

anovasofie

MARDIN, Serif (2002) Playing Games with Names, In Kandiyoti, Deniz & Ayse Saktanber (ed.), *Fragments of Culture The Everyday of Modern Turkey*. London.NY:I.B.Tauris&Co Publishers, p. 5-127



Title of the Article: Playing Games with Names

in Fragments of Culture The Everyday of Modern Turkey

edited by Deniz Kandiyoti & Ayse Saktanber

(2002) London, NY: I.B. Tauris & Co Publishers

Author: Serif Mardin

Pages: 115-127

The problem

Between 1918 and 1939 Turks embarked on a major identity switch. This involved a change in status, from subjects of a multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan empire to citizens of a republic that set down and affirmed its true Turkishness. For the literate, the transfiguration meant the transformation of the written language from one replete with Arabic and Persian roots to the retrieval (and recasting) of the vernacular and the colloquial, and the shift from a picture of a glorious Ottoman past to the promotion of Central Asian origins. This process was met by Western commentators with either spirited or tacit approval, the change being seen as a step towards Turkish modernisation. Such approval, however, has eluded an important question: how was this transition possible? How did such a major, and successful, transposition take place in a relatively short time? After all, the antithetical quality of 'Ottoman' and 'Turk' was a theme all knowledgeable commentators on Turkey had asserted in the past.

This chapter is a preliminary attempt to explain this transmogrification of literary taste and 'identity', focusing on aspects of the history of the Turkish language. But first, a few clarifications about relevant theoretical frames.

Language

Current theory about the role of language in the rise of modern nationalism derives from Benedict Anderson (1991). This theory constitutes a challenge to the views of the nineteenth-century *litterateurs* that language was constitutive of nationality, i.e. that as an autonomous force it propelled nation-building. Anderson's tack, and he is preceded by others,¹ is that language by itself is not constitutive of anything until it has become a printed language, the twin fruit of capitalism and of the construction of a nation by nineteenth-century intellectuals through the elaboration of the national language.

The idea that intellectuals worked to elaborate a national language is not in itself groundbreaking, having been around for decades. It is also a commonplace for historians of Turkish literature, and the point is not lost on anyone who has graduated from a Turkish lycee.

This chapter attempts to study the relation of language to nation-building in Turkey by recasting the debate on language in society. It seeks a middle ground between Anderson and the nineteenth-century language theoreticians in attempting to re-establish some of the validities of language as constitutive in the Ottoman Turkish cultural frame.²

The main theme advanced is that despite the imputed use of two antithetical languages in the Ottoman empire - one 'polite', cosmopolitan, and made up of Turkic, Arabic and Persian roots, the other folkic vernacular - a common substratum of 'Turkishness' was maintained across the varieties of linguistic code. This was achieved through the hegemonic position of the cosmopolitan hybrid language of state, which remained 'Turkish' by affirming its difference from the other languages spoken in the empire. Thus observers from Europe could state that the Ottomans spoke 'turc'!

Approaches concerning the link between language and society have been elaborated at a new level of analytical sophistication in studies of the poetic function of language/ a development which Anderson completely ignores. In our case, in particular, the concept of 'intertextuality' seems rich in explanatory potential, to unravel the persistence of 'Turkishness' in a language that to this day is characterised as 'Ottoman'. Poetics have already been used with success in the analysis of social structures in Islamic societies, especially with regard to the illocutionary use of language,⁵ and it is here that we have to look for the source of the special 'ring' a language can have for a people. Using Ottoman social and intellectual history and poetics opens up novel ways of conceptualising the cultural history of the Ottoman empire at the meeting-point of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, most important, the role of 'Turkish' in nation-building.

Identity

Among contemporary social scientists, the theme of identity has shifted from an approach that examined how, in the course of a lifetime, people attempted to work out a satisfactory *şef*,⁶ to one in which it was used to connote the satisfactory integration of a group into a separate community, involving a change in the collective name. But in fact it is possible to have two variants of the pursuit of a collective name.⁷ The more modern of these variants, which takes place under conditions of migration from rural to urban areas, can be seen as working at the individual level, where the individual adopts the strategy of greater integration within a group which, in the village, had a much looser grip on him or her.⁸ In the second, closer to Barth's work on ethnic groups, a whole group changes its identity markers as a group.

The switch at the 'individualistic' level exists only when social ties have already been loosened to the extent that an individual is liable to be confused, since items of his or her self-classificatory systems are in the process of disappearing.

