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KEMALISM AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: TRANSFORMING PATTERNS OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES IN TURKEY

Definitional framework for Kemalism

The guiding philosophical basis of the Republic of Turkey has been Kemalism, named after the founding father of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Kemalism played a pivotal role in constructing a unified and an internationally recognized state, it also enormously empowered the state vis-à-vis the society. There are certainly many aspects of Kemalism and understandably it is not our intention to mention them all in the paper. But we do want to stop on one feature or a perspective of Kemalism that had been understudied - the social component of it. In this paper we explore the topic of Kemalism as a social movement, which will make it easier for us to clarify the roots how it became such an influential ideological construct in the Republican decades, an approach which in turn can help to understand how a party program can be transformed into a state ideology and then turned into a social movement. Once we do this, we might better understand and estimate the causes for the emergence, evolution and the current state of the Kemalist discourse in Turkey.

Why and how was a state ideology transformed into a social movement? Our paper will revolve around that question, because we think that there is not much clarity concerning the bonds of mentioned transformation. Prominent observers in the field like Niyazi Berkes, Kemal Karpat, Suna Kili, Andrew Mango and Metin Heper wrote immensely about Kemalism and its different manifestations[1], however, they largely failed to capture the moment

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[1] Niyazi Berkes, The development of secularism in Turkey, Montreal, McGill University Press, 1964; Karpat Kemal, Turkish politics, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959. Karpat Kemal, Social change and politics

of the transformation of Kemalist state ideology into a social movement. This was mainly because they did not believe that the corporatist structure of the state, which they saw as a powerful and an indissoluble tool for social domination, could suffer any division. They gave no credit to those speculations which situated Kemalism vis-à-vis other social and political adversaries. In a word, they treated Kemalism as a purely political and ideological phenomenon, existing above everything, without giving credits to its social capital.

Our tentative answer to the aforementioned question is that because of the diversification of the polity the advocates of the Kemalist felt that the possession of the leverages on ideological power were not sufficient to have the society to follow the centre, hence, the power structure of the Kemalists was diversified and expanded. As a result, along with the "elite Kemalism"[2] a new process was triggered thereby initiating Kemalism as a social movement. We suggest that it was done to cope with the emerging counter-forces more efficiently. By no means, that initiative needs to be considered as a thoroughly designed policy, it was a counter-measure and an instinctive balance creation effort against ethno-nationalist centrifugal forces (Kurds) and Islamists.

With that clarified, we deem it necessary to consider the following questions - why it is important to consider the Kemalist social movement, what possible difference will the findings make? It is widely accepted that one of the vulnerable parts of the Kemalist discourse is the consistent obscurity about its content and social

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in Turkey: A structural-historical analysis, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973; Mango Andrew, Turkey: Emergence of a Modern Problem in *Aspects of modern Turkey*, ed.William Hale, London and New York, Bowker: 1976; Kili Suna, The Atatürk Revolution: A paradigm of modernization, İstanbul: Türk Iş Bankası, Kültür Yayınları, 2003; Kili Suna, Kemalism, İstanbul, Robert College: School of business administration and economics, 1969; Metin Heper, The State tradition in Turkey, Hull: The Eothen press, 1985.

[2] We suggest this term to describe those forces in the elite of Turkey, which are in power positions and are regarded as the only devoted guardians of the Kemalist ideology acting versus those power circles in the elite, which seek compromise between Kemalism and other competing ideologies.

manifestations. Hence, Kemalism is a subject that has been more the object of speculation than research. The Kemalist social movement constitutes a part of a larger package of Kemalism and without a clear idea how that movement relate to Kemalism we can barely understand the complexity of Kemalism. Hence, although we acknowledge that Kemalism (or a portion of it) does not easily fall into the category of "social movement", we examine Kemalism from that perspective, because we think that approach can bring out more essential features of Kemalism that are otherwise difficult to notice.

