

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN TURKEY: REFLECTIONS ON TV SERIES AS
POPULAR CULTURAL PRODUCTS



AYTUNÇ ERÇİFCİ

AUGUST, 2018

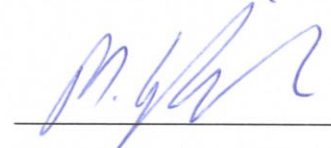
IZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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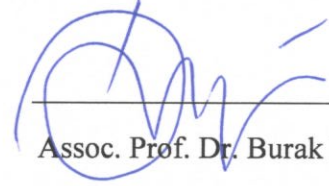
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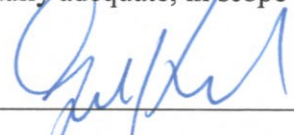
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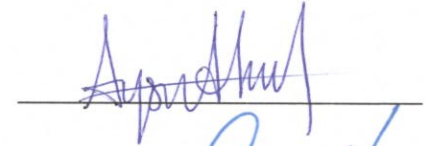


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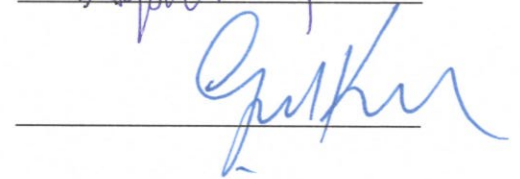
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ABSTRACT

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN TURKEY: REFLECTIONS ON TV SERIES AS POPULAR CULTURAL PRODUCTS

Erçifci, Aytunç

Media and Communication Studies

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Y. Gökçen Karanfil

August, 2018

This thesis investigates the reproduction of the official statist ideology of Turkey and the theme of nationalism on TV series broadcast in Turkey. Throughout the thesis, the treatment of nationalism within popular culture products are examined with regards to the transformation of the official ideology in Turkey, new nation building processes, and the concept of the invention of tradition. The three TV series that are analyzed are, *İsimsizler* (Kanal D), *Söz* (Star TV) and *Savaşçı* (Fox TV), and they have started broadcasting in March – April 2017. In order to achieve an in-depth analysis of these three TV series and to be able to better understand the symbolic and discursive meanings within these products of popular culture, qualitative research methods and thematic analysis are used. These TV series are discussed with regards to the dispersing of nationalism in daily life via popular culture, new nation building and reproduction of ideology specific to Turkey. The thesis concludes by arguing that despite their innocent appearance, as products of popular culture, TV series function effectively in voicing and reproducing ideologies through latent and manifest messages.

Keywords: Turkish TV series, nationalism, popular culture, ideology

ÖZET

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN TURKEY: REFLECTIONS ON TV SERIES AS POPULAR CULTURAL PRODUCTS

Erçifci, Aytunç

Medya ve İletişim Çalışmaları

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Y. Gökçen Karanfil

Ağustos, 2018

Bu çalışma, popüler televizyon dizilerinde resmi ideolojinin ve milliyetçiliğin yeniden üretilmesini ele almaktadır. Tez boyunca temel olarak son dönemde Türkiye’de yaşanan resmi ideolojideki değişim, yeni ulus inşası ve gelenek icadı göz önünde bulundurularak milliyetçiliğin popüler kültür ürünleri ile işlenişi incelenmiştir. Devletin resmi ideolojisindeki yaşanan değişim ile birlikte medyada yeni sahiplik yapıları ve içeriksel dönüşüm olduğu gözlemlenerek resmi ideolojinin ve milliyetçiliğin yeniden üretilmesi açısından son dönem televizyon dizilerinden İsimsizler (Kanal D), Söz (Star TV) ve Savaşçı (Fox TV) dizileri analiz edilmiştir. Yayınlanma tarihleri Mart – Nisan 2017 olan bu üç televizyon dizisinin incelenmesinde, niteliksel araştırma yöntemleri ve tematik analiz yönteminden faydalanılmıştır. Bu üç dizi içerikleri bakımından ‘yeni’ ideolojinin yansıması olduklarından gündelik yaşamın ve popüler kültürün parçası olan televizyon dizileri üzerinden milliyetçilik, yeni ulus inşası ve ideolojinin yeniden üretilmesi konuları, Türkiye özelinde ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türk televizyon dizileri, milliyetçilik, popüler kültür, ideoloji



To my mother and my father...

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem & Rationale

Nationalism has become one of the major research topics of social sciences, particularly starting from the 20th century. Even though it is claimed continuously, especially by liberal thinkers, that nationalism has run its course with the rise of globalization and that it has lost its influence over societies, nationalism remains to be a significant ideology affecting the world we live in.

Important thinkers such as Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, Michael Billig, and Anthony Smith have formulated various theories regarding this field. Today, many academicians continue to study nationalism.

Not only has nationalism been a subject studied in the framework of the media, which is the main area of interest of this thesis, it has been and will continue to be a concept studied in many fields such as political science, sociology, arts, literature, and linguistics.

From the invention of the printing press to the present day, mass media have been one of the most vital instruments shaping our social lives. People consume the products provided by television, newspapers, radio, and cinema, which are the channels of mass media, in their daily lives and they are influenced by the ideological thought embedded in these products either consciously or unawarely. The media, as suggested by Althusser (2000), is an ideological apparatus through which the sovereign power controls the masses. For that reason, there is an inseparable relationship between the media and nationalism, especially in the states trying to build a new nation and a new future.

The existence of a new social construction process is visible upon the analysis of Turkey in the time period starting from the 2000s. Coming into power in 2002, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) has embarked on a process of building a brand

new nation, invented traditions, and initiated a process of formulating a new kind of nationalism by transforming the representation of secular nationalism which had been blended with the Western values created during the foundation of the Republic, particularly with the start of the party's period of "mastery". Many academicians studying the latest period in the history of Turkey along with the members of JDP themselves have regarded this period as 'New Turkey' (Keyman, 2014; Kaya, 2016; Yaşlı, 2014).

Much as various discussions concerning 'New Turkey' still continue, the establishment of this new term is widely recognized (Keyman, 2014; Kaya, 2016; Yaşlı, 2014). Even though the term 'New Turkey' has been used by JDP since 2010, Tanıl Bora indicates that the initial use of the term coincides with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's presidential campaign in 2014 (Bora, 2018). Erdoğan's slogan during the presidential elections in 2014 was "*Yeni Türkiye yolunda demokrasi, refah, itibar* (Democracy, prosperity, and dignity on the way to New Turkey)". The slogan for the local elections in the same year was "*Yeni Türkiye yolunda daima ileri* (Ever onward on the way to New Turkey)".

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan verbalized the vision of 'New Turkey' in a clear manner during his 'balcony speech' on the day of his presidential victory:

Today, the victor of this election is not only Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Today, the national will has triumphed once again... Today, the 77 million [people living in Turkey], the 81 provinces have triumphed. Without any doubt, today, New Turkey, Great Turkey, Pioneering Turkey has triumphed. My brothers and sisters, not only Turkey but also Baghdad, Islamabad, Kabul, Beirut, Sarajevo, and Skopje have triumphed. Today have also triumphed Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, Gaza, and Jerusalem have also triumphed... Today, we comprehend a blessed 'Fatiha' [the first chapter of the Quran], that is a blessed opening in the name of Turkey and our nations. Today, we conclude an era and take the first step towards a new era... Let the old discussions remain in Old Turkey... (Sabah, 10.08.2014).

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's emphasis on 'New Turkey' is striking in his speech, so are the names of places which were told to have triumphed besides Turkey. These cities are former Ottoman territories with Muslim-majority populations and indicate 'New Turkey's area of dominance.

"The rhetoric of 'New Turkey' is invoked in a framework that divides the political history of the Turkish Republic into two eras: the Kemalist period (that is, the old Turkey) and the post-Kemalist period (the JDP era)" (Kocamaner, 2015). The Kemalist period, one of the two eras, has a secular and modern understanding of the state turning towards the West and Western values following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The period in which JDP is the ruling power, starting particularly after JDP's third time in power, is named 'New Turkey'. In this period, policies towards Islamic countries, conservatism, and a Neo-Ottoman approach were mainly foregrounded (Yeşil, 2016; Keyman, 2014; Ongur, 2018; Bora, 2018; Aktoprak, 2016). According to Aktoprak (2016), 'New Turkey' includes not only the change in the official understanding of the state but also the rebuilding of the nations.

In this thesis, we use the term of 'New Turkey' not as a new country or different country from today's Turkey. With using the term of 'New Turkey', we only indicates specific time period, which started with JDP government, transparently and objectively.

1.2 Aim, Scope & Limitations

This thesis takes the era of 'New Turkey' as its principal focus and analyzes in this respect the representation of issues such as nationalism, nation-building, and the invention of tradition in the latest popular television series along with the role of the media and popular culture in this process.

The purpose of the thesis is to evaluate the relationship between nationalism, a catalyzing force for the processes of nation-building and inventing tradition, and the media as an ideological apparatus, to demonstrate the transformation of Turkey

while entering the era named 'New Turkey', and to underscore the role played by the mass media, specifically by television series, in this transformation process.

However, there are also certain limitations. First of all, the era to be discussed is not over and therefore its outcomes are yet to be determined. The process still takes place and the subject of this thesis is based on the events which have taken place until the time period in which the thesis was written. Predictions made about the future of the process are excluded from the subject of this thesis.

Another limitation is the selection of three militaristic series depicting the fight against 'terrorism' aired in the same time period on mainstream media channel with high ratings as the data to be analyzed. Similar products of popular culture such as other television series, films, and books are excluded from the paradigm of this thesis.

1.3 Method and Methodology

Qualitative research method and thematic analysis are used as the research methods. According to Strauss and Corbin, qualitative research is one of the processes aiming to produce information in order to comprehend people's lifestyles, histories, behaviors, organizational structures, and the social change (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). According to Creswell (1998), qualitative research is a process of interpretation of social life and human problems by questioning these with unique methods.

As for the method of qualitative research, Michael Singletary states that it "relies more on observation, intuition, and personal insight" (Singletary, 1994; p. 13). This signifies that qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, is not objective and that it is a process which reflects the researcher's view as well. Cohen and Manion (1994) also state that qualitative research is subjective, personal, and unique.

This thesis is about the thematic analysis of three television series started to be aired in the same time period on mainstream channels and the discussion of the construction of 'New Turkey' based on this analysis. These three series are *İsimsizler*

(*The Nameless Squad*) aired on Kanal D, *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın (The Promise: Rest Assured)* broadcasted on Star TV, and *Savaşçı (The Warrior)* aired on Fox TV. These series were selected based on their high ratings, similar thematic structures and the fact that they were started to be aired within the same time period of 15 days and on different mainstream television networks.

Each episode of *İsimsizler* aired on Kanal D has reached 3.46 million viewers with an average rating of 4.28%. On Kanal D's official website, every episode except for two has had more than 1 million views. Each episode of *Söz* broadcasted on Star TV was viewed by 7.62 million people with an average rating of 9.3%. Every episode uploaded on Star TV's official website except for two had more than 400,000 viewers.

Each episode of *Savaşçı* broadcasted on Fox TV was viewed by 5.71 million people with an average rating of 7.07%. The episodes are uploaded on Fox TV's official website, however, no information regarding the number of viewers is given.

The first three episodes of each series were selected to be examined with the method of thematic analysis. The reason for this is that the main plot lines, protagonists, the representation of 'us' and 'them', and the main ideology embedded in the series are given explicitly in these episodes. The other episodes are the continuations of the themes designated in the first three episodes and of the struggle between 'us' and 'them'. In addition to the analysis of these first three episodes, a control group was created in order to control the consistent continuity of the themes formulated in the initial episodes. The control group consists of every fourth episode following the first three episodes analyzed. In this context; for *İsimsizler* the episodes 7, 11,15, 19, 23, and 27 (which is the final episode); and for *Söz* and *Savaşçı* the episodes 7, 11,15, 19, 23, 27, 31, 35, 39, 43, and 47 were watched to control the analysis.

Within the context of the analysis of the selected episodes and the processes of data gathering and analysis, the method of thematic analysis is used. "Thematic Analysis is a type of qualitative analysis. It is used to analyze classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data. It illustrates the data in great

detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations” (Boyatzis, 1998 in Alhojailan, 2012). “Through focusing on meaning across a data set, thematic analysis allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences” (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This helps with the detection of certain themes in the analyzed data in alignment with the research question and the analysis of these themes.

Within the scope of the method of thematic analysis, the data is gathered first and patterns about the research are then detected. Themes and sub-themes are determined within the framework of these detected patterns. With these determined themes a consistent argument is formulated (Fereday, 2006). “Mass media material (both text and image) can be thematically analyzed in parallel to the thematic analysis” (Joffe, 2012).

This research method is selected in accordance with the nature of the analyzed data; the selected data are analyzed based on academic grounds. Within this context, different theories of nationalism are handled and evaluated specifically within the framework of Turkey, which is the main subject of the thesis.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Three different generally-accepted points of view on nationalism are examined in the second chapter of the thesis. These points of view include primordialist, modernist, and ethnosymbolist approaches. These approaches are explained in the chapter; the thoughts of thinkers defending and criticizing these three points of view are also included in the explanations. Furthermore, the theoretical examination of these points of view is supported by examples from Turkey.

In the third chapter, the foundation of Turkey along with the modernization efforts started in the final stages of the Ottoman Empire, the process Turkey went through up until JDP rule, and the era of JDP rule are discussed. The chapter provides an opportunity for examining the nationalist ideology and the process of nation-building both during the foundation of the Republic and in ‘New Turkey’ period, rendering it possible to observe the transformation between two eras.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the analysis. After the discussion of the methodology, the series *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı*, all of which being products of popular culture, are examined with the method of thematic analysis. The analysis is made within the framework of academic background research and the themes designated after watching the series. As for the end of the chapter, the relationship between nation-building and popular culture will be analyzed and an argument regarding the role of the selected series in 'New Turkey' nationalism and nation-building is formulated.



CHAPTER II

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE LITERATURE ON NATIONS AND NATIONALISM

In this part of the thesis, it would be meaningful to discuss and analyze the theories of nationalism for the thought of nationalism and the academic works studying this line of thought form the basic starting point and the central thought of the subject of this thesis. As it can be seen in the following chapters of this thesis, the theories of nationalism and the views of the thinkers contributing to or criticizing these theories to be analyzed here will be beneficial within the scope of the thesis. For that reason, we will handle different points of view on nationalism and the criticisms of these points of view in this chapter. While we address these different points of view and the criticisms to these points of view, we will try to explain our subjective opinion, which point of view is closer to ours, and the reasons why did we not take other points of view as the starting point.

Fundamentally, three different theoretical approaches to nationalism will be discussed and the criticisms of these approaches will be presented in this chapter. First, the primordialist approach claiming that traces of nations and nationalism can be found even in ancient times will be handled, and the criticisms of this approach will be given. Then, the modernist approach claiming that nationalism and nations emerged in modern times and that nationalism created nations will be discussed. Thirdly, the ethnosymbolist approach, the point of view that can be regarded as a bridge between primordialist and modernist points of view, will be treated, and the criticisms of this approach made especially by the modernists will be presented.

In the final part of the chapter, a new perspective will be brought onto the modernist point of view, deemed significantly functional in the context of the

subject matter of this thesis, and the thoughts of Benedict Anderson, Eric J. Hobsbawm, and Michael Billig will be analyzed in depth.

2.1 Three Schools of Thought on Nations and Nationalism

Why do we get emotional, proud or happy upon seeing a particular shape consisting of particular colors in any place? Why did we create that particular shape consisting of particular colors? Does this have a meaning, and if it does, what does it mean? Why do we feel at home on a certain piece of land on the world? Why do we have the need of determining this piece of land as our home? Why do people risk death for the piece of land they live on, or 'their homes'? The answers to these questions can be given as the loyalty to a nation and nationalism.

Do nation and nationalism, for which people lay down their lives, presumably their most precious asset, have a beginning and an end? According to Renan, the answer is positive. Thus, nations do have beginnings and ends (Renan, 1990). Nationalism also has a beginning. But does nationalism have an end? Certain thinkers like Fukuyama claim that nationalism does have an end and that other concepts will shape the world in the future (Fukuyama, 1989). However, notwithstanding the narratives on nationalism with an ending similar to those of these thinkers like Fukuyama, the view to be defended within the framework of this thesis will be based on the idea that nationalism goes on living and shaping the world we live in. Therefore, as Anderson suggests, we believe that we are far from the period where nationalism is no more (Anderson, 1993, p. 17).

What are the terms 'nation' and 'nationalism'? For Connor, a nation is a community of people believing that they share a common race and a common past (Connor, 1994). According to Hroch, nationalism is the way of thinking in which one believes that values of the nation and about the nation are superior to other values and benefits (Hroch, 1995). Gellner defines nationalism as a principle asserting that the political unit and the national unit must be in harmony (Gellner, 1983). Some thinkers like Hobsbawm and Breuille also share Gellner's opinion (Hobsbawm, 1992;

Breuilly, 1993). In addition to these opinions, Özkırımlı describes nationalism as follows: “Nationalism, before anything else, is a discourse shaping our conscience, making it possible for us to make sense of our world; in other words, it is a way of seeing, interpreting and perception which determines our collective identities, and which governs our daily conversations, actions, and attitudes.” (Özkırımlı, 2016, p. 14)

By deducing from the opinions of different thinkers on nationalism, we can claim that nationalism shapes our identity, daily language, behaviors, and attitudes. If nationalism, besides the formation of our identity, is influential in our daily lives to such a degree, it would not be wrong to assert that nationalism is a significant part of our lives.

Asking the question “When and how did nationalism, which has such an important place in our lives, was born?” makes sense. These questions can also be asked as well: “When did we encounter the thought of nationalism? Is nationalism an inherent phenomenon with no beginning? Or is it invented or imagined? Are there different opinions and points of view on nationalism? Did nations create nationalism? Or, on the contrary, did nationalism create nations?”

While pondering on the answers to these questions, we can make use of three different generally-accepted approaches on nationalism. These points of view include primordialist, modernist, and ethnosymbolist approaches. At this point, it would be beneficial to explain in detail what these three approaches to nationalism are. We will not confine ourselves to mere explanations of these primordialist, modernist and ethnosymbolist approaches, and, with the criticism of these points of view, we will try to come up with answers to the aforementioned questions. Furthermore, in order to express our approach to ‘New Turkey’ and ‘New Turkey’ nationalism, the notions forming the subject of this thesis, we find it useful to explain our opinions on each point of view, and to put forward the reasons why a point of view is closer to ours. In addition, we aim to evaluate the discussions of nationalism by widening them in accordance with the current conditions.

2.1.1 Primordialist Approach

The first point of view to be handled among different approaches to nationalism is the primordialist approach. According to this point of view, today's nations are the continuations of the unities existing for centuries. For the primordialist approach, it is possible to trace the roots of contemporary nations back to ancient times (Özkırmı, 2016). The common ground of the thinkers defending this point of view is that they believe ethnic identities and their aspects like kindredness and language are 'given' and innate (Özkırmı, 2016; Eller & Coughlan, 1993). Lieven states that our ethnic identity is a natural feature of us, similar to speaking, being able to smell, or biological sex (Lieven & Harris, 1997).