This individualistic strategy has only been available in recent times, for it is also in recent times that individuals have begun to increase their role as agents rather than simply as units in a collectivity (Giddens, 1991). Richard Handler has shown that as late as the mid-nineteenth century, peoples were evaluated in relation to the set of social networks to which they belonged. In a study of Jane Austen's novels *Persuasion* and *Emma*, Handler (1994) concludes that in these novels

...the 'what' of a person refers to characteristics of appearance, manner, mind and situation that have been ascertained from personal experience of the person in question. By contrast, the 'who' of a person clearly refers to a web of social relations that places the individual with respect to family connections and social rank.⁹

In other words - in the nineteenth-century English setting - to *be* is to be placed within a social category. This outside process of placement also determines the subject's self-placement, since the subject also sees him- or herself as part of a collective. This also facilitates this second type of identity switch from one collective to another.

Identity switching

In the history of the Middle East, many groups defined by the names that we give them today, whether religious, ethnic, tribal or linguistic, seem to have operated within these parameters; identity is the collective to which one belongs.

The process of incorporation of one collectivity into another described by Barth is a case in point. A tribal group - for a number of reasons - incorporates itself into another and takes its name. The same name-switching game can be played with ethnic group names, religions or languages. Recent work has shown us how the element of switching has constantly operated in the history of the Middle East.¹⁰ Here, of course, the 'who' is determined from the 'outside', and collectively. Georg Elwert (1997) gives us some examples of the process:

Some Black Sea Christians in Turkey switched to Islam during periods in this century dominated by 'ethnic exchanges' but maintained the differences declaring themselves to be Alevis. Inversely, the Christian Bogumil heresy in the Balkans increased the clarity of the difference with reference to their Serb and Croat neighbours by switching to Islam when conquered by Ottomans, creating the Bosnians.

Notice the two opposed elements contained in switching: first the change-over, but second the maintaining of the difference even in the change. Thus, while switching occurs differences are not being invented, but maintained, something that should be of interest to proponents of theories of 'imagined communities'. Bruinessen (1977) describes the unbelievable numbers of combinations and permutations of such names that appear in the history of the group that we know today in Turkey as Alevi." But there are limits to such operations, and the limits are set by

the number of available names. Although new names appear and old one disappear, there are still a finite number of tribe names, a finite number of names of religions and heterodoxies, and a finite number of names for languages.

One consequence of switching is what may be called the 'exchange value' of a name for the player, quite apart from the symbolic charge carried by each of these names. This brings us to the ramifications of the names 'Turk' and 'Ottoman' through Ottoman history, and the role of their names as identity markers. Difference, as we shall see, will play a central role in this process.

'Turks' and 'Turkish'

The encounter of Ottomans with other 'Turks', i.e. Turkmen or Tatar (in the person of Tamerlane) was not auspicious, the experience being even worse with Mongols whose groups had sometimes overlapped with 'real' Turks. For the Ottoman Sultans - and for burghers as well - the term 'Turk' became one to forget, and was identified with rebellious tribes or country bumpkins. The Ottoman founders were keen to adopt elements of Islamic social organisation that defined urban culture. Doctors of Islamic law were invited to establish urban centres of Islamic civilisation, and Islamic 'private' law was incorporated into early Ottoman society. This was an elaboration of the somewhat superficial Islamisation of the population that entered the composition of the early empire. But a difference remained: 'public' law. i.e. Ottoman 'administrative' law, which addressed aspects of taxation as well as the status of the servants of the Sultan, remained 'Turkic' (post-Mongolian) somewhat embarrassingly so for the less sophisticated Ottoman 'clerics' trained in Islamic 'seminaries' (*medrese*). The founding elites of the empire, in tandem with these borrowings, incorporated some of the vocabulary and the literary devices of the already flourishing Arab Islamic and Perso-Islamic cultures. The name by which the subjects of the Sultan describe the empire in most Ottoman sources, *Âl-i Osman* ('sons of Osman'), was an Arabic construction. However, a new name, in the ascendancy for some time, 'Rum', or territory of the ex-Roman (Byzantine) empire, emerged, connoting the fact that long before the demise of Rome-Byzantium the Turks were established in the Balkans, that their recruiting of state servants (Janissaries etc) was centred in the Balkans, and that the state apparatus saw the Arabs as different, if not alien. When Sultan Selim I conquered Egypt (1516-17), the Janissaries began to grumble that they had spent enough time in an alien land, and wanted to return to 'Rum'.¹²

The Turkish poet Baki (1526-1600) was later to speak of himself as the teacher of the 'poets of Rum',¹³ and this usage can be followed throughout the history of 'Ottoman' literature. All the signs point out that the use of 'Rum' was a polite way of differentiating oneself from Arabs and Persians. A more latent distancing was the continued role played by the Turkish language itself, a role to which I now turn.

