

Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Post-Imperial States: The Turkish Republic and the USSR

Hakan Erdagöz,
Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University
hakan.erdagoz@izu.edu.tr

Paper presented at the 2021 ASN World Convention, 5-8 May2021

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Introduction

What explains the dynamics of nation-building in post-imperial states? Why are some states more compatible with citizenship/nationality policies that embrace ethnic pluralism than others? Why and how did the Turkish Republic and the USSR as the post-imperial states diverge in their nation building models? This paper intends to develop a nuanced analytical framework with an aspiration toward a theoretical proposition on institutional change of citizenship and nationality policies in imperial and post-imperial states.

This paper tries to answer these interrelated questions by comparative historical analysis of the Ottoman and Russian empires and their successor states. Thus, it aims to understand different patterns of political development concerning citizenship and nationality policies in the two imperial and the post-imperial states. Their management of ethno-religious diversity primarily shaped citizenship models the two empires adopted in the nineteenth century. Hence, they affected the two states' post-imperial citizenship and nationality policies, producing long-lasting legacies that continue to date. While both the Ottoman and Russian empires experienced a similar issue of governing ethnoreligious minorities and came up with an overarching imperial identity and citizenship model, the successor post-imperial states ended up in different trajectories regarding the national identity and management of ethno-religious diversity. The purpose of this study is to examine and understand this variation in citizenship and nationalities and the historical legacy in Russian and Turkish contexts from a historical perspective.

Literature on Nation-Building and Citizenship

Scholars have extensively researched different models of nationalism and nation-building. Indeed, there have been valuable contributions in the study of nationalism by many scholars who analyzed different pathways to nation-building in Europe (Deutsch and Foltz 1966; Eisenstadt and Rokkan 1973; Greenfeld 1993). Since Hans Kohn's (1945) foundational work on the typologies of nationalism based on civic and ethnic dichotomy, many others followed suit (Brubaker 1992; Joppke 2005). Although the civic-ethnic categories have been helpful, these typologies assume a fixed and unchanging national identity. The civic-ethnic typologies have recently come under solid criticisms in studies beyond the Western context (Akturk 2012; Al 2019; Aslan 2015). In this sense, this study shares these criticisms toward the civic-ethnic dichotomy. On the other hand, there has been a growing aspiration to develop a theory for nation-building variations (Wimmer 2012; Mylonas 2012; Bulutgil 2016). These studies tremendously enriched our understanding of why nation-building varies across time and space. However, they neglect a crucial point that the non-Western imperial and post-imperial states operate their nation-building in a vastly different context from the Western countries and often in a successive fashion that produces temporal lag.

This study underlines how ideas and institutions travel across regions and applied in different settings differently, like the imperial and post-imperial states of Eurasia and the Middle East. Thus, the paper aspires to overcome what I call nation-state bias by analyzing the dynamics of nation-building in empire-states. When one speaks of Russian or Ottoman empires, the notion of national identity may indeed sound like an oxymoron. Yet, these non-Western empires extensively experimented with a state-led national identity through universal citizenship policies

and practices to cope with the necessities in the age of nationalism. Even though there are valuable studies on citizenship and nationhood, these studies exclusively focus on the European nation-state models (Brubaker 1992; Fahrmeir 2000; Torpey 2000; Weil 2008). There are only a few works that look at the imperial cases (Lohr 2012; Karatani 2003; Cohen 2014), but these studies do not explain how imperial citizenship persists or changes over time in the successor states.

In the literature of citizenship, ethnicity, and nationalism, a central puzzle is still remains unresolved—that is, why some states are more compatible with citizenship policies that embrace ethnic pluralism than others. In addition, the comparison of the Russian and Ottoman empires and their successor states is scarce in the literature. Moreover, governance of ethno-religious diversity is usually reviewed in the literature by a nation-state bias, ignoring the fact that empire-states also tried to find specific schemes for managing of ethnoreligious diversity. In this sense, tracing the origins of citizenship models adopted by Turkey and the Soviet Union in the twentieth century to their previous empires is a novel contribution in the tradition of comparative-historical analysis. Overall, this study intends to fill such gaps in the existing literature.

