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Onur Kınlı & İrem Özgören Kınlı [*]

Abstract: *»Wird jeder Türke als Soldat geboren? Eine historisch-prozessuale Analyse«.* Through a historical-processual perspective, this article investigates military aspects of Turkish national character. We utilize methodological and conceptual tools developed by Norbert Elias in order to reveal peculiarities of Turkish state formation experiences. Starting our survey from early nomadic times and extending to the foundation of Turkish Republic, we seek to demonstrate the extent to which military traits are incorporated in the Turkish national character. Drawing on the conceptual framework of national habitus outlined by Elias, this article primarily aims at exploring military traits among Turks through power relations and established-outsider figurations in Turkish history. The conceptualization of established and outsider groups (Elias and Scotson 2008) enables us to determine the basic stages of state formation as we-units through struggles for power between these two groups in Turkish society. We will attempt to highlight the particular historical moments at which established minorities lost their power, while outsiders came to the fore and gained a privileged status.

Keywords: Norbert Elias, Turkish national character, military characteristics, Janissaries, quasi-established.

1. Introduction

Norbert Elias argues that the changes in the structure and the framework of society are closely connected with the process of the development and the transformation of personality structures. In one of his central arguments, Elias draws attention to the significance of specific historical processes in forming the character of nations. As Elias meticulously displayed in the *Germans*, the particular power configuration and the institutionalization of political authority in diverse European countries gave rise to different kinds of national characters (Elias 1996). In Eliasian terminology, the national character is roughly coterminous with the concept of national habitus (Elias 1996; 2000). Elias makes

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use of the national habitus, traits of national group identity, or national character as a conceptual apparatus and defines it as "a layer of the social habitus built very deeply and firmly into the personality structure of the individual" (Elias 2001, 209). Inspired by Elias's works dealing with the analysis of emotions and its effects generated by the state as well as the process of habitus formation, Kuzmics and Axtmann explore how and why England and Austria developed dissimilar national characters. The authors compared English parliamentarization and Austrian bureaucratization processes to demonstrate the similarities and differences in English and Austrian formations of authority between 1700 and 1900 (Kuzmics and Axtmann 2007).

Based on the above-mentioned framework, this paper focuses on revealing the Turkish peculiarities in the state-formation process and deals mainly with the following questions: To what extent has the Turkish national character incorporated military models and values? What are the critical set of circumstances in Turkish history supporting the revival of a warrior ethos accompanied by a demand for the rule of a single powerful and influential political leader who controls by force? What are the emotional components of Turkish we-identity in connection with a strong intertwinement of Turkish national identity and national pride? How did the militaristic aspects of the Ottoman Empire contribute to the establishment of Turkish self-image, a we-ideal, and we-feeling?

Drawing on the conceptual framework of national habitus outlined by Elias, this article primarily aims to explore military traits in national character through the power relations and established-outsider figurations in Turkish history. The conceptualization of established and outsider groups (Elias and Scotson 2008) enables us to determine the basic stages of state formation as we-units through struggles for power between these two groups in Turkish society. We will attempt to highlight the particular historical moments at which "established" minorities lost their power, while "outsiders" came to the fore and gained a privileged status. In the historical formation of Ottoman Turkish state, we observe the shifting balances between established and outsider figurations. As a revealing parameter of Turkish national character, we may start to examine the formation of the configuration of *gazis* and *ahis* as established groups. An analysis of the founding dynamics of Ottoman state formation aims to demonstrate how the aforementioned established groups lost their privileged power in favour of newly established strata comprised of *devshirme*.

To achieve the objective of the article, we attempt to highlight the complex web of interrelated processes that would help to clarify the role played by the social macrostructures in forming a Turkish national habitus. Firstly, we address the principal dynamics of the Ottoman state-formation process to determine the established and outsider groups. In this part, we review three main theories of Ottoman state-formation in historiography. Then we discuss the reconfiguration of the Ottoman state dynamics into an Empire which consti-

tutes another vital characteristic with a determining role in shaping a Turkish national habitus. To this end, we examine the practice of Ottoman military recruitment, the transformation of the composition of ruling elites, and the balance of power in the workings of the Ottoman court. Finally, we analyze the role of New Ottomans and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) respectively, and the influence of the latter's heritage on the formation of Turkish Republic through new established military bureaucratic governing elites who would reshape the Turkish national character.

2.   The Principal Dynamics of Ottoman State-Formation Processes

Owing to the lack of written documents, other than the witness accounts of its neighbours and rivals, we know nothing for certain about proto-Ottoman history, especially in reference to the state building process. There are three major theories about the foundation of the Ottoman state in historiography out of which many branches of sub-narratives can be derived. In order to focus on Elias' understanding of state formation process as one of the revealing parameters of national habitus, we aim to trace the military traits by power relations and *established/outsiders* figurations through these theories and their critics.

In chronological order of publication, H. A. Gibbons' book *Foundation of the Ottoman Empire*, published during World War I (1916) – when the Empire was still intact – contains the first of these theories. His book was the first study devoted to an inquiry into the foundations of the Ottoman state. In brief, Gibbons alleged that Asiatic people were not capable of building and managing such a successful state and transforming it into an empire. He suggests that the expertise for developing the administrative structure was mainly provided by knowlegeable Christian neighbours in Byzantine territories. These probably converted to Islam later under the leadership of Osman and his tribe who were pagan nomads with roots in Inner Asia. Gibbons also used the sub-title "A new race appears in history" to the chapter which narrated that hybrid formulation (Gibbons 1916, 11-53). The tone of Gibbons' statement clearly denigrates Turco-Muslim political-administrative culture and this view inevitably provoked the new Republican regime's ideologues. According to Cemal Kafadar,

> The emerging Turkish nationalism of the republican era (1923 onwards) busily occupied with redefining the role of Turks in world history, was not entirely sympathetic to the late and "corrupt" phase of the Ottoman Empire that the Republic replaced; however, the same nationalist could not but proudly appropriate the earlier history of invasions, settlement, and state building, including the most successful case, represented by the Ottomans, that established the Turkish presence in the region. (Kafadar 1995, 10)