Language in republican Turkey

In republican Turkey, in our time, ideological use has been made of a theory of Turkish 'modernisers' that saw Turkish as a language of the peasant or folkic back-ground of Ottoman society. The theme promoted in this context is that there had been a suppression of a Turkish 'essence'. This idea worked in parallel with a policy aimed at retrieving the Turkish vernacular and making it a vehicle of a 'modern' general usage and literature. The most current official explanation for the earlier use of an 'Ottoman' language, purportedly heavily Arabised and Persianised, was that this was a monarchic, elitist plot that created a cultural divide between a palace literature - now described as 'divan' literature - and the people. The responsibility of Ziya Gokalp, a Turkish sociologist who set the frame of nationalist ideology in the republic, for this artless picture is well established.¹⁴ Gokalp's ideas encouraged the creation of a number of official scientific societies, such as the Turkish Language Association (1932), which went on to retrieve 'Turkishness' from folk culture. Following the ideological line of the republic inspired by Gokalp, Agâh Sırrı Levend, a Turkish historian of literature, began, in 1944, to gather materials to recount the history that transformed the simple Turkish - presumably already a well-fleshed-out and seamless whole at the time of the foundation of the empire - into the reprehensible, cosmopolitan, ornate 'Ottoman' of the Ottoman *ancien regime*.¹⁶ Across three editions, in 1949, 1960 and 1972, Levend refined his approach, but the ideological substratum of the book remained in evidence.

Already by the time that the last edition of the book was published (1976), Fahir İz of Istanbul University had contested the existence of a simplistic literary divide in the Ottoman empire. İz showed that there existed three genres in Ottoman prose. First, the simple prose using 'Turkish', i.e. the language of the 'people', then middle prose, more precious but still clear, and finally *inşa* ('rhetoric').¹¹¹ He identified *inşa* as the flowery idiom of literatures that went on to create their own esoteric and literary universe (p.1-xvii). İz also showed that the overwhelming volume of Ottoman prose was in the middle prose genre; these never disappeared. He demonstrated that their long-lasting presence in a number of differentiated discourses, such as the literature of mysticism, the educational fare of the Janissaries and popular liturgical song, can be pinpointed.

There were also some fundamental aspects of Ottoman discourse that kept Turkish afloat. Arabic and Persian syntax had never been integrated with the syntax of Turkish in the mix of the three that came to prevail after the fifteenth century in polite usage.¹⁷ Divan or 'palace' literature, once considered the most characteristic and prominent 'genre' in Ottoman literature, turns out to be primarily poetry framed in a set of conventional stylistic patterns, such as the *kaside*, the *mesnevi*, the panegyric and love poetry; all these forms were taken from Arabic-Persian literature." With time, this genre, in which the main aim was to show a sophisticated use of hyperbole, became, increasingly, an end in itself,¹⁹ and in that respect Levend's views concerning the artificiality of 'Ottoman' is justified. But even the practitioners of divan literature often interspersed their

conceits with nostalgic remarks about the use of pure 'Turkish' as an ideal to be striven for. Experiments of this type were undertaken by Tatlavali Mahremi (d.1535) and Edirneli Nazmi (d.1548), aiming to use the Turkish vernacular within the frame of divan literature.²⁰

In a number of literary sources Turkish was - and described itself as -different from Arabic and Persian, in the sense that the names 'Arab' and 'Farsi' retained the connotation of different cultures. I have shown that 'Rum' was the most polite strategy used in this respect, i.e. both a switch into a new identity, a reference to the Ottomans as torchbearers of Islam and a reminder that these torchbearers were not Arabs. A substratum of Turkish culture was kept by the impediments of vocabulary and syntax in 'Ottoman'. While Ottomans had used Arabic and Farsi in the elaboration of the new polite language, difficulties were constantly encountered on the way to this adaptation. It is reported that when the historian Ibn Kemal (d.1534, i.e. 230 years after the foundation of the Ottoman empire!) began writing the history of the Ottoman dynasty (*Tevârih-i âl-i Osman*), the ruling Sultan, Bayazid II (1481-1512) entreated him to write in a way comprehensible to higher and lower classes (*havas ve avam*), asking him to be clear (*vazih*) and 'without caring for the affectations of rhetoricians'.²¹