Conceptual Framework

This paper aims to explain different trajectories of nation-building in the USSR and Turkey through an analysis of their former empires' governance of ethno-religious diversity. This analysis shows that both international and domestic level factors shaped the paths not taken. To this end, it is apt to examine how global influences, discourses, and norms diffused and introduced the notion of citizenship in multi-ethnic empires. For the reasons that will be laid out in the proceeding pages, the Russian and Ottoman empires as non-Western followers produced different modes of compatibility with the modern institution of citizenship, which was primarily shaped by the idea of sovereignty, legitimacy, international law, and European conception of modernity.

The analysis in this paper adopts the kind of methodology used by pioneering studies of comparative historical analysis that highlights how states' patterns of modernization affected one another in a successive manner (Moore 1966; Gerschenkron 1962; Bendix 1977; Greenfeld 1993). In his comparative study, Moore offers an answer for what explains political regime outcomes in modern Europe. According to him, the internal dynamics of a society, predominantly originated and fueled by the relationship between the landowner and peasantry, determine the type of polity and regime type. Moore comes up with three main patterns of polity in the process of modernization. These three trajectories are democratic capitalism, exemplified by England, France, and the US; conservative revolution (or fascism), exemplified by Germany, Italy, and Japan; and peasant revolution (or communism), exemplified by Russia and China. In the first pattern, commercialization of agriculture is accomplished through a decisive existence of the bourgeois that is independent of political power. The transition from pre-industrial to industrial level occurs softly and creates democratic capitalism. As Moore concisely puts it, no bourgeois, no democracy. In the second, there is an unrealized bourgeois revolution and the state, on behalf of the former, takes initiatives and imposes the top-down modernization. In the third, if

there are no active state power and elites, be they aristocrat or bourgeois, rancorous peasants are likely to rebel and to cause a revolution, as in China and Russia (Moore 1966, 413-523).

Moore's explanation implies a path taken by a pioneering country, in this case, England, that was modified and distinctively adopted by the followers or latecomers (such as France, Germany, Russia, and so on). A crucial point in this causal mechanism is the way in which follower countries do not simply follow the same path taken by England even though they are very much inspired by this path taken. Since these three patterns have a chronological order and they subsequently developed, they are very distinct from each other. In other words, Moore does not claim that countries modernized in a singular and linear way. On the contrary, they took different paths in part to the way taken in handling the abolition of the peasantry and in part to the timely occurrence of the three trajectories. Therefore, the timing creates a strong cause for diversification. In a similar vein, in his study of industrial development, Alexander Gerschenkron offers the theory of economic backwardness. He argues that there are no certain pre-requisites to economic growth. Although England was the pioneering country, the latecomer developers adopted different paths for economic development. For instance, in his understanding of economic growth and development, the speed of development, the organization, and the ideology play important roles. He categorized early developers (Britain), late developers (Germany), and late-late developers (Russia), which showed different paths of growth. For instance, the industrial growth of Britain was through trade rather than the banks in Germany and the state in Russia in a rapid, top-down fashion. The key idea here is that different nations developed different paths depending on the distinctive adoption of the pioneering country's ideas and the timing of industrialization (Gerschenkron 1962, 5-52).

In a similar manner, Reinhard Bendix adopts a comparative modernization approach and applies this methodology to the study of nationalism. He highlights the importance of timing and sequence: "Once industrialization has occurred anywhere, this fact alone alters the international environment of all other societies. There is a sense in which it is true to say that because of timing and sequence industrialization cannot occur in the same way twice" (Bendix 1977, p. 410). Taking Gerschenkron's idea of economic backwardness one step further, Bendix suggests that the industrial revolution in England and political revolution in France in the eighteenth century set these two pioneering countries as "advanced" in relation to other countries and made the latter "politically backward" (411-413).

With an inspiration to add Russian/Soviet and Ottoman/Turkish experiences of nation-building and citizenship to this tradition of historical comparative analysis, I suggest that the advanced and follower countries framework can shed light on the nature of political change and nation-building trajectories in these two non-Western societies. In order to explain different trajectories of nation-building in these contexts with an emphasis on state variation, I adopt Max Weber's definition of the nation, which underlines the importance of prestige and status on the one hand and collective memories on the other. According to him, "the community of political destiny, i.e., above all, of common struggle of life and death, has given rise to groups with joint memories which often have had a greater impact than the ties of merely cultural, linguistic, or ethnic community. It is this 'community of memories' which...constitutes the decisive element of 'national consciousness'" (Weber 1978, p. 389). From a Weberian point of view, the great powers care more about the idea of prestige than ordinary states because the sentiments of

prestige legitimize “glory of power over other communities.” Just as individuals strive for status in society, states, especially great powers, endeavor to gain prestige and honor in international society (Weber 1968, p. 160).