A second theory was elaborated by Fuad Köprülü who was a prominent Turkish historian working in early 1930s. Köprülü challenged Gibbons' thesis. He argued that the Mongol invasion of Anatolia led to drastic demographic changes in the region as a result of Turkish tribes fleeing westwards from the Mongol armies. Owing to the weakness of the political authority of the Anatolian Seljuks, Osman and his tribe took over leadership of other Turkish elements in the same region. They seized and held power, building a state aided by their experience of a Turco-Muslim political and administrative heritage. While acknowledging the evidence of some conversions, Köprülü claimed the essence of the state consisted of Turks and that all elements of the political culture were based on a Turco-Muslim tradition derived from central Asia and the Middle East. In which case, the Ottomans did not need to incorporate any Byzantine or Western Christian cultural traditions in their state formation process (Köprülü 1986, 23-38). It should be noted that this theory relies heavily on local legends and histories. It does not provide reliable scientific data, especially concerning the origin of the Ottomans. However, even today, it remains the most influential thesis in Turkish national historiography probably as a consequence of its ideological appeal in constructing national identity and manipulating national feelings.

The third thesis on the rise of Ottomans is that of Paul Wittek. Published in the late 1930s, it has become the most influential, convincing, and internationally recognized explanation. To sum up, Wittek developed his arguments within the framework of the concept of "gaza" (Islamic ideology of Holy War) and he considered that to be the crucial motive of the early Ottoman conquerors. While noting both conversions to Islam and Christian-Muslim collaborations, Wittek argued that the state was constructed and governed by scholars and bureaucrats from Islamic cultural centres. In other words, while he avoided Köprülü's controversial ethnocentric approach, he underlined the great impact of religious motivation (Wittek 1995, 25-46).

According to Perry Anderson, Wittek's analysis of the founding dynamics of the Ottoman State shows traces of Ibn-i Haldun's discussion of the evolution process of societies from nomadic to urban societies. While Ibn-Haldun argued the incompatibility of "nomadic asabiyya (characterized by religious fervour, social solidarity, and military prowess)" and "urban faragh (characterized by economic prosperity, administrative sophistication and cultural leisure)," Wittek demonstrated that these principles "for the first time came into structural harmony" in the Ottoman state (Anderson 1974, 363).

In addition to his "*gaza* thesis," Wittek's remarks on the Ottoman genealogy, the concept of "toleration" and the tension between the heterodox Islamic frontier culture of *gazi*s and Islamic orthodoxy became the most fruitful narrative of modern Ottoman historiography. However, many supporters of this thesis also seem either to be stuck on the concept of "toleration" (Wittek 1995, 58), or to undermine Wittek's statements on the controversial claims on the

genealogy (Wittek 1995, 14-23) by citing Köprülü's thesis on this subject, and neglecting his reservations on the tension of Islamic heterodoxy and orthodoxy. One of the strongest supporters of this thesis, well-known historian Halil İnalcık, expanded the limit and the essence of this "*gaza* spirit" at an overarching level. İnalcık draws a consistent and traceable framework of Witteks's thesis through field surveys, legends, and chronicles of the pre-Ottoman Anatolia. We need to note a few points before elaborating on İnalcık's explanations.

The Islamic paradigm of earthly governing is based on the key concepts of *Dar al-Islam* (House of Islam) referring to lands and peoples ruled by an Islamic authority, and *Dar al-harb* (abode of war) referring to lands and peoples ruled by "infidels" which will eventually be ruled by an Islamic authority. A war can have legitimacy in Islam only if it is declared on *Dar al-harb*. Therefore, there is a widespread tendency, particularly in Turkish national historiography, to name or define any warfare waged by an Islamic entity by the term *gaza*. This puts a respectable religious veneer on all kinds of actions by Muslim sovereigns, or warriors, including plunder and the taking of spoils in order to appease Muslim audiences' pride. This point of view also constitutes an important part of Rudi Linder's critics in explaining the pragmatism of the decision-making process of the early Ottomans. We should note that Kafadar also criticized, and disregarded, Linder's tribalism theory.

According to İnalcık, *gaza* emerged as a substantial idea, a matter of life and death, in late 13th century Anatolia for the Ottomans and other patrimonial states (*beylic*s). After re-capturing Constantinople from the Latins, the Byzantines paid less attention to their eastern fronts for a while. Thanks to their strategic location right on the Byzantine frontier and thanks to the on-going chaos of the time due to the Mongol invasion of inner regions of Anatolia, the Ottomans gained leverage to lead *gaza* activities in the region. The massive numbers of Muslim/Turcoman forces fleeing from the Mongols joined and allied their forces with the Ottomans. İnalcık cites the earliest Ottoman narrative describing the founder Osman Gazi's *nökers* (comrades) as people of various origins and not necessarily from a clan or a tribe based on kinship by blood. Some of them were referred to as *garib*s (strangers). While spoils were the strongest motive for a long time, these elements retained their position in the Ottoman army until the end of the Empire. The tribal Turcoman *kızıl börk* (crimson headscarves) who were stationed on the frontier in the service of the *alp* (heroes) or *gazi* (holly warrior) made up the majority of the Ottoman military force (İnalcık 2004, 36).

İnalcık's crucial contribution to this thesis is the mercenary aspect of the *gaza* spirit. Cemal Kafadar drew attention to İnalcık's incorporation of materials from the *gaza* thesis of Wittek to create a matrix of factors. According to Kafadar, İnalcık kept the reference to the *gazi* band, calling them "*gazi* mercenary bands" because they managed the profitable business of enslaving the neighborhood "infidels." Kafadar found this account very important in explaining

the balance between the actual raids of the Holy war ideology and its strong "ties within the gazi-mercenary band" which gathers a "cohesive social group around the leader" (Kafadar 1995, 58-9).