The classics of Islam in Arabic were only read by a small minority of Ottomans, while a large number of these classical works of Islam in Arabic circulated in Turkish translation. An explanation of this somewhat surprising fact is given by the doctor of Islamic law Ismail Ankaravi (d. 1631): his grandchildren had complained that the major work on epistolary style which they had to study, the *Telhis of Kazvini*, was incomprehensible. Ankaravi translated the entire work into the Turkish vernacular.²²

On the other hand, Ottoman everyday Islam was also expressed in the vernacular. The best loved religious text celebrating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, the *Mevlut*, by Suleyman Çelebi, was in Turkish.²³ So too were the religious chants that went to the heart of the people, the *ilahi*.²⁴ Even vaster was the bulk of secular materials in Turkish that constituted the fare of lower classes.²⁵ In this tradition, texts taken from the written Islamic corpus appeared in manuscripts in Turkish translation, and often took on a life of their own, with additions and corollaries. The *destan* (epic), the *kıssa* (edifying religious story), the vignette (*latife* or *fıkra*) were penned in the Turkish vernacular. It was again in this idiom that the collections of stories of the Persian writer Sadi, as well as motifs from *Kalila and Dimna* and the *Thousand and One Nights* were received in the oral tradition of Ottoman society.

Finally, Turkish was certainly the idiom of the palace. An example may be the account a court historian gives us of the language used by the Şeyhülislâm, the head of the religious institution, at the time of Selim III (1789-1807). The following was the Turkish sentence this dignitary used to express his fears about the Sultan walking incognito in the capital, well-armed and taking potshots at whatever he chose. 'Şevketli Efendimiz tebdilde silah ile gezermiş ve hem tufenk

atarmış. Şevketlu Efendimizin vucud-u humayunu cumlemize lazımdır... Soylesen de o sevdadan fariğ olsun'. Even today, a Turk with a primary-school education would have no difficulty in understanding this palace Turkish.²⁶ This daily language used in the palace presents an aspect of a wider, latent but hegemonic influence of Turkish through the many layers in which it was still alive in the 'classical' era of Ottoman history. "What is still missing in the history I have attempted to give is how a literature that might have been to a large extent 'Turkish' was able to maintain an identity function at the time when Turk' was still used in a pejorative sense. An answer begins to emerge when we distinguish divan literature from the official style. What we find is a latent factor that 'preserved' Turkish even after the banishment of the social identity of the Turk' to the margins of social groups. That factor was simply that the official language of the Ottomans continued to maintain a difference from all other languages in the empire. Turkish, the language of administration and of judicial decisions, though interspersed with words taken over from Arabic and Persian, elaborately persianised and arabised, was not Greek, it was not Slavic and it was not Vlach, neither was it Arabic. In other words, the difference maintained by the language was both one connoting the power of the Muslim ruling group vis-à-vis non-Muslims, but also one that distinguished the language from Arabic as the language used in Arab provinces of the empire. Sultan Abdulhamid II, who at one time was thinking of introducing Arabic as the official Ottoman language, eventually had to give up this policy, because of this very penetration of this latent 'Turkishness' into the interstices of administration.

Turkish as a language different from that spoken in the empire kept throughout Ottoman history a 'fresh' substratum of Turkishness, to be revived by Ottoman intellectuals in the nineteenth century. A more ideological frame for this revival was provided by the Turkish republic in the twentieth century. Referring to some of the more fashionable theories of semiotics (Kristeva, 1984), we may conclude that maintaining the difference in the Turkish used by the state, and even by some nostalgic divan *litterateurs*, was an 'intertextual' continuity that had remained effective for centuries.

