs the audience about the "corruptness" of Herzl in one of the early scenes. The scene depicts that Herzl imprisoned his own father at a dungeon because he would not follow him as the leader of the Jews. In addition to almost torturing his father, Herzl told his mother that his father died, which dragged her into a deep depression (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). Nevertheless, Herzl continues to ignore their pain and do not show a sign of regret for doing so. Again, his cruelty even against his own parents stand out and contribute to the evil image of the West.

The main pillar of the Kemalist doctrine was their approach to western modernity. They saw it as a role model, both in terms of political structure and the social context. While admiring their notions of modernity, secularism and democracy; the Kemalist elite stands against their imperialism and capitalism (Ulusoy, 2017). Albeit their alertness against the West's desire to conquer the Turkish land, the Kemalist elite also thought that the best way to resist the West was to be more like them. By

increasing the Turkish nations' resemblance to the West, the Kemalist elite hoped to prove that Turkey was good enough to become a part of the Western nation. Being included with the West in the international setting would provide the new Republic with significant strength. Thus, their ideal citizen has a very positive approach to the Western lifestyle.

The JDP narration, on the other hand, does not entitle any positive characteristics to the West. In contrast to the Kemalist narration which acknowledges the West's negative sides while still celebrating the good ones, the JDP narration merges the idea of the West completely with their negative sides. In both series, the first thing that is emphasized about the West is their imperialism and their desire to colonialize the Middle East. Since the Ottoman Empire is narrated as the guardian and the leader of the Muslim world, they stand in between the West's colonial plans and the Middle East. As a result, the West comes to hate Turks and provokes the minorities under the Ottoman Empire in order to devour them to clear their way.

While acknowledging the West's colonial tendencies appear as a continuum from the Kemalist narrations to the JDP's, the JDP narration merges this characteristic of the West with cruelty and hatred towards Turk. In the JDP narration, the West's evilness is evident by their colonialist tendencies because their main purpose is demonstrated as exploitation rather than expansion. The West also appears crafty and evil because they provoke the minorities. By not spending any time on showing why it was so easy for the West to provoke the minorities, the JDP narrative victimizes the

Ottoman Empire while further demonizing the West. As a result, the West appears as the main enemy which wants to destroy the nation in both of the series.

This approach to the West also appears in Erdoğan's present policies. For example, in addition to revealing their Ottomanism during the Gezi park protests, the JDP also revealed their approach to the West. JDP reacted to the protesting group by bolstering the police's violent acts towards the public, by associating them with the opposition party and the West while blaming them for planning this uprising in order to create discomfort under the JDP rule. JDP argued that the public's reaction to the artillery barrack was a reaction to their Ottoman heritage, which was initially kindled by the West who still had plans to divide the Turkish nation (Türk, 2014, pp. 250–262). The same attitude towards the West can also be seen at the 15 July coup attempt and the government's narration of it in order to support their evil West narrative. After discovering that the coup was conducted by the *Fetullah Gulen Terrorist Organization(FETO)* which the leader of currently is a resident in the USA, the JDP government also turned their attention to the West as well. For example, at the article Erdoğan wrote for *the Guardian*, he mentions that some of the high-ranking members of FETO were given protection by certain western countries that these countries must choose between standing with Turkey, or the terrorist group (Erdoğan, 2017). Also, the Turkish Parliament's report on the coup attempt provides strong proof of the connections between FETO and the USA (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. 2017). Similar to Gezi park incident, the JDP government blamed the divisive foreign powers with trying to cause social discomfort within the society with the aim of damaging the nation.

As it can also be seen from the exemplary scenes and anecdotes above, JDP government's approach to the West is directly represented in the selected television dramas. It is possible to say that this approach towards the West is a result of the government's approach to Western modernity and Islam. In addition to contributing to the context of their nationalism project, the West's evilness provides a reference point to the other characteristics. In other words, the soldiers fight fiercely as a result of their devotion to their nation because the West poses a serious threat to it. They also embrace Islam so deeply because the West, as a non-Muslim, is the non-ideal concept. Similarly, whether a character is a representative of the ideal image or the internal other also depends on their sympathy towards the West. Before finalizing, next chapter will pay particular attention to the characters who appear as internal others, and their relationship with the ideal characters.