In addition to the *gaza/gazi* institution, the institution known as *Ahi* is generally recognized as a substantial institution in the state formation process. The origin of this institution derived from the Islamic concept of *futuwwa* (chivalry) which refers to nobility and strength of character which each Muslim should aim to have. The institution took its name from the Islamic Scholar Ahi Evren who came to Anatolia from Bagdad at the beginning of the 13th century. According to İnalcık, *Ahilik* referred to certain ethics and rules of behaviors which determined the national character of the Anatolian Turkish people for centuries. In practice, *Ahi zawiyas* were the leading institutions in governing the behaviour of tradesmen and artisans across the whole country. The ethical framework of *Ahi* codes regulated all kinds of training, working relations between an apprentice-assistant master, and a master (İnalcık 2004, 54). Also, while functioning as trade/merchant guilds, *Ahilik* inevitably became an influential actor in power politics, representing a local opposition to the central administration as well (Pamuk 2007, 58). Later, this function of *Ahilik* diminished in favour of more orthodox centralization processes. As İnalcık mentions, the Sultans consulted *Ahis* regarding the organization of the conquered land (İnalcık 2004, 52; 54-5). Ömer Barkan's famous study, entitled "The Colonizer Turkish Dervishes and Zawiyas During Conquest Periods," provides consistent and strong evidence in support of this argument (Barkan 1942).

From this perspective, we argue that the institution of *Ahi*, in all its aspects, fits into the Eliasian concept of a "good society." Elias describes the "good society" as a particular kind of a social formation widely recognized with its "authoritative source" determining basic criteria for evaluation of normative standards and creating behavioural standards to which other people may compare and judge their actions (Elias 1996, 49).

It would be useful to explore the historical conditions that led to change in the balance of power to the detriment of these established groups (*gazis* and *Ahis*). According to Feroz Ahmad, from the beginning, the ruler had a tense relationship with his Turcoman allies as they also threatened the Sultan's efforts to create a powerful state. After the conquest of the Balkans, the Sultan considered minimizing his dependence on Turcoman elites by creating a counter-power formed of Christians selected from the newly occupied lands. In the reign of Murat I, the state introduced the *devshirme* system, the practice of taking the brightest and talented (mainly Christian) young men and giving them military training in the capital away from their homes. They were known as Janissaries (Ahmad 1996, 18-9).

The *devshirme* literally means gathering and collecting. It does not have a direct connotation of selecting only Christian boys. Using the term in too strict a sense in Ottoman/Turkish historiography created a reductive interpretation of

the decline of the Empire by a simple logic: the majority of historians reached a consensus that the corruption of the Janissaries was the primary cause of imperial decline. However, considering the term in a broader sense might provide a new perspective on the subject. If we step outside the mainstream argument (that the *devshirme* system refered solely to the recruitment of Christians considered as the optimal choice), we can look for evidence that the "corruption" of Janissaries might not be the only reason for the decadence of the Empire. In this respect, Kafadar's arguments in his unprecedented study on the Janissaries (Kafadar 1981), where he discusses continuity and discontinuity, should provide a firm basis for further studies. If, from a linear historical perspective, we cannot perceive the Janissaries as a harmonious unit, we should examine them for their representative status as the embodiment of military traits at an institutional level within the context of ruptures and discontinuities. Thus, we may better evaluate the positioning of Janissaries in the operation of the Ottoman court in the context of shifting balances of power.

The elimination of Turcoman elites also raised the tension between heterodox and orthodox tendencies owing to changes in the power balance. While the Ottomans were abandoning their semi-nomadic life style and adopting a sedentary way of life, the power balance between the heterodox Islamic character of the spirit of gaza and the Sunni orthodoxy of governance shifted towards the latter. During the reign of Beyazid I, the Mongol invasion under the leadership of Timur and his army revealed clashes among these power groups in the early state which we know as the Ottoman interregnum. Relying on Wittek's ideas, we can argue that this phase was a warning for the Ottomans not to push the parameters of religious configurations so harshly as to threaten their own survival (Wittek 1995, 63-4). When Sunni orthodoxy gained dominance after the reconciliation with the remaining Turcoman elites, the Ottomans had to reconfigure the state structure and its court society. Kudret Emiroğlu cites evidence that the Ottoman state forced the survivors of these Turcoman elites and other heterodox elements to become peasants and farmers with a sedentary life. This resettlement of Turcoman elites and other heterodox elements also sowed the seeds of the contemporary *Alevite* issue in Turkish state and society (Emiroğlu 2015, 34). We can also read this process as the pacification of the former warrior class which would eventually lead to their revolt against the central government in the mid-18th century. This structural transformation inevitably set up a unique form of feudalism, an Ottoman type called "timar." In order to secure the ties between the Balkan lands and inner Anatolia, the Ottomans initiated a new project of conquering Constantinople and its network of international trade.

3. Reconfiguration of Ottoman State Dynamics

After the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed II united all the state authorities under his absolute control through the re-formulation of the state structure. The law gave the Sultan absolute authority to confiscate any kind of private property or estate without any reservation which enabled the Sultan to control potential rivals for the throne. Ahmad claims "any possibility of an independent, Ottoman landowning aristocracy, which the notables might have become, emerging as a counter force to the sultan was destroyed" (Ahmad 1996, 20). Mehmed the Conqueror also introduced the law of fratricide (which was obviously in contradiction with the law of Islam), which empowered the strongest crown-prince to eliminate the internal threats and prevent further wars of succession to seize power. However, the improvement in the organization of the *devshirme* process could be considered as the Ottomans' most effective tool in the new state structure for holding onto the reins of power over the long term. Perry Anderson describes the practice as an astonishing paradox of slave synarchy with Ottoman despotism, and explains the essence of this paradox as follows:

> Once all landed property was a prerogative of the Porte, it ceased to be degrading to be the human property of the Sultan: "slavery" was no longer defined by opposition to "liberty", but by proximity of access to the Imperial command, a necessarily ambiguous vicinity that involved complete heteronomy and immense privilege and power. The paradox of the *devshirme* was thus perfectly logical and functional within Ottoman society at its prime. (Anderson 1974, 367-8)

