THE CONCEPT OF NATION AND NATIONALISM IN TURKEY COMPARING TO THE WEST

A. Baran Dural

ABSTRACT: Despite all the speculations broached concerning the end of the nation, in near future it seems as the fact truth that nationalism will play a dominant role in attrition between national forces and universal-global forces. In this context, Gungor who thinks that in the countries saved from colonialism, nationalism was a riot act towards colonial force and due to this feature, it could entegrate even socialism, predict that cultural conscious could be possible again with the rise of a nationalist trend on history scene in small nations. It could be found the features of a religional riot in Africa and Arabic world. Nevertheless, the real reason becomes to take the religion to forefront and to base from the local folk, then the underlying fact meaning national curiosity would reveal. It shows how true that Gungor’s discourse is, founded on after the socialist movements in Africa shaped as “civilization restrict of black and white” Arabs’ Baas model decision after seeming like revolting Crux to get help from Muslims. So, rather that the trouble is whether the nationalism is disappeared or this is not the point, but the point is, “Is it possible to be a debonair nationalism in a new way and the conditions which contain nationalism except of fundamentalism and conservatism, was formed in this political trend?”

Keywords: nation, nationalism

Introduction: What Is Nation?

When looked at the near future, it must be focused on nationalism trend which brings war, blood and tear to be whether captured a new version or not that can take the place in our present terminology which is defined as a new way. Is it possible to be a debonair nationalism in a way and the conditions which contain nationalism except of fundamentalism and conservatism, was formed in this political trend? Before getting answers to these questions, it would be useful to focus on some concepts that all nationalist theorists try to to explain at length. In this context, nation, society, community, nation-state, culture and civilization; are nearly creating the conceptual subdirectory of the nationalist literature. When the topic is analysed in an encyclopaedic way, nation and nationalism concepts would seem to be explained in this way:

“All the people who live on the same land, come from the same origin and has history, custom and language create the nation.” (Meydan Larousse-VIII, 1972: 789) But this is not the only definition of nation in encyclopaedias. As a matter of fact there is a latter nation explanation comes after from this stating, “The jural being that the whole individuals governed with the same polity create, holds a different supremacy rather than these individuals.” (Meydan Larousse-VIII: 789)

It is unquestionable both two definitions was coherence to the trends of nationalism budded in 18th century. Whereas the nation definition discoursed before this period rather than considered a nation-state principle, shaped as “The people in same religion” so that, the said definition is presenting an important beginning point in the way of nation concept to be fixed up and nationalist trends to be budded. The most extensive analysis of the concept nation in Turkey based on the nation rather than the gathering of religious beliefs- identity was firstly achieved by the famous sociologist Ziya Gokalp.

The Nation Concept in Turkish Literature

With Suleyman Nazif many 19th century Turkish theorists gave an analysis of nation interspersed through these French type freedom, independency rather than the concept of nation. In this context, Nazif, in his cultural nation “definition analysis”, says “A nation can never extinct who has Fuzuli, Baki, Nefi, Naft, Nedim,
Namik Kemal, Teyfik Fikretin its past” influencing also by the modernization. This cultural and extremely close fitting nation definition emphasize would not reveal the Turkish emphasize. The reason of this nation analyze to be given is, to contribute to show that the concept of nation in Gokalp sociology that was discussed in all derivative means, how it was mattering as a primary value. Gokalp saying that every nation had its own thought system and philosophy, because of his aspiration to creating a nation-state in Turkish culture. Gokalp’s ideas emphasize in his “Hars and civilization”, “interna idealism” who was considered as one of the most extensive hypothetical theorists of the nationalist trend. Gokalp, define the nation as, “Nation is not a racialist, ethnic or volitional clan. Nation is a category which is common in language, meaning consists of individuals have the same discipline.” (Dural, 1998:10-23)

To say Gokalp sociology should be discussed inside out, is not to give an address to prove the reflections of the concept nation in Turkey to be analysed. As a matter of fact Ayhan Tugcugil the doctriner pen of Turkish Nationalism, defines the concept nation in this way in his work named TMSF: "Nation is an association unit which language, culture, origin, fatherland, ideal, history, beneficium union has se all or most together as a concept.” (Tuğcugil, 1978: 87)