CHAPTER 6

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNAL OTHER

This section will look into how these television series narrate the ideal Turk's relationships with the internal other characters. The primary concern of examining the relationship between the individuals is to discover an important characteristic of the ideal image. Even though the ideal Turk's relationship with the others do not seem as if it is directly related to politics like their approach to Islam or the West, the positive interactions between the characters is one of the most emphasized themes in both television dramas. Therefore, it constitutes a portion of the ideal image narrations. In both of the series, the audience can easily see that the ideal characters are always in positive interaction with the others, as long as the other person also shows the remaining characteristics of the ideal Turk image. They appear as helpful, generous and overall, 'good'. Even though the ideal citizen is assumed to be a devoted Muslim, there are instances that go beyond this categorization in the sense that in rare occasions, non-Muslims are also depicted as ideal citizens due to their devotion to the remaining characteristics. Similarly, many Muslim Ottomans are also depicted as non-ideal citizens, if they do not abide by the remaining characteristics.

The characters that represent the ‘internal others’ are the ones who do not show the other ideal approach to the West, the national duties or Islam. As it is narrated in these series, the ideal citizenship model does not constitute a prerequisite of nationality. In correspondence, the ‘internal other’ does not refer to the non-Muslim characters in the series.

In other words, they do not show the same level of devotion to their nation, they often admire the West and they are dishonest. These ‘internal other’s are also narrated as the enemy, while some non-Muslims appear as the ideal Turk due to their loyalty to the Ottoman nation and goodness in their relationship with the others.

6.1) The Ideal Turk

Similar to other notions, the positive attitude towards the others is emphasized from the very first episode of both television dramas. In *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*’s first episode, two soldiers in the army speak to each other. When one of them says that “I have a baby son, I will save the nation and return home”, his friend responds by saying: “How rich I am, that I am friends with such a hero”(Aydın, 2018b). This statement both implies that the soldier is proud of his friend, and that having such good friends is the real wealth. The same episode also shows the audience that Mehmet is cheating in the army entrance evaluations to help his brother (Aydın, 2018b). Mehmet is represented as the brave, loyal soldier throughout the show. It is the most unexpected behavior for him to trick the commander and cheat in the evaluation. However, he does it without hesitation to help his brother achieve his dreams too.

As the story develops, Mehmet is left behind because of his leg injury when army departs. So, Mehmet hides in the army's artillery chests to go with them. A few days later, the commander discovers that Mehmet has left with the army and gives an order to the other soldiers to find Mehmet. Mehmet's brother finds him in the third episode and informs Mehmet's location to the commander. When he does, the commander slaps him and says: "The Ottoman soldiers do not tell on their brothers, not even if they die doing so" (Aydın, 2018d). Albeit it was the commander himself who wanted to find Mehmet at the first place, he does not approve his brother to tell on Mehmet like that. As a result, the commander leaves Mehmet be, and sends his brother with a harsh warning. This scene describes the importance of honesty, especially between the family members. It also justifies Mehmet's cheating in the first episode. Both these scenes imply that the family comes first, even before than the army.

In almost all episodes, such scenes which demonstrate honesty, modesty and goodness appear. For example in the fourth episode, even though they are very poor, the soldiers collect money amongst themselves to send it to their newly departed friends' wife and child (Aydın, 2018e). Another example can be seen in the seventh episode when a soldier gives the medicine he obtained through various ways to another sick soldier he does not even know (Aydın, 2018g). Such subtle scenes are repeated very often and draws a general picture about the personality of the soldiers. Specifically in these scenes, the fact that the soldiers in the army are conscious about

the less fortunate, considering that they are not at their best situation either, tells a lot about how helpful and selfless the ideal Turk is narrated to be.