The Ottoman sultans also employed bodies of foreign troops just like their predecessors, the Seljuks and the Byzantines. However, in their practice, the Ottomans recruited nearly all their bureaucracy and governing officers as well as military forces through foreign channels. According to Colin Imber, the dependency on slaves became more pronounced by the "employment of foreigners" on the one hand and the "elimination of the sultan's blood relations" from the "household and government" on the other hand (Imber 2002, 130). The essence of the practice also highlights the fundamental characteristics of the classical age. In other words, in the classical age of the empire, apart from the Sultan (whose mothers were, in most instances, also Christian slaves) and the *ulema*, no one in the ruling class came from Turkic origins or was Muslim born. Thus, we see sharp differences between the ruling authorities and the ruled strata in the Ottoman society. In this regard, Emiroğlu describes how, in the classical age, the Ottomans were those who worked for the Ottoman dynasty. For Emiroğlu, the Ottomans developed a classical structure of the state when they denied and detached/abandoned their fundamental ties to the Turcoman tribal origin and their rebellious character against the Seljuks (Emiroğlu 2015, 20). In that sense, in the late 15th century, the Ottoman dynasty became

the only stratum established by its kinship through the marriage of princesses to the cadre of recruited high officials (Imber 2002, 88-9).

Elias argues that people who are accustomed to being ruled from above experience the state as something exterior to their world (as "you") with which they have difficulty in identifying (i.e., not seeing themselves and the state as a "we unit"). In these types of societies, in which there are sharp lines of division between the ruler and the ruled, individuals tend to delegate full authority and responsibility to this superior power (Elias 1996, 340). Although historically the state is perceived as a sacred entity in the Ottoman state and later in Turkey, first the subjects and then the citizens have experienced identification problems with the state and its institutions. The exaltation of the state by its sanctity increased the gap between the state and its subjects/citizens.

We should note that even after the conquest of lands which were already Muslim during the reign of Sultan Selim (1512-1520), approximately 40 per cent of the population of the empire were Christian subjects. Therefore, we could estimate that after the conquest of Constantinople, Christian subjects constituted more than half of the population (Barkan 1957). That means there was an abundance of human resources to be recruited, and special taxes to be collected, which were not levied on Muslim subjects. Imber states that Islamic law "forbids the enslavement of Muslims, although slaves who convert to Islam do not lose their servile status" in the Ottoman Empire (Imber 2002, 131). Anderson argues that this complex understanding caused a direct conflict between tribute-oriented toleration and mission-oriented conversions. The Ottomans resolved this conflict through the practice of the *devshirme* "by siphoning off an Islamized child levy, while leaving the rest of the Christian population in their traditional faith, and paying the traditional price for it" (Anderson 1974, 371). In other words, a continued Christian presence was allowed for the sake of the survival of the regime, not out of toleration. Wittek's remarks on the mandatory settlement of non-Muslims in Constantinople after the conquest (Wittek 1995, 68) could be evaluated through this perspective.

We argue that Christians who were the *quasi*-established under the rule of the early Ottomans became the *quasi*-outsiders of the Empire. We suggest this adjectival use of "quasi" to refer to the possibility of transition between established and outsider groups. One should conceive the quasi established/outsider position as a transitory status which does not fit in the classical categories of the established and outsiders in its strict sense. This in-between status, perceived as being affiliated to more than one position at the same time, allows the members of either group to switch between one and the other while demonstrating basically the distinguishing characteristics of one of these groups.

In the Ottoman state structure, the established strata were clearly described above as members of the Ottoman dynasty and its kinship through marriages. However, a hierarchy among the Sultan's subjects prevents us from easily making a clear description of the outsiders. Once a Christian subject was re-

cruited and became a part of an established stratum, he also became a part of the established strata's collective identity as a Muslim without losing his servile status. However, this Muslim identity also did not accurately represent the dynasty's understanding of Sunni orthodoxy. It is presumed that the Janissaries were first organized under the strong influential doctrine of *Ahilik* and then it is assumed that at the dawn of the 15th century, they submitted to the *Bektashi* order (Uzunçarşılı 1943, 148-50) which was a branch of Sunni Islam, but also had close ties with Anatolian Islamic heterodoxies.

Living with vast amounts of these *quasi*-outsiders and depending on them for survival inevitably required strict codes of conduct for all sections of such a society. *Dhimmi* is a term used to describe a non-Muslim subject living in a state governed by Islamic jurisprudence. Concerning his contract with *Dhimmis*, the Muslim ruler assumed full responsibility for the protection of their lives, their freedom, and, to a certain extent, their property and granted them the liberty to fulfill their religious observances. In return for this protection, *Dhimmis* were obliged to pay a specific poll tax, *Jizya*, and a land tax, *Haraj*.[1]

Despite their inferior status in the Ottoman Empire in the classical age, a Christian-born healthy boy could possibly benefit from a windfall (such as having the chance of being a state officer) more than could a Muslim-born subject. This odd situation regarding the conventional wisdom about Ottoman society creates a complexity in constructing or describing the we-identity of the Ottoman society. The *millet* system was a system formulated to categorize a fragmented Ottoman society in regard to their relations with the state by granting a degree of autonomy to religions and religious sects (Armenian Protestants, Armenian Orthodox, Rum Orthodox, etc.) but not to ethnic groups. It did not include Muslim communities. Explaining the conceptual framework of the *millet* system and its effect on state-society relations would go beyond the limits of this paper. However, we will discuss the *millet* system below as the dissolution of this system and how the rise of Turkish nationalism during the Young Turk era is relevant to the formation of the Turkish national character.

During periods of social transformation, collective identity becomes a more meaningful category, because new groups formed at a complex level of integration experience problems of we-identity production, while nevertheless preserving, in a powerful manner, the previous we-feeling. The shift from a lower

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[1] Compared to Muslim subjects, they were not granted equal legal status. They had to confront many restrictions. First of all, they are in a legally unfavorable position when compared with Muslims. *Dhimmis'* evidence was not admissible against that of a Muslim in court. If a Muslim murdered a *Dhimmi*, the Muslim is not sentenced to death. While a Muslim man can marry a *Dhimmi* woman, a *Dhimmi* man is not allowed to marry a Muslim woman. In addition, a discriminatory dress code was imposed on *Dhimmis* in order to distinguish them from Muslims. *Dhimmis* were not allowed to ride horses or to carry arms (Gibb and Bowen 1969: 207-8).

level integration to a higher one coexists with the "transfer of power resources." The influence of the power balance between we-identity and I-identity can be examined by the consideration of the social standing of established and outsider groups. The identification of some main phases of state formation as we-units through the theoretical framework developed by Elias enables us to demonstrate the acknowledgment and integration of an outsider group as a result of struggles between the established and outsiders. Moreover, emotional aspects within the integration process have a significant effect on the formation of identity (Leonardi 2011, 170-1).