Therefore, in this paper, we will detail the main features of the Kemalist power structure and delineate the internal dynamics within the Kemalist ideology. Once we do that we will have a plainer picture of those contextual characteristics which shaped Kemalism as a distinct social movement.

Initially (until 1935) Kemalism was a program of the ruling Republican People's Party (henceforth - RPP) but later on it was transformed into a state ideology and was inserted into the Constitution (in 1937). In the founding years of the state (1919-1923) the term "Kemalists" was in use to describe those members of the elite who were close associates of Mustafa Kemal[3], the hero of the Independence War. From time to time, the term Kemalism was put in circulation, mainly by foreign, particularly Russian, observers, to denote the processes of founding the state and coping with the centrifugal forces. With a passage of time and with the consolidation of power Mustafa Kemal strengthened his authoritarian power through different agencies and measures. Hence, making Kemalism a guiding philosophy of the Republic became the sole *tour de force* in the 1930s. By the time, the central idea of Kemalism was to erect a homogenous, secular and nationalist society highly sensitive towards internal and external adversaries. In the minds of those who were close to Mustafa Kemal and his cause Kemalism became a

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[3] The name Atatürk (forefather of Turks) was given to Mustafa Kemal after the 1934 Surname law.

synonymous of unquestioned devotion and sacrifice to the principles of the leader. After the death of Kemal Atatürk (1938) it was taken for granted that the internal stability of the country was firmly maintained, therefore, no major instances of social and political upheavals were imminent. During the presidency of İsmet İnönü (1938-1950), Kemalism was transformed into a political vision and a source of an ideologically cohesive power structure. However, the developments in the later decades brought a new social and collective identity to the Kemalists characterized by an identical collective experience of struggling against those forces who were striving to threaten the secular and homogenous order of the society.

As the multi-party politics got on its way (from 1946 onwards), the situation started to change albeit extremely slowly. The society started to be more vocal about the socio-political challenges and aspired to have its word on vital maters. In other words, the vernacular movements in Turkey started to gain weight and substance. This factor has not gone unnoticed by the Kemalist elite, which by the 1960s and 1970s did not possess those powerful ideological leverages, which once were in their undisputed 'territory'. So, the Kemalist elite and the military felt that the ground under their feet was moving, which meant they needed support from outside of the elitist circle. The Kemalist had problems acknowledging the fact that the corporatist structure of the state, which they saw as a powerful and an indissoluble tool for social domination, could suffer any division. By no means, that application for support has immediately been proceeded, since, at the outset, the Kemalists tried to rely on their resources first, by triggering the military interventions in 1960, 1971 and 1980. But the more they intervened the more they felt alienated from the social support. Hence, by the 1980s the Kemalists had to revise their policy of exclusion and tried to engage the society to be on their side and to defend those values that had been inherited from the founder of the state. Thus, we can identify at least three reasons that the Kemalits turned to the society and the social movements. One is that they felt alienated from the society

and did not enjoy the same backing as they used to and the existing power structures were not sufficient to have the society to follow the centre, and secondly, the social movements in Turkey were quite well organized possessing vital organizational and individual networks and last but not least, the emerging social and political forces, the political Islamist groups and ethno-nationalism of Kurds added more incentives to the Kemalist to broaden their front and engage new forces to deal with new "existential threats".

Concurrently, the official interpretation of Kemalism ceased to exist by the 1960s and different "Kemalisms" started to appear. During the 1930s at least six interpretations or definitions of Kemalism were known (proposed and defended by Celal Bayar, İsmet İnönü, Recep Peker, journals of Kadro and Ulku, a group of Bergsonians)[4]. But later decades, especially in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, more interpretations and definitions of Kemalism were circulated, which will be succinctly presented in the below lines. That implies that *Kemalism is* - new political stand on the revolutionary practices that had taken place between 1923 and 1935; a new nation- and state-building ideology; basic principles and values of the Turkish path to modernity; philosophical-political stand and genre; unfinished revolution advocated by positivist humanist groups; a late-Enlightenment movement that had its roots in the secular-rationalist tradition of ideological positivism; a zero-sum game between secular-modernist Kemalists in action and religiously oriented anti-modernists in reaction; an intellectual tradition of nationalism, modernism, Westernization, radical culturalism, secularism and romanticism; a conservative force; a rationalist dogma that aimed to realize a universal civilizing project; a source of philosophical inspiration; a omnipresent philosophical and political current; a power structure; a scientific breakthrough; a creative spirit to renew the