The Expansion of National Character

Prof. Dr. Erol Gungor who analysis Gokalp sociology and Mumtaz Turhan’s thesis, both critisized those theorists before him extensively and also used an eclectic nationalist discourse which is more coherent in his main thesis, alleging that he found the absent ways of both two theorists. According to Gungor, it is needed to rather than explicating the nationalism out of only one way, figures on its conceptions system which is consisting of its subfields. Gungor who started explaining the features that make the nation as it is rather than a principle depending to solely race, fostering biological dominancy and is extremely tough, is explicating the analysis of nation concept with national character. According to Gungor, the most crucial impasse that the nationalist literature had fallen into is “race in advance decision”. (Güngör, 2010: 120-126) Gungor’s valuable spot in here is that Frencn, German and Arabic Nationalism tried to define themselves as very different foreaceptances. When it is considered nationalism trend was blossomed and evolved after 18th century French Revolution, we can reach to the point in what nationalist theorists in France liked to be seperated from other social structures in cultural nationalism. As is remembered, France is the first European country that saved itself from its Latin alphabet. (Ebeistein - Fogelman, 1967: 99-114) French literature that turned to from Latin alphabet, blossomed rapidly, developed, their wise men hugged the French people and building structures of the revolution became real one by one. Among other things, France created French into the focus point of the national character crowing with their cultures also in modernization duration which is after insurrection.

Besides, German nationalism used the culture as a latter feature and emphasized on biological dominancy meaning the features of the German race. Accepting German race’s biological dominancy and its conditions of intellectual revolution coming to Bismarck, Kaiser and Hitler, were in a struggle of using the culture as the abutment of this contention. Arabic nationalism that breaks the nationalism chronology of the western idea system, enlightens the very early of French Revolution, even a few centuries afterwards Asr-i Saadet (The Golden Age of Islam) period. Emphasizing the religion should be considered as an Arabic religion and belonged to solely Arabs rather than its universal part beside embracing Islam, shows Arabic Nationalism could not be seperated from nationalism fanatics at the cost of corrupting the universal message covering into an Islamic guise. With the groups of Bektasi and Alevittes, to bring the Shaman culture which is corrupting the universal message covering into an Islamic guise. With the groups of Bektasi and Alevittes, to bring the Shaman culture which is seperated from nationalism fanatics at the cost of and evolved after 18th century French Revolution, we can reach to the point in what nationalist theorists in France liked to be seperated from other social structures in cultural nationalism. As is remembered, France is the first European country that saved itself from its Latin alphabet. (Ebeistein - Fogelman, 1967: 99-114) French literature that turned to from Latin alphabet, blossomed rapidly, developed, their wise men hugged the French people and building structures of the revolution became real one by one. Among other things, France created French into the focus point of the national character crowing with their cultures also in modernization duration which is after insurrection.

At this point it is needed to emphasize on the research of American anthropologists during II World War. In the research that the USA Ministry of Defence conducted in latter years of 1940, in order to fine the similarities within the social structures of the two great enemy forces to the USA, two spots had come onto the spot. These two features were the culture and national character. In here as also seen in Gungor’s researches, culture, makes the building structure of national character. Gungor, shapes his assumption as follows: “We call an individual’s so so carrying behaviour bents, particular character. These behaviour bents take shape during the life of the
individual and is a combination of both from its physical, physiological and social pertinences.”

(Göngör: 125-126)

In here, “so so carrying” concept is literally important. Because it must be acceptable that an individual’s carrying behaviours are not just limited to that individual’s own universe wall to hear and to perceive. If, the social scientist accepts the motive to change is the only unchangeable factor of social life, he will also have to believe that every society carries resistance against its transformation processes at one hand while they also keep changing rapidly from their inner structures on the other. In this context, individual also deals out with the irresistible motive to change-transform, both with being a social entity, resurrectors to changing out of the way of acceptances of society, and tries the get uses of social transformation even if it is partially. Therefore, around this circle, individuals, advancing their own developments in a social universe, are discovering time zones social transform’s different paths. Göngör’s “rarely iterative social acts” assumption fixes the national character in time as a part of social life. No doubt individual or society that living the change, has not got the capability of understanding the said duration with its whole potential. Basing historical data, external observations, help to let us see how the national character was created and it could be possible to live in different forms in a community. In here, around the historical duration, observations of orientalists who analysis the Ottoman Empire would really help. As is known, within the borders of the Empire having extremely cosmopolite structure, there live social organs linked but not convenient with each others at all, could be shaped as a social structure combined together. Nevertheless, these social parts living together for ages could not be melted in one pot and shaped as a nation. Also, it must be added the Ottoman statesmen who cognized this purpose to be impossible very well, did not force the social structure with their utopias and were stick to “Millet System” instead.