Payitaht: Abdülhamid II also represents the ideal characters as helpful and modest the same way *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* does. In *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*'s very first episode, Abdülhamid's daughter's close relationship with her cousins draws the attention of the audience. She asks for her father's permission to visit her uncle's daughters. Despite that fact that her cousins would like to see their own father as the Ottoman Sultan instead of Abdülhamid, she still maintains a strong bond between them. Even though Abdülhamid does not give permission for her to leave with the fear of revealing his brothers' location to his enemies, he gives permission to her to invite her cousins over (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). The conversation between Abdülhamid and her daughter draws attention because both of them knows that in case of an attack, Abdülhamid's nieces would love to see the end of his rule and the start of their father's. Nevertheless, Abdülhamid states that they are no different to him than his own daughter. Despite these girls pose a serious threat to Abdülhamid's rule, he still maintains good relationships with them because they are family.

Abdülhamid appears as modest and helpful many times throughout the show. For example, the sixth episode shows him carving a wooden leg for a disabled child that he saw a few days earlier at the bazaar. He delivers the leg himself and sees through the child's treatment. While this exchange takes place, a spy hides in a closed in the room to assassinate Abdülhamid, because she thinks that Abdülhamid had kill her father. However, after seeing this exchange, she is convinced that Abdülhamid is a

good man and he would not commit a murder. Therefore, she does not kill Abdülhamid that night (Akar & Konuk, 2017e). The fact that this exchange takes place in Abdülhamid's private chamber implies that he is not doing this to collect approval from the society. On the contrary, he holds this meeting at a rather late hour at night, so that nobody sees this exchange.

The goodness of Abdülhamid is repeated in the eighth episode as well. Abdülhamid sends his best Pashas to help a group of Jews in need. The scene shows their return to report that they succeeded. Abdülhamid responds by saying: "Saving one life is like saving the whole world. We will help everyone from every religion and every language" (Akar & Konuk, 2017g). In addition to his role as the protector of the Muslim nations, Abdülhamid sees himself as obligated to help anyone, if it is possible for him to help. This scene demonstrates that his goodness does not come from the obligations Islam put on his shoulders, but from the fact that he is good person.

Another example of the emphasis on goodness can be seen in the third episode. The scene shows two young Ottoman brothers talking to each other. These characters had been represented as the ideal characters earlier in the show. While one of them saves Abdülhamid during a public assassination attempt, the other one is shown as a hard-working, good man (Akar & Konuk, 2017b). The hard working one gambles and loses the money he earned that day. Instead of telling the truth, he tells: "I gave the money I earned today to a sick man, so that he can buy medicine". His brother responds by saying: "I'm glad you did it, we'll earn again" (Akar & Konuk, 2017c).

His response comes out without a hesitation or a subtle sign of frustration. Despite how much they need money, he does not get angry with his brother, or question whether he's lying or not. He simply expresses his happiness with his brother's helpful action because he is a good man and also believes that his brother too, is the same way.

In addition to these examples, there are also striking characters which appear ideal despite their nationality. For example, as it was mentioned earlier, Abdülhamid's favorite woman has a Caucasian origin. However, due to her devotion to her Sultan and her nation, she is demonstrated as a representative of the ideal image. This demonstrates that the ideal image does not carry a prerequisite of being a native Ottoman. Abdülhamid's favorite's devotion to the Ottoman Empire as well as his closeness to Abdülhamid makes her a desired citizen.

The second example of such a character is *Melike* which appears in the first season of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. According to the series, she is sent to the palace by the supporters of Herzl to poison Abdülhamid. However, she loses her memory in an accident she gets in and Abdülhamid decides to take care of her at his palace until she heals. During her recovery process, she grows fond of Abdülhamid and his close family. While waiting to regain her memory, she discovers that she was sent to the palace to kill Abdülhamid. Instead of fulfilling that task, she confesses to Abdülhamid and he forgives her in return by claiming that she confessed due to the good nature. Thus, a good person cannot be a threat to himself or his reign (Akar & Konuk, 2017j). In addition to demonstrating an ideal Turk who is a non-Muslim; this

example also associates the ideal image with goodness since Abdülhamid shows full trust to Melike, just because she is a good person.