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[4] Türkeş Mustafa, A Patriotic Leftist Development-Strategy Proposal in Turkey in the 1930s: The Case of the Kadro (Cadre) Movement, *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 33, No. 1, 2001), pp. 91-114.

moral force; a positive phenomenon supporting the cultural and political reforms as logical consequences of the nationalist ideology of the Republic. All these definitions suggest that the empowered sections in the society aspired to broaden the actual front of Kemalism as much as possible and thereby insert their identities, values, goals and demands in it.

Social movements and social identities

Based on the approaches and definitions mentioned above the Kemalist social movement has specific features in a sense that it deviates from classical approaches and definitions available in the scholarly literature. For instance, John A. Guidry claims that "*social movements are broad, intentional efforts by organized, collective actors who seek to alter patterns of authority, power, social values or behaviour*"[5]. We can agree with his characteristics and composition of the actors but we disagree with the action and the target he designates for the actors. In the Turkish case we encounter a different pattern of social movement, which aims to preserve all the objects that Guidry wants to change, i.e. "authority, power, social values or behaviour". Peter Burke's approach supports our claim, because he brings out two types of social movements. The first type that he refers to is the active social movement (which is "taking the initiative in the pursuit of precise aims such as national independence, the abolition of slavery or votes for women"), whereas the second type is the reactive social movement (which is "responding to changes that are already taking place and attempting to preserve a traditional way of life against threats from outside")[6]. While disagreeing with his second term – reactive or reaction, which engages us into a prejudice from the very beginning and may serve

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[5] Guidry John A., "Social movements" in *Encyclopaedia of government and politics*, ed. Mary Hawkesworth and Maurice Kogan*,* 2nd ed., London and New York: Routledge, 2004,p. 616
[6] Burke Peter, *History and social theory*, 2nd ed., Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005, p.92

little analytical purpose, we suggest another analytical term to better suit the general context of our claim – reflexive, that is when social movements are engaged in responsive relationships with the proposed change, which is one of mutual cause and effect and, hence, becomes active when there is an alert to the *status quo*. The term "countermovement" has also been in circulation by the end of the 1980s to describe those movements which had been developed in segments of the population whose ways of life, status and the rewards were challenged by other movements[7]. Zald and Useem even tried to describe the interactive dance between movement and countermovement to illustrate why countermovement varies in the speed and strength of their mobilization[8]. However, the suggested term (countermovement) fails short to explain the possibility of the state's involvement in retraining other social movements, instead that term keeps the profile within the conflict of interests in the societal level, therefore, it is incomplete for our purposes. This terminology suggests that the term reflexive social movement is quite suitable to the main features of how the Kemalist social movement reacts and engages in the discourse about the change and status quo of the Turkish state. Some may try to equate the characteristics of the reflexive social movements with the conservative social movements (movements which want to preserve the existing norms and values), but, it is our belief that there are essential differences in their tactics, at least, in the Turkish context. While conservative social movements exist and consistently counteract the perceived challenges to the order, the Kemalist social movement, as stated above, reacts depending on the level of the grievance and the real significance of the perceived threat. That is to suggest, that although the Kemalist

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[7] McAdam Doug, McCarthy John D. and Zald Mayer N., "Social movements" in *Handbook of Sociology,* ed. Neil J. Smelser, Newbury Park: Sage publications, 1988, p. 721.
[8] Mayer Zald and Bert Useem, "Movement and countermovement interaction: Mobilization, tactics and state involvement" in *Social movements in an Organizational Society,* ed. Mayer Zald and John McCarthy, (New Brunswick, NJ:) Transaction books), 1987.

social movement always exists, however, it becomes active and starts to counteract, when dramatized and highly publicized events are categorized as existential threats, meanwhile, in different circumstances, it is mainly in a 'standby mode'.