This evaluation shows us that living together for a long time, sharing the same land and attending some same interests are in complicated on defining a nation’s characteristic features. The orientalists explicating the structure of the Ottoman Empire have the same observations as well. These observations are clarifying themselves in many analysis from the current notes of Byzantine annalist who compared the Ottoman navy through observing it during the conquer of Istan-

bul to the Byzantine Empire, in the work of Comme de Boneval’s “Anecdote Venitennes et Turques”. In the said work, the writer relates his observations via saying, “Christians living in this country are not like Turks. Even though punishments they had many times, these live in a vice which damages the purity of Christians.” The analysis which belongs to A. Del Motreye that is also used by the famous nationalist theorist Göngör many times, all throughoutly sets a pattern: “I did not really see Turks are separated from chastity. ... In reality, it is often coincided that cause of cheating with the gauge Rum butchers and grocers were nailed in their ears in front of their stores and laid out for hours.” Ubicini’s observations related to that in Turkish stores, even if they are open during the times of namaz, no one stole anything, but in minority regions, every hour it happened a stabbing and burglary, surely shows neither Turks are savoury and righteous nation from their birth nor all the minority members are debauchee and living in a useless way. Examples given in here and sometimes are fulsome, are important in the way of two society’s way of life and observing the reference to the difference of their general acceptance. Among other things, what determine the nation are neither language, culture, collective interests nor some biological features, public spirit and religion by themselves but a combination of all of the features shown above.

It would be appropriate to turn back to Göngör again from here. Erol Göngör, in his works, always continues to tell about that the national character begins from the individual’s behavior, attitudes and how they are accepted by the society. According to Göngör in the change, analysing externally behaviours that repeat intermittent in an historical observation reveals a philosophy that the formulaic attitudes created. What left in hand is nothing but the national character at the end. Then the theorist gives his theory its last shape specifying that the definition of the nation could not be done unless revealing the national character out.

So, a general nation concept can be specify so: “The nation is an historical duration which contributes-leads to individual and the society to turn their attained habits in an historical duration into a national character who are always in a rapid interaction: which is specified under religious, lingual, cultural and custom rules and finally that submits society to organise around those common interests or ideals. This together

ness does prepare not only biological, cultural or
social acceptances but prepares a structure which contains all of those.”

The Definition of Nationalism

After what the nation is being specified, to catch different expansions of nationalism, it is needed to approach to the problem with its dictionary meaning. Among other things, in VIII volume of Meydan Larousse, the first nationalism definition given as follows: “Evaluating the features which belong to one’s own nation on every other belief the point where nationalism is seen at first glance”. After this very narrowed definition, “The doctrine which defends to accept the right of a political activation that consider the power, opposing all type of integration which can limit the nation’s act of freedom.” points out at the second definition. The third explanation related to the definition of nationalism is shown below: “It’s the common belief of a political community gathered around the reasons of race, language, culture, etc. It is the the thought of a high political accreditation focusing on the national identity and being a nation-state” (Meydan Larousse-VIII: 798)

As can be understood, the first explanation has an hypothesis towards the explanation of National Socialism which is known as German Nationalism. Although the second explanation seems like more extensive, it is left in abeyance how the third one would separate from an assumption which encyclopaedic language defined as "nationalism". Moreover, Hitler’s discourse contains hypotheses which can be complicated easily with the first and second explanations. Hitler, introduced the axis of National Socialism in 1924, in this way: “…The government is not a purpose but a tool. To build up a big civilization, government is one of the primary conditions. But this is not the direct condition of the rising civilization because the civilization especially is hidden in the being of a race which has the capability of civilization-creating. ... For us the National Socialists, the nation consists of a form. Government’s, moreover, this community’s contents is the nation. That’s why, all the benefits, must be faithful to the nation’s dominant and high class benefits.” (Hitler-I, 1968)

Constitutional Nationalism

Republic of Turkey founded by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk is an ideological nation depending on the principle of Kemalism. One out of the 6 arrows which represents the founding philosophy of the nation, shows that Republic of Turkey has a structure based upon nationalism. The definition existing in Turkish Constitutional Charter is in this way: "This Constitutional Law which specifies Turkish land and nation’s endless being and empyreal Turkish government’s indivisible integrity. The nationalist apprehension which Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, immortal leader, the unique hero specified and through the way of his revolution and principles, as an honourable member of the world nations family who has the equal rights, signifies the Turkish Republic’s endless being and affluence. Its corporeal and incorporeal happiness and with those in the way of to reach to the civilization of modern system; ... With the all Turkish citizens’ proud and pride, at gladness and sorrow, responsibilities to the national being, at national benefications and tasks and common in every type of phenomenon...” (TC Anayasasi, 1987: 32-33)