Therefore, it can be said that according to the primordialist point of view, nations created nationalism. Because for ones defending this point of view, we can trace nations back to ancient times, and this is our natural process and an inseparable part of our lives. It can be said that nationalism was created by the fact that we have been members of different nations since the beginning and the endeavor of every nation seeing themselves, going back to ancient times, as superior to other nations. The thinkers defending this point of view also claim that nations come until today without being significantly affected by historical processes, preserving its essences. Historians like Frantisek Palacky, Eoin MacNeill, and Nicolae Iorga are among thinkers defending the primordialist approach. As it can be seen in different countries as well, in Turkey, especially among right-wing political thinkers and parties, in order to value their nation above other nations, to sanctify it, and to make it seem primeval, there is a tendency of explaining the sources of their nation with a primordialist approach and arguing that its origins date back to ancient times.

For example, Prof. Dr. Cemal Anadol, an academician conducting research on Turkish history, dates Turkish history back to 3000 BCE in his book "Turkish Culture and Civilization" coauthored by Fazile Abbasova and Dr. Nazile Abbaslı. "Based on the analysis of the findings on the Altai Mountains, it is possible to date the first Turks back to 3000 BCE. In 2000 BCE, spreading eastward, the Turks drove various

tribes of Mongol and Southern Siberia living in the regions of Otuken and Selenge into east and north.” (Anadol et al. 2002 p.75) As it is seen here, according to Anadol, the Turks are a nation that has existed even before the common era.

The Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), known as a “far right” party in the politics of Turkey, provides an example of the primordialist approach to nationalism by dating the origins of the Turkish nation back to ancient times. For instance, the hand gesture of MHP, the sign of the “grey wolf”, is the gesture used by the Huns, the Kipchak Turks, and Patzinaks to signify the phrase “I am Turkish”. The Xiongnu, the state of the Huns mentioned above, existed between 220 BCE and 46 BCE. The referral of the people supporting MHP to themselves as ‘grey wolves’ is a reference to ancient times. Because the name ‘grey wolf’ comes from the ‘Grey Wolf Legend’, set in Central Asia before the common era.

However, there are some problems with the primordialist point of view. For example, according to Brass, ethnic identities are, contrary to the claims of primordialist thinkers, are subject to change and are not ‘given’ (Brass, 1985). Anthony Smith, one of the ethnosymbolist thinkers to be analyzed in the following parts of this chapter, expresses his opinion on ethnic identities and the preservation of the essences of these ethnic identities without any change as follows:

Ethnic identities, like all social identities, are subject to many factors (economic, political, etc.), therefore vary depending on the setting and the conditions. Many factors like marriages between different ethnic groups, internal and external migrations, epidemics, the development of trade relations between regions, and invasions by external powers cause ethnic groups to intermingle with each other. This indicates that it is not possible for ethnic identities to reach the present day without any changes, preserving their essences (Smith, 1995, p. 33; cited in Özkırımlı, 2016, p. 94).

Another criticism of the primordialist approach is presented by Sami Zubaida (1978). Zubaida states that in pre-modern societies, countries or empires comprised people of differing ethnic identities instead of a homogeneous nation and that these countries or empires were ruled by a single person, group, or family (Zubaida,

1978). For Zubaida, this ruling class was sometimes of an ethnic identity different from the ruled people. In this period, the aspect given importance and taken into consideration by the ruled concerning the ruling class was not a shared ethnic identity but their fairness towards the ruled people. Thus, Zubaida indicates that ethnic identities were not as important as they are today in pre-modern societies (Zubaida, 1978).

Given these criticisms, it is not possible to say that the primordialist approach claiming that nations are inherent or 'given' and that they survive until today without any changes is suitable in the context of this thesis. It must be expressed clearly that the primordialist approach is not an interesting or popular point of view among people conducting academic research on nationalism today. Nevertheless, as it is the first approach handling the terms 'nation' and 'nationalism' in a scientific and analytic manner, and the first point of view setting the ground for subsequent theories, it would be meaningful to present this approach in the thesis.

The primordialist approach to nationalism is not explanatory in the context of this thesis, and it is not practical while establishing the analytical framework and analyzing the findings of this study. Because, within the scope of this thesis, the focal point will be the manner of the process of social engineering resulting in the construction of the concept of nationalism and the phenomenon of the nation through various mass media. Even though the primordialist point of view will not be included in the research part of the study, we mentioned some general arguments around this approach for we believe it is crucial to discuss primordialism in order to make sense of the theories of nationalism as a whole. Despite the lack of interest in primordialist point of view in the academic world, the discourses of nationalist parties in daily political life remain close to this approach. Therefore, it is meaningful to mention and analyze this point of view.

2.1.2 Modernist Approach

In the previous section, we explained the primordialist approach to nationalism, discussed its criticisms, and expressed our own opinions on this point

of view. Now, it would be appropriate to continue the thesis with the modernist approach.

From this point of view, it cannot be said that nations and nationalism are old phenomena. According to the modernists, nationalism emerged in the 19th century and is a social construct (Anderson, 1993; Hobsbawm, 1983). As stated by Anderson, the word 'nationalism' was not even included in dictionaries before the 19th century (Anderson, 1993). Furthermore, for the modernist approach, contrary to the claims of the primordialist approach, nationalism created nations (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1983). From the beginning of the 19th century, especially in Europe, it can be seen that nations started to consider themselves better than other nations, and also started to create countries with nationalism as their core value, regarding their nations to be superior. For example, toward the end of the 19th century, three great dynasties from different parts of the world and unrelated in terms of ethnic origin, the Romanovs, the Habsburgs, and the Ottomans, started to fall, and after their downfalls, they left states formed with nationalist structures on the lands they lost.

According to the modernists, it is not possible to find any trace of nationalism in pre-modern eras. The paradigm of the modern world is entirely different from the past (Kuhn, 1970). It is not possible to find a trace of nationalism not only in city-states but also in feudal structures in the Middle Ages and great empires reigned in pre-modern times (Gellner, 1983). Hobsbawm indicates that nations do not date back to ancient times (Hobsbawm, 1992). Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric J. Hobsbawm, Tom Nairn, John Breuilly, and Miroslav Hroch can be counted as examples of thinkers of the modernist approach to nationalism.

The fundamental claim of the modernists is that nations and nationalism were invented or imagined in modern times. In this context, what is the core element leading to the emergence of nations and the concept of nationalism in modern times?

For Anderson, nations are imagined political communities (Anderson, 1993, p. 20). In Anderson's argument, a nation is both limited and sovereign (Anderson,

1993). Nations are limited for even if a given nation is the biggest nation in the world, there are also nations other than itself that continue living (Anderson, 1993; Özkırımlı, 2016). Therefore, even if a nation is the biggest, it can be said that it is limited as they are confined to the existence of another nation living separately. Moreover, even if a nation has vast territories, it requires another nation, i.e. 'the other', in order to define itself and its inherent features. Thus, for a nation to define itself and the other, it needs different borders or distinctive features such as language, religion, and culture. In addition to the limitedness and sovereignty of nations, Anderson also asserts that the concept of nation is an imagined one (Anderson, 1993). For Anderson, the entity of a nation is an imagined one, because even if a group of people is living in the smallest country of the world, they do not know every fellow member of that nation, they don't come face to face with them, or they cannot know everything about them. However, they keep on living along with their fellow members of the nation in their minds (Anderson, 1993).

But how nations were imagined? In terms of the imagination of nations, Anderson foregrounds newspapers and the expansion of capitalist enterprises into the publishing sector. Because, according to Anderson, newspapers are the media that make us think and feel the same with people we have never met or known. Newspapers, along with other people composing the nation, are consumed on a mass scale on the same day, at the same time. It is not possible to come up with a better definition for imagined communities (Anderson, 1993). With their aforementioned feature, newspapers allow us to share the same agenda and the same thoughts with the members of the nation of which we are a part. One example for this would be the use of a common language or even a common title in the headlines of almost every newspaper in Turkey during an important event in the country's agenda or a crisis. By this means, the subject deemed to be important and relevant to the country's agenda is given a place in almost every newspaper, thus, it is shared by people composing a common nation.

Another thinker with works supporting the claims of Anderson indicating the state of nations as invented entities is Eric J. Hobsbawm. For Hobsbawm, nations

and nationalism are products of social engineering, and understanding the processes of this social construct is possible through focusing on invented traditions (Hobsbawm, 1993). In Hobsbawm's words:

The term 'invented tradition' is used in a broad, but not imprecise sense. It includes both 'traditions' actually invented, constructed and formally instituted and those emerging in a less easily traceable manner within a brief and dateable period and establishing themselves with great rapidity... 'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past (Hobsbawm, 1993, p. 1).

These invented traditions are regularly repeated, therefore establishing a bridge between the past and the present and giving us a sense of continuity. Besides, invented traditions aim to augment the solidarity and cooperation among the people composing the nation and to inspire the loyalty of these people to the nation. This is, in fact, a process of regularization and routinization. Nationalism invents and re-invents history for daily or contemporary purposes (Hobsbawm, 1990; Hobsbawm, 1983). Invented traditions, the routinization of the elements forming the nation in people's lives, and the claim that the nation has existed since old times are crucial in order to gather the nation around a common ground and to unify it. In the work titled "The Invention of Tradition" edited by Hobsbawm and Ranger, the significance of these invented traditions in the nations' processes of creation is given through examples from different nations (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983).

Another important thinker of the modernist approach is Ernest Gellner. Gellner emphasizes that nationalism belongs to modern times (Gellner, 1983). Because, for Gellner, nationalism is a principle asserting that the political unit and the national unit must be in harmony (Gellner, 1983; p. 1). In brief, nationalism became a

sociological need only in modern times. According to Gellner, what makes a human being, or what gives them an identity, is education. Modern people do not feel loyalty to a king, monarch, or sultan. Instead, they have loyalty to the culture and cultural wealth (Gellner, 1983) It can be inferred from this point that an educational system shaped and changed by the rulers or the ruling political party is one of the key elements creating the nation and holding it together.

Another figure to be mentioned in this thesis after the modernist opinions of Anderson, Hobsbawm, and Gellner is John Breuilly and his opinions on the matter. Breuilly defines nationalism as a political movement and claims that nationalist arguments are used by people seeking to seize the rulership and the state power as justifications (Breuilly, 1993). Defending arguments similar to those of Breuilly, Paul R. Brass is one of the first figures to come to mind when the subject is instrumentalism (Özkırmı, 2016). For Brass, nationalism is a tool used by the elite in order to seize or maintain political power (Brass, 1979).

In this section, we tried to include the opinions of different thinkers on the modernist point of view. It can be said clearly that, like the primordialist thinkers, it is difficult to discuss the thinkers that can be counted among the figures of the modernist approach under a common ground. Even though almost all of them have varying opinions on the reasons of using nationalism or its existence and reflection to the present day, they share the opinion on the relationship between nationalism and modern times and nationalism's status as an invented or imagined notion. Furthermore, every thinker of the modernist approach is of the same mind when it comes to a significant matter: Nationalism created nations.

It is possible to see this process of nationalism creating nations and the invention of traditions both during the first years following the foundation of Turkey after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, or the Early Republican Era and in 'New Turkey'. This matter will be discussed in detail in the following chapter of this study.

2.1.3 Ethnosymbolist Approach

In this chapter in which we analyze the schools of thought on nationalism, the last theoretical approach is ethnosymbolism. John Armstrong and Anthony D. Smith can be counted among the thinkers of this approach.

For Özkırıklı, the term 'ethnosymbolist' is used for thinkers focusing on the ethnic background and culture while analyzing nationalism (Özkırıklı, 2016). The thinkers of this approach try to find a middle ground between the primordialist approach and the modernist point of view. Because, according to the ethnosymbolists, nations are not 'given' as primordialists suggest, but they are not invented in modern times, either, as claimed by modernists. For ethnosymbolists, in order to comprehend the origins of nations and nationalism, one must focus on the ethnic identities in pre-modern times. According to Conversi, national identities are shaped under the influence of things coming from the past like myths, values, and symbols, and nations cannot be created from zero (Conversi, 1995).

Unlike primordialist and modernist thinkers, ethnosymbolists can be easily counted under a single category. Because the analyses made by ethnosymbolist thinkers are, to a large extent, similar (Özkırıklı, 2016). They argue that one must look at the developmental processes of nations in a wider time period. For that reason, they claim that it is not possible to find the essence of nations without considering and analyzing their ethnic backgrounds. Thus, it can be said that, according to ethnosymbolist thinkers, today's modern nations derive from the ethnic communities existing in pre-modern times.

John Armstrong claims that national consciousness has a long past. According to Armstrong, ethnic identities can be traced back to the civilizations of the ancient era, such as Ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia (Armstrong, 1982). In this point of view, today's nationalism is the latest part of the deep-rooted ethnic consciousness shaping political and social structures. Because consciousness is constant and permanent (Armstrong, 1982).

Anthony D. Smith, another figure from the ethnosymbolist approach, shares the idea of John Armstrong. For Smith, modern nations cannot be understood

without the ethnic communities of the past and their connections. Smith expresses this in a study on the features of an ethnic community as follows:

The six main features of an ethnic community can be listed as follows: A collective proper noun, a myth of a common ancestry, one or more elements differentiating the common culture, a bond with a special homeland, the feeling of cooperation between the important segments of the population. The more a certain population has or shares these features (or the more in number it has or shares these features), the closer it is to the ideal type of an ethnic community. Wherever these elements are present, one can talk about the presence of a community with a common sense of identity and a historical culture. Such a community must be certainly separated from the term 'race' signifying a social group having unique genetic and biological features that determine its cognitive abilities (Smith, 1999; p. 42-43).

Smith also mentions ethnic cores (Smith, 2013; p. 48-54). The notion of ethnic cores can be explained as the loyalty of people forming a common ethnic identity to each other and their consciousness of the difference of their own ethnic community when compared to other ethnic communities. Smith claims that ethnic identities are durable and continuous (Smith, 2013; p. 49) Even though ethnic identities are durable and continuous, they may have been undergone changes due to various events in history such as war, invasion, banishment, slavery, refugee influx, and religious conversion. Nevertheless, according to Smith, even the most radical changes cannot eradicate the idea of continuity of the ethnic identity from people's minds, therefore ethnic identity survives (Smith, 1999; Özkırımlı, 2016). Thus, even if an ethnic identity undergoes changes, its essence remains the same.

As mentioned before, ethnosymbolist thinkers try to find a 'middle ground' between the primordialist approach and the modernist point of view. Ethnosymbolists accept that nations are created subsequently, but unlike modernists claiming that nations were invented, they try to trace nations in pre-modern times and not in modern times.

We have given some information on the ethnosymbolist approach to nationalism and the claims it makes. Even though significant figures such as John Armstrong and Anthony D. Smith are thinkers of this point of view, the ethnosymbolist approach is criticized especially by modernist thinkers. One of the critics is Brendan O'Leary. In his article in which he uses Gellner's opinions on the concept of nationalism as the base, O'Leary voices a criticism as follows:

Most of those who discuss 'nations' before 'nationalism' are in fact establishing the existence of cultural precedents, and ethnic, and other materials, which are subsequently shaped and re-shaped by nationalists in pursuit of nation building... It is just as important to recognise that most of those who have written of nations before the age of nationalism, whether they be historians like Seton-Watson, or historical sociologists, like Armstrong, Greenfeld and Smith, concede the modernity of nationalist doctrine and nationalist political programmes... There may have been talks about nations and indeed national consciousness before nationalism, but, so to speak, there was no nationalist talk of nations and national consciousness before nationalism (O'Leary, 1997; p. 16-17).

For that reason, it is not reasonable to talk about nations before modernism which created nationalism.

In addition to the criticisms made by O'Leary, ethnosymbolists are still criticized due to their opinions on the emergence of nations. According to Özkırıklı, ethnosymbolists make a misinterpretation by claiming that nations emerged in pre-modern times.

Religious/ethnic communities with different rates of group consciousness were not after political aims like autonomy and independence. Such a thing was not possible as these aims would become important only after nationalism became a norm. As Hall expresses, the developments unifying people around a common destiny, spreading the ethnic identity to masses, therefore transforming it to a national identity, would come up with modernization (Özkırıklı, 2016, p.225; Hall, 1993; p.3).

Developments that contribute to the sharing of a common national identity such as the sharing of a common destiny by the people in a community, sharing a common ethnic identity with the masses, the spread of the mass media, and the increase in literacy became main topics and widely discussed with the emergence of modernism (Hall, 1993). In other words, the lack of all the aforementioned developments in the modern age contributing to the formation of a national identity makes it difficult to talk about the concept of a nation in pre-modern times. In brief, for the thinkers of the modernist school, it is not reasonable to talk about nations before pre-modern times. Because communities existing before modern times are only ethnic groups and the notions of nations and nationalism are invented or imagined in modern times.

It is necessary to point out that we are closer to the modernist school of thought rather than the primordialist or ethnosymbolists ones and that we believe the points given by this particular school of thought on the emergence of nations and nationalism make more sense in the context of the subject of this thesis.

2.2 Further Discussions: Formulating the Theoretical Framework of the Thesis

So far, we have given some information on the three schools of thought on nationalism and their points of view on nations and nationalism. Furthermore, while discussing a given school of thought, we have also mentioned the criticisms made by thinkers having opposing ideas. We have listed the schools chronologically in order of emergence.

In this section, the opinions of the thinkers among the most significant figures of the modernist school of thought having central importance in the context of this thesis, Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Michael Billig, will be thoroughly analyzed. Because the theories put forward by Anderson, Hobsbawm, and Billig will shed light on our analysis of the 'New Turkey', the subject of this thesis.

In his famous book titled 'Imagined Communities', Anderson denies the arguments claiming the end of the age of nationalism has come, stating that "nationalism is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time"

(Anderson, 1993). However, have nations and nationalism, the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our age, always been present? According to Anderson, the answer is negative. In his aforementioned book, Anderson states this clearly as follows: “The nation is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson, 1993). Anderson states that nations existing in the present time and nationalism were imagined with the creation and sharing of common values among people living in certain borders and the raising of the expectation of a common destiny and future following the invention of the printing press. He also claims that newspapers and the entrance of capitalism to the publishing sector occupy the pivotal role in this process of imagination (Anderson, 1993). Because even if one lives in the smallest country in the world, it is not possible for this person to even meet every person living inside the borders of this given country and supposedly composing a nation, let alone knowing all of them. In this case, newspapers and the media are the tools imposing common thoughts on the people of the same nation and unifying them around common expectations and values.