Guidry also suggest that "*Social movements usually begin with an organized response to a grievance*"[9]. We suggest that this approach downplays the potency of those social movements, which are established long before a grievance comes into force, hence they are capable of transforming their counteractive possibilities according to the challenges. To put it plainly, one doesn't need to establish a new social movement each time there is a new grievance. Therefore, a social movement can concurrently be both offensive and defensive.

Our next claim opposes Guidry's statement that "*movements are not always aimed at the state*"[10]. First of all, he fails to propose examples when the state itself acts via the channels of social movements, hence, the potency of the state is taken for granted and while its functionality agencies are downplayed. To put it plainly, some states also need the social movements to disseminate their perspectives. Thus, in the Turkish context we have the very example, where a state as a defensive strategy promotes those social movements the strategies of which are identical with the state.

By bringing all those counterarguments together, one might ask whether it is analytically justified to talk about the Kemalist social movement, if it so different from general patterns. Simply put is Kemalism a genuine social movement or a wishful identification with it? We argue that Kemalism is a social movement because it has the following characteristics common to other social movements: collective experience, collective identity, and a web of related activist networks organized through the process of collective action.

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[9] Guidry, 2004, p. 617.
[10] Guidry, 2004, p. 621.

Speaking of the characteristics of the Kemalist social movement it is worth asking how different is it from other social movements in Turkey? For a long period of time, the Kemalist ideology, with all its like-minded counterpart organizations, occupied an over-privileged social position enjoying the institutional support of the state. That was partly because the Turkish state was not very tolerant towards social movements and non-governmental organization until the end of the 1980s[11]. The Kemalist social movement is also different in terms of its composition, simply because there is no single, legally registered organization named a Kemalist social movement, instead it is a synthesis or a hybrid of various mini-social movements. It is sheltering diverse organizations and NGOs, which, by the way, are not necessarily based in Turkey. For instance, one of the well-known representatives of the Kemalist current is the "*Atatürkçü düşünce derneği*" (The Atatürk Thought Association - henceforth - ATA), which was established on May 12 1989 by prominent intellectuals like Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeoğlu**,** Muammer Aksoy, Bahri Savcı, Münci Kapani, Bahriye Üçok and others. It expanded its influence in the country with over 400 branches and more than 70,000 members[12]. Other well-known Kemalist associations created in that period were "Societies for Contemporary Living", "Daughters of Atatürk", "Sons of Atatürk", "*Altıok Kemalizm*" (Six arrow Kemalism), a movement which is for strict interpretation and application of Kemalism's six principles, "*Kemalist Izciler Forum*" (Forum for Kemalist scouts), "*Atatürkçü düşünce topluluğu*" (Society of Atatürkist thought), "*Genç Atatürkçüler*" (Young Atatürkists) and many other associations and NGOs. Speaking of them, Zafer Toprak succinctly mentioned the following: "*As a matter of fact, the army is not obsessed with a*

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[11] Şimşek Sefa, "New Social Movements in Turkey Since 1980", *Turkish studies* 5, no. 2 (2004), p. 112.
[12] Nowadays, the ATA stands in a very different position comparing to 1980s, simply because they are mostly related to marginal left groups in Turkey such as the "*Turkiye Komunist Partisi*", "*Turkiye İşçi Partisi*". Very often, the term "ulusalcı" is used to define them

dogmatic interpretation of Kemalism, there are the NGOs in Turkey which are more dogmatic in terms of being obsessed with Kemalism"[13]. These different organizations come together under the roof of the Kemalist social movement because their members experience identical existential perceptions and pursue the same strategy the ultimate aim of which is to preserve the legacy of Kemal Atatürk's revolutionary deeds.