The quote above means that the nationalist principle in Constitutional Charter can not be changed. Many Kemalist theorist supports these explanations are under the matter of third retry in encyclopaedic terminology. Definitely, in Ataturk’s “Speech” and other interviews, the definition of nationalism that Ataturk mentioned can be considered under the third explanation. Nevertheless, it is clear too the group who prepared the new Constitutional Law after the Military Coup in 1982, had an extremely heroic and full of pending hypotheses of understanding of nationalism. Rather with its identification coming and going between the second and third explanations, the nationalism definition of the Constitutional Law in 1982, it is clear that Turkish nationalism flew through eclectic, neo-fascist and in patches a paranoiac feature even though, staying away from Turkish nationalism’s main stream. Whereas, Ziya Gokalp’s –the first theoretical Turkish sociologist- definition of nationalism, depends on starting with the person’s feeling about himself that he was a Turk and goes through a sociocultural acceptance the 1982 re-definition of nationalism goes far beyond the cultural understanding of nationalism in some aspects.

As is remembered, Gokalp’s ancients had recided to the Ottoman boards from a Kurdish oriented society. For this reason, Gokalp, going through his own personal development, defends that if a person feels himself what of the ethic he had, he should be in that race. (Gökalp, 1959:43-44) It is primary here how the individual was
brought up and which purposes he had his task. Again Gokalp who criticizes the government in Istanbul for them to blame him Kurdish, because of an article of him in which he compared the government of Istanbul and Kemalist Anatolian Movement, defended in his has written poem for replying: “Himself to be a friend of Turk whether he is Turk or not, slanderer to be an enemy of Turk if he is Turk or not.”(18)

In Gokalp’s sociology, it is seen a system of hypothesis rather than shown structure. Gokalp, defended living together tough sharing a world in aware of being enlightened, meaning though the awareness of the world, criticizing the nationalism mentality depending on biological and domination. Gokalp, is summarizing nationalism in his head shown below:

“It’s seen that, Turkism is not also jingoist or fanatic, although with all its love, being captivated to only its original culture. Like Europe determined the civilization in a complete and systematic form, has also no brails or disdain to any nation’s national culture. On the contrary, Turkists assess values and honour against all national cultures. Besides, we will appreciate to those authors with thinkers who are captivated to their own national cultures, although we do not like their political organizations, of the nations to whom our country was once the aim of their incursions.” (Parla, 2009:21)

**Culture & Civilization: Coalition of Contradictions**

In Gokalp sociology, to cognize the mission of Turkism or nationalism that formed, it would be useful to explicate firstly the work of its theorist and which is also the base of Gokalp sociology, “Being Turkized –Being Islamized- Being Civilized”. Simpliestly, the culture is the national accumulation that contains a nation’s own values, social interests and its own stuff. Whereas civilization means, “A common accumulation valid for the whole world created in the end of cultural integration and contributing to general universal processing” for the theorist. (Gökalp, 2010: 96-108) Gokalp sees the civilization as Europe’s “industrial developments and affirmative scholarships” against the Ottoman Empire. According to Gokalp, to take these two, meaning the industrial developments and cultural modernity from the west was in result of use rather than discount. But, there are some aesthetic, moral, philosophical emotions that; completely belong to nation. These values can not be lost definitely, can not be disregarded, can not be compromised on any matter. (Gökalp: 11-13) Besides, Gokalp, repeated in every chance the transformation of civilization’s universal features should be in real condition of to be added to national culture. While he was separating culture from civilization, he fended there were features which make the nation as nation. But in this point, it does not need for culture to head over civilization or civilization to head over culture. What important is to protect the culture which brings in difference but in this case, to reach to level of general civilization, not to fall behind the world. Sociolog draws this refined distinction’s walls as follows: “If which features of this civilization can be accepted by our people according to the Turkish national identity, only those features would count as added to our culture. Matters ordinary Turks has aggression towards, should be kept out of the national culture even if they are accepted by the elites.” (Gökalp: 2-9)

Gokalp, in his poem he has written in 1918 named as, “Civilization” was bringing clarity to the topic: “Civilization is an universal book/ Consisting of national cultures/ Belonging to different national identities” (Gökalp, 1918: 20)