The potential for the emergence of a form of the Turkish vernacular, its readiness to be plucked out of Ottoman with relatively little effort, was promoted by a number of diffuse social changes that occurred in the various stages of modernisation of the empire. One of these was the little-studied 'localisation' that appears in seventeenth-century Ottoman poetry, and that possibly reflects changes in the urban structure of the empire (*mahallileşme*).²⁷ More manifest and prominent was the influence of printing, introduced in the Ottoman empire in 1728-9. The first book to come out of this official Ottoman press was an Arab-Turkish dictionary. Usually described with a certain lack of wonder by Turkish sources, the selection of a dictionary to teach Arabic, presumably to scribes who had not the faintest knowledge of the language, as the first text to be printed was extremely important, a deliberate step that highlighted a bottleneck in the

promotion of official correspondence at a time when Ottomans were beginning to turn inward to see what they could offer in the competing sciences of the Enlightenment. The same bottleneck may have affected official correspondence, as scribes had to cover an increased number of documents. Manuals of official style were less useful than printed dictionaries, which allowed a more mechanical but also more accurate retrieval of meaning.²⁸

In the nineteenth century, these harbingers of a diffuse reaction to the complexity of 'Ottoman' were transformed by an acknowledgment by Ottoman officials of the programme of educational promotion carried out among Western nation-states.²⁹ Turkish journalism, introduced by the founding of an 'official gazette' in 1831, went on to make a more systematic use of the Turkish vernacular. In the 1860s, the first promoters of private Turkish journalism brought their own contribution, i.e. a new 'journalistic' style aimed at mobilising the literate population towards economic and social modernisation. The same group took the first steps toward the creation of a national literature. Increased contacts with France promoted the adoption of genres like the novel, the most popular of which were in 'simple' Turkish.

In the 1880s and 1890s, a new controversy erupted: a group of *litterateurs* were now denying the legitimacy of Arabic as the foundation of Ottoman culture.³⁰ Following the Young Turk revolution of 1908, the name 'Turk', already moving up with the times since the 1890s, acquired a new, positive valence enabling Turkism' to inspire the official ideology of the Turkish republic in the 1920s and 1930s. The image of the Turk as the country bumpkin was transformed into that of the bronze-bodied, strong, serene and silent farmer carrying his load of grapes door-to-door in the stifling heat of summer. The final step in this extremely complex and cumulative process of retrieval of 'Turk' as the name of language and a people was the Turkish government's 'cleansing' of Arabic and Persian roots from 'Ottoman' and the creation of 'pure' (on) Turkish as an adjunct to the official 'turkic' nationalism of the Turkish republic.

I have used four main tacks to make my point concerning the retrieval of 'Turkishness' from a parent linguistic fund. First, the syntactic characteristics of Turkish precluded an easy fusion with Arabic and Persian. Second, the very volume of the vernacular Turkish circulating in the Ottoman empire worked in the same direction. Third, the daily language of palace officials was colloquial Turkish. Fourth, the parent hegemony of Turkish - even though in its 'Ottoman form' - as the official language of the hegemon kept a 'turkic' substratum in administration. All these forces made it easy to retrieve a Turkish identity in the late nineteenth century. I have not addressed a fifth issue, which appears promising but is too complex to deal with in the present state of Turkish studies, namely a more extensive use of the resources of modern poetics to understand the 'ring' that a language would have when it is put to new, nationalistic uses. A related issue, namely the 'primordial' aspects of language, is currently being revived, once more

underlining the failure of the Anderson model as a general explanatory link between language and nationalism.³¹

Thresholds and the autonomous forces of vernacularisation

The 'recapturing' of the latent Turkish vernacular was a task that modernist Ottoman intellectuals set themselves very early. This process went through a number of phases during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but none of these have had the detailed attention they merit, and I shall not attempt to correct this weakness of Turkish cultural history here. I shall only address these thresholds to underline that community was set by the very ambiguity of Ottoman as a language. I also want to underline how the almost mechanical working of various facets of vernacularisation impinges on questions relating to modernity. Each one of the stages of 'language simplification' introduces a new dimension of linguistic change, a neglected aspect of the story.