There have been different efforts made by social scientists to explain the phenomenon of social movements. As a result, different theories emerged four of which, according to Guidry, are widely circulated among the scholars – a) political process/political opportunity structure, b) resource mobilization, c) new social movement, d) globalization and transnational connections[14]. Şimşek uses another methodology to match the existing theories the Turkish context. Without explaining the method of choice he willingly picked up two out of four above mentioned theories (b and c) and sought the compatibility of them not with specific social movements that he initially wanted to study (Islamism, feminism, the Alevi movement and Kurdish nationalism), but with the historic features of Turkey (homogenization, authoritarianism and ethno-political dimension), thereby trying to merge the characteristics social movements with their context of existence[15]. In other words, his major assumption is that since "*Turkish nation building has much more in common with the European experience than with the American one.* [Then - VTM]*… the new social movements theory, which reflects European social and political mobilization, better applies to Turkey than the resource mobilization paradigm that is based on American mobilization*"[16]. We consider this approach as a partial one as well as misleading, because each of them (Islamism, feminism, the Alevi movement and Kurdish nationalism) needs to be investigated

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[13] Interview with Zafer Toprak, İstanbul, 04.05.2005.
[14] Guidry, 2004, p. 617.
[15] Şimşek, 2004, p. 116, 118.
[16] Şimşek, 2004, p. 119.

separately, as the factors and driving forces standing behind each of them vary from case to case, hence, it is wrong to bring together four different social movements (leaving aside the legitimacy of viewing them as social movements) and consider them as all new social movements and spread that "diagnosis" to other social movements existing or emerging in Turkey.

Alternatively, we suggest that the above mentioned political process/political opportunity theory (a) is more suitable to be used on explaining the Kemalist social movement. According to Guidry that theory can be applied in the cases when "*elite alliances break down and excluded social groups perceive a new opportunity to alter their position in the political system*"[17]. In its emphases this theory is considered an old

one, but nevertheless it entirely captures those characteristics, that are present in the discourse of the Kemalists. As mentioned, Kemalists feel their position either lost or threatened, which is why, they initiated a broad-based social movement to recapture the social space 'unjustly' occupied by other social forces. The Kemalists, which still hold the key positions in the bureaucracy, the military and the judiciary, believe that the social contract imposed by them had been disrupted by new forces.

In terms of what the basic traits of a social movement is, there are also various interpretations. Şimşek cites those brought by Popenoe: a) a new perspective to see things differently; b) an ideology maintaining group loyalty; c) a commitment to action; and d) a dispersed or decentralized leadership[18]. Again, Şimşek, by referring to Popenoe's approach, fails to give credits to those social movements that do not necessarily have innovative socio-political agenda. That is why, we suggest that the Kemalist social movement is different also in terms of its character traits, because it vigorously tries a) to bring out old perspectives to new challenges (to fight

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[17] Guidry, 2004, p. 617
[18] Şimşek, 2004, 113.

against heterogeneous and religious identity with the help of old symbols of militant nationalism and secularism, characteristic to the 1920s and 1930s), b) to encourage commitment to reflexive engagement (to voice their disagreement only when there is an existential threat) and c) to unify its constituency against a single target.

We also suggest considering the factor of symbols in making social movements working agencies. We don't intend to discuss the theory of symbols in length, therefore, we rather prefer to consider the decisive importance that the image of Kemal Atatürk played in consolidating the Kemalists. His image and personality, his visions and principles had been vital in clarifying the extent of the Kemalist movement. However, with its historical significance, it later became more of a hindrance than a help to those who wanted to have his image as a guiding light.