Taha Parla used to analyse the works of Gokalp, specifies in Gokalp sociology, there was no paradox between civilization and culture, namely national and universal. (PARLA:38) However, in the works of Prof Dr Orhan Turkdogan and Mumtaz Turhan walking along the line of Gokalp, under the concepts of civilization and culture was undergone a difference collinear. Parla who criticised Gokalp in a systematic way, emphasizes the famous theorist was quite eclectic and that he could not blend Islamic Moral, the culture of West with the culture of Turkish. On the other hand, Aynur Ilyasoglu who tries to keep Gokalp apart from his original works on nationalism, claims Gokalp had a synthesis, for Turkish state in just a pragmatic axis. This approach makes Gokalp stay away from the system of thought he created to form the building stones of. Cahit Tanyol arguing “it is the duration” that the nationalism was a key factor on changeover from ummah to nation- state, was settled to be stuck to republic’s quite pragmatic expression without neglecting Gokalp was a strong theorician of Turkish nationalism. Whereas, it was felt in Gungor’s works that the most systematic criticism to Gokalp comes into being.
Gungor Criticises Gökalp

Gungor, begins his criticism analysing Gökalp’s main thoughts: “Gökalp sees, civilization as the arrogation of techniques and conceptions from one nation to other via procedure and imitations. Culture is both the emotions not taken imitated and not executed by procedure, he says. ... This definition belongs to him as well, 'Culture is composed of the people's ancestors, precedents, customs, orally and written literature, language, music, religion, morality.’ ...In this formula, Gökalp had contrasts of the cause of thinking appropriate besides his instinct to win the favour of political leaders of his time.” (Gungor: 12-13)

Gungor who draws the religion as a sample, argues that the religion association is into the coverage area of both national culture and civilization. According to this apprehension, Turks had not invented the religion but shaped it as a part of the culture adding some of national features into the religion from by using the characteristics of their own national identity. The same definition greets in also Cahit Tanyol’s works. Tanyol too, just like Gungor, depending the Shaman belief in Turks had accessed into Islam culture via mysticism. (Tanyol: 186-192)

Gungor blames Gökalp not only for he fallen into a wrong conception and questioning two different item in a wrong way. According to him, nationalism concept is also needed to be analyze in different contexts. According to Gungor, not just the nation but the nationalism has different expansions and these expansions can not be reached to a common structure via getting melted in a pot. Gungor, in his book labelled as, “Turkish Culture and Nationalism”, adverting to the American sociology’s literature, alleges that currently nationalist trends was identified with fascism or National Socialism. Gungor, continues as below: ‘For not having a common doctrine related to nationalism or having its secular prophet, it is not true to dispute against the ideology. Developing the national power could cause country to have national political interests over another, it can be expanded as independency movement, in another place. Nationalism can shape as a movement of creating civilization and culture. In Greek nationalism, church plays a big part in the formation of Greek's national identity. Today’s Arabic nationalism tries to bring localization depending on Arabic language and socialism, postponing the religious ideals as secondary ideals. (Güngör, 1987:111)

Conclusion: Which Nationalism to Be Chosen?

In the countries saved of colonialism, Gungor who considers that nationalism was a restriction movement against the colonial forces and through this way it could be integrate with socialism, believes that it could be possible in small nations, history and cultural consciousness still come in real with a nationalist trend to come up through the history scene. In the freedom periods of the Africa and Arabic world, at the first sight, it could be found of features of religious restrictions. Nevertheless, the fact reason must be to clear the curiosity of nationalism after getting an opportunity from the society by postponing the religious ideals. It shows how true that Gökalp’s discourse is, founded on after the socialist movements in Africa shaped as “civilization restrict of black and white” Arabs’ Baas model decision after seeming like revolting Crux to get help from Muslims.

In the article of the “Illrd Wave” which was written by Alvin- Heid i Toffler, it is underlined that the world is getting transformed towards, "New World Order" under the control of the US. In the same article, all nations live the same development- transformation period via the transmission from modernism to postmodernism. However, the so- called war against terror which turned into an "ethnic cleansing operation" in the US, covering the EU rapidly, and called as a religion war in Bosnia in the middle past and in Iraq in near future; justifies the arguments of both Toeflers and Gungor.

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. A. Baran DURAL
TC Trakya University Economics and Administrative Sciences Faculty Department of Public Administration, Merkez/Edirne
b_dural@yahoo.com