As expressed before, the primordialist school of thought argues that even though nations go through changes due to factors like migrations, wars, and invasions, these changes are not important as the essence of the nation remains the same. Anderson disagrees with this opinion and claims that this essence in imagined nations is subject to changes due to factors such as the domination of a state over another state and the education system. For instance, Anderson gives the following example on the Anglicization of Indians following the invasion of India by the United Kingdom through the transformation of the education system:

When the East India Company's charter came up for renewal in 1813, Parliament mandated the allocation of 100,000 rupees a year for the promotion of education, both ‘oriental’ and ‘Western’. In 1823, a Committee of Public Instruction was set up in Bengal; and in 1834, Thomas Babington Macaulay became president of this committee. Declaring that ‘a single shelf of a European library is worth the whole native literature of India and

Arabia', he produced the following year his notorious 'Minute on Education'. Luckier than Uvarov, his recommendations went into immediate effect. A thoroughly English educational system was to be introduced which, in Macaulay's own ineffable words, would create "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect (Anderson, 1993, p. 107).

This is a striking example of how can nations in the process of imagination or the essence of a nation readily imagined and having its own values can change through education. In brief, for Anderson, nations and nationalism was imagined in modern times and it can be said that the most significant factors in these processes of imagination are newspapers, media, and education.

While analyzing the period of 'New Turkey', the subject of this thesis, the examples of the changes in the education system will also be provided from this point of view. In addition, for us, how 'New Turkey' was imagined is an important topic worthy of analysis.

We also think that analyzing the theories put forward by Eric Hobsbawm, who has an important place in the analysis chapter of this thesis with his work on the invention of traditions, is crucial.

Hobsbawm indicates that traditions present in our daily lives and making us feel that their origins can be traced back to ancient times were actually invented in relatively recent times. He defines invented traditions as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawm, 1983; p. 2). "[These traditions] are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition." (Hobsbawm, 1983; p. 3) In brief, the traditions that are currently present and that gives us the feeling that they have always been present due to references to old times were actually invented in a relatively recent time.

Hobsbawm indicates that the invention of traditions took place in an intense manner in the 19th century, a period in which social transformation occurred rapidly (Hobsbawm, 1983). These traditions were invented in order to fulfill the need of rapidly-transforming societies for “expressing social unity and identity and structuring social relations” and for the political elite to maintain control over this transforming society and create new points of loyalty (Hobsbawm, 1983). However, the intense process of invention of traditions in the 19th century does not mean that new traditions were not invented in the following periods of time. The transformation of the society and the need of the political elite for the control over this transforming society continue to exist in the present time as well. In short, it can be said that traditions are still invented today. In case of ‘New Turkey’, how new traditions were invented especially after the attempted coup d’état on July 15, 2016, in order to hold the society together and maintain control over it will be discussed with examples in the following chapters.

In his book titled ‘The Invention of Tradition’, Eric Hobsbawm focuses on how traditions were invented in Europe, deeming three fundamental novelties after 1860 to be significant for the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm, 1983). The first of these novelties is the primary school education which allows one to reach individuals of a society in their childhood years and which is nowadays mandatory, i.e. the education system. The second is the invention of public ceremonies. Certain dates subsequently created and made important with these ceremonies are celebrated or commemorated publicly with the people. Being a part of these celebrations, the nation is gathered around a common point and the sense of collaboration among fellow members of the nation is reinforced. As they are repeated consistently and as they make references to historical events, these ceremonies create the impression of having always been present. Hobsbawm gives the example of the Bastille Day of the French in this respect (Hobsbawm, 1983; p. 315).

In the case of Turkey, official celebrations invented by different governments in line with their tendencies and implementations aimed to be transformed into

traditions can be given as examples. The early years of the Republic of Turkey founded after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire provide a good example in this respect. In this period, during the creation of the nation of a newly-founded state and the ensuring the nation's sense of belonging to the state, many dates like May 19, April 23, and October 29 were associated with historical contexts, therefore becoming important dates for the nations. Hobsbawm specifies the final novelty as the production of monuments placed on public spaces (Hobsbawm, 1983). The statues of Atatürk built on city squares by military governments following the death of Atatürk can be given as examples to the production and placement of monuments reflecting national values on public spaces. The aim of these glorious sculptures placed on important centers is to indoctrinate people with certain common values. An example in this respect would include the naming of schools, even a university in Niğde, after Ömer Halisdemir, a symbolic figure of resistance during the attempted coup d'état on July 15, 2016, and the renaming of the Bosphorus Bridge as the 15 July Martyrs Bridge.

Another figure whose point of view on nationalism is to be analyzed in detail after the analyses on Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm is Michael Billig and his theory of banal nationalism.

Skey defines the theory of banal nationalism put forward by Billig in 1995 as the most effective study produced on the daily forms of the concept of nation (Skey, 2009). Michael Billig's theory of banal nationalism was evaluated or placed as one of the fundamental theories in many previous academic studies (Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014; Skey, 2009; Özkırmılı & Yumul, 2000). Banal nationalism is also important in the context of this thesis. For that reason, we will benefit from Billig's work on banal nationalism in the following parts of this thesis.

With his work, Billig breathed new life into nationalism studies. According to Billig, nationalism is both evident and hidden at the same time (Billig, 1995). "Billig's study led the way in marking something of a shift in focus as research began to move away from the more macro-scale theorizing on nationalism to more empirical based studies" (Skey, 2009). Michael Billig, the figure behind this shift, defines

nationalism as the power that created national states and threatens their existence (Billig, 1995). He explains his main argument in his book titled 'Banal Nationalism' as follows:

The central thesis of the present book is that, in the established nations, there is continual flagging, or reminding, of nationhood. The established nations are those states that have confidence in their own continuity... In so many little ways, the citizenry is daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations. However, this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding. The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag which being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building (Billig, 1995; p. 8).

Thus, it can be said that according to Billig's theory of banal nationalism, nationalism does not cease to exist in readily-established, modern, settled Western countries. In countries having a common past, common expectations, and national heroes, and becoming 'proper' nations by choosing a particular national anthem and a national flag (Billig, 1995; p. 86), common values are kept alive by waving flags on important dates, therefore nationalism persists. In addition to Renan's claim that collective amnesia and collective memory are among the most vital elements in the formation of a nation (Renan, 1990), Billig indicates that the national identity is continued through explicit and implicit imagery placed in people's daily lives (Billig, 1995).

The explicit nationalism maintained by waving flags and national symbols on certain days is sustained in daily life with unnoticed flags.

National identity in established nations is remembered because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or flag nationhood. However, these reminders or flaggings are so numerous and they are such a familiar part of the social environment, that they operated mindlessly, rather than mindfully (Billig, 1995; p. 38).

This is the main point of Billig's theory of banal nationalism. If this main point were to be explained with an example from the Turkish society, the photograph of

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the president of Turkey, being hanged in government offices or during the television interviews made with the members of the parliament would be a good example. This photograph upon which one stumbles without noticing reminds us of the country one lives in and the president of that country.

In addition to the flag waved unintentionally, Billig also focuses on the pronouns used in the media and by the politicians. These speeches of the politicians and the media “routinely reproduce a taken-for-granted world composed of sovereign and discrete nations” (Skey, 2009). The media and politicians use pronouns like ‘us, we, our’ and these pronouns signifies continuously the national homeland, the home of the audiences. These pronouns used regularly by politicians and the media reproduce the nation unintentionally. Because they put us in a certain category and reminds us who we are, where we belong, and which nation we are from, without us noticing. For instance, the problems mentioned by politicians become our problems with the use of pronouns without realizing it or they are reminded to be our problems.

However, if someone uses pronouns like ‘we’ and ‘our’, they actually show us who we are not, in other words, who ‘it’ or ‘they’ represent. Thus, while categorizing us by using pronouns like ‘we’ and ‘our’ and reminding us who we are, politicians and the media show us who ‘they’ are. By this, the media and politicians show us who our internal and external enemies are. “By identifying ‘our’ enemies both within and without, the press produces a dichotomous –and mutually exclusive- vision of ‘us’ and ‘them’” (Özkırmırlı & Yumul, 2000). On this point, Billig expresses that “there can be no ‘us’ without a ‘them’” (Billig, 1995; p. 78).

Therefore, it can be briefly said that the theory of banal nationalism put forward by Billig is based on the argument that nationalism and its symbols are interspersed among our daily lives and daily practices, and that they survive without being noticed. The members of the society can stumble upon these symbols in government offices, schools, stadiums, or streets, any place they go in their daily lives. Furthermore, the pronouns like ‘we’ and ‘us’ used by politicians and the media implicitly reminds the members of the society who that ‘we’ is. We see the map of

the country with its borders in the media as in television programs, newspapers, or weather forecasts, and we remember where our homeland is. This way, without noticing, we keep our nationalist identity alive in our daily lives, even though it dates back to old times. We nourish our national identity on a daily basis. Why do we do this regularly? Billig's response to this question is as follows:

Identity, in common talk, is something which people have or search for. One might think that people today go about their daily lives, carrying with them a piece of psychological machinery called 'a national identity'. Like a telephone, this piece of psychological equipment lies quiet for most of the time. Then, the crisis occurs; the president calls; bells ring; the citizen answer; and the patriotic identity connected (Billig, 1995; p. 7).

In this chapter of this study focusing on 'New Turkey' and the nationalism of 'New Turkey', we have discussed primordialist, modernist, and ethnosymbolist points of view on nationalism. We have also mentioned the criticisms voiced against these schools of thought while discussing these approaches. Then, we have explained the reasons why we think that the modernist approach is more suitable in the context of this thesis. Finally, we focused on the theories to be focused further in the analysis part of this thesis, Benedict Anderson's theory of Imagined Communities, Eric J. Hobsbawm's theory of the Invention of Tradition, and Michael Billig's theory of Banal Nationalism.

As Billig expresses, the "world of nation-states, being constructed in the modernist mood, is a world of boundaries" (Billig, 1995; p. 130). Thus, the state creating its own culture and homogeneous society within its own borders is a concept of the modern age. Because it is claimed in the post-modern world that it is not possible to indicate that people living within certain borders would not be affected by other people living outside these borders and that they would be able to preserve their unique features where the world becomes day by day a global village with the developments in technology and transportation. "The result is that the process of globalization, which are diminishing differences and spaces between nations, are also fragmenting the imagined unity within those nations" (Billig, 1995;

p. 132). In this novel process, it is assumed that supranational organizations will supersede nation-states as the dominant entities in the world (Hobsbawm, 1992; p. 191) The European Union or the United Nations can be counted as examples of these supranational organizations. Fukuyama states that liberal democracy is above all other ideologies by asserting that “There is now no ideology in a position to challenge liberal democracy and there is no legitimate principle other than the sovereignty of the people” (Fukuyama, 1992; p. 45). Bauman, one of the most significant thinkers of post-modernity, indicates that the formation of nations in the post-modern age is different than in modern times (Bauman, 1993).

In any case, however, it is hard to claim that nationalism and nation-states will cease to exist and that different cultures in the world will be homogenized with the impact of globalization. Billig states that even though the European Union has abolished its internal borders, it has its own anthem, its own flag, and even its own external borders. “Thus, Europe will be imagined as a totality, either as a homeland itself or as a homeland of homelands” (Billig, 1995; p. 141-142).

In the present day, it can be seen by observing the current global political trends that nationalism has not lost its influence and that it is still a concept that shapes even our daily lives despite globalization and the changes brought about by globalization. In 2017, manifesting that they want to establish their own independent states, the autonomous region of Catalonia in Spain and the Kurdish zone in Iraq organized referenda in this respect. Furthermore, it is observed that nationalist and ultra-nationalist parties get higher votes in Europe and the future of supranational organizations like the European Union is debated. Therefore, even though the conditions change, nationalism adapts to these changes and continues to be influential.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIOPOLITICAL HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

THOUGHTS ON THE PRE AND POST-JDP ERAS

In this chapter of the thesis in which the focal point is the period transformed during the JDP administration and named 'New Turkey', it would be reasonable to discuss the processes Turkey has gone through since its modernization and foundation to demonstrate the change taking place in the period of 'New Turkey'.

Upon looking at the time period starting from the foundation of Turkey to the present day, three main elements seem to be prominent: The modernization steps taken for the convergence with the West, the military and military interventions, and religion, which remains a significant element in social life, and the turn to religion.

However, when it is considered that the country has ties with its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, and that from time to time these bonds are foregrounded with various schools of thought and tendencies, it would be more meaningful to handle the story behind Turkey's modernization starting from the final years of the Ottoman Empire.

With the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, several steps were taken in alignment with the efforts to become separated from the Ottoman Empire and with the purpose of "reaching the level of contemporary civilizations" as stated by Atatürk, the founder of the country. The struggles of a newly-founded state to invent its own tradition can be seen in the analysis of this period. With the steps taken by Atatürk and the Republican People's Party (CHP) in many fields ranging from the regime to the daily life of the people, the country sought to distance itself from the shadow of the Ottoman Empire and to determine itself a new path.

Another significant factor in the modernization process in the history of Turkey is the military along with military interventions. The army, being a crucial part of the

efforts for modernization even during the Ottoman Empire, also has a prominent position in the foundation of the Republic. The founders and the rulers of the country were all coming from the military in the initial years. In the years to come, the army, being discontented with the country's situation following the transition to a multi-party system, intervened in the civilian government on May 27, 1960; March 12, 1971; September 12, 1980; and February 28, 1997. Most recently, during the rule of JDP, the soldiers affiliated with the Gülen Movement attempted to launch a coup d'état on July 15, 2016, in order to seize the power.

The third significant element in the modernization of Turkey is religion along with religion-oriented policies. As the Padishah, the head of state in the Ottoman Empire, was also the Caliph of Islam, he was an important religious figure.

Starting from the foundation of Turkey, a secular state structure was sought by eliminating the influence of religion on the government. The Democratic Party, which came into power following the transition to the multi-party system, was overthrown with a military coup on the grounds that it moved away from secularism. Later on, political Islam rose into prominence with Necmettin Erbakan and the political parties led by him, becoming a major factor in domestic politics. Finally, the Justice and Development Party administration, which came into power in 2002, was criticized for moving away from secularism and changing the way the state is governed in alignment with Islam.

In this part of the thesis, the transformation of Turkey will be discussed considering the military, Westernization, and Islamization, which are significant factors in its modernization.

3.1 The Historical Development of Modern Turkey

In order to make sense of the historical transformation of Turkey with respect to its society, culture, and politics, one must think of it in relation to the final stages of the Ottoman Empire. It is necessary to clarify in this context that the modernization efforts date back to the Edict of Gülhane, the Imperial Reform Edict, and the Constitutional Era (Kadioğlu, 2007). The new-founded Republic formed its

unique identity both with the continuations of the Empire and by claiming its separation and break from the Ottomans. After emphasizing all the factors mentioned above, we would like to begin by stating that due to its inherent limitations, this study will handle the historical development of Turkey starting from the foundation of the Republic and will not mention the final years of the Ottoman Empire.

3.1.1 Early Republic

With the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the state's struggle to differentiate itself from its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, becomes visible. However, it is interesting that the West, the enemy during the Independence War, became the role model of the Republican elites in the process of this process of differentiation, i.e. the process of creation of a new national identity.

The Kemalists wanted to transform Turkey into a modern nation-state and for this nation-state to live, with Mustafa Kemal's words, as "an advanced and civilized country at the level of the contemporary civilization". Such a nation had to be secular and rationalist, placing importance on science and modern education in order to create a modern, industrialized economy (Ahmad, 2016; p. 69).

These Western factors and the struggles for secularization formed the official culture of the state in that period.

What emerged as the 'official' culture of the Republican period, to be imposed on the Turkish people from above, was an ideology that had been imported from the 'civilized' world, and was centered around the modern and western values of republicanism, nationalism, secularism and rationalism (Aksoy & Robins, 1997).

The administration of the Republican People's Party under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal embarked rapidly on reforms to establish the Western vision of the state (the official culture) and secularism in the newly-founded Republic of Turkey. In 1924, the caliphate was abolished, followed by the banning of religious orders, the Hat Law replacing fezzes and turbans with hats and the adoption of Latin script instead of Arabic letters.

The Republican elites did not only tried to separate the state and the religion, a symbol of decline, but also sought to control the religion. With this respect, the foundation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the regulation of religion is of importance. The state became not only the authority separating itself from religion, but also the one teaching its people the religion and regulating it with the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Tombuş & Aygenç, 2017).

Yet these changes were not as effective on the people as desired by the Kemalist elites. The top-down social engineering of the Kemalist elites was problematic from the beginning (Tombuş & Aygenç, 2017). Because the 'real' culture of the people could find no place in this ideal-modern national imagination, for to acknowledge the actual culture, with its religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural pluralism, would be to acknowledge diversity and potentially division within the new national territory.

And, so, the imagined unity and homogeneity of the 'official' culture was asserted against the palpable pluralism and heterogeneity of the 'real' culture (Aksoy & Robins, 1997).

In particular, the reforms concerning religion and the steps taken for secularism weakened the connection between the state and the people. The secular Western reforms put in place by the Republican People's Party (CHP) did not resonate completely among the people.

According to Ahmad (2016; p. 133), the members of the society were not content with the state constantly imposing its will on them without considering their feelings; the secular politics was never explained to them and they never understood its benefits for them. This situation created an opportunity for the transition to the multi-party system and a chance for the party to be founded in this process to be active in politics.

The Democratic Party (DP) was thus officially founded under these conditions. The elections in 1950 became a turning point for the Turkish political scene. In the elections during which it entered the race with the slogan "Yeter! Söz milletindir (Enough! The decision belongs to the people)", the Democratic Party won the

outright majority by gaining the 53% of the votes. For Ahmad (2016; p. 114), this event marked the beginning of the Islamic awakening whose effects can be felt in the present day.

After gaining the power, the Democratic Party took control and did not care for the opposition. "DP was of the opinion that it represented the majority and, for its understanding of democracy, this majority gave it the absolute authority and legitimacy to do anything it deemed to be necessary" (Zürcher, 2014; p. 325)

Its votes increased to 56.62% in the 1954 elections, DP gained confidence and thought that its deeds were accepted by the people.

These results transformed Menderes. The approval of the people freed him of any doubt about the policies he followed... While doing politics against this understanding of majoritarian democracy placing national will above anything else, it was no longer necessary to take any person or anything (except for the voters) into account (Ahmad, 2016; p. 137).

Reasons such as the decline of the economic situation and the oppressive government losing support led to the fall of DP's votes in the 1957 elections. This forced Menderes "to follow populist policies. That was when he started to use religion for political purposes" (Ahmad, 2016; p. 138). In this period, DP accused CHP of communism and impiety while appealing to the religious sentiments of the people by mentioning the mosques and imam hatip schools opened during his government. "Therefore, DP was subject to accusations that it used religion for political aims and that the state was moving away from its secular principles" (Zürcher, 2014; p. 338).

The rule of the Democratic Party came to an end with a military coup taking place on May 27, 1960. This was the first military intervention after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey.

One of the reasons why the military intervened to interrupt the political process in 1960 was that the policies implemented by the then center-right Democrat Party were thought to be out of step with the secular democratic

principles of the Republic. The military punished the party leaders and rewrote the Constitution (Tombuş & Aygenç, 2017).