In order to retain our focus on military traits, we can briefly sum up that the Ottoman state structure in the classical period was mainly based on two classes: the military class and the *reâya* (subjects). The military class refers to the ruling class as a whole, constituted of three main divisions: *Seyfiye* (governing and military), *İlmiye* (religious order and justice), and *Kalemiye* (civil bureaucracy and finance). The military class also received tax exemptions and privileges. According to İnalcık, Suleyman I (1520-1566) revoked the tax exemptions formerly granted to the members of this class who did not descend from a military ancestor. Before Suleyman I, every member of this class was entitled to this tax exemption regardless of his ancestor's status. This order made it difficult to change status (İnalcık 1995, 69).

The Janissaries were the main section of *kapıkulları* (the body of slaves of the Porte) who were employed by the dynasty to fulfill military and administrative functions. Most of the Janissaries membership was supplied through the *devshirme* (Kafadar 1981, 6). İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı was the first historian to draw attention to a significant documentary source from the early 17th century, entitled *The Laws of the Janissaries* (Uzunçarşılı 1943, 152). The manuscript not only included rules for the Janissary Corps but also proposed measures to counter then current defects by referencing ideal practices from the past. The Janissary Order's first article was quite remarkable: "Do not ever take a son of a Turk!" The second article complements the previous one by forbidding the recruitment of Turkish-speaking Christians. The reasoning behind the exclusion of Turks was briefly explained as follows: If many Turks were recruited for the Sultan's service, all their relatives and friends back home would bother other people by bragging about being the Sultan's slave, and they would also claim exemption from taxes by demanding to be considered as Janissaries. Law enforcement authorities might hesitate to detain these people as they might genuinely consider them to be the Sultan's slaves. Hence, it could lead to many problems including disorder. Turkish-speaking Christians would consider their own interests as persons without fellow townsmen in the group. For this reason, they would not be ashamed of escaping the battlefield before others (Toroser 2011, 13).

The other articles concerning suitable and unsuitable recruitment give us many clues about the ideal character of a Janissary. The sons of dignitaries,

priests, or nobles should not be recruited; only sons in a family should not be taken as the son is supposed to help his father in farm work so that he is able to pay his taxes. As they are opportunist and undisciplined, orphans also should not be recruited. One should not recruit crossed-eyed boys as they are "perverse and obstinate," tall ones because they are "stupid," short boys because they are trouble-makers, fresh faced and beardless lads because they have despicable appearance to the enemy, and craftsmen because they are not capable of enduring heavy workload (Imber 2002, 136).

We should mention that Kafadar finds the binding character of this so-called code suspicious. The code also forbids any kind of mercantile activity by the Janissaries. The reason for Kafadar's suspicion is that some archival documents could be interpreted in such a way that Muslim-Turks could have been recruited and, furthermore, the Janissaries were engaged in trade before the 16th century (Kafadar 2009, 34). We can say that the author of this Janissary Code might have been motivated to write that sort of a manuscript to protect his quasi-established status and to warn his fellows against his potential Muslim-Turk rivals who had recently been recruited in large numbers by Sultan Murat III (1574-1595). The well-known Koçi Bey from the period of Sultan Murat III also wrote a report critical of the current defects of the system and underlined the same shortcomings in the recruitment procedure. In that context, if we acknowledge the supreme authority of the Sultan as the lawmaker, especially in the 16th century, we cannot consider the manuscript mentioned above to have been an official law or code. It could only be a document offering strong advice for the Janissary elites on how to hold their positions in the state power structures. Therefore, we can claim that an attempt at excluding Muslim-Turks from recruitment could indicate an awareness of we-identity in this quasi-established structure which tried to impose its standards as the governing principles. It is certain that the effort of these Janissary elites failed. As Kafadar stated, the number of Janissaries doubled during the reign of Murat III (Kafadar 1981, 78), a Sultan who appeared to oppose the political preeminence of the *devshirme* elements, and continued to increase its dilution until its abolition. Imber mentions that the transformation of the *devshirme* system was not directly linked to corruption, but the increase in the number of enrolment to the corps with significant salaries should be considered to be the main factor for it (Imber 2002, 141). By the mid-17th century, the former Janissary structure had already been changed. This change became evident by the loss of their strictly military nature and standing as a socio-political power often in opposition to the central state (Kafadar 1981, 121). This opposition would manifest itself as uprisings and revolts.

The power struggle of the Janissaries within the state, along with the military defeats of the Empire against western powers through the 17th and the 18th centuries, corresponds to the deterioration of *timar* and the uprising of the *ayans* (provincial land lords) in the same period. Losing their militaristic nature

while gaining experience in mercantile activities resulted in the dominance of the Janissaries over the marketplace through brute power and toughness. Therefore, every kind of measure by the state to re-establish the political or economic *nizam* (order) inevitably required a serious state interference in the Janissaries, which would disturb the status quo of their comfortable position. Hence, the Janissaries tried to establish strategic alliances with the *ulema* to legitimize their objections to state interference (Kafadar 1981, 121). From this perspective, the essence of their uprisings and revolts could not be reduced to a conservative reflex with religious sensitiveness, which most historians have commonly claimed. It has to be stressed that, in the second half of the 18th century, the Ottoman Army "evolved from a combination of voluntary feudatory militias and Janissary-style conscripted infantries into a system state funded militias, with periods of short-term conscription, particularly in the 1768-74 Russo-Turkish War" (Aksan 1999, 21).