In the historical layering I have in mind, we first encounter the attempts of the architects of nineteenth-century Western-inspired reform, the fathers of the so-called Tanzimat (the name by which historians refer to the redrawing of Turkish society between 1839 and 1876, a period during which much attention was given to issues of language use in the educational institutions established in these years). Already in 1851, a grammar of the 'Turkish language' had been prepared by two of the most senior Ottoman officials, for use by the Imperial Ottoman Academy of Arts and Sciences with a view to enlarging the circle of those literate in Ottoman, an aspect of the attempt to involve citizens in the process of modernisation. The attempt by a new group of journalists with liberal ideas to reach to a wide audience by using a simpler language - a task shouldered by the *litterateur* İbrahim Şinasi in his paper *Tasvir-i Efkar* (founded in 1862) - worked in parallel. Almost simultaneously appears the attempt of Şinasi's contemporary, the poet and liberal leader Namık Kemal, to achieve a goal that can only be described as that of forging a shared Ottoman Turk 'national' literature. Somewhat later, in the short stories and novels of Ahmet Mithat Efendi, one observes³² an increased number of locutions taken from the domestic vocabulary and discourse of Istanbul households. 'Pure' Turkish becomes even more hegemonic as it becomes the teaching language of the new secular, five-to-eight-year-old schools promoted by the architects of Tanzimat throughout the empire. While both Turkish-speaking Muslims and non-Muslims with a range of mother tongues were accepted in those schools, after 1867 entrants were obliged to pass an examination in the Turkish language.³³

A third layer of vernacularisation, emerging in the 1880s, which may be judged as the consequence and cumulative effect of earlier phases, was that of new generations of Turks trained in the new colleges (now also including the School of Political Science and the Military Medical Academy). Some of these young men could not any more place themselves in the cultural settings of their fathers. This phase, intimately connected with the building of a literature

in 'Turkish', simultaneously brought in a distancing from the magic garden of Islam, which was now replaced either by suspicion or by a rationalisation of religion and deism. A further form of the vernacular Turkish appears in the late nineteenth century. In the poems of Mehmet Emin it promotes a new view of 'Turkishness' and a conception of the Turkish 'race' as sacred. Soon (1910) the outright use of the Turkish vernacular became a clarion call, in a literary manifesto in the periodical *Genç Kalemler*³⁴

In the era of the Young Turk revolution of 1908-18, controversies regarding the extent to which the vernacular should supersede Ottoman were rife. The focus of the debate, however, was even clearer than it was in the late nineteenth century: it was now about the construction of a cultural identity for the Turkish-speaking population of the empire. For one author the issue was that of the language appropriate to the Turkish *ethnie* (*kavm*) (*ethnie* is a French word used by Smith [1991, p.21] to refer to an *ethnie* group) and nation (*millet*), which would one day "have to gather around its own language".³⁵ Later, at the time of the inception of the Turkish republic, the focus of the issue of vernacularisation shifted once more. The object was the mobilisation of the population of the republic, a further elaboration of the target of Tanzimat. With the appearance of discussions about the adoption of the Latin alphabet to replace the Arabic, a major new problem appeared, the ability of the Latin alphabet to bring out the symbolic richness of religious texts in Arabic, like the Quran. A focus already adumbrated in the discussions of the 1880s now emerged centre-stage. A leading intellectual, Kılıçzâde Hakkı, stated that it was not 'the Angel Gabriel who brought us the Arabic letters'. Arguable in Islamic terms from the viewpoint of the 'createdness' of the Quran, the argument was still sacrilegious to Turks.³⁶ The issue of the use of Arabic by Turks also connected with the 'translation' of the Quran, a hotly debated issue beginning with the twentieth century. That a 'translation' of the Quran into Turkish would be a necessary prerequisite for its understanding by literate Turkish Muslims had been promoted at the beginning of the century by the Tatar Musa Carullah Bigi. Ziya Gokalp, ideologue of the Young Turks, had thought in similar terms. For him the vernacular Turkish would not be rich enough if it were unable to share a religious discourse with other Muslim cultures. In the early days of the republic, a number of Turkish intellectuals, encouraged by Mustafa Kemal, set out to produce a Turkish translation of the Quran. Prominent among them were İsmail Hakkı İzmirli and Mehmet Akif. However, in a speech in Bilecik on 5 February 1933, Kemal reminded his audience of the central focus of the issue in the culture of the republic. He had met, he stated, opposition to the Turkification of the Islamic call to prayer, and he added, 'The question is not one of religion, it is of language. One should be quite clear about the fact that the foundation of the Turkish nation will be its national language and national self.' Various attempts were made in the 1930s by the government to 'Turkicise' the call to prayer, ritual and Friday sermons. This last item was the only one that received widespread popular support.

It would seem that it was the double target of cutting modern Turkey's moorings to Arabic, or in a wider sense Islamic culture, and creating a national self that led Kemalist ideologues in the 1930s and 1940s to pursue further Turkification. The further promotion of this trend in literature and scholarly discourse in philosophy and the social sciences has led today to a cul-de-sac and the prevalence of European technical terms in these fields. The rescinding of the Turkish-language call to prayer in 1950 was met by believers in Turkey as victory for Islam, in the meantime, secularist intellectuals continued to use a 'Turkified' vernacular that they filled with 'ur-Turkish' locutions unknown to most Turkish speakers. This is about the stage we have reached today.