The Democratic Party was dissolved during the regime of May 27 and the people responsible for the coup executed Adnan Menderes, the Prime Minister of the time, Hasan Polatkan, the Minister of Finance, and Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

With the constitution written after the coup d'état of 1960, Turkey went through a new process both politically and socially.

In this period, right-wing parties resorted to Islamic discourses in order to increase their votes or to fight against communism, thus political Islam became radicalized. The economic hardships brought about by the efforts for industrialization, the clash between the leftists and the rightists or their demonstrations against one another, and the rise of the political Islamist power against secularism led to another military intervention in 1971. "On March 12, the generals delivered an ultimatum to President Sunay and to the speakers of the two assemblies. They demanded the formation of a strong, honorable government able to realize the reforms projected by the Constitution" (Ahmad, 2016; p. 176).

One of the fundamental thoughts influential in the political scene of Turkey was the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. The system developed by the prominent ideologist of the Intellectual Hearths, İbrahim Kafesoğlu, was called Turkish-Islamic synthesis. The main principle of this synthesis was as follows: Islam had a special appeal for Turks as there were some striking similarities between the Islamic civilization and the pre-Islamic culture of Turks... For this theory, the Turkish culture was built upon two pillars, i.e. the Turkish element of 2500 years and the Islamic factor of 1000 years (Zürcher, 2014; p. 414).

This ideology was influential in the National Salvation Party and Nationalist Movement Party founded by Alparslan Türkeş.

In this period, some "tarikats" and Islamic groups such as the Nur movement, the 'Işıkçılar', the 'Süleymancılar', and the Gulen movement formed strong and

effective connections in business, politics, mass communication, and social services, thus increasing their influence.

Tarikats and Islamic groups develop networks, the boundaries of which extend far beyond the immediate local, and even national community. They also have international links... Tarikat activities in the public sphere in the 1970s and 1980s focused primarily on efforts to widen the basis of their organizations (Ayata, 1996).

This increase of influence in various fields brought about not only a political expansion, but also a social expansion and sympathy for the Islamic view.

3.1.2 From the Coup of 1980 to the JDP Administration

The army intervened in the government once again on July 12, 1980, and Turkey went through the third military intervention of its history in 20 years. "The Armed Forces was declaring that it seized power because the government bodies were not functioning. Furthermore, it was promulgated that the parliament was dissolved, the cabinet was discharged, and the immunity of the members of the National Assembly was lifted" (Zürcher, 2014; p. 401). For Zürcher, there are many reasons behind three military interventions taking place in 20 years: "Increasing problems of public order, Kurdish separatism, the political system seeming to become tangled, and the ruined economy..." (Zürcher, 2014, p. 387) In this period, the military government started to undertake the work for a new constitution. The members of the military holding the power believed that the constitution drafted after the military intervention of 1960 had granted the society too much liberty. A referendum was called for following the preparation of the new constitution. The authority of the president was increased and Kenan Evren, the leading figure of the coup, became president with this referendum.

The general elections were held for a transition to a civil government following the constitutional referendum. Motherland Party (ANAP) won the elections. This period is remembered mostly for the economic liberalization, privatizations, and West-oriented policies. Some steps for economic growth were taken; however,

these steps for growth brought about large amounts of foreign indebtedness, and therefore, the economy suffered progressively.

During the rule of the Motherland Party, political Islam started with the Democratic Party in the 1950s continued to gain influence and to infiltrate governmental institutions.

When the Motherland Party came to power in 1983, the Naksibendis emerged as the single most important lobbying group in politics. Özal himself had Naksibendi affinities. The members of this tarikat, or brotherhood, were given privileged positions in the MP... Control over key positions in government and the bureaucracy enabled the well organized Islamic networks to recruit their own members into civil service jobs, diverting public resources to Islamic activities and businesses and giving a boost to Islamic education and the training of new members and cadres (Ayata, 1996; p. 44-45).

The 1990s in Turkey became the scene for coalition governments and a flagging economy. Two events that occurred in the 1990s are significant as they affect the present day as well. The first one is the rise of the Welfare Party (RP) founded as the successor of the dissolved National Salvation Party, and the second is the military memorandum following the procession of the army accompanied by armed vehicles and tanks in the district of Sincan in Ankara.

The Welfare Party under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan won the majority of the votes in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey, during the local election in the 90s; and became a coalition partner in the general elections. The party owes its strength to its responsive and well-organized grassroots memberships. The highly motivated, well disciplined, and strongly committed activists believe in their political cause as ordained by God (Ayata, 1996).

Gaining significant political power, the Welfare Party strengthened its pro-sharia discourse against secularism and the West, thus disturbing the army, which deems itself to be the protector of secularism.

By 1997, the relations between the government and the army started to deteriorate rapidly. On February 4, a huge convoy of vehicles with armed

members of the military in them slowly passed through the center of the district of Sincan... On February 28, the army presented the cabinet a long list of demands aiming to curb the influence of the Islamists on the economy, education, and the state apparatus. (Zürcher, 2014; p. 430-431).

After the court case in 1998 lasting 8 months, the Welfare Party was dissolved on the grounds of 'its actions against the principles of the secular republic'. Two parties founded following the dissolution of this party were the Virtue Party and the Justice and Development Party. JDP remains in power since its victory in the general elections of 2002 and it is still the ruling party in the time period in which this thesis is written.

3.2 The Justice and Development Party Period: The Road to 'New Turkey'

The Justice and Development Party was founded in 2001 following the dissolution of the Virtue Party, which was accused of being the direct successor of the previously-dissolved Welfare Party. Two different opinions emerged within the party after the dissolution of the political Islamist Virtue Party: The conservatives favoring an Islamist approach and the reformists with the desire of transforming the party into a center-right one, widening its scope. These differing opinions went into separate ways with two different political parties. While the conservatives founded the Felicity Party, the reformists founded the Justice and Development Party with Abdullah Gül and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in its administration.

Racing in the elections of November 3, 2002, for the first time under the name Justice and Development Party, it gained the 34% of the votes and became the leading party.

3.2.1 The Rule of JDP with Its Periods

As stated by Öztan, "In the early years of its rule, AKP deliberately avoided presenting a public profile contradictory to the republican presuppositions and the symbols of the regime" (Öztan, 2018; p. 117). In this time period during which it followed policies in a cautious manner, the Justice and Development Party gained

the support of voters from differing backgrounds with its policies even though it succeeded political Islamist parties. Girgin makes a summary of this period as follows: “While JDP managed to gain the support of the bourgeoisie, the liberals, and some socialists with the program of economic and political liberalism it presented at the early stages of its rule; it also succeeded in winning over the voters of center-right parties and nationalists along with the religious with its tendency of cultural conservatism” (Girgin, 2016).

As underlined by Girgin, particularly the civilianization within the framework of the EU harmonization and democratization processes, the limitation of military domination, and the efforts for a political solution to the Kurdish problem “created a perception of JDP among the masses as a democratic party and not an Islamist one.” (Girgin, 2016; p. 104)

The period in which the Justice and Development Party abandoned its reconciliatory and democratic policies and strengthened its efforts to impose its hegemony started in its first stage coincides with its second stage starting with the increase of its votes in the elections of 2007. In these elections, JDP obtained 46.6% of the votes and 62% of the seats in the parliament.

JDP ensured the transformation of Kemalism and the army, then the transformation of the jurisdiction in order to strengthen its hegemony. As Akça indicates in a detailed analysis (2018; p. 47-48), JDP’s project of hegemony seems to become feasible by merging economic policies with social programs, opening a daily, cultural, and political space to the conservative lifestyle and legitimizing it, and adopting foreign policies in alignment with the global political business cycles.

The relations of JDP with the military were quite strained in its early stage. “The army perceived the JDP government as the successor of the political Islamist movement and saw it as a threat to the secular foundations of the Republic of Turkey” (Akça, 2018; p. 53). The climax of this tension was during the time period in which Abdullah Gül was nominated for the Presidency by JDP. JDP nominated the then-foreign minister Abdullah Gül; however, the military opposed to this nomination for Gül’s wife wore a headscarf.

“The Turkish General Staff published a memorandum remarking on the threats against secularism on its website, later to be referred to as the e-memorandum, on April 27, 2007” (Akça, 2018; p. 54).

Thus, the army once again tried to intervene in politics through this e-memorandum in 2007. Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) voted in favor of Abdullah Gül’s presidency; this decision was overruled by the Constitutional Court. JDP overcame this obstacle by holding an early election. At the end of this process, Abdullah Gül was elected as the President and the majority of JDP in the parliament was increased. Therefore, JDP established a strong rulership which can pass any law from the Parliament in which it secured the majority and which can ratify these laws as the President is from its party. For Girgin, “JDP turned its steps towards the de facto establishment of the hegemony whose foundations were laid in its first stages” (Girgin, 2016; p. 108). There are differing opinions on the reforms undertaken by JDP.

For some, the JDP-led reforms brought about the end of the Kemalist era and of the authoritarian reflexes of the Turkish state, becoming a turning point in the normalization of politics. For many others, instead of expanding democratic gains, the JDP appropriated key Kemalist institutions and used them to consolidate its own power at the expense of broad democratic rights and freedoms (Tomuş & Aygenç, 2017).

Securing 46.6% of the votes and 62% of the seats in the parliament in the general elections of 2011, JDP managed to come in power for the third time. It maintained its hegemony in this stage as well, legitimized this hegemony with the discourse of the national will, changed the understanding of the official nationalism, and sought to build a new nation by embarking on the invention of traditions with neo-Ottoman policies.

According to Girgin, “Challenging every class but itself with the confidence brought about by winning every election, the leaders of JDP did not hesitate to explicitly voice religious slogans” (Girgin, 2016; p. 115).

It is reasonable to analyze the exact nature of the understanding of the nation of JDP, predicating every decision taken and implemented after the victory in the elections on the national will as stated by Girgin. By doing so, we can understand the nation on whose will the decisions are made.

3.2.2 The Discourse of the National Will and a New National Consciousness

In reality, the definition of the national will is an identity politics making the conservative community, which is claimed to be mistreated by the Kemalist elites throughout the history of Turkey, become the dominant group when they were previously considered to be outcasts. The discourse focusing on the mistreatment of the conservatives is persistently maintained.

It is through this social imagination that JDP and Turkish-Islamist intellectual produce their image of the victim in order to consolidate and enlarge their own hegemony in line with their own pragmatic interest (Yılmaz, 2017; p. 484).

There is a striking difference between the Kemalist nationalism which dominated the official scene and the understanding of the nation by JDP, which went through a new process of structuring after coming to power. This difference is significant in the way that it also demonstrates the contrast between the Kemalist Turkey and the 'New Turkey' of JDP. As stated by Özbey, JDP's definition of the nation "signifies the large segments of the society organizing around Sunni/Orthodox Islam and supporting the present political power" (Özbey, 2016; p. 136). On the other hand, "Kemalist nationalism ensured the equal treatment of each faith by maintaining its organization based on the principle of secularism, therefore, it did not allow any faith to impose a hegemony over other people" (Özbey, 2016; p. 136).

In brief, it can be said that while nationalism was separated from the framework of religion and based upon secular foundations, the national will of JDP is built upon the reference of Islam. "Upon looking from this point of view, the national will composed of the total of the people voting for the ruling party means

the will of the Muslims; it has a religious character and not a secular one” (Yaşlı, 2014; p. 56).

The recourse of the Justice and Development Party to the discourse of the national will and the foregrounding of the nation’s will in each step taken bring about the legitimization of the steps towards ‘New Turkey’ through the masses voting for it, i.e. ‘the nation’. “The synonymization of the term ‘national will’ with the voters of JDP, thus the narrowing of its sense leads to the fetishization of the national will. Therefore, the immunized national will creates the foundation for the ruling party given the authority of representation to do anything it wants” (Girgin, 2016; p. 116).

As far as the general analytical framework of this thesis is concerned, it would be reasonable to analyze JDP’s nationalism within the context of the discourse of ‘the national will’.

According to the evaluation made by Özkırmı, while the state takes shape in alignment with the concerns of security and continuation in the understanding of the top-down official nationalism under the exceptional protection of bureaucracy, the matters of belonging, citizenship, and identity are tried to be solved through a certain definition of identity. However, the complex nature of the social structure within the context of class and culture and the unforeseeable points of resistance deriving from its inherent dynamism renders the exact transmission of this official ideology to the society impossible. “At this stage, unofficial nationalisms come into play and start to create alternatives harmonious with the standard grammar of the nationalist ideology but differing from the official nationalism” (Özkırmı, 2008; p. 708).

It is possible to say that following its coming into power and strengthening its rule through victories in the elections, JDP has an attitude against the official nationalism. In Öztan’s words, “instead of distancing itself coherently from the official nationalism, we observe that JDP recreates the official nationalism by arranging it in alignment with Islamist goals and neoliberal needs and changing its quality” (Öztan, 2018; p. 121).

Thus, it positioned its own nationalism as the exact opposite of the introverted, reactionary, and pessimistic nationalism claimed to belong to old Turkey. Without any doubt, the populist aspects and symbols of the nationalist discourse were rendered functional along with Islamist elements in this process. All of these commemorations reproduced in the collective memory for nationalist purposes, the heroic statements made in these commemorations, the visits to the graves of martyrs, and the messages celebrating national and religious holidays find their place in the nationalist symbolism used by JDP (Öztañ, 2018; p. 118).

According to Özbey's evaluation, the Ottomanist-Islamist characteristic of JDP nationalism does not approve Western-Turkish nationalism and takes the Islamic world as its reference; the main goal here is "to create the contents of the project for a new nation around an Ottomanist-Islamist understanding of nationalism and to hold the society together within this direction". In fact, the Ottomanist-Islamist foreign policy of Ahmet Davutođlu was built to accelerate such an understanding (Özbey, 2016; p. 141).

Even though the neo-Ottoman politics forming the basis of JDP's 'New Turkey' did not achieve the intended results as far as Muslim countries are concerned; it merged with the principle of 'a single homeland, a single flag, a single nation, a single state' it had previously rejected.

3.2.3 JDP Nationalism and the Invention of Tradition

One of the factors used by JDP as a catalyst in the establishment of its understanding of nationalism and building of a nation for the 'New Turkey' is the invention of tradition and future. As indicated by Özbey, "to invent tradition signifies the reestablishment of the present day through the past and the act of seeking the present in the past. The building of the present day is accomplished by referencing the past and creating continuities from the past to the present" (Özbey, 2016; p. 141)

Hobsbawm explains invented traditions as follows:

‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. However, insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of ‘invented’ traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition (Hobsbawm, 2006; p. 2-3).

One of the most significant factors in the process of building a nation is the political figures and heroes to serve as a model to that nation. Upon looking at the building process of the ‘New Turkey’, it can be observed that the heroes to set an example to this nation are Ottoman sultans who were successful in their times such as Mehmed the Conqueror, Suleiman the Magnificent, or Abdulhamid II. Another example for such figures is the Islamist poet and writer Necip Fazıl Kısakürek. Awards named after him are given each year by the newspaper Star and the awards ceremony has a semi-official atmosphere by the participation and a speech by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan himself. Thus, influential figures known for their political Islamist ideas are publicly rewarded. Another created hero is Ömer Halisdemir, a symbol against the attempted military coup orchestrated by the Fethullah Gülen group on July 15, 2016. According to the news story by Anadolu Agency, the official news agency of the Republic of Turkey, “[Ömer Halisdemir’s] name is given to babies, schools, city squares, streets, and memorial forests in many cities in order to express gratitude and to hand his heroism down to the next generation” (Anadolu Agency, 17 August 2016).

Another crucial factor in the invention of tradition is the official/semi-official ceremonies and official holidays celebrated by the state. For the new nation tried to be built, new official days were invented during JDP rule. The major ones include

the semi-official celebrations for the conquest of Istanbul and the anniversary of the birth of Prophet Mohammad, and July 15, the Democracy and National Unity Day declared as an official holiday and commemorated each year. Within this framework, Özbey states that “the celebrations of the Conquest of Istanbul aim to replace Kemalist nationalism with conservative-Islamist nationalism and are among the notions of the project for a new nation” (Özbey, 2016; p. 143).

July 15, the Democracy and National Unity Day declared to be a national holiday marks the anniversary of the quelling of the attempted military coup orchestrated by the Fethullah Gülen group, an important day of JDP rule. July 15 is sought to be represented as the day of the Independence War for ‘New Turkey’. Its official name, Democracy and National Unity Day, also seems to be significant. The word ‘national’ in ‘national unity’ refers to the emphasis put by JDP on the nation and represents people went out to the streets to answer the call of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on the day of the coup attempt. Therefore, the Democracy and National Unity Day celebrated on July 15, ‘invented’ according to the term coined by Hobsbawm, plays a crucial part in order to understand ‘New Turkey’.

JDP also invents the future in addition to inventing traditions. They actualize this stated invention by determining the years 2023 and 2053 as goals. 2023 marks the centennial of the foundation of Turkey while 2053 the sixcentenary of the conquest of Istanbul. The discourses claiming that Turkey will be stronger in 2023 under JDP rule are present in both the statements made by politicians and election campaigns. With these years put forwards as goals, JDP symbolizes the continuity of its rule and contributes to the building of the nation by creating the impression that it will always be present.

Another significant factor in the building of the nation in ‘New Turkey’ is the changes made to the education system and the aims related to upbringing within this system. With the new “4+4+4” system, the popularization of imam-hatip schools, and new courses on the Koran and the life of Prophet Mohammad laid the foundations of the religious generation of ‘New Turkey’. To build a new nation in ‘New Turkey’, JDP, like Kemalists during the foundation of Turkey, uses education as

an ideological instrument. In this respect, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated these exact words:

I stated that we want to raise a religious generation. We mean a religious generation loyal to its national and moral values. Sorry to bother the elites, but we are now present in this country. We are the children, daughters, and sons of this country. That is why we insist on a religious generation. We insist on a religious generation so that the youth can choose freely without the influence of cultural imperialism. (Hürriyet, 29 April 2012)

3.2.4 JDP Nationalism and the Construction of the 'Other'

According to Özbey;

One of the major characteristics of the building process of a nation is to maintain the unity of the society through the imagination of an enemy. The political power invents new internal and external enemies in order to consolidate large segments of the society voting for it. These new invented enemies are portrayed as targets who oppose the nation's will, therefore situating the political power as the sole protector of that said will. Creating opposing sides, those who are for the national will and those against it, the political power thus builds the project of a hegemonic nation it desires (Özbey, 2016; p. 149-150).

Previously, we discussed JDP's confrontation with Kemalists. This list of 'others' would be expanded later with the addition the Kurds and the Gülen group. The Kurds, with whom the political power had positive relations during the Democratic Initiative Process or the Solution Process, were included in the 'others' with the adoption of the 'single homeland, single flag, single state' policy following the elections of June 7, 2015; and the Gülen group after the events of December 17-25.