In the words of Mustafa Akyol "*Whenever there is a political crisis, his devotees, the Kemalists, rush to his shrine in drones and present wreaths as offerings. One of our retired generals recently said, "Whenever I despair, I read the Nutuk." ... the spiritual power it transmits is apparently not too dissimilar to what the Bible gives to a devout Christian*"[19]. The comparison of the Bible with the Nutuk[20] points us to the incessant symbolic significance that the Nutuk enjoys among those who consider themselves Kemalists. Mustafa Akyol goes on in the same article and gives the following summary to the description of the Kemal's cult "*The result of this strict mental blueprint is detachment from reality. That's why, despite all its rhetoric on "science and reason" as guiding lights for society, Kemalism has become an irrational*

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[19] Akyol Mustafa, "The gospel according to Atatürk", *Turkish Daily News,* Saturday, November 10, 2007
[20] The "*Nutuk*" is a famous historical speech delivered by Mustafa Kemal in October, 1927, which lasted six days and gave a meticulous account of the independence war (starting from 1919), and the founding years of the republic until the day of delivering his speech.

ideology. When its adherents are challenged by rational arguments, they respond by emotional reactions. They take extra tours to Anıtkabir and sing more anthems"[21]. We consider this statement suitable to the general trend dominating among the members of the Kemalist social movement. Another handicap present in this context is the fact that the Kemalist social movement, developed around the personality and the legacy of Kemal Atatürk, is a unidirectional process, with limited innovative agendas. The Kemalist social movement's political backing is limited and it has a few often repeated issues on the agenda, which are continuously brought into discussion (preservation of the unitary character of the state and safeguarding secularism). The Kemalist social movement has difficulty in renewing its identity and its demands. A possible solution could be transforming it into a "movement party", which will have a clearly defined constituency.

A decisive component of each social movement is to have a capable and a "charismatic" leader in the Weberian sense "*endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers and qualities*"[22]. The functions of the leader are clear and there is no need to elaborate on them in this paper, however, it is important to note that, after the death of Kemal Atatürk, the Kemalist social movement has been constantly lacked a single leader who could mobilize and coordinate the efforts of the active members of the movement. From time to time, the names of the leaders of the RPP or the heads of the Turkish army were identified as provisional leaders of the Kemalist social movement, but in the later decades these names ceased to be associated with the broader coalition of the Kemalist movements.

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[21] Akyol, 2007
[22] Weber Max, *Economy and society*, English trans., reissue, 3 vols., Berkeley, 1920, p 241.

Membership to the Kemalist social movement

The research on boundaries and criteria for the membership in the Kemalist social movement is one of the confusing tasks for any observer. At the outset, it seems rather obvious how the Kemalists situate themselves in relation to their adversaries. The situation is noticeably different when we try to dig into the internal dynamics of their motivations to that particular social movement. Leaving aside the 'elite Kemalists', which represent the power basis of Kemalism, we will discuss the grassroots of Kemalism. There is a Kemalist umbrella, which incorporates Kemalist organizations, NGOs, think-tanks, members of the bureaucracy and ordinary citizens. The only thing that unites them is their target to cope with the all the threats coming from Islamists and Kurds who want to dismantle the secular and homogenous structure of the Turkish state. However, both their strategies and tactics vary depending on their perception of the threat and level of organization. In other words, Kemalism, as a social movement, is so enormous and diverse that it possesses social movements in itself.

The definition of a Kemalist is made through different channels of identification. For some it is sufficient to say "I am a Kemalist, because I am against the Islamists", for others, being a Kemalist resembles being a secular-nationalist, for yet others, to follow the principles and the legacy of Kemal Atatürk is sufficient to be named a Kemalist. Moreover, there are different efforts to distinguish between Kemalism and Atatürkism. The boundary between those terms is never distinct. Some people clearly identify themselves in the following way "I am a Kemalist, but no way an Atatürkist" and vice versa. Those who call themselves Kemalists want to see the state playing an assertive and a firmer role in handling the key issues facing the state and the society, while the Atatürkists prefer the vital matters of the state to be handled with an utmost care, without violence and major social upheavals and without disrupting the social contract. The latter group also wants the principles of Kemal Atatürk

be interpreted not at will, but with a distinctive devotion to his cause[23].