Conclusion

The preservation of the resources for the elaboration of a Turkish identity through a number of 'games' of adaptation and disguised hegemonic posture can be traced in the history of the Ottoman empire. The most interesting part of this process, however, is that modernity seems to have diminished rather than increased the opportunities for 'gaming' of this type.

Vernacularisation now increasingly appears an irresistible force, and it is this mechanical force that gives the lie to the proponents of theories of cultural invention, such as Anderson. I have followed the transformation that has attended the expansion of vernacularisation, and am well aware of the changes of meaning that each threshold brings with it, but at each stage - and regardless of the actors' positions - the hegemonic, autonomous, irresistible thrust of language has become one that players of games themselves are increasingly forced to confront. In modern Turkey the state's policy of 'purification' of Turkish still exhibits two dimensions of central importance. First, the impoverishment of the language of the intellectuals who, when in need, i.e. often, switch to English. Second, the residue of an earlier, lunatic pursuit for the recovery of a Turkish culture, an exercise which, in its 1930s version, has greater affinity with the Enlightenment's concept of a fundamental, core truth, that waits to be unearthed than with 'inventions' of Andersonian origins.

Acknowledgment

With thanks to Professor Fahir İz, who inspired this chapter but cannot be saddled with responsibility for its contents.

Notes on Chapter 5

- 1 See, for example, Derrida (1981).
- 2 See, for instance, Humboldt (1988); also Caussat, Adamskin and Crepon (eds) (1996).
- 3 Galland, Julien Claude, *Memoire pour Servir d'Eclaircissement et de Supplement aux deux Relations que Mehemet Efendi a fait turc de son Ambassade en France*, Archives du Ministere

des Affaires Etrangeres, Series Memoires et Documents, Turquie, vol. 10, no 18 (December), cited by Veinstein (1981). Many other examples on the use of 'Turk'/'Turkish' confirming this description appear in European archives and literature.

4 Jacobson (1963); Price (1983); Kristeva (1984).

5 See, for instance, Samatar (1982).

6 Eriksson (1950).

7 Barth (1969).

8 Minnes (1970).

9 Giddens(1991),p.74.

10 Kehl-Brogodi et al. (eds) (1997).

11 Van Bruinessen (1977) "Aslını Inkâr Eden Haramzadedir", The Debate on the Ethnic Identity of Kurdish Alevis', in Kehl-Brodogi et al. (eds), pp.1-25.

12 Ülkütaşır (1979), p.275.

13 Nevzat (1963), p.10.

14 See Tanpınar (1962/1995), p.110.

15 Levend(1972).

16 See 'Insha', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. III, pp.1241-4.

17 See Deny (1956), 'L'Osmanlı Modern et le Turk (sic) de Turquie', in Deny, Gr0mbech, Scheel and Togan (eds) (1959), pp.182-258, here p.198.

18 See the discussion in Holbrook (1994).

19 Ibid., p.82.

20 See 'Othmanli', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. VIII, pp.210-21, here p.213.

21 Bombacci (1965), pp.67-8.

22 Ferrard(1984),p.21.

23 See McCallum (1943/57).

24 See 'İlahi' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. III, p. 1094.

25 See Boratav (1965), pp.42-67.

26 Reported in Uzunçarşılı (1995), p.499n.

27 See *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. VIII, p.214.

- 28 See Mardin (1961), pp.250-71.
- 29 See Mardin (1962), passim.
- 30 See Kushner (1977).
- 31 See Fishman (1997); as well as earlier statements that language should not be understood as the 'verbal organisation of symbols that mirror an objective world, see Thiele (1995). p.122; also Rorty (1993).
- 32 Levend (1972), p.168.
- 33 Kodaman and Saydan (1992), pp.475-96.
- 34 Levend (1972), pp.272-99; Arai (1991).
- 35 Kadri (15 September 1327).
- 36 Levend (1972), p.362, note 404.