A third striking example from *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*, regarding an ideal non-Muslim character appears in the fourteenth episode. This example is more moving than the other because the character which appears as ideal is Herzl's own father. The scene shows Herzl's father together with the Ottoman soldiers. When Herzl realizes that his father had collaborated with the Ottomans, he asks his father to come back home. In return, his father states "I'm not a prisoner here. Abdülhamid is always so kind to me and I practice my religion freely. You should abide by him as well" (Akar & Konuk, 2017i). This scene supports many characteristics of the ideal Turk narration. In addition to addressing the love of nation, it also contributes to the West's image of being a liar, since they claim that Abdülhamid is a dictator, but Herzl's father chooses to stay with him because he can freely practice his religion. Moreover, despite Herzl appear as the main enemy in the show, his father is so easily accepted by the Ottomans, simply because of his devotion to Abdülhamid.

In *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre*, the *Zeynep* character also fits into the same description. Zeynep appears as a local healer close to the area Kût. She and Mehmet meet at the fourth episode, where she and her grandmother attend Mehmet's injury. In the same episode, Zeynep's grandmother makes her promise that she will not leave her nation no matter who provokes her (Aydın, 2018e). Zeynep willingly makes that promise and falls in love with Mehmet in the later episodes. Her love for him is mainly fueled by Mehmet's love of nation and desire to fight. Despite her origin, Zeynep joins

Mehmet in his quest and gains a high-ranking position in the army as a spy. Her love of nation and devotion to this war makes her an ideal Turk.

6.2) The Internal Other

A good example of an internal other is provided in the first episode of *Payitaht: Abdülhamid II*. From the first episodes Mahmut Pasha and his son Sabahattin appear as the main internal others in the show. Mahmut Pasha is the highest-ranking Pasha in the palace and is married to Abdülhamid's sister. Him and his son's admiration for the West strikes the audience from the very first minutes of the first episode. Their first appearance in the series shows their conversation over how democratic the British rule is while Abdülhamid's rule is certainly a dictatorship. Right after their harsh criticisms, Mahmut pasha visits Abdülhamid and acts as if he is a devoted supporter (Akar & Konuk, 2017a). In the first few episodes, Mahmut pasha and his son is demonstrated as selfish, wasteful and dishonest (Akar & Konuk, 2017c). These characteristics show parallelism with the cruelty and evilness of the West. In addition, the later episodes tell how Mahmut pasha is in constant collaboration with the British and Theodor Herzl.

In the following episodes, Sultan Abdülhamid's sister also joins her husband in his plans of devouring Abdülhamid (Akar & Konuk, 2017j). Thus, despite her closeness to the sultan himself, which caused her devotion to her nation, she becomes a representative of the internal other as well. Mahmut pasha and his son also targets prince Abdülkadir in the series. Especially Mahmut pasha's son, who grew together with prince Abdülkadir uses their friendship to corrupt Abdülkadir. Abdülkadir is an idealist young man who admires the ideas of democracy and freedom. Mahmut pasha

and his son, regularly engage in intellectual conversations where they connote the ideas of fighting for freedom with Abdülkadir and regularly bring him in contact with British newspapers that blame Abdülhamid for being a dictator. Their efforts pay off, for example it was mentioned earlier, Prince Abdülkadir sells some of his lands to the Jews. Mahmut pasha, his son and his wife appear as the internal others because of their corrupt nature, their lowered devotion to their nation and admiration of the West.

Best example to the internal other in *Mehmetçik Kût-ül Amâre* is Mehmet's brother, Sait. The first episode shows Said having a hard time competing with Mehmet's military talent. Sait's resentment turns his attitude towards Mehmet very bitter. At the beginning of the season, both Mehmet and Sait makes it into the army. However, due to Mehmet's injured leg, he becomes temporarily dismissed. Mehmet does not accept that and sneaks into the army's artillery to travel with the rest of the soldiers. Sait discovers him hiding, tells Mehmet that he will help him but still informs the commander about Mehmet. Even though he understands his mistake and transforms into an ideal Turk, Sait represents the internal other at the beginning of the series. Sait informs the commander to act honest and noble, to earn his place in the army and to prove himself better than Mehmet. However, the fact that he turned his back to his own brother makes him a internal other. Since the ideal Turk was narrated as honest, loyal and understanding; Sait does not fit into this description. He makes it difficult for Mehmet to fight for his nation, thus, in a way Sait does not support the idea of love of nation. Therefore, Sait represents the internal other.