The internal dynamics of evolution of the Kemalist social movement need also be stressed. The major turning point of the Kemalist social movement is the year 1980, when the third military intervention took place in Turkey. Being a Kemalist before the 1980 was not like those newly emerged Kemalists. In order to have a more precise view of how the Kemalist social movement evolved it is worthwhile to look back to the earlier decades. After the foundation of the Republic, the Kemalist social movement was active, to use the Guidry's term, it was striving for a change of the social order, to abolish the legacy of the Ottoman Empire, to eliminate the negative repercussions of the WWI, the war with the neighbouring countries, etc. It is not a coincidence that in the early 1920s the people, who were named as Kemalists, stood by Mustafa Kemal's side. In later decades the term Kemalism was made more precise and clarified, accordingly it was much easier to become a member of a Kemalist movement, simply because there existed no other social movement. During the 1950s, the Kemalist social movement started to stress the importance of generating new identities in response to the multiparty politics. The process was accelerated after the first military intervention in 1960, the ultimate target of which was to reconstruct the Kemalist cause of development. In other words, the Kemalists felt that they had to encourage the military intervention since the Kemalist social and political order was endangered. Rather interestingly though, the constitution that followed the military intervention in 1961 was rather liberal. It encouraged social liberties and pluralism. As a result, newly emerging social and political forces made Kemalism become one among many. Kemalism was deprived of its privileges, it was no longer an asset to be a member of a Kemalist social movement. The next phase started in 1980, when the

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[23] For an introduction of that discourse see Esra Özyürek, "Miniaturizing Atatürk: Privatization of state imagery and ideology in Turkey", *American Ethnologist* 31, no. 3 (2004): 375.

third military intervention was initiated by the army generals 'to safeguard the state against internal rivals'. As stated above, the third military intervention was designed to recover the Kemalist principles, to encourage all the efforts to diversify Kemalism and to empower all the movements, which aimed to newly disseminate the principles of Kemalism. In other words, the 1980 intervention intended to resurrect Kemalism through multiple channels. As a result, the 1980s and 1990s were the decades when Turkey witnessed an unprecedented mushrooming of various Kemalist movements. There are several factors that can explain that boom. First of all, the neo-Kemalism as a new wave of Kemalism was directly supported and sponsored by the state, enjoyed the support of those citizens who wanted Kemalist principles to play pivotal role in helping Turkey to cope with the internal and external challenges. Secondly, unlike the previous decades, the Islamists and Kurdish nationalists became more organized and more vocal, which led the Kemalists to felt threatened and disturbed about their social statues and possible changes in the social and political structure of the state.

The most important characteristic of the 1990s has been the emerging influence of political Islam in Turkish politics. The main discourse of that decade was the increasing conflict between political Islamism and laicism. This is the period when Islamic discourses paid lip service to the laicist symbols and images of the Republic just as much as the Kemalists utilize Islamic symbols and images.

In the 1990s a dozen of Kemalist intellectuals were assassinated the majority of whom were the columnists in the leading secular and left-leaning newspaper *Cumhuriyet* (Çetin Emeç, editor in chief of the daily *Hüriyyet*; Maummar Aksoy, he was a Law Professor at the Ankara University and the President of the Turkish Law Society, who also wrote extensively on Kemalism; Bahriye Üçok, she was secular theologist; Onat Kutlar, who was a prominent writer and poet and many other). The murder of Uğur Mumcu in 1993, a die-hard Kemalist and human rights activist who had been investigating Islamic underground groups for the *Cumhuriyet*, engendered an

unprecedented wave of resentment and his funeral turned into demonstration of furious citizens who demanded more watchful attitude towards the ever-growing influence of Islamic circles, which attacked on secular personalities and gravely challenged the stability of the country. Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, another staunch Kemalist, an intellectual, a columnist for the same *Cumhuriyet,* a former Minister of Culture, noted that "*Mumcu's death shocked the nation, it was a kind of mass awakening, with people everywhere saying: What can I do to save democracy and Kemalism*?". He also linked the renewed interest in Atatürk to the Mumcu's murder[24]. In 1999, A. T. Kışlalı was also assassinated in Ankara by a bomb placed in his car.