Sultan Selim III's (1789-1807) attempt to restore the order – especially regarding the military aspects, such as the constitution of modern military schools and an alternative modern regular army, even without interfering in the Janissary structure – faced strong opposition which claimed the Sultan's life (Ortaylı 1999, 34). Facing the alarming threat of the Janissary opposition to the state's peace, the state ironically had to demand the immediate help of the provincial landlords to stand against and to suppress the Janissaries who had once been fundamental to the defence of the state (Kafadar 1981, 122).

4.   Dissolution and Nation-Building Process

Mahmut II's accession to the throne with the strong military support of the *ayan* of Ruschuk, Alemdar Mustafa Pasha, led to a new structural transformation of the state. With the Deed of Agreement of 1808, the Sultan officially distributed his power among local authorities with regard to the collection of provincial taxes. During the Greek war of independence (1821-1829), Mahmut II created a new branch of the army which recruited from the selected Janissaries, called *Eşkinci Ocağı*, in 1825. The inaugural ceremony of the new army was planned and announced to take place in 1826. There were new European-style uniforms in which the Sultan had even dressed himself. The Sultan, who was prepared to order bloodshed, expected that the Janissaries would reject wearing "infidel's" uniforms and retain their military customs which in turn would help trigger the process of the complete abolition of the institution (Esat Efendi and Abdürrezzak Bahir Efendi 2000, 608-13). Apparently, this resistance to the new uniforms was not the actual cause of the abolition. After the war of Greek independence, *devshirmes* of Greek origin, especially dragomans (translators), were accused of espionage and held responsible for the defeat and they were executed. Even the Rum (Greek Orthodox) Patriarch was executed

for treason (Ortaylı 1999, 51). That accusation was extended to all *devshirmes* and used as an excuse to terminate the entire tradition of the *devshirme*. Hence, the quasi-established strata were effectively wiped out and survivors became outsiders. Mahmut II also abolished the grand-vizier's office with all its traditional institutions of government and replaced it with the western style cabinet and ministers in order to calibrate the state structure for integration into the international capitalist system.

The whole reform movement of Mahmut II was processed through a centralization of the state with the enrollment of Muslim-Turks into the state's service as well as homogeneity in the military service. The new army which replaced the Janissaries was established under the name of *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye* (Lion Soldiers of Mohamed), a strong reference to its Sunni orthodox character. The move toward Westernization also continued with the creation of a new Islamic we-identity of the state.

For Anderson, Ottoman reforms in the 19th century "produced neither a Turkish neo-despotism, nor an Eastern Absolutism, nor-naturally-a Western parliamentarism" (Anderson 1974, 390). The 19th century could be considered as a period of strengthening of this new formation. In particular, the Tanzimat (1839) movement created its hybrid bureaucracy from western elements and local customs inherited from the old Empire. The desire for integration into international capitalism required a wide ranging hierarchy of officials (Findley 1989) and the necessity to recruit them. For this purpose, the state sent young boys to Europe. That practice saw the emergence of the New Ottomans. After returning home in the 1860s, this small group of intellectuals criticized, directly or metaphorically, aspects of the despotic regime, even though they were themselves state officials. Their main struggle concentrated on establishing a constitutional monarchy with a parliament which could represent all the groups within the state. During this struggle, many of the New Ottomans were exiled. The widespread influence of the New Ottomans' ideas created a huge impact on the expanded state bureaucracy and on minority groups. The New Ottomans' ideology, defined as "Ottomanism," aimed at gathering all elements of the Empire to establish a we-identity.

When the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878) broke out on the Balkan Peninsula region of the Ottoman Empire, hatred of the West and national bankruptcy came together (Wheatcroft 1995, 189). However, to overcome these crises, the state was required to restore both the economic and political credibility of the Empire in Europe. The formula for doing so came about through an ambitious New Ottoman, Midhat Pasha, who was appointed as a grand-vizier in 1872. He created a coalition with the army and prepared to stage a *coup d'état*. Eventually, Sultan Abdulaziz was overthrown in 1876. Following Murad V's sudden nervous breakdown within a year of succeeding the deposed Sultan, a new head of the Empire, Abdulhamid II, ascended the throne after coming to an agreement with the New Ottomans in order to promulgate the constitution and the

first Ottoman parliament (Kinross 1979, 514-6). It did not take long for Abdulhamid II to seize full power. He used the Balkan crises, which led to the Russo-Turkish war, as an excuse to get rid of parliament. Lord Kinross stated "Abdulhamid saw his parliament as a puppet assembly manufactured to give an appearance of legal validity and popular assent to such measures as he elected to impose" (Kinross 1979, 529).

According to Elias, for the majority of Germans whose personality structures were adapted to strict autocratic and hierarchic order due to living in long periods of absolute regimes, the state is an entity formed by ruling authorities, that is to say, it is "external to themselves," instead of "something they all formed together" (Elias 1996, 69). Elias also states that the passage from a semi-absolutist monarchy to a parliamentary republic was too abrupt for the majority of Germans. This unexpected transition evoked negative connotations, such as acting as reminders of war defeats, among ordinary members of the public. Besides, they felt a strong dislike towards this form of government which necessitated debates, discussions, and agreements through mutual concessions. Many Germans living in the Weimar Republic still longed for a strong leader who could make decisions on their behalf for their benefit (Elias 1996, 34; 290-4). Roderic Davison's arguments about the first Turkish parliamentary experience are greatly similar to Elias' critics about German society:

> Parliamentary government meant nothing to the masses, but respect for the duly girded scion of the house of Osman did. The autocrat was generally thought to be well-intentioned, bent on paternalistic help to his people. (Davison 1988, 94)

Abdulhamid II became a harsh autocrat, though gaining popularity by imposing a Pan-Islamist ideology. The promotion of Islamic solidarity strengthened by anti-Western agitation could not help the state recover from bankruptcy. Eventually, a special debt commission of the Great Powers was established in 1881. It was quite humiliating and a hurtful loss of sovereignty for Abdulhamid II (Wheatcroft 1995, 192). As Elias noted, the state's structural obstacles caused Germans to respect, to admire, and to idealize military bearings and actions (Elias 1996, 7); in the same vein, Abdulhamid II focused on advanced military training to produce well-trained army officers within well-established military academies. Ironically, these academies became hotbeds of strong opposition to his tyranny. In the late 1880s, the Young Turks, who were the second generation of the New Ottomans, started to organize in numerous clandestine organizations and clubs opposed to the despotic Sultan. *İttihad-ı Osmani* (the Ottoman Union), which was established by students of Military Medical Academy in 1889, merged with *İttihat ve Terakki* (Union and Progress), which had been established in Paris in the same year, and adopted the name of the latter. This formation was the core of the well-known *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Committee of Union and Progress, CUP), which was established by officers of the Third Army in Selanik in 1906 (Tunaya 2000, 27).