References

- Anderson, Benedict (1991), *Imagined Communities*, 2nd ed., Verso, London
- Barth, F. (1969), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Differences*, Scandinavian University Press, Oslo
- Bombacci, Alessio (1965), 'The Turkish Literature', in Boratav (ed.), *Philologiae Turcica Fundamenta*
- Boratav, Pertev Naili (ed.) (1965), *Philologiae Turcica Fundamenta*, vol. II, Steiner, Wiesbaden
- Caussat, P., D. Adamskin and M. Crepon (eds) (1996), *Le Language Source de la Nation: Mesianismes Seculiers en Europe Centrale et Orientale du XVIII are XIX Siecle*, Mardaga, Paris
- Deny, Jean, Kaare Gr0mbech, Helmuth Scheel, Zeki Velidi Togan (eds) (1959), *Philologiae Turcica Fundamenta*, vol. I
- Derrida, Jacques (1982), *Margins of Philosophy*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL
- Encydopaedia of Islam* (1969) 2nd edition, Brill
- Elwert, George (1997), 'Switching of we-group identities: the Alevis as a case among others'.
Krisztina Kehl-Brodogi et al. (eds), *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, Brill, New York, NY.
- Ergang, Robert F. (1967), *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY
- Eriksson, Erik (1950), *Childhood and Society*, Norton, Nw York, NY

- Fishman, Joshua (1997), *In Praise of the Beloved Language: A Comparative View of Positive Ethnolinguistics*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, NY
- Ferrard, Christopher (1984), 'The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric up to 1882', part I. The Medrese Tradition', *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no III-IV
- Giddens, Anthony (1991), *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA
- Handler, Richard (1994), 'Is "identity" a useful concept', in John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ
- Holbrook, Victoria Rowe (1994), *The Unreadable Shores of Love: Turkish Modernity and Mystic Romance*, University of Texas Press, Austin, TX
- Humboldt, W. von (1988), *On Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- 'Ilahi', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. III, p.1094
- 'Insha', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. III, pp.1241-4
- İz, Fahir (1996), *Türk Edebiyatında Nesir*, 2nd ed. (1st ed. 1964). O. Yalçın, Ankara
- Jakobson. Roman (1963), *Essais de Linguistique Generale*, Editions de Minuit, Paris
- Kadri, Huseyin Kâzım, in *İçtihad*, 15 September 1327 (28 November 1911)
- Kehl-Brogodi, Krisztina et al. (eds) (1997), *Syncretistic Religious Communities in the Near East*, Brill. New York, NY
- Kodaman. Bayram and Abdullah Saydam (1992), 'Tanzimat Devrinde Eğitim Sistemi in Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (ed.), *150. Yılında Tanzimat*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara
- Kristeva, Julia (1984), *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Columbia University Press, New York. NY
- Kushner. David (1977), *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism 1876-1908*, Cass, London
- Levend, Agah Sırrı (1972), *Türk Dilinde Gelişme ve Sadeleşme Evreleri*, 3rd ed., Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara
- Mardin, Şerif (1962), *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, Princeton University Press, Princeton. NJ
- Mardin, Şerif (1961), 'A Note on the Early Phase in the Modernization of Communication in Turkey', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April, pp.250-71 .
- McCallum, Lyrman (1943/57), *The Mevlidi SHERIF OF SULEYMAN CHELEBI*, John Murray, London
- Minnes. Mattison (1975) 'Islamization and Muslim Ethnicity in South India', *Man*, no70. pp.404-

Nevzat, Yesirgil (1963), *Baki: Hayatı, Sanatı, Şiirleri*, 2nd ed, Varlık, Istanbul

'Othmanlı", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. VIII, 210-21

Price, M.. (1983), *Forms of Life, Character and Moral Imagination in the Novel*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London

Rorty, Richard (1993), 'Wittgenstein, Heidegger and the Reification of Language', in Charles Guignon (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, Cambridge University Press, New York, NY

Samatar, Said S. (1982), *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism: The Case of Savyid Muhammed 'Abdille Hasan*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Smith, Anthony D. (1991), *National Identity*, Penguin, London

Tanpınar, Ahmed Hamdi (1962/95), *Yahya Kemal*, Dergah, Istanbul

Thiele, Leslie Paul (1995), *Timely Meditations: Martin Heidegger and Postmodern Politics*, Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ

Ulkutaşır, M. Sakir (1970), 'Ibn Kemal', *Türk Kültürü*, no VIII (February), pp.39-43

Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı (1995), *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 4th ed., vol. IV, part II, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara

Veinstein, Gilles (1981), *Le Paradis des Infideles*, Maspero, Paris