Even though the struggle between the Kurds and the state dates back to previous periods, we will focus on the Kurdish movement during JDP rule for the focal point of this thesis is not the Kurdish movement itself and it is more meaningful to do so as far as the subject time period of the thesis is concerned. The

attitude of JDP towards the Kurds and the Kurdish movement has alternated between being peace-oriented and war-oriented.

The party initially gained the support of the Kurdish masses with the promise of providing a democratic solution for the Kurdish issue. In contrast, this period was followed by a period of oppression in the mid-2000s. Later, the government introduced a discourse and policy of democratic flexibility concerning identity rights of the Kurds in Turkey with a program called 'Kurdish Initiative'; within the scope of this program, the first broadcast in the Kurdish language was made in the state television and education in Kurdish was legalized (Yörük, 2018; p. 330).

The period of military operations and political oppression started once more within the framework of the recreation of the nationalist discourse and action after JDP lost its majority in the elections of June 7, 2015, following the democratic initiative.

Akça underlines that JDP makes a distinction between good Kurds and bad Kurds within the scope of its policies towards the Kurds.

The good Kurds have been accepted as much as they have Sunni Muslim identities and seen as a part of JDP's nation. In other words, JDP has adopted policies promoting religious identities in order to strengthen the religious identity against the Kurdish ethnic identity and used it as an instrument to exclude the ethnopolitical Kurdish issue from the field of politics. Meanwhile, in addition to the armed wing of the Kurdish movement called PKK, JDP also embarked on the elimination of bad Kurds, including all of its political extensions from legitimate political parties of the Kurdish movement to unions.

The period introduced by JDP as the Project of National Unity and Fraternity and known as the democratic initiative or the Kurdish initiative was a period during which the aim was to find a political solution for the issue between the state and the Kurds instead of armed conflicts. "In JDP's point of view, the means to achieve this national unity and solidarity was Islam" (Öztan, 2018; p. 119) JDP aimed to

pursue its hegemony by using Islam as an umbrella solution, as in all other elements in Turkey, during the Kurdish initiative.

In fact, this aspect comes into prominence in the following speech made by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to explain the Kurdish Initiative:

For whatever reason their sons lost their lives, if the mother in Yozgat and the mother in Hakkari recite the same prayer before the graves of their sons, if they recite Yasin and al-Fatiha for their sons, if the community turns towards the same Mecca, it is apparent that there is something seriously wrong here (in the war between the Armed Forces and PKK) (Öztañ, 2018; p. 119).

The event which terminated the solution process may be the declaration of the results of the election on June 7, 2015. In this election, JDP set off with the aim of changing the present system of parliamentary democracy and adopting a presidential regime. "Erdoğan said a strong presidential system would remove the cacophony of the present system and have an important effect on decision-making processes" (Salt, 2016). However, even though JDP was the leading party in the aftermath of the election, it could not achieve the necessary majority to change the constitution in the Assembly. JDP got 40.87% of the votes in this election. The main reason why JDP could not obtain the desired results is that People's Democratic Party (HDP), the representative of the Kurdish political movement entering previous races with independent candidates due to the electoral threshold, passed this threshold of 10% by securing 13.12% of the votes.

In brief, seeing that it lost support during the democratic initiative process, the ruling party regained the votes it had lost by positioning itself as the provider of stability and the protector of the nation by foregrounding the nationalist discourse and the armed struggle against PKK in order to continue imposing its hegemony and to eliminate any potential obstacle in the process of nation-building in 'New Turkey'.

The other entity established by 'New Turkey' as the 'other' besides the Kurds is the Fethullah Gülen group. Partners with the political power and positioned as

people serving the country in the initial years of JDP rule, Fethullah Gülen and his religious group were later accused of infiltrating the state and creating a parallel state structure. “Gülen, once an ally and now regarded as a deadly enemy, has been put on a list of most wanted terrorists and his Turkish Hizmet network in Turkey officially designated as the FETO terror organization” (Salt, 2016).

This change in the nature of the relationship from friendship to enmity was triggered by the operations of December 17-25. According to Anadolu Agency, the official news agency of the state,

The process known among the public as the ‘December 17-25 process’ and a milestone for the activities of the Gülenist terror organization and the parallel state structure started with the operations conducted against many people including businessmen, bureaucrats, and officers within the scope of three investigations with the accusations of money laundering, gold trafficking and bribery (Anadolu Agency, 14.07.2017).

The climax of the tension between JDP and the ‘Gülenist terror organization’(FETÖ), which started with the aforementioned operations, was the attempted military coup on July 15, 2016. “The government stated that Fethullah Gülen and his secret organization, which is called the Fethullah Terror Organization was the mastermind behind the coup” (Yılmaz, 2017). The military coup was suppressed with the call of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to the nation against the coup and the resistance of the army officials by not participating in the attempted coup. After the attempted coup d’état had been subdued, a state of emergency was declared and President Erdoğan was given the authority to rule the state with decree laws. The state of emergency was extended with the decision of the cabinet and still goes on in the time period in which this thesis was written. “The statements of party leaders and pro-JDP opinion technicians indicate that the JDP will endeavor to take advantage of post-coup reaction within society to build a national consensus around new Islamist-nationalist historical bloc, based on the strong leadership of Erdoğan” (Yılmaz, 2017).

Under the state of emergency, JDP had no obstacles to keep imposing its hegemony. FETÖ was claimed to be the perpetrator of the controversial events such as Ergenekon, Balyoz, December 17-25, and the shutdown of the Russian warplane during the post-coup process. Fethullah Gülen was accused of conspiring along with foreign forces and the enemies of Turkey in order to divide the country and to overthrow the government. JDP, on the other hand, was positioned as the savior of the country and the guardian of unity and solidarity under the leadership of Erdoğan.

The said process has also shown the main actor in the 'New Turkey' project, thus in the project for a new nation. The ruling party and Erdoğan labeled the Fethullah Gülen group as an illegal organization, a gang, and assassins with a discourse of a parallel structure, positioning it as an opposer to the nation's will within the framework of the project for a new nation. Therefore, in the present stage, the ruling party and Erdoğan eliminated the influence of the religious group in the process of nation-building; the group was thus no longer an actor in 'New Turkey' and it was declared and marginalized as an enemy of the nation (Özbey, 2016; p. 173).

3.3 The Relationship Between JDP and the Media: The 'New' Media of 'New Turkey' in Relation to Nationalism

The media are one of the vital actors in the nation-building process in 'New Turkey'. As indicated by Kaya, JDP was aware of the influential power of the media on the masses. "JDP was insistent on using the power of the media in the construction of a masculine, conservative hegemony and in the manufacturing of consent for this hegemony; and this was certainly not a matter to be handled only with the media outlets subject to its power" (Kaya, 2016; p. 251)

With the formation of the free market conditions in the 1980s and 1990s, we start to observe the conglomeration of the media.

External benefits such as the strengthening its hand -either during alliances or conflicts- against the political power, gaining advantage against

competing groups, winning state tenders, having a share in privatizations, benefiting from loans and incentives, and publicizing other companies operating in different fields encouraged the non-media capital to enter the sector (Sönmez, 2004).

This caused business executives operating in fields other than the media such as construction, energy, mining, and tourism to become interested in the media and, therefore, media moguls. An owner of a media organization having investments in other fields of business brings about the aim of maintaining good relations with the state. Because media moguls, as a result of this, become obliged to think of their investments in these other fields and the tenders to be won.

As stated by Kaya, during the rule of its first government, JDP “had the ideal form of power with its alignment with the IMF and EU and the support of the mainstream media and the powerful bourgeoisie” (Kaya, 2016; p. 251). However, in the second phase in which it renounced these liberal principles, JDP needed to create its own media in order to reinforce its hegemony. “The sales process of Sabah-ATV became a milestone in the relationship between JDP and the media” (Kaya, 2016; p. 251) within this framework. The sale of Sabah-ATV group from TMSF to Çalık Group, JDP’s the first step towards the creation of its own media group was realized for \$1.1 billion with the help of the loans provided by state banks (Haynes, 2009). And the head of the Çalık Group was Berat Albayrak, Erdoğan’s son-in-law.

As of its second phase in power, the party aimed for the capital having investments in the media, or the capital who owns the mainstream media. The groups considered to be the mainstream media had already been operating in non-media sectors like finance, industry, energy, mining, and construction when they entered the media sector; they used their media-sourced influence to have precedence in privatizations, public tenders, and permits for construction, mining, and energy production. The sectors in which they operate had some ties with the political power and the mutual exchanges necessitated inevitably intricate relations with the ruling party (Kaya, 2016; p. 251).

During the initial years of JDP in power, Doğan Media Group owned more than half of the media sector. First, JDP imposed a heavy tax fine on the media group. As a result, Aydın Doğan had to sell some of his sub-companies and shrink in order to be able to pay this fine. Then, the law which forbids any media organization from owning more than 30% of the market share led to the sale of Star TV to Doğuş Group and the sale of newspapers Vatan and Milliyet to DK Journalism and Publishing, a company of the Demirören and Karacan groups. Finally, in 2018, Aydın Doğan made it public that he had withdrawn from the media sector, selling Doğan Media, including media outlets and distribution companies like CNN Türk, Hürriyet, and YAYSAT, to Demirören Holding (New York Times, 21 March 2018)

The newspaper Star and a TV channel once belonged to Uzan Group, JDP's rival in the first election it competed, and then seized, was initially sold to a businessman named Ali Özmen Safa; the name of the TV channel was changed to Kanal 24. Then, they were sold to Ethem Sancak, who had expressed previously his love for Erdoğan. After that, Fettah Tamince, the owner of the Rixos hotel chain known for its close ties with Erdoğan, was made partner to Ethem Sancak. Finally, the group was sold to Murat Sancak, the nephew of Ethem Sancak (Kaya, 2016; p. 252). Show TV, one of the channels seized from Çukurova Holding due to his debts to the state, was sold to Ciner Group, and the newspaper Akşam to Ethem Sancak who underlines his admiration of Erdoğan on every occasion.

Demirören Group, entering the media sector through the purchase of newspapers Vatan and Milliyet, terminated the employment of journalists who would antagonize the government and asked not to publish news that would upset 'the mister' (Sönmez, 2014; p.99).

The media outlets which were the voice of the Kurds were either out of satellite broadcasting or were shut down. One of the main media outlets of the Kurds, the newspaper Özgür Gündem was shut down following the attempted military coup on July 15 (Evrensel, 16 July 2016).

Media organizations belonging to the Gülen group who was one of the 'others' of JDP like Cihan News Agency, Samanyolu TV, Bugün TV, and the newspapers

Bugün and Zaman were either shut down or placed in government conservatorship after July 15 (Cumhuriyet, 27 July 2016).

These media owners also supported the rapidly-proceeding society design of JDP... The media were of importance in the realization of the new society design of JDP. It is obvious that this design aimed to create a brand new, religion-oriented Turkey and the media plays the key role in convincing people to accept this society design and having their consent on the matter (Kaya, 2016; p. 253-254).

These media organizations having close ties with JDP both gained benefits in the other fields in which they operate and got the lion share of the publicity made by governmental institutions. For instance, the Albayrak group is now responsible for all the meter reading in Istanbul and Ankara; it has won the tender for the production of the Altay Tank, the tender for the motor production for the first aircraft tug to be manufactured in Turkey, and the management of the Port of Trabzon. Furthermore, The Demirören Group has gained the ownership of Zeyport, the third-biggest port of Istanbul. (Kaya, 2016)

Looking at the relations between 'New Turkey' under the rule of JDP and the media only from the perspective of ownerships and the ties with the state would not give a comprehensive approach to these relations. Because media also plays a crucial role in terms of its influence upon culture and daily life and its reflections of the daily-social environment.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels states in their book named "The German Ideology" as follows:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it (Marx & Engels, 1970; p. 64).

In this case, it can be said that the JDP rule, which is now the ruling power, continues to impose its hegemony with the aforementioned media organizations which have ties with the government creating content in alignment with the ruling ideology.

This change of content can be discussed and exemplified from two different perspectives: The latest television series and TRT.

Television series have a significant place among the products of popular culture. In Turkey, there is an increase in the number of television series with the increase in the number of private television channels. Nowadays, besides being a tool of popular culture consumed by the viewers in order to spend their free times, television series have an impact on masses and influence daily life with their ideological structures and strong characters and plots. Furthermore, television series have become a tool of soft-power upon the countries to whom they are exported (especially the Arabic world).

Within the framework of the changing political scene after JDP's rise to power and the ideological structure of 'New Turkey', the content of these television series also has started to change and new nationalist-conservative television series in alignment with the ideological discourse of the state have started to emerge. According to Geer, this change can be explained by the political tendency. "Because the visibility of the religious discourse and narratives has increased and the tendency of becoming religious has been observed in the society in this context" (Geer, 2018).

In the latest series (in the years 2017 and 2018), one can easily stumble upon people in prayer, scenes where Koran is recited, religious discourses, and plots and characters repeating the ideological discourse of the state. The examples of these series include *Sen Anlat Karadeniz* (ATV), *Resurrection: Ertuğrul* (TRT), *İsimsizler* (Kanal D), *Söz* (Star TV), and *Savaşçı* (Fox TV).

A change in the content and broadcasting policies of TRT, a state television, can be observed in accordance with the political business cycles. It was previously observed that TRT had broadcasted content in alignment with the policies of the

incumbent governments of the time as TRT is a state-controlled channel. It had adopted a secular, Western, and modernist broadcasting policy in accordance with the previous state policies.

However, with JDP's rise to power, changes in TRT's broadcasting policy and an increase in the programs with 'conservative' content has been seen. As indicated by Karanfil and Eğılmez (2017), TRT follows a policy in alignment with the neo-Ottoman foreign policy of JDP with its newly-founded channels. "For the first time in its history, modern Turkey had turned its face to the Islamic based societies in its neighborhood and TRT was deployed to exert a cultural presence in the region" (Karanfil & Eğılmez, 2017).

The relationship between JDP and the media is mutually beneficial. While the owners of the media organizations which have close ties with the political power increase their economic profits with the aforementioned investments and tenders, JDP maintains and strengthens its hegemony by controlling the media, one of the vital factors in influencing the public which JDP needs in the building of 'New Turkey'.

CHAPTER IV

THE REPRESENTATION OF NATIONALIST DISCOURSES IN TELEVISION SERIES: THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF *İSİMSİZLER* (THE NAMELESS SQUAD), *SÖZ* (THE PROMISE), AND *SAVAŞÇI* (THE WARRIOR)

In this chapter of the thesis, we will analyze three militaristic television series depicting the fight against terrorism all of which were started to be aired in a two-week time period in the mainstream media. These series are *İsimsizler* (2017, The Nameless Squad) aired on Kanal D, *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın* (2017, The Promise: Rest Assured) broadcasted on Star TV, and *Savaşçı* (2017, The Warrior) aired on Fox TV. We will discuss the role of these series as products of the popular culture in nationalism, the construction of 'New Turkey's future, and nation-building in 'New Turkey' by using qualitative research methods and thematic analysis while analyzing these series. Before proceeding with the analysis, however, we believe it is vital to recapitulate the method and the methodology to be used throughout the analysis.

4.1 A Note on Methodology

At this point, it would be crucial to discuss certain determining factors in the sampling process. While selecting the television series to be analyzed, their popularity, which includes primarily the ratings, the average number of viewers, and the average number of likes in social media, and their reaching to a large audience are taken into consideration. In addition, all three series being aired in the mainstream media networks is also an essential criterion. Besides, the similar themes handled in their plot lines is another significant factor. Finally, being aired within the same time period contributed to the decision of choosing these series for the research.

The examples given in the thesis are *İsimsizler* aired on Kanal D, *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın* broadcasted on Star TV, and *Savaşçı* aired on Fox TV. These series are among the most-watched and most-followed as far as their ratings and the number of viewers of their episodes, the number of viewers of episodes uploaded on their official sites or YouTube, and the number of likes on social media are concerned.

Aired on Kanal D and having the lowest ratings among the three series to be analyzed in the thesis, *İsimsizler* was concluded and ranked averagely 8th on rating lists after 27 episodes. With an average rating of 4.28%, the average number of viewers for each episode was 3.46 million. At the same time, every episode uploaded on Kanal D's official website except for two has been viewed by more than 1 million people. However, the series does not have an official YouTube account and, therefore, the episodes are not available on this platform. 190,000 Facebook users have liked the official page of the series.

For the latest 50 episodes of the series *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın* aired on Star TV, the average ranking is 1.3 while the average rating is 9.3%. This rating signifies on an average 7.62 million viewers for a single episode. All episodes uploaded on Star TV's official website except for two have had more than 400,000 viewers; nine of these episodes have exceeded the threshold of 1 million viewers. The official YouTube channel for the series has 1.9 million subscribers and the episodes are uploaded on this platform along with the channel's official site. 286,000 users have liked the official Facebook page of the series.

The ranking for all the episodes so far of the series *Savaşçı* aired on Fox TV is on an average 1.5 with an average rating of 7.07%. On average, 5.71 million people watched a single episode of the series. The episodes are uploaded on Fox TV's official website, however, no information regarding the number of viewers is given. There is also an official YouTube account of the series; it has 278,000 subscribers. 101,000 users have liked the official Facebook page of the series.

Another factor bringing these three series into the forefront is their almost exact central themes. The themes foregrounded in these series are Turkish-Islamic

synthesis, the consecration of the flag and martyrdom, internal and external enemies, the representation of 'us' and 'them', the attitude of the local community, the power of the state, and the heroism of the military.

These three series, in addition to having these similar themes, were started to be broadcasted on mainstream television networks within the same time period of 15 days. *İsimsizler* started airing on March 27, 2018, *Söz* on April 3, 2017, and *Savaşçı* on April 9, 2017. Among these series, *İsimsizler* was concluded on December 17, 2017; the remaining two are ongoing series.

İsimsizler, the only series to be concluded, has a total of 27 episodes. *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın* has a total of 50 episodes with its season finale aired. As for *Savaşçı*, 48 episodes along with a season finale have been aired as of the date in which this thesis was written. Except for the concluded series *İsimsizler*, the remaining series *Söz* and *Savaşçı* are renewed to be aired in the new broadcast season.

After gathering general information about the series, scanning the news stories regarding the series published before they were aired, and establishing a general framework concerning the plot lines, the first three episodes of these three series were analyzed with the qualitative research method and thematic analysis. A general evaluation of these three series will be made and common points will be underscored after examples are provided within the framework of the designated themes. Much as the dates in which the series were aired for the first time are close, the information regarding these three series under will be provided under respective titles in the order of broadcasting dates. First, examples from *İsimsizler* will be given, followed by examples from *Söz* and *Savaşçı*, respectively. As the three series capture the main theme and reveal the protagonists and the roles these characters play within the plot line in their first three episodes, these episodes were analyzed. The following episodes of each series revolve around the plot line presented in the first three episodes and the new conflicts between the protagonists and the designated internal-external enemies. In brief, as the first three episodes of these series provide the sufficient material in order to determine

the main plot lines, protagonists, the internal-external enemies created, and themes and to comprehend the relation between these series and 'New Turkey' nationalism, it was decided to watch these episodes for the analysis.