The main purpose of this opposition was to re-establish the constitutional monarchy and the parliament by deposing Abdulhamid II. Within a short period, the organization had become the centre of all oppositions against the Sultan. Having the support of discontented minority groups, a significant number of non-Muslims also became members of the union and militia, who were called *ittihatçı* (unionist). A series of sudden inspections by the central government of the Third Army's offices in the Balkans aimed at detaining unionists increased tension. Eventually, high ranking army officers took bold action which forced the Sultan to re-establish the constitutional monarchy and convene the parliament in 1908 (Davison 1988, 105-6). Educated officers occupied both military and civilian posts. As the centre of elite training, the military held the monopoly of pioneering knowledge. In the Hamidian period, the military corps, with their administrative posts in the provinces, became the main actors of the 1908 Revolution (Moreau 2007, 319). However, after coming to power, the actions of the CUP failed to meet the expectations of opponents, particularly those of the oppressed minority groups. An extremely radical transition of social policies was observed in the committee programme as well. Their policy became overtly nationalistic. The quest for the law order was just an instrument to bring down the Sultan (Aydın and Türkoğlu 2010, 275). The CUP chiefs also regarded parliament in the same way that their archenemy Abdulhamid II had done; they considered the assembly a puppet, useful only for keeping up the appearance of legality. This reminds us of Elias' remarks on the perceptions of parliament among Germans. While warrior methods and the components military situations such as physical force, skill, and agility were highly valued, peaceful ways of solving problems via debates and negotiations were considered as having lesser value (Elias 1996, 65).

As indicated by Elias, it takes at least three generations to get used to a parliamentary regime in which people could make their own decisions without the external constraints of a powerful leading figure who has total responsibility for the destiny of the subjects of a nation. The adjustment between political and personality structures is a lengthy process. While autocratic regimes based on a chain of command require a comparatively simple personality structure characterized by individuals' willingness to obey orders, a multi-party parliamentary system necessitates a more differentiated personality structure. An individual accustomed to the absolutist regime "remains in a child-like status in relation to the state" (Elias 1996, 34; 290-4).

This new officer corps became the most privileged class in the Ottoman state. The general officers received honors, decorations, various gifts, and the award of lucrative governorships. They enjoyed social prestige and looked forward to a comfortable retirement. From a social point of view, the new leaders had become integrated into the former ruling elite (Moreau 2007, 18). We can say that the CUP chiefs' strong admiration of their German ally also had a deep impact on the formation of their social policies, in particular their

policies in education. It was no longer important to be a loyal subject to the Caliphate Sultan; instead, what was important was to be a loyal and patriotic citizen to the state and the priority was given to Turk-Muslims. Creating a soldier citizen-based society became the process aim of all institutions of the state. In this regard, Ahmed Riza, one of the great thinkers of the CUP, was convinced of the indispensable role that the army would have to play. The Ottoman Empire had to be a military state. He wrote several books advocating the liberating role of the army and extolling the virtues of a nascent patriotism that was spread among all strata of the population regardless of race or religion. He advocated an armed nation and a form of military state in his book entitled *Duty and Responsibility of the Soldier* (Moreau 2003, 62). The main idea of that book was inspired by German General Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz's famous book *Das Volk in Waffen* (*The Nation in Arms*).[2]

According to Elias, the feeling of loyalty and duty towards one's country has become an explicit manifestation of the national habitus in modern nation-states. A sense of one's responsibility to defend one's state is imposed upon individuals in times of national need. The internalization of the external compulsion to defend the state in times of war later displays itself with reference to the belief in the survival of the nation as the supreme value (Elias 1996, 334). The CUP chiefs seemed to have been well taught by their German colleagues regarding the essential elements of the nation-building process.

The idea of a "nation of soldiers" (referring to Turks) became quite popular and was promoted through Unionist media, especially during the Balkan Wars (1912-13) (Zürcher 2010, 118). The defeat (of the Ottoman forces) triggered rising voices of militaristic nationalism which were replete with references to a heroic past. As Elias mentions, states which experienced a decline due to continuous military defeats have to live in the shadow of their once-glorious past. Having lost their privileged status, people therein may demonstrate symptoms of depression and their positive self-esteem may be hurt (Elias 1996, 4). While on the one hand, military successes on the international stage are correlated with national pride, self-respect, and national identity; military defeats, on the other hand, are associated with loss of self-esteem and self-identity. When the self-image is damaged due to military defeats, it poses a threat to the positive we-feeling. As a result, "life is no longer worth living if the older order in which they enjoyed supremacy disappears. Without the attributes of their social superiority, life appears to them to be devoid of value and meaning" (Elias 1996, 357-8).

Even the military oath was changed during World War I. A striking expression was added: "... I will never decline to obey blindly all orders of my superiors…" (Akansel, t.y., 16). In warrior societies, honour is a tool of social dis-

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[2] Goltz's book *Das Volk in Waffen* was also a source of inspiration of Mustafa Kemal and Afet İnan's book *Askerlik Vazifesi (Military Duty)*, written in 1930.

tinction and the protection of honour in the eyes of we-group plays a crucial role. The code of honour of warrior classes is closely connected with hier-archized power relations and an established chain of command (Elias 1996, 96-97). During the war, the CUP chiefs became notorious for making bad decisions and for malpractices; however, all their orders of all types were executed "blindly" – with fatal consequences. The end of the war was a true catastrophe. The masses welcomed even the humiliating armistice (Gökbilgin 2011, 3-4). When the invasion of Anatolia began, the CUP chiefs fled. What was left for a defeated soldier-nation was the trauma of humiliation.