The last instance when the Kemalist social movement was consolidated was the recent developments around the candidacy for the president of the Republic. A candidate from the ruling Justice and Development Party (which has ideological roots in the Islamic politics of Turkey) was nominated for that prestigious position. The reaction to that 'grievance' turned into mass rallies in major cities of Turkey organized mainly by the NGOs and associations, which associated themselves with the secular course of Mustafa Kemal. This broad-based coalition of the Kemalist movements protested against the candidate of the ruling party on the grounds that 'he might endanger and threaten the secular character of the Turkish state'. This motto alone was sufficient to establish a coalition of forces ready to appose the tendency of the ruling party. The "Republican" rallies (as they were coined later), in spite of time constraints, demonstrated the mobilization strength of the Kemalists. The final result, however, was not very satisfying for them, because the candidate from the ruling party succeeded in being elected, but the lessons learned from that clash of interests became important factors that the ruling party had to take into consideration.

Another point worthy of consideration is the level of engagement of the Turkish Armed forces in the discourse of the Kemalist

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[24] Howe Marvine, Turkey: A nation divided over Islam's revival, Colorado: Westview press, 2000, p. 21.

mobilization. For many decades the Turkish army has been an outspoken proponent of the secular character of Turkey. That is to suggest that all the social movements, which pursued the same target, found strong assistance from the army. When we also consider the fact that for the last five decades the army intervened into Turkish politics five times in order to preserve the legacy of Atatürk, we can perhaps discern the level of responsibility that the army generals put on themselves. The army is one of the most organized institutions of the Turkish Republic, hence, any support coming from it is widely welcomed among the various Kemalist movements. More than that, the army founded a few enterprises and industries to secure financial aspects of its involvement. All this evidence suggests that army plays crucial role in making the Kemalist voice heard, ultimately, the army constitutes, to put it mildly, a key element in the hierarchy of the Kemalist social movement.

Conclusion

Social movements constitute an under-researched aspect of Kemalism. The state ideology of Kemalism, which is now undergoing significant ideological transformations, is faced with a crucial question – how it can be efficiently developed to cope with the ever increasing pressure from the inside and outside forces demanding reforms in its structure and accents. In that context social movements have a central role to play, since they constitute the grassroots of Kemalism. No matter how ambiguous the term Kemalism has been and remains, it is still associated with the power, dominance and ideological vision set by the eternal leader of the Turks, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and pursued by his followers, the Kemalists. It is still a powerful denominator, it still enjoys a wide popular backing, especially among those who are not intend to be silent spectators of the major identity transformations rapidly occurring in Turkey.

The state ideology of Kemalism was transformed into a social movement, for of the following reasons – a) with the passage of the time other popular voices became widely heard, as a result Kemalism became one among many other ideologies, b) the additional factors of the increasing level of societal participation, social movements and social communication enhanced the actual size and potency of other social movements, c) the routines of previous engagements in power relations became obsolete and Kemalism was faced to leave aside its statist-authoritarian measures, d) Kemalism had to look for a wider popular support through social movements to make their level of engagement far-reaching and productive. To sum up, there are different mass based social movements in Turkey arguing for the preservation of Atatürk's legacy, opting for protecting the secular, republican and nationalist characters of the state, however, by force of pursued objectives, all these movements are united under one broader movement – the Kemalist social movement, in order to cope more efficiently with the those forces which want the opposite. Another distinctive feature of the Kemalist social movement/s is that for the last two decades their members have tried to counteract adversaries not only with the assistance of the state agencies, but to a great extent with rules of engagement characteristic of the civil society.

By no means can we consider the task of correlating of Kemalism and social movements solved thanks to this paper. It is an extremely interesting subject which requires further deliberate research, because the sooner it is scrutinized the better for the researchers involved in the study of the Kemalist discourse.