The consistency of the analyses based on the plotlines and themes of *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı* was confirmed by watching the remaining episodes in alignment with the designated selection method. The other episodes were viewed with respect to the control of the designated themes, protagonists, and the internal-external enemies created. Within the scope of this selection method, the control group was formed by watching every fourth episode following the third episode. In this context, the 7th, 11th, 15th, 19th, 23rd, and 27th episodes of *İsimsizler*, the 27th being the final episode, were watched in order to verify the analysis. The 7th, 11th, 15th, 19th, 23rd, 27th, 31st, 35th, 39th, 43rd, and 47th episodes of the series *Söz* and *Savaşçı* were viewed with the same purpose.

4.2 General Information About the Series

İsimsizler, one of the series to be analyzed, was first aired on Kanal D on March 27, 2017. Co-produced by Es Film and Barakuda Film, the series was dedicated Muhammed Fatih Safitürk, the former district governor of Derik, Mardin who was killed in the explosion of a bomb made and planted in his office by PKK. Unlike other politically-charged action series, it begins with the following sentence: "Real events which took place during the fight for the homeland are depicted in this series".



Figure 1: A Scene From the *İsimsizler* TV Series – Generic I

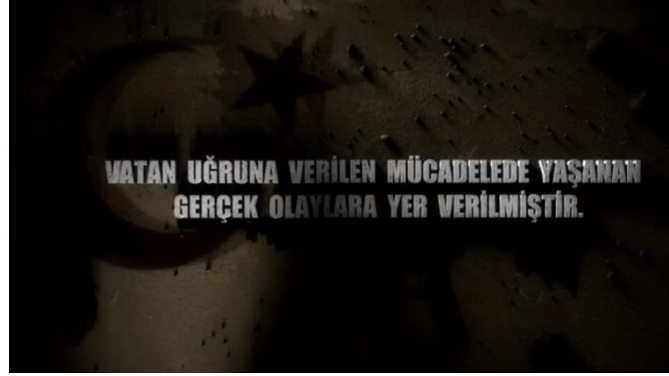


Figure 2: A Scene From the *İsimsizler* TV Series – Generic II

The setting for the series is a fictional town named Virankaya. According to the information provided in Kanal D's official website, Virankaya is a strategic settlement with a population of 32,400 inhabitants located in Southeastern Anatolia, on the Syrian border. The district governor of Virankaya dies following an explosion in his office due to a bomb made and planted by the terrorist organization. A brilliant diplomat named Fatih waives a post in Switzerland and voluntarily goes to Virankaya as the new district governor. The series narrates the fight of Fatih and the squad of seven people created by him against the internal and external enemies in the region. This squad is named 'İsimsizler' it is lead by Fatih, the district governor of Virankaya. Other characters include an exemplary police officer with the nickname *Dayı* (The Uncle), another officer trained by *Dayı*, a chief of police, an intelligence officer, a soldier previously discharged from the army during Operation Ergenekon, and a local working as the driver of the district governor.

Es Film, one of the producers of the series, has also produced an Ottoman crime series called *Filinta* and a historical drama based on the life of Abdulhamid II eponymously titled *Payitaht Abdülhamid*, both of which were aired on TRT. In Es Film's website, there is a statement which goes as follows: "Our projects are created by sensitive people who are able to hear the whispers of history and who

bring light upon the present day inspired by the past” (esfilm.com.tr, 24 July 2018). On the same website, it is stated that four Gendarmerie Special Operations teams and one Police Special Operations team have both taken place in the series itself and coached the cast for the combat scenes while shooting *İsimsizler*. Furthermore, many authorities ranging from Süleyman Soylu, the incumbent Minister of the Interior, to the Gendarmerie General Command and the General Directorate of Security were included in the acknowledgments. For the reasons mentioned above, it can be said that the series is supported on a state level. Mete Yarar, a public personality appearing on television as a specialist on terrorism, consulted for the series.

Uğur Güneş (Fatih, the district governor) portrays the protagonist of the series. He comes to Virankaya, the setting of the series and a fictional settlement on the Syrian border, voluntarily to replace the former district governor after he had been killed by ‘the terrorist organization’ with a bomb planted in its office at the beginning of the series. Not only does he undertake administrative tasks in the district, he also carries out military operations with his teammates in order to eliminate terror in the region.

Another important character in the series Dayı, portrayed by Bülent Alkış. Dayı has become a legend among the police forces with the operations he had conducted and with his sharpshooting skills. Traces of Turkish-Islamic synthesis can be found in the discourse of this character. In both the poems he recites throughout the series and his various discourses, this ideology can be traced.

Murat Gürcan, portrayed by Çağkan Çulha, is a police officer of Kurdish origin whom Dayı started training in his early childhood and then got into his team. He takes part in the operations alongside Dayı.

As for Derman (Musab Ekici), the driver of District Governor Fatih, is a local and is portrayed as a person loyal to the state.

Having aired for the first time on March 27, 2017, the series was concluded after 27 episodes. It is the only series to be canceled among the three militaristic television series depicting the fight against terrorism to be analyzed in the thesis.

Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın is aired on Star TV and produced by TIMS&B Productions, who also produced *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* (The Magnificent Century) and *Muhteşem Yüzyıl: Kösem* (The Magnificent Century: Kösem). Through handovers, Star TV became known as a television network having close ties with the government.



Figure 3: A Scene From *SöZ* TV Series - Generic

The plotline of the series revolves around the efforts of a team consisting of elite special operations soldiers in order to annihilate a terrorist organization harming Turkey. The soldiers undertake operations and fight against groups depicted as enemies.

The protagonist of the series is Senior Lieutenant Yavuz Karasu (Tolga Saritaş), the commander leading the team conducting against terrorist organizations in the region. At the very beginning of the series, he loses his fiancée in an attack made by the terrorist organization at a shopping center in Istanbul. Then, he becomes the leader of the team formed to defeat the terrorist organization in the region, leading it during operations.

Another important character is Bahar Kutlu (Aybüke Pusat). Initially working as a doctor in her mother's hospital, Bahar Kutlu meets Senior Lieutenant Karasu in this hospital as his fiancée dies. Learning about the need for doctors in the region which is the setting of the series, she leaves her mother's hospital to work voluntarily in this region.

Staff Sergeant Fethi Kulaksız (Burak Sevinç), Staff Sergeant Mücahit Serdengeçti (Görkem Sevindik), Sergeant Major Ateş Acar (Eren Vurdem), and Specialized Sergeant Feyzullah Altıparmak (Aytaç Şaşmaz) are the other characters in Senior Lieutenant Karasu's team conducting operations against the terrorist organization in the region.

Its first episode aired on Star TV on April 3, 2017, *Söz: Gözün Arkada Kalmasın* has 50 episodes as of the date in which the thesis was written and it is still being aired.

Savaşçı is the latest series to be aired among the three militarist series depicting the fight against terrorism. The series is produced by Limon Film and aired on Fox TV.

Although not explicitly stated in the series, the series is about a colonel previously arrested during the operation Ergenekon or Balyoz who is asked to recruit a counter-terrorism group to fight against terrorists plotting to take advantage of the chaotic atmosphere created after the attempted coup of July 15 and the team's fight against these terrorist groups. The team, consisting of special operations soldiers (i.e. the maroon berets), is named as 'Kılıç Timi (Team Sword)'. According to the information given in Limon Film's website, "Kılıç Timi will operate wherever the homeland needs it; it will be Turkey's clenched fist and strong wrist... For them, if the homeland is at stake, the rest merely trivial" (limonproduction.com.tr, 24 July 2018).

As it is the case with the other series, the characters are members of the armed forces. The protagonist of the series is Captain Kağan Bozok (Berk Oktay), the head of the operation team 'Kılıç Timi' which undertakes operations and fights against the terrorist group in the region.

Another significant character is Colonel Halil İbrahim Kopuz (Murat Serezli), the commander of Captain Kağan Bozok. Both of these characters are soldiers who were jailed within the scope of operations either Ergenekon or Balyoz. After the attempted coup d'état of July 15, 2016, also the starting date of the series' plotline, whose real footage is given in the series, Colonel Kopuz is remitted so he can recruit

a team to fight against terrorist groups. He assigned Captain Bozok as the commander of this team.

Characters such as Lieutenant Serdar Türkmen (Fırat Albayram), Command Sergeant Major Bayram Bayat (Burç Kümbetlioğlu), Master Sergeant Emre Durmuş (Uğur Biçer), Master Sergeant Galip Aygün (Bahadır Vatanoğlu) are the members of this team led by Captain Bozok fighting against terrorism in the region.

Having started to be aired on Fox TV on April 9, 2017, *Savaşçı* has 48 episodes as of the date in which this thesis was written and it is still aired on Fox TV.

There are similarities between *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı*, the series analyzed within the scope of this thesis, in both plot lines and characters.

The settings of the series are all regions on the borders located in Southeastern Turkey and the topics handled are domestic and cross-border operations. All of the three series narrate the fight of armed teams formed against a certain terrorist organization.

There are also many common points between the characters. The primary common point is that all protagonists are leaders of military teams formed to counter designated 'terrorist groups'. As for the other characters, another common point is that they are members of the armed forces. In brief, all of the three series recount the story of members of armed forces fighting against a certain 'terrorist organization'.

The difference between these series is that *İsimsizler* has a District Governor and the police as armed characters while soldiers are the only armed characters in the other two series.

The opening scenes for each series are crucial as they attract the attention of viewers and show the main focus of the series. All three of the series have selected an operation scene for their opening sequences. While there are two sides in the armed conflict, the camera focuses on 'us' and the plot line is given from 'our' point of view. The entity of 'they' is presented as the adversary. Without any exception, a scene of armed conflict in the opening sequence, in a way, demonstrates the 'us vs. them' distinction to the audience.

4.3 The Analysis of Nationalist Themes in TV Series

4.3.1 Turkish-Islamic Synthesis

Turkish-Islamic synthesis is not as apparent in *Söz* and *Savaşçı* as it is in *İsimsizler*. In these two series, the synthesis manifests itself in the funeral scenes, however, these scenes are blended with the consecration of the flag and martyrdom. Turkish-Islamic synthesis is more prominent in *İsimsizler* aired on Kanal D.

For instance, the first scene of the first episode, while the armed conflict between 'terrorists' wearing keffiyehs and using Kalashnikovs and 'us' in the series, the following lines are recited by the character named Dayı: "*We are ready to be martyred and to reach Heaven. We entrust true heroes wrapped in the flag with the star and the crescent to earth. The first rule here is to live. None of us is Rambo. We are Ahmet, Mehmet, Fatih, the future... Those bastards have guns, you also have guns. But you are always superior to them. Because your mothers sent you here with their prayers. If you have no mothers, there is a whole nation praying for you. You have your love for the homeland, you believe in Allah, you have your faith. It is said in the Quran. If you believe, Allah hits the target when you pull the trigger with faith. Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.*"



Figure 4: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series
Praying Soldiers I



Figure 5: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series
Praying Soldiers II

While these lines are heard, a hand wearing a police ring about to pull a trigger, a praying woman, and a person waving the Turkish flag can be seen in the scene. The speech made in the first scene of the series made by a character shown to be a

role model tells a lot to its audience in an ideological sense. We observe the consecration of the flag and the rank of martyrdom. It is told to the audience that dying for the flag (i.e. the homeland) is something to be esteemed. The support of the nation for the soldiers and police officers fighting against 'terrorists' is foregrounded. Something being written in the Quran and Allah hitting the target when one has faith are religious references and sanctify this fight by adding a religious dimension to it. Dayı lists the three most important concepts as "the love for the homeland, the belief in Allah, and the faith. The consecration of the flag, the flag shown in the opening scene, the mention of the love for the homeland, and the emphasis on Allah, prayers, and Quran provide an example of Turkish-Islamic synthesis. Dayı, portrayed as a role model for the police, is a patriotic, nationalist, and religious character as he ought to be according to the synthesis.

Turkish-Islamic synthesis is a prominent and apparent concept in *İsimsizler*. For example, the newly-appointed police officer upon whom Fatih stumbles at the airport utters the following sentence: *"Above anything else, I love my homeland, my adhan, and my flag."*

Another example of Turkish-Islamic synthesis can be seen, once again, in Dayı's lines. Dayı gives advice to new police officers: *"Understand its meaning well. Whenever you reach for the grip of the gun, remember why you draw it!"* Here, using guns to protect the homeland is normalized. Then, he recites a poem by Yahya Kemal Beyatlı: *"Şu kopan fırtına Türk ordusudur yarabbi / Senin uğrunda ölen ordu budur yarabbi / Ta ki ezanla yükselsin müeyyed namın / Galib et; çünkü bu son ordusudur İslam'ın"* (Good God! That storm breaking out is the Turkish army / Good God! This is the army dying for your name / May your righteous name rise with the adhan / Make them victorious for this is the last army of Islam). The poem advised by Dayı to never be forgotten and to be remembered whenever these newbie police officers reach for their guns for the homeland states that those who have dies for their homeland are martyred and presents the Turkish army as the army of Islam.



Figure 6: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series – Funeral Rites

In *İsimsizler*, the lyrics of the song played during scenes of operations and armed conflicts manifest clearly the Turkist point of view of the series. The song used in these scenes is named “Türk Kanı (Turkish Blood) and it was written by the Kazakh band Er Turan. The dominant Turkish-Islamic ideology in the series also becomes apparent upon translating the lyrics into either Turkish or English: “*Geri dönsün ulu günler / Hun’un Allah ömrünü ver / Bölüneni kurtlar yiyor / Birleşiniz, birleşin sizler... Kime gerek yetim başın / Yurdun için doğrulasın / Turan oğlu gevşemesin / Turan tuğu yere yığılmasın... Kimler seni zapt edebilir / Er İdil’in dölleri / Yeniden doğan Alp yiğit / Yeniden coşar Türk kanı*” (*May the great days come back / May Allah give life to Hun / The wolves devour the separated / Unite, unite, all of you... Why be all alone / May you rise for your homeland / May the son of Turan never fade / May the son of Turan never fall to the ground... Which man can ever defeat you / O the spawns of Er İdil / Hero reborn / Overflows once again the Turkish blood*)

In *Söz*, one of the characters is named Hafız. A military officer in Senior Lieutenant Karasu’s team, Hafız is a character with a significant amount of religious references. His name is the first remarkable aspect. According to the dictionary in

the Turkish Language Association's website, the word 'hafız' means "a person who has memorized the Quran in its entirety" (tdk.gov.tr, 24 April 2018). After a scene in which Hafız argues with his spouse, he performs the salaah and at the end of the salaah, he prays to Allah for getting rid of his problems. As Hafız is both a soldier and an individual with intense piety, he is seen to be reflection Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

4.3.2 Consecration of the Flag and Martyrdom

One of the common points of the three militaristic television series depicting the fight against terrorism is the consecration of the flag with the star and the crescent, the symbol of the Republic of Turkey, and martyrdom, i.e. dying while fighting for the country.

The flag, in particular, is sanctified and fetishized as a symbol worthy of one's life, something to be protected and fought for. Because of the values it carries, the flag is being consecrated as the most valuable being in all three series.

Martyrdom and being martyred is exalted with the blending of nationalist and Islamic sentiments. The martyrs die for the sake of the flag. However, through the aforementioned exaltations, dying in war is seemingly normalized with television series, which are products of popular culture. This renders the opposition ineffective regarding the possible death of soldiers in 'New Turkey' aiming to gain control over former Ottoman territories and conducting cross-border operations for that purpose. Because through these series with high ratings, dying for one's flag is being consecrated and being martyred is thus presented as the highest rank one can ever achieve.

For example, there is a flashback scene of Fatih and a soldier in his team. In this flashback, a group chanting slogans like "*Freedom to the peoples! Turkey the Murderer!*" attempts to burn the Turkish flag. Fatih and two other people assault the group and save the flag. When the flashback is over, we see in the scene that this flag saved from the protesters is hanged on the wall of the soldier in the group saving it.



Figure 7: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series – Flashback Flag Scene

Traditionally, the coffins of those who are martyred are wrapped in the Turkish flag. In a funeral scene of a person died or martyred in battle, his letter to his mother is recited. The letter goes as follows: *“Do not say that I died. Allah commands ‘Do not say the martyrs are dead’. Do not say ‘My dear Ersan is dead’. Say that I went to sleep with his head on the Prophet's knee. Say that I accompany Husayn ibn Ali. Say that I am going to meet my grandfather, martyred in Çanakkale. But do not say that I am dead. Be proud of me, mother. Say that I have colored the red flag with my blood. Say that my bright light shines along with the crescent of the flag, mother. Remember me whenever you see the flag... Say ‘May the homeland shall prevail’, mother.”* Then, Dayı says *“Allahuaqbar, Allahuaqbar”* and carries the coffin accompanied by every member of the armed forces. In these scenes, the death of individuals fighting for the homeland is normalized and even sanctified with religious references. Furthermore, historical allusions are made and the flag is consecrated as the metaphor created with the red color of the flag and the blood of the martyrs is perpetuated.



Figure 8 : A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series
Martyr Funeral



Figure 9: A Scene From *Söz* TV Series
Martyr Funeral

As for *Söz*, the first scene of the first episode starts with the killing of a soldier in a battle and his commander delivering the news to his family. The place in which the family lives is seen and the narrator recounts the scene in which the news is delivered: *“Look at the grave look on his face. On one hand, there is the pain of losing his child. On the other hand, there is the pride of his son being martyred... He will not shed a single tear. This means ‘You cannot defeat us’. The homeland counts on you. May you count on Allah. Our neighbors, my childhood friends, all my relative will want to make it known that there is a martyr from our village. The whole village will be decorated with Turkish flags. Each flag a symbol of pride... Do not be misled by their tears, they are all proud.”* First, a flag is hanged outside the home of the martyr’s family; then, each household in the region is seen to hang flags outside their homes. At the end of the scene, the body of the martyr is covered with the flag.

The flag is therefore consecrated and dying for the homeland and thus being martyred is presented as a normal event to be esteemed. As the flag is a sacred object, it is hanged outside houses and used as a cover for the martyr’s body. It is also presented as a unifying factor for the citizens living in the country with everyone hanging flags outside their homes upon receiving the grave news.

In another scene, a commander is seen showing a soldier the Turkish flag and asking him some questions: *“Do you know what this is?”* Soldier: *“Everything I live for.”* Commander: *“Do you know what does it do? Let me tell you. It unifies people regardless of their beliefs, races, and colors. It makes us thankful for being able to wake up as free individuals. It reminds us that there are still many things to die for.”*

It reminds us of hundreds of thousands of martyrs died to keep this flag flying at the top of the highest peak. Above anything else, it makes you a conscientious, just, lawful soldier.”

The flag is consecrated as a symbol so valuable that it keeps people united, liberates them, and is worth dying for. The viewers are subjected to the thought that martyrs, i.e. people dying for the country, sacrifice their lives for the flag to fly evermore.