To overcome this trauma, the nation needed a military leader to organize resistance. Mustafa Kemal, who was also a unionist in his earlier years, organized the resistance and met the hopes of the masses by saving national pride without emphasising Turkish ethnicity in defining we-identity. Contrary to a widely held belief, there were no references to Turkish ethnicity or a Turk(ish) nation in the final declarations of temporary assemblies which were held in Erzurum and Sivas. In those documents, we-identity was constructed as "all Muslim subjects." Even though many members of the assemblies and the chief staff of the resistance were well known former unionists, they all used discourses of blame against the CUP and its policies. The main purpose of the resistance was also declared to be to secure the prosperity of Islam and the Caliphate Sultan in İstanbul from the imperialist western powers' invasion. Therefore, all the references to the term "national" (*milli*) were used in the sense of being a Muslim community (*ümmet*).

As Elias states, when the German nation faced intense difficulty, uncertainty, danger, or serious threat, no matter how different Germans felt in ordinary life, their national belief system forced them to act in unity and to follow their leaders who declared that it was the duty of all Germans to fight against their common enemies (Elias 1996, 332). Mustafa Kemal and his brothers in arms found it pragmatic to use Islam as a unifying force to fight against the western powers, whether they believed in it or not. Following the proclamation of the Republic, the backward-looking national historiography, characterized by praise for national pride, replaced the notion of the "nation" as the core established stratum of the resistance with an emphasis on Turkish ethnicity. To record, teach, and learn one's own national history provides individuals with information that would help them to develop a sense of solidarity, to have an identity in their groups and a permanent meaning and value in connection with other people.

National we-feeling stems from indoctrination via education and socialization in modern nation-states. After the establishment of we-feeling, it is strengthened by the feelings of hostility towards outsiders who are not involved in the shared national identity (Elias 1996, 350-3). According to Elias, public education institutions in all nation-states are highly devoted to the reinforce-

ment and the consolidation of a we-feeling solely grounded on the national tradition (Elias 2001, 210).

5.   Conclusion

In this article, we investigated military aspects of the Turkish national character through a historical-processual perspective. By utilizing methodological and conceptual tools developed by Elias, we attempted to reveal the peculiarities of Turkish state formation. Starting from its nomadic existence till the foundation of the Turkish Republic, we sought to demonstrate that military traits are largely incorporated in the Turkish national character. Without entering into a lengthy discussion on the identity debates about the historical continuities and discontinuities between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic under the influence of Eliasian terminology, we not only focused on the continuities that have been internalized and have become an integral part of Turkish military traits, but also explored the various discontinuities and ruptures that shaped the Turkish national character.

The military successes of the Ottoman Empire, supported by a powerful army, were considered to be one of the most important characteristics of a powerful empire until the 18th century. In connection to this, military values were already prevalent in the Ottoman ruling elites. By the recruitment of the Turkish ethnic community within the military class starting from the second half of the 18th century, warrior ethic became also a code of conduct among the Turkish population compared to other ethnic and religious communities. Simultaneously, there was a growing alignment with military values as palliatives to the Ottoman Empire's cultural decline. In the 19th century, the Ottoman military elites merged into civilian government. The military elite handed down military values to the Turkish people and an ideal Turkish citizen has started to be depicted, in the 20th century, as bound to honor, glory, duty, and fidelity to oath.

As Elias states, national habitus comes into existence as a result of particular historical changes that influences personality structure including sentiments, opinions, ethos, identity, and moral codes. He treats national habitus as a "mental orientation towards the past" (Hir 2014, 7-9). Concerning the Turkish national character, the satisfaction of the emotional need of "forward-looking" mental orientation, the new ruling strata began to develop a close connection with their imaginary ancestors. Their future expectation is replaced with the faith in the permanent value of national traits and traditions.

Turkish history, national pride, and collective self-respect have always been a serious matter for Turks. Within the Eliasian perspective (Elias 1996, 322-3), the exaggerated national pride created in Turkey, as may be seen elsewhere, leads to national hubris built upon collective fantasies about being the best in the world. A well-known Turkish saying runs, "A Turk is worth the world"

could be given as an example. The fluctuations between under-evaluation and over-evaluation of themselves created vulnerabilities and insecurities in Turks' self-esteem which can easily be wounded.

After the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, these feelings found their echo in excessive emphasis on Turkey's greatness and power by referring to a highly selective sketch of their own history. With the foundation of the new republic, "the pendulum swung from the extreme of abasement to the extreme of exultation" (Elias 1996, 178). The self-image of Turks was influenced by the results of continuous military defeats, which created deep-rooted feelings of anger, inferiority, powerlessness, and humiliation among Turkish people.

The elaboration of the Turkish History Thesis in the 1930s (Üstel 2008, 170-171) redefined the role of army as a "requirement" and the significance of military service as a "duty." The Turkish nation's cultural and racial character-istics have gained a particular importance in the development of the Turkish national character. We observe the rise of a new type of nationalism based on ethnicity instead of citizenship through the creation of historical myths about "Turkishness" and the incorporation of the Turkish History Thesis into school textbooks. Concurrently, Turkish nationalism demonstrates its uniqueness by its representation of army-nation myth. From this point of view, military ser-vice is the extension of Turkish culture, not of military and/or state organiza-tion. The military traits became the most valuable and honorable qualifications of Turkish national character (Altınay 2002, 61-2).

"Every Turk is Born a Soldier" is one of the best-known proverbs and char-acterizes the essence of military traits in the Turkish national character. As Zürcher states, "the idea that the Turks actually are a nation of soldiers, later became an integral part of Turkish republican nationalism and it still lives on even today in nationalist circles" (Zürcher 2010, 118). We definitely argue that Turkish national habitus is the synthesis of old and new characteristics trans-mitted from early military codes and the faith in the nation as the ultimate value.

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