In correspondence to their doctrine, the Kemalist doctrine re-defined ways of behaving in public, the dress codes, the entertainment styles, appearance of both men and women etc. While opening up westernized restaurants, holding events where men and women joined together or changing the dress code from fezzes to hats, the Kemalists aimed for a deeper transaction than just for a change in the appearance. For them, the ideal Turk mainly accepted secularism and western modernity, thus, changed their lifestyle as a result of a change of their personality. In other words, for men and women to spend time in public was not the primary concern of the Kemalist specific narrative of the ideal Turk. A man who went to dinner parties with other men and women, but still approached modernity with doubt was nowhere near of being an Ideal Turk for the Kemalists. Therefore, this narration of an ideal image with the other did not have a direct meaning for the Ideal Turk like the definition of national duties or emphasis on secularism had. Instead, the relationship with the others were narrated to somewhat describe the final step of becoming an Ideal Turk. As the literature also suggests, westernized lifestyle and daily practices provided an opportunity for people to practice the new ideal image or show how much they fit to it. Thus, as it was mentioned earlier as well, the undesired Turk would appear as someone who embraces the Ottoman heritage instead of western modernity.

The JDP narrative also draws the boundaries of the ideal Turk definition by the individual's approach to the West. In a way, the criteria for the evaluation of the ideal Turk's relationships with the others remain the same, while the results are reversed in the JDP narrative. In contrast to the Kemalist ideal Turk, the JDP narrative describes the ideal Turk as a person who dislikes the West and adopts the

above-mentioned characteristics. In the narratives of these television dramas, the ideal Turk would have a strong feeling of militarism which fuels their dislike of the Western nations. The internal other, on the other hand, would appear as someone who is in collaboration with the West, has a corrupt nature and does not devote himself to his nation. Albeit the importance given to Islam in the JDP narration, the internal other does not have a pre-condition of being a non-Muslim. The only criteria for becoming an internal other appears as their favoritism towards the West. This emphasizes the narrations which emphasize the loyalty for the nation while simultaneously associating the concept of loyalty with a strong dislike of the West.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to examine how certain type of narratives are produced by the government based on their approaches to nationalism and infusing into the collective memory. Albeit the ambiguities in its definition, this thesis takes collective memory as a significant ingredient of national identity and thus, acknowledges the governments' need to make it compatible with their own doctrines. Constructing tangible national identities which support the governments' ideology serves the purpose of increasing their legitimacy. Constructing narratives becomes a very effective tool in altering certain notions of nationalism as well as collective memory. Within this framework, this study focuses on the narratives of an ideal Turk image which are produced by the current government of Turkey.

While it is not possible to describe the JDP's view of the ideal Turk image solely from the above analysis of two television dramas, it is possible to say that it shows consistency with the JDP leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's rhetoric. This correspondence can only be expected considering the fact that these television dramas are being broadcasted in a governmentally funded television channel. Therefore, it would not be surprising for the JDP government to infuse their view of

the ideal Turk into the Turkish collective memory through the narratives of television series. The JDP attempts to revise the once-official Kemalist narration of the Ideal Turk image which does not support the JDP doctrine from the Turkish collective memory by spreading and settling the ideal Turk narration they construct into the collective memory day by day.