As for *Savaşçı*, the most prominent element in the series may be the consecration of the flag and martyrdom. In one scene, the civilians do not believe the words of the soldier saying that he will take part in a cross-border operation and block his way out of the military zone with flags in their hands. The Captain speaks as follows: *“The border means honor, the flag means honor. I protect my honor. Those who seek to stop me pay the price. I will not point my gun at you. A Turkish soldier would never point his gun at you. But he protects the border, he protects his honor”*.

In another scene, the viewer sees that a Turkish soldier shoots and kills a ‘terrorist’ upon seeing a group of ‘terrorists’ gathered in a settlement who are about to burn the Turkish flag. The scene continues as the soldier kisses the flag he saved from being burned, presses it into his chest, and wants to raise it up to the flagpole. However, as the ‘terrorist organization’ set up a trap near the flagpole, a bomb explodes as the soldier raises the flag, leading to his death. Later in the scene, his friends raise the flag covered in the martyred soldier’s blood and salute it. A song is played while the scene goes on. The lyrics to the song are as follows: *“Sana sıkılan kurşun ciğerime saplanır / Bilmem bu acı nasıl yüreğimde saklanır / Can verdiğin bayrağım tabutuna sarılmış / Sana yüce yaradan cennetten yer ayırmış / Sen her şeye değersin milletimin göğsünde (The bullet aimed at you pierces my lungs / How to hide this pain in my heart, I do not know / My flag you gave your life covers your coffin / The Almighty Creator has a place in Heaven just for you / You are worthy everything in the hearts of my nation)”* The metaphor of the flag being

colored by the blood of the martyred soldiers is reminded to the audiences. The flag is consecrated as an object to die for and being martyred is normalized.



Figure 10: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series – Flag Scene I



Figure 11: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series - Flag Scene II

4.3.3 Internal and External Enemies

'We' define ourselves through 'the other'. For that reason, the designation of the 'other', i.e. the person/group which is not us, gathers people together on the basis of having a common friend or a common enemy by defining the identity of 'we'. This is one of the major factors making societies nations.

The enemy is the person/group from which one needs to protect themselves and against which one must act. The series *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı* shows to/indoctrinates the audience the identities of internal and external enemies. These internal and external enemies are similar in these three series. In other words, certain/similar groups are presented to the audience as the enemies. The symbolizations of these enemy groups are also the same. The internal enemy depicted in all of the three series are groups symbolizing PKK and FETÖ in real life while external enemies are their 'alleged' allies, the United States and Western countries. These 'enemies' collaborate with one another in the series and gather around the purpose of dividing-harming Turkey.

İsimsizler identifies the enemy and shows this identification to the audience in an explicit manner. We can say that the groups symbolized in the series as enemies

are in reality the same ones against which the state and the armed forces fight. It is possible to categorize enemies symbolized in the series as internal and external enemies. However, these internal and external enemies do not fight against one another but act together and collaborate in a coordinated manner in order to divide and harm Turkey and to spark a civil war. The 'enemy' groups against which the District Governor and his team fight are as follows: the Kurdish movement aiming to have an independent country through armed conflict (PKK); the political party aiding them and even racing in the elections with its benediction (HDP); the religious group weakening the country particularly in terms of intelligence by infiltrating the state and the police, aiding other terrorist groups, and using religion to achieve these goals (FETÖ); other countries (external powers) supporting the armed Kurdish movement, collaborating with FETÖ, and supporting these groups with guns, ammunition, and political influence.

A conversation between the District Governor and his superior and another between the group symbolizing PKK and 'external powers' summarize the situation. Superior: *"Those who claim to be allies work hand in glove with the organization. The organization's encampments are visited by many. But who knows who they are. They have an alliance just like the Crusaders. They already have great political influence over the region. Their influence spreads from Morocco to the Caspian Basin, Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine. One by one, they divide nation-states."* While this conversation continues, a scene in which the members of the terrorist organization and officials coming from foreign countries meet in the 'terrorist organization's camps and shake hands is shown to the audience. After this conversation between the District Governor and his superior, another conversation between the 'terrorist' and the officials from foreign countries is given and the 'terrorist' says: *"The gains we have acquired are pleasing for both sides. But this is not enough. Without connecting Manbij and Afrin, you cannot get what you want, neither can us."* One of the foreigners continues as follows: *"There is no need to be this pessimistic. You are closer than ever to establish an independent state. We completely support you on the political aspect of your cause."* Terrorist: *"A state like the Turkish Republic is*

hard to overthrow through politics. We need to destabilize it and spark a civil war. Besides, you need to reinforce our armies as well... You just want to have a cost-efficient army to protect your energy lines.” Foreigner: “A country in exchange for a simple task of protection.”



Figure 12: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series – ‘Internal and External Enemies’ Cooperation

At this point, a correspondence is tried to be established between the events given in the plot line and the real-life events. The ‘enemies’ presented to the public by politicians, news programs, and newspapers match up with the ones designated within the plot line of the series. In this respect, these series seem to reflect the official discourse. Foreign allied countries are shown in the series negotiating with the ‘terrorist organization’ aiming to establish an independent country by dividing Turkey in order to secure their own energy lines and provide arms and ammunition for the organization. Thus, it is necessary to enter into armed conflict against the terrorist organization to preserve the integrity of the country. Through the series, a product of popular culture, the opinions of the opposition against the armed struggle of the state in order to secure its borders are suppressed and this struggle is legitimized in the viewers’ minds.

Another dialog between the Kurdish armed forces and foreign powers is as follows: Terrorist: *“We need to declare self-governance in Virankaya before the*

Republic recovers from the assassination of the district governor.” Foreigner: “Do not worry. Our guest in Pennsylvania and his loved ones would not spare their contributions to your cause.” This scene shows the audience that FETÖ also collaborates with other ‘terror groups’ aiming to divide Turkey.

Another scene shows Kurdish forces planning an attack on the city center. A character working as a doctor for an international humanitarian aid organization provides tactical support for the individuals plotting the attack. Guns and ammunition are carried to houses in the city center with the garbage trucks of the municipality. One of the conflict scenes shows the audience the Doctor pointing a gun at the police and the soldiers. After the confrontation, the District Governor says: *“What were we doing while all these terrorists were infiltrating the city? The conflict happens right in the middle of the city, not in the mountains.”* The chief of police responds: *“These [supporters of the parallel state structure] erased the list of informers in the terrorist organization before being ousted.”*

Another scene depicts a police officer ‘who supports FETÖ’ entering into the hospital ward where a ‘terrorist’ arrested after the conflict is being treated and leaving the keys to unlock his handcuffs. Having got rid of the shackles, the ‘terrorist’ hides in the youth center of the municipality and then is evacuated by a member of the parliament and the mayor with the car of the MP. In this scene, different groups, all of them being enemies of Turkey are seen to be collaborating in order to harm Turkey. The struggle against this collaboration is thus legitimized and the state is sanctified as the protector of the people. The message is clear: What falls on the people’s shoulders is to remain in unity and solidarity against the forces plotting together to divide Turkey and to support their state and its policies.

In a scene of the second episode, the alliance of the enemies of Turkey is clearly shown to the audience. In the series’ plotline, the Kurdish armed forces and the Doctor make plans to plot a suicide bombing during Nowruz celebrations and frame Turkey for the attack. According to this plan, the Doctor meets with a police commander supporting FETÖ infiltrated the police force and delivers him the bomb he had prepared in the terrorist’s hiding place disguised as the headquarters of a

charity organization. This police commanders get the bomb out of the box with the name of the aforementioned charity and gives him to a police officer who, like himself, supports FETÖ and says: *“We have to ally with the those who are enemies of this system aiming to destroy us.”* The suicide bomber receives a message on his cell phone while leaving the house to make the attack: *“The Master prays for you. Our Master saw you strolling through the gardens of Heaven in his dream.”*

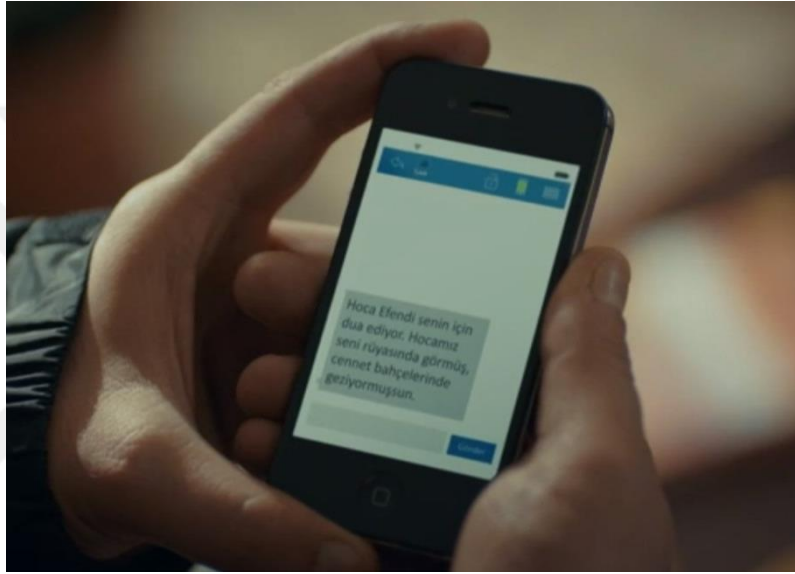


Figure 13: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series - SMS

By showing who ‘the other’ is, the series defines ‘us’ and indoctrinate the audience with the necessity of us fighting against the other. Thus, it is shown that we need to be in unity and solidarity with nationalist sentiments for a strong state in ‘New Turkey’ and to support the state policies.

The symbolization of the enemy in *Söz* is not as clear and diverse as it is in *İsimsizler*. However, as it is the case in *İsimsizler*, there is the imagination of an enemy supported by external powers in order to harm Turkey.

One of the initial scenes of the series shows the terrorist organization launching an armed/bombing attack at a shopping mall in Istanbul and killing civilians. In this attack, Senior Lieutenant Karasu’s fiancée, to whom he had proposed to marry, is

also killed. The following scenes depicting the burial of his fiancée are accompanied by the voices of adhan and verses recited from the Quran. A commander says: *“They brought the war into the cities. They target civilians. As Köse (the leader of the terrorist group) is cornered, he started seeing red.”*

This scene shows the viewers the cruelty of the enemies of Turkey attacking cities and the necessity to fight back in order to prevent such atrocities. As for the bombs detonated in cities, they are described as the final struggles of the terrorist organization cornered with counter-terrorism operations. The terrorist organization is capable of attacking civilians to cause harm, kidnapping the commander’s daughter and publishing videos in which they threaten to kill her, killing a child from the local people, and setting bombed traps against soldiers.

The idea of the ‘assumed’ allies supporting the terrorist organization is prominent in this series as well. In one scene, while conversing about Çolak, the person leading the terrorist group, one of the commanders asks: *“Who is behind this man?”* The other commander replies: *“Terrorist organizations are the most expensive toys in the world... If [this terrorist organization] troubles us, our ‘friends and allies’ are behind him.”* In another scene, Çolak is seen buying heat-seeking missiles from a foreign man to use against Turkey. The commander describing the situation during the meeting held before an operation says: *“The Western world aided Çolak greatly. First, he started controlling the trade of the heroin imported from Afghanistan. He became rich. Our presence in Syria bothers many countries. These countries use Çolak against us. This man will buy heat-seeking missiles from his beloved Western countries tomorrow. In fact, he will buy these from our friends.”* Another soldier replies in a sarcastic manner as follows: *“They insist on bringing peace to the Middle East, sir.”*



Figure 14: A Scene From *İsimsizler* TV Series – Representation of the ‘Enemy’

The series conveys the idea that the Western world, against Turkey and its interests, do not want a strong Turkey and thus support terrorist organizations against Turkey.

As for *Savaşçı*, we can see the designated internal and external enemies in the first scenes of the series. The starting date of the events taking place in the series is given as July 15, 2016. On this date, FETÖ unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow the government with a coup. Then, the real footage of the failed coup in which tanks crush cars, helicopters fire at civilians, and people go on the streets with flags is shown to the viewers. The Captain asks the Colonel: *“What do you think?”* The Colonel replies: *“I do not think anything. I just feel ashamed. I just feel ashamed as a soldier... They locked us here with unthinkable plots. Now, they attack the very state. These men are not soldiers. A man bombing his own people is not a soldier, he is a terrorist.”* Then, a high-ranking official orders the formation of a special team to fight against terrorist organizations seeking to take advantage of this chaotic atmosphere.

As the opening scene, this scene conveys many ideological thoughts to the viewer. Primarily, FETÖ is given as the enemy of the nation and the soldiers taking part in this failed coup are referred to as terrorists. Another ideological thought given in the series is that other enemies of Turkey benefit from the chaotic

atmosphere created by the attempted coup and that it is imperative to engage in armed struggle against these terrorist groups for Turkey.

Besides FETÖ, the other enemy group is the terrorist organization whose members are portrayed wearing keffiyehs and using Kalashnikovs, supported by foreign powers. Even though the name of this terrorist organization is not mentioned explicitly, it can be understood that the group symbolizes PKK. The terrorist organization in the series counter the development and the presence of Turkey in the region. One can observe this clearly in a scene in which the Captain's childhood is shown. The construction site where his father used to work is ambushed by the armed terrorist organization. The 'terrorist' says these words to the Captain's father before killing him: "I have told you thousands of times. The Republic of Turkey will not be present here. We do not want dams, roads, or bridges." Then, the terrorist organization executes several workers and set fire to the machinery used in the construction. This scene shows the audience that despite the investments of the state, the terrorist organization do not want the region to be developed and thus kill innocent workers. As for the foreign powers, they are seen providing weapons for the terrorist organization.

The designated internal and external enemies against which the state fights has common points in all of the three series analyzed in the thesis. In reality, these designated internal and external enemies are the reflections and repetitions of the official discourse. Through these series, which are products of popular culture, the official discourse gains a legitimate ground in the minds of viewers. Thus, the identity of the enemies of 'the nation' and the target of the struggle for a stronger country is presented to the audiences within the building process for 'New Turkey'. By this means, with the help of these series, the identity of 'them' is defined, leading to the definition of 'us', i.e. the nation of 'New Turkey'.

4.3.4 The Representation of 'Us' and 'Them'

In all of the three series, the distinction between 'us' and 'them' is transparently displayed to the viewer. Furthermore, the entities 'us' and 'them' are represented within certain stereotypes in these series. In general terms, one can claim that while the concept of 'us' always represent the good, 'they' always represent the bad.

By constructing the concepts of 'us' and 'them' within certain stereotypical representations, the series imprint these stereotypes into the viewer's mind. While watching these series, the viewer unconsciously feels obligated to pick a side within the framework of these stereotypical representations. As they create the stereotypes for 'us' and show 'us' the ideal way to act, these series also make their viewers a part of the concept of 'us', thus positioning them as one of the opposing sides rather than leaving them to be mere spectators.

For these reasons, it is significant how the concepts of 'us' and 'them' are presented/shown to the audience in all of the three series.

One common point of these three series that 'we' are represented as the figures who are strong, merciful, brave, willing to make sacrifices, and who have good friendships and family relations. As for 'them', 'they' are represented as ragged, unpleasant, merciless, and cunning characters.

In *İsimsizler*, terrorist organizations are capable of bombing their own people for personal gains, executing their comrades because of failure, trading heroin, and use children in their demonstrations. As for the police and the military, these individuals are willing to shield the child throwing them molotov cocktails so the child will not get hurt.

In *Söz*, Çolak, the leader of a terrorist group, tests the heat-seeking missiles he bought from a foreigner on a tractor on which there are innocent villagers. 'Terrorists' do not hesitate about killing civilians or children in order to achieve their goals. They usually wear keffiyehs around their heads and use Kalashnikovs as guns. When one of their members makes a mistake or fails a mission, they are not

reluctant to kill their own comrades. Çolak, for example, has killed his own wife and children and kills his nephew, who did not comply with his instructions.

In a scene from *Savaşçı*, as a terrorist executes innocent people one by one until he gets the answer he wants and is about to kill a child, a Turkish soldier comes to the rescue.



Figure 15: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series – Representation of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ I



Figure 16: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series– Representation of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ II

4.3.5 The Attitude of the Local Community

İsimsizler, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı* are set in Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia, on the Iraqi and Syrian borders. This region is given as the location where the military and the police fight against the terrorist groups represented in the series.

In the settings of these three series, the points of view/attitudes of the local people towards the characters or, in other words, towards 'us' and 'them', bear similarities. The locals are on 'our' side and regard the 'other' represented as the 'enemy' as their foe in all of the three series.

This case is significant as far as the legitimization of the real operations through these series, which are products of popular culture, in the minds of the audiences is concerned. In brief, one can say that according to these series, these operations against 'terrorist' groups are necessary in order to maintain peace and security for the inhabitants of the region and these inhabitants have no problems against these operations. Because 'we' are the protectors of the peace and the security in the region. Within this framework, it is vital to comprehend the attitudes of the local community in the series.

In *İsimsizler*, the local community seems to be pleased with the state but unhappy about the presence of the Kurdish armed forces. In one scene, the local tradespeople state that their situation is better when compared with the other side of the border. *"Their business is dead, so is ours. But they do not have a state, yet we have one, thankfully."* In another scene, a terrorist running away from conflict and taking shelter in a home takes a woman as a hostage in order to run away. The other woman says: *"The terrorist kidnapped my cousin."* Thus, it can be seen that the Kurdish armed forces are also 'terrorist' in the eyes of the local community in this TV series.

In the series, the associations with the local community are formed on the basis of a common past. For example, while the District Governor pays a visit to the municipal worker injured in an explosion and utters these lines to his child who is a 'terrorist' sympathizer: *"Your father is my brother, he was also the brother of the former district governor. Those so-called freedom fighters detonated the bomb for*

the same reason why the invaders attacked Kurdish and Turkish soldiers fighting alongside in Çanakkale. Orhan, the Turkish man, is dead. And look, your Kurdish father is injured. Who has won?"



Figure 17: A Scene From Söğüt TV Series – Local Community and Flag

In another scene, leaders of local clans are shown gathered to discuss after the suicide bombing. One of the leaders claims that the state points a gun at them. Another one objects to this claim, states that those who tried to detonate the bomb was not the state, and continues as follows: *“Those are not the state. The state is Alp Arslan, alongside whom we fought in the Battle of Manzikert. The state is Mustafa Kemal, who ordered his men to die alongside us. The state is Selim [Selim the Resolute or Selim I]. You know Selim, my fellow clan leaders. He was the one who carried the holy relics of our Prophet to Istanbul as the caliph and who left us here as their guardians. The state is Selim the Resolute.”*

Here, it is shown to the audience that the local community is on the state’s side and do not support the armed organizations. In addition, the common historical ties between the Kurdish people living in the region and the state are reminded and their duty to be loyal to the state is thus displayed.