The ideal Turk's understanding of the national duties as the JDP narrates show correspondence with the Kemalist description of the ideal image. Both narrations describe a strong military nation that is devoted to their country. The will to fight for freedom against the enemy and die at the battlefield is emphasized by both narrations. However, the remaining characteristics of both ideal images lack such consistency. Since one of the main pillars of the Kemalist doctrine was their association of westernized modernity with civilization, the ideal Turk in Kemalist narrative has a very positive relationship with the West. Since the civilization is to be reached, despite acknowledging the imperial tendencies of the West as negative aspects, the ideal Turk takes the West as an exemplary model and tries to resemble it. This pillar also determines the Kemalist ideal image's relationship with Islam as well. Since the Kemalist ideal Turk wants to 'be like the west', as it was also argued earlier, they abandon Islam in order to be secularized and westernized. Therefore, they are rather distant and hesitant with Islam and its practices. Moreover, Kemalist approach to western modernity also affects the ideal Turk's approach to other citizens. In order to highlight secularism and westernism, the ideal Turks is expected to apply westernized codes of social relationships while still being against the colonizing attempts of the West which targets their nation.

As opposed to the Kemalist image, the JDP narration of the ideal Turk adopts a controversial approach regarding the remaining characteristics of the ideal image. First of all, the JDP narrative adopts a very positive approach to the ideal relationship with Islam by emphasizing its public visibility and narrating it with positive concepts such as motivation and unification. Secondly, all the West's negative aspects such as imperialism, colonialism and provocations are emphasized in the JDP narrative while neglecting the positive aspects of the West. Thus, the West becomes a cruel enemy which the Turks need to be defend against. Thirdly, the boundaries of the ideal relationship with the others is also drawn in correspondence with these approaches. The ideal Turk would approach others with an overall 'goodness' as long as the other person is devoted to their nation. In other words, Turks are narrated to be honest, loyal and generous to their fellow citizens. The ones who do not show devotion to their nation or the ones who admire the West appear as the internal others.

When both narrations of the ideal Turk are considered overall, the differences between them stand out clearly. The JDP narration does not explicitly attack the Kemalist one. However, by changing the ideal approach to the West and Islam, the JDP narrative attempts to shake the grounds of the Kemalist narrative and produces an alternative narrative. Instead of building a new ideal image which focuses on the core principles of the JDP doctrine, the JDP narrative choses to revisit the existing ideas of the ideal Turk so that the new narrative can support their political legitimacy. When the changes and continuities between these narrations are considered, the JDP's desire to apply Ottomanism reveals itself. All four characteristics of the ideal image was re-narrated by the JDP government based on

the elements of the Ottoman heritage. In other words, the JDP narrative reverses the changes made with the Kemalist narration. Only the approach to the national duties remain the same, because it was the only characteristic the Kemalist narration inherited from the Ottoman heritage.

Striking differences between these two narratives can be explained by Wertsch's concepts of "specific narratives" and "schematic narrative templates". While specific narratives have specific characters, events, settings, timelines, beginnings and ending; schematic narrative templates do not refer to any specific characters, often do not have beginnings, endings or specific plots. They function as the "main idea" of the collective memory and can allow for more than one specific narratives which support this general narrative (2004, pp. 60–62). However, having many specific narratives which feed the schematic narrative templates does not necessarily mean that the specific narratives are similar. Both the Kemalist and the JDP narrative, defines the ideal Turk as 'good enough', which is the dominant schematic narrative template in Turkish collective memory. While the vagueness of this template allows for many different interpretations, it does not indicate that these interpretations would be roughly similar. On the contrary, as also the analysis of both narratives reveals, both specific narratives are gradually different from each other. The Kemalist narrative see the ideal Turk as 'good enough' to be a part of the Western world. Since they associate the Western modernity with civilization, the Kemalist ideal is to prove that Turks are as good as the Westerners. Being a part of the Western world would give Turks their rightful strength in coping with the Western nations. On the other hand, the JDP narration claims that Turks are 'good enough' to

defeat the West. In addition to not implying that Turks should resemble the West more, the JDP narration claims that Turks are good enough to defeat the West when they keep their attachments to the roots of their culture. In other words, since Islam constitutes a big place in Turkish history and culture, the JDP narrative implies that the Turks are better than the West when they claim their religion. Therefore, while still supporting the same schematic narrative template, the specific narrative of the JDP still differs greatly from the Kemalist narrative in their definition of what the ideal Turks are ‘good enough’ for.



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