In *Söz*, as well, the local community supports ‘us’ while being displeased with the presence of ‘them’. In one of the scenes, a commander asks a girl’s hand in marriage on behalf of a man from the village and invited to the wedding as the guest of honor. In another scene, a shepherd offers his own water to the soldiers recently returning from a conflict, shows a shortcut to their destination, and has them as guests in his house until morning. These scenes display the local community’s support of the state and the soldiers who are the representatives of the state.



Figure 18: A Scene From *Söz* TV Series – Marriage Ceremony

The same local community warns the soldiers of the group shown as a terrorist organization by saying *“The terrorists are coming”*. These groups are also terrorist organizations in the eyes of the local community... In another scene, a kid talking to an army intelligence officer says: *“Save us from those guys. They burned and pillaged, all of them. They killed my father.”* The military and, therefore, the state, are presented as the savior of the local community defending people against these terrorist groups.

4.3.6 The Power of the State and the Heroism of the Military

One of the common points of *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı* is that none of them presents to their audiences a possibility of failure or defeat of the soldiers and the police representing the state. The soldiers always succeed against the enemy and survive even the most critical situations either with their personal heroism or with the help of their friends arriving just in time. Whatever the conditions may be, the representatives of the state always emerge victorious in the series; the state teams with the people by fighting the enemy and protecting its citizens.

The characters, the soldiers and police officers, are well-trained and capable of fighting dozens of enemies by themselves. All of them are ready to give their lives for their homeland. This reassures the local community of their future safety as the state secures the future of the region with the help of ‘gallant’ soldiers and police officers.



Figure 19: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series – Heroism of the Military I



Figure 20: A Scene From *Savaşçı* TV Series – Heroism of the Military II

For example, in a scene in *Savaşçı*, the soldiers conducting an operation point their guns to the sky and recite the Turkish Commando Oath in unison. This oath is known for its vivid depiction of the heroism of the Turkish military. The lyrics to the song are as follows: *“Korku nedir bilmeyiz / Biz dağların erleri / Yuva yaptık göklere / Baş döndüren yerlere / Engel tanımaz aşarız / Yüce engin dağları / El verir uzanırız / Mor siyah bulutlara / Ben Türk komandosuyum / Düşmanı çelik pençemle ezerim / Her yerde ben varım / Havada / Karada / Denizde / Çölde / Batakta / Çatakta / Her zaman ve her yerde / Allah Türk komandosunu korusun / Amin (We do not know what fear is / We the privates of the mountains / We have made homes at skies / To dazzling places / We proceed, no obstacle can stop us / Not even great mountains / Together we reach with our hands / The clouds purple and black / I am the Turkish commando / Crushing the enemy with my steel claw / I am everywhere / At the skies / On land / At sea / At the desert / At the marshes / In the streams / Anytime, anywhere / May Allah bless the Turkish commando / Amen)”*

Another scene shows the Turkish soldier being heroized by the ‘terrorist’ himself: The ‘Terrorist’: *“You do not see? They are the maroon berets. Special forces. Okay, you can assault them. You can even kill a few of them. But the remaining will annihilate all your men. Not only them but also you and me.”* In this scene, the heroism of the military and its power to crush the enemy are foregrounded.

In another scene, a wounded soldier calls his commander to his room and wants him to make him recite the Special Forces Oath; two soldiers salute each other and recite the Oath together.

4.4 Media, Popular Culture, Nationalism: A Brief Discussion Regarding the Analysis

Television is among the most significant socialization tools for masses in their daily lives outside of working hours. As for television series, they are one of the most common formats in television broadcasting. For that reason, television series blended with the nationalist ideology help spreading this ideology in the daily course of events through televisions in the homes of the viewers.

In this chapter of the thesis, we analyzed the selected series from a thematic perspective. We discussed which issues acquire currency on a regular basis, how these issues can be related to Turkey's political and cultural agenda, and how these mainstream series analyzed in the thesis contribute to the dissemination of the ideological discourse. At this stage, we believe that it is necessary to briefly mention the relationship between the media, popular culture, and politics and to develop an argument regarding the analysis made above while doing so.

According to Oktay, "the most effective and the most implicit" propaganda is broadcasted via mass media. "The dominant stereotypes reinforcing consensuses such as nation, family, heroism, sense of duty, masculinity, and work are internalized by the masses thanks to these media" (Oktay, 1993; p. 30-31). We observe that certain stereotypes are produced through the latent propaganda in *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı*, television series and products of popular culture. All three series have plot lines which reproduce the dominant ideological discourse; these plotlines contribute to the legitimization of this ideology in the viewers' minds through the series. As far as the general structure of the series is concerned, the designated sides of 'us' and 'them' created the series are represented within the framework of certain stereotypes. With these stereotypes, the ideal characteristics of 'us' is given to the audience.

As a component of the superstructure, the media has a vital role in the dissemination of the dominant ideology to the masses. The reason for the significance of this role is, as we have discussed at the end of the previous chapter, that it does not seem possible for the media to broadcast and publish content or to create cultural commodities independently of the ruling power in the context of their ownership structures. Therefore, it can be claimed that the ruling power producing the dominant ideology assumes control over the media, leading to the spread of its ideology among the masses. Shoemaker and Reese (1991) indicate that due to the filters of property and advertisement, the media has become dependent on the ruling power and the emergence of alternative media has become less possible. The media thus has an ideological function. "To claim that the media is ideological is to indicate that it has a function in the social construction of meaning. The media provides the space on which people become aware of their own worlds" (Hall, 1989). In the previous chapter, we have mentioned the close relationship between the media and the ruling party in terms of the ownership structures and the effect of this relationship on the contextual structures of media productions. The media, a part of the superstructure in Turkey as well, contribute to the dissemination of the dominant ideology among the masses.

It can be claimed that television is among the most significant mass media. In a country with long viewing hours like Turkey, television is a crucial aspect as it influences people's thoughts, dreams, and points of view. According to Kaplan (1991), television is the most widespread and the most effective culture production machine in the contemporary society. The viewers are both informed and entertained with the content provided by television which is either related to their own worlds or outside their life practices. Much as the people spending most of their leisure times after working hours watching television come from different backgrounds, they watch similar content. Thus, television produces the similar culture, similar thoughts, similar expectations, and (let us remember who controls the media) the similar ideological ground. Smythe (1977), claims that capitalism has expanded its domain from the business world to the leisure world and, therefore,

that we work for commodity capitalism as much as any worker in an assembly line (cited in Fiske, 2012; p. 39). Argın elaborates on the concept of leisure and indicates that “leisure is seen as one of the most vital and effective tools to render the masses apathetic and apolitical regarding any social problem” (Argın, 1992). “As a part of the media creating, maintaining, and changing whenever necessary popular thoughts and hopes, the television industry popularizes products, determines the dominant agenda, and becomes a tool of popularity in addition to being popular” (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2005; p. 79)

Within this context, television plays a crucial role in the creation, continuation, and shaping of the popular culture with the content it produces and presents to its audiences. It can be thus said in this respect that the leisure time spent watching television provides a space for the ruling power maintaining control over the media to achieve their ideological goals. As far as both the viewing hours in Turkey and the ratings of the series we have analyzed named *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı* are concerned, it can be claimed that people spend their leisure times watching these three series we have analyzed. As we have mentioned before, these three series are products of popular culture repeating and reproducing the official ideological discourse. This leads to an ideological transfer to the masses watching the series during their leisure times and the shaping of the viewer’s political opinions through this ideological transfer.

It is not possible to come up with a clear definition of popular culture. Erdoğan and Alemdar (2005) define popular culture as the culture loved and preferred by the public. According to Batmaz (1981), “Popular culture is the culture of daily life. In a narrow sense, it consists of entertainment as an input of the daily reproduction of labor. In a wider sense, it meets the prerequisites of the ideological reproduction of a certain lifestyle. It created a space for the daily ideology to disseminate and get approval” (Batmaz, 1981; p. 163). Fiske puts forward the following definition of popular culture: “Popular culture is the culture of the subordinated and disempowered and thus always bears within it signs of power relations, traces of the forces of domination and subordination that are central to our social system

and therefore to our social experience. Equally, it shows signs of resisting or evading these forces” (Fiske, 2012; p. 15).

Fundamentally, it can be said that there are two different points of view about popular culture. It is possible to basically categorize these as the positive point of view and the negative point of view.

The positive point of view perceives popular culture as a type of culture in which the masses are included in the production process and resist the mass culture. For this point of view, popular culture is the symbol of individual liberty. Thinkers like John Fiske and Marshall McLuhan are the representatives of the positive point of view about popular culture.

As for the negative point of view, popular culture is produced by the ruling elite with an ideological aim and it is imposed upon the masses. According to this view, popular culture standardizes and renders passive the masses with the ideology it carries. Batmaz (2016) states that the thinkers of the Frankfurt School regard popular culture as an ideological institution of the superstructure.

Gans (2014) states that “in the modern-day societies where media plays a determining role, popular culture is generally produced and presented to the mass media on a mass scale” (Gans, 2014; p. 45). As popular culture targets masses and produces content for masses, it offers low appreciation levels and does not contribute to the intellectual development of the masses.

Similar to other products of popular culture, television series also have ideological functions. The events narrated in the series, the heroes and the clothes, behaviors, and catchphrases of the characters serve in the transmission of the ideology. As television series reach large masses and are consumed by these masses, “they promote the functioning of the society by creating individuals adapted to the society and integrated into the social structure, preventing potential fractures in the society, and through the dissemination of established values” (Parkan, 1989; p. 80). Işık (2006) underscores the identity-constructing aspect of the products of popular culture and indicates that “these products legitimize some identities with the language they use while marginalizing others”. All three of the

series we have analyzed reach to large masses as far as their ratings go. The viewership consists of individuals of different ages, educational backgrounds, genders, and living in different cities. As these are productions conveying the official ideology to large masses, it contributes to the homogenization of the society around the official ideology.

The tools of popular culture often contribute to the reproduction of nationalism as well. According to Ernest Renan, “nation was made up of the will of its members, who shared the same national ideals to live together” (cited in Nişanyan, 2001; p. 221). One of the major factors leading to the creation and continuation of this will to live together is the media. “TV programs, commercials, films, serials and news broadcasts can be cited as the most widely used and most popular means of mass communications, they play dramatic roles as agents of socialization in processes of socially constructing imaginary nationhoods and/or national identities” (Karanfil, 2002; p. 51). The media and popular culture are of vital importance in terms of the transfer of the ideology and the manufacturing of consent regarding the building of a brand new nation, the construction of tradition, or the preservation of the unity of an existing nation. Furthermore, they are also crucial for the creation and preservation of the collective memory emphasized by Renan.

Occupying a significant place in individuals’ daily lives, popular culture and its products, in Billig’s words, contribute to the dissemination of evident and hidden nationalism in daily life. Nationalism is integrated into products of popular culture and thus it infiltrates daily life. Elements enabling the dissemination of the nationalist ideology such as the flag, the map, the nationalist discourse, the emblem, the emphasis on a common history, and heroism are visible in the products of popular culture consumed by the masses. The audiences are thus reminded of the country in which they live and their nationalities while they consume these products. Popular culture contributes to the nation-building process and the preservation of the dominant hegemony maintaining the unity of the

nation with its historical allusions, language, fictional heroes, and content tailored for common important dates.

Turkey goes through a rapid process of transition. In this process, these three high-rated television series with a high density of content in alignment with the nationalist state ideologies broadcasted on mainstream networks contribute to the legitimization of the policies of the ruling party, facilitate the transition to 'New Turkey', and act as ideological intermediaries of the nation-building of 'New Turkey' and the invention of tradition.

With the contribution of the militaristic television series depicting the fight against terrorism, JDP, the ruling party, forms a legitimate basis for the policies it enacts on certain issues. Presenting dualities of 'friend-enemy' and 'problem-solution', these series, products of popular culture, persuade the public of the certain steps regarding certain issues taken by the government and thus legitimize these steps. This paves the way for 'New Turkey'.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Nationalism has become one of the fundamental research topics in social sciences as of the 20th century. Even though there are individuals claiming that nationalism has lost its influence and that it has now come to an end, nationalism continues to live not only in the political scene but also in our daily lives.

As for Turkey, it has entered a new era in which the nationalist ideology is prominent as of the early 2000s. After the Justice and Development Party came into power alone in 2002, especially in the process starting with JDP's second stage in power, Turkey has started to change and transform; this change and transformation continue to this day.

This age of change and transformation is named 'New Turkey' as it is recognized in the academic literature as well (Keyman, 2014; Kaya, 2016; Yaşlı, 2014). 'New Turkey' has an ideological structure turning towards Islamic countries, foregrounding nationalist-conservative values and maintaining the ideology of "one flag, one homeland, one state, one nation" with a neo-Ottoman approach. In this process, not only has the official ideology of the state changed, the social order of living and the daily lives of individuals in the society has also been transformed in order to create a 'reasonable citizen'. This situation brought about the building of a new nation on the way to 'New Turkey', the invention of traditions, and the nationalist discourse.

Fundamentally, this thesis examines how the nationalist discourse, the nation-building, and the invention of tradition behind 'New Turkey' are realized, legitimized, and reproduced through popular culture. The importance of this thesis lies in the analysis of the relation between the products of popular culture and nationalism through the example of 'New Turkey'. Because, as products of popular

culture are created around a certain ideological discourse, they act as tools carrying this ideology into individuals' daily lives either explicitly or implicitly. In Turkey, as far as the ownership structures of the media and the contextual transformation of media texts are concerned, it seems like television series are the conveyors of the dominant ideology. This results in the implicit conveyance of the dominant ideological point of view to people's leisure times.

It is claimed in this study that popular culture is also an ideological space. According to Oktay, in a country like Turkey, "popular culture serves directly to disseminate the dominant ideology" (Oktay, 1993; p. 23). "Through this culture, the dominant powers make large segments of the society lose themselves in pipe dreams by entertaining them and prevent them from dealing with their real problems and questioning injustices" (Zorlu, 2016).

Within the scope of this thesis, television series, which have a significant place among products of popular culture, and their functions are analyzed. Television series occupy a considerable part of the broadcasting streams of television channels in the present day. They are significant in terms of creating common opinions by reaching large masses and narrating common stories. According to Oktay, "reproducing dominant values and easily accessed by large masses, television series are programs in which the factitious replace the reality through narrations emerging from people's own worlds and constantly referencing these worlds" (Oktay, 1987; p. 64).

It is argued in this thesis that in the construction of the national identity, television series "are agents in which the thought of the political nation becomes a real, experienced practice, sentimentality, and daily phenomenon and which, as an experienced practice, lay the grounds for mass ceremonies and traditions within which millions of individuals participate" (İmançer, 2003; p. 248).

Gültekin positions the media as a space in which the nationalist discourse is reproduced and states that "[the media] serves to the formation of the national identity and legitimization of the nation-state and seeks for or invents national origins in history" (Gültekin, 2006). We argue in this thesis that there are factors

creating a national consciousness in *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı*. Even though they are broadcasted on different channels by different producers, all three of these series presents common concepts of 'us' and 'them' to their viewers. Through the scenes in which the enemies of the country threaten the integrity of the country and innocent people, 'we' are warned and the necessity of 'us' remaining united is conveyed. The steps taken by the ruling power are thus legitimized through these discourses and the consent for the ideology of the ruling power among the viewers is obtained through popular culture. In addition, some common historical references reminded to the audience function in the same way.

This thesis examining the relationship between nationalism, nation-building, the invention of tradition, and popular culture provides a point of view to the academic scene and contributes to the field of Media and Communication Studies within this framework. As the process discussed in it has yet to be concluded and is still ongoing, the thesis also provides a basis for the academic research to be conducted in the future.

In the second chapter of the thesis, academic studies on nationalism were discussed and three schools of thought were separately examined. These points of view are primordialist, modernist, and ethnosymbolist approaches. The primordialist approach claims that the traces of nations and nationalism date back to antiquity and that these concepts survive to this day without any changes. The modernist school of thought, denying the primordialist theory, claims that nationalism and nations emerged in modern times and that nationalism created nations. Thirdly, the ethnosymbolist point of view, which is considered to be a bridge between the primordialist and modernist schools of thought, was discussed. According to this approach, nations and nationalism are not 'given' as suggested by primordialists, yet it was not invented in modern times either as claimed by modernists.

Following the examination of the primordialist, modernist, and ethnosymbolist approaches to nationalism, the theories of modernists Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Michael Billig were handled within the context of the thesis.

In the third chapter, the period between the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the present day was discussed. The Westernization/modernization efforts during the final stage of the Ottoman Empire, the official ideology aligning with the West and Western values with the foundation of the Republic, the rise of political Islam, military interventions, and the ongoing JDP rule were introduced in this chapter within this context. In this chapter, the modernization efforts starting from the final years of the Ottoman Empire up until the Early Republican Era were discussed; then, it was underscored that there has been a profound change when compared with the Kemalist ideology as conservative-nationalist values have become foregrounded and the state has turned its face towards Islamic countries with the start of JDP rule. The transformations and changes were examined chronologically within the chapter. The building of a new nation, the invention of tradition, and 'New Turkey' nationalism, all of them occurring in the same process, were handled with examples.

As for the fourth chapter of the thesis, the selected television series, products of popular culture, were examined with the method of thematic analysis taking into consideration the process of change/transformation discussed in the second chapter and the modernist theories explained in the first chapter along with other approaches to nationalism. The role played by the series *İsimsizler*, *Söz*, and *Savaşçı*, selected within the aforementioned context and started to be aired on mainstream media channels, in the change which has taken place in 'New Turkey' and the conveyance of the new official ideology to the masses was examined and the relationship between these concepts were tried to be illuminated.

These series were chosen due to their high ratings, similar themes, and the fact that they were started to be aired on mainstream networks within the same time period. All three series were analyzed within the framework of the themes designated following the academic literature review and after watching some episodes. These themes were Turkish-Islamic synthesis, the consecration of the flag and martyrdom, internal and external enemies, the representation of 'us' and 'them', the attitude of the local/regional people, the power of the state, and the

heroism of the soldiers. The scenes selected from the series were then analyzed within the framework of these themes.

At the end of the analysis, an argument concerning the relation between popular culture and nationalism was formulated and the role of television series in this context was discussed.

At the end of this thesis; the process initiated particularly in the second stage of JDP in power and accelerated in its third stage was determined to be a new era for Turkey and named as 'New Turkey' as it is widely recognized. It was acknowledged that there has been a transformation in 'New Turkey's official ideological structure and that this transformation has been realized through a neo-Ottoman approach which is oriented towards a conservative-Islamist ideology.

With the research conducted within the framework of this thesis, it was concluded that television series, products of popular culture, go hand in hand with the existing political discourse. The idea of the thesis is that through these television series with high ratings, the ideological discourse of the ruling party is transmitted to the masses in an implicit manner. These products of popular culture contribute to the spread of nationalist ideology in daily life and to the nation-building and the invention of tradition in 'New Turkey' by tacitly reproducing the official ideology.

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