As will be clear, Russia’s sense of honor and prestige were fundamental to its imperial national identity. As followers of the Western countries, the Russian and Ottoman empires and later their successor states introduced and implemented the then universalizing components of the modern state. These empires, while aiming to retain their ancient regime and ethno-religious pluralism, had to experiment with some of the urgencies of the time such as national identity, centralization, new forms of legitimacy, and so on. What emerged was the application of universally dominating European concepts and institutions such as citizenship and constitutions based on the circumstances that were inherited from the past. In a study that examines the theme of nationalism in the Russian and Serbian contexts, Veljko Vujacic also draws on the nation formation through the advanced and follower countries framework. In his words, “the national identity of the initial follower society is formed through a partial imitation and rejection of the model (France vis-à-vis England), while the model’s identity is reinforced by its interaction with the follower. Each follower society, in turn, becomes a model for subsequent followers (France for Germany and Russia; Germany for Russia), so that the identity of each is formed through the process of imitation of and competition with its most proximate rival society, seen as the embodiment of either the ‘developed West’ or the ‘backward East’” (p. 84). Even though analysis of French or English nation-states as pioneer societies falls outside the scope of this paper, I square the Russian/Soviet and Ottoman/Turkish nation building models into such a framework.

My overarching argument is that citizenship in the Russian and Ottoman empires was theoretically an oxymoron. The emerging world polity defined by European modernity did not support imperial citizenship models. Citizenship was compatible with the notion of nation-state, not necessarily empire-states. Thus, the state variation was the most obvious obstacle for it. By the term ‘emerging world-polity,’ I am referring to the European universalism that began to develop in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. European universalism often reflected Christian political theology, especially based on the idea of civilization. Non-Western multi-ethnic societies with autocratic government models increasingly came to be defined as uncivilized and not compatible with the European state system. In this sense, the recognition within the civilized world required the embrace of liberal European norms and values such as minority rights, human rights, popular sovereignty, and so on. The non-European people were increasingly defined as savage, uncivilized, or barbarian (Woolf 1989, p. 97; Gong 1984; Conklin 1997). Both the Russian and Ottoman empires were caught guard off by this ideological and racist conception of the world. However, the Russian Empire was nevertheless Christian and at times can overcome this uneven treatment. However, the expansion of the Westphalian state system to non-Europe was mostly about great power games because great powers made the rules and their practices and norms constituted the institutionalization of international politics. Since Russia directly tied its national identity to its international standing as a great power, it was immune from European interventions, whereas the Ottoman Empire, as a declining power and at the nexus of Eastern Question, was subject to many European interventions. Its sovereignty was not deemed legitimate because it did not enjoy the cultural and religious proximity to Europe like the Russian Empire did.

Finally, as latecomers, the international influences of imperial citizenship in the Russian and Ottoman contexts infiltrated into the locale under different settings and hence produced different outcomes. Since the follower states adopt the models of advanced states distinctively, the diffusion of European ideas and institutions does not create sameness. The universalistic norms and ideas decouple at the locale. Because of the different models of ethno-religious governance, the role of collective memories, and official ideologies in the twentieth century, the two follower countries developed different nation-building models with variant capability of incorporating ethnic pluralism. This variance was also reflected in the state variation.

Central Arguments

This study predicts several outputs. First, imperial citizenship was endogenous to great power politics that was shaped by both ideology and *realpolitik*. In theory, imperial citizenship as designed by empires like the Ottomans and Romanovs was not compatible with the internationally legitimated forms of citizenship, which is nation-state citizenship. In other words, the emerging world polity composed mainly of European nation-states did not support the citizenship projects of empire-states. However, since the Ottoman Empire was culturally and religiously more distant to Europe than Russia, it was more susceptible to European interventions. The second predicted outcome is about the division of ethno-religious communities. Both Russian and Ottoman empires legally recognized each ethno-religious group's cultural, religious, juridical, and economic autonomy by institutionalizing and coopting their church and courts. Religious status was the single most important mark among the identities that existed in the Ottoman Empire. In contrast, the Russian Empire classified its ethnic groups not just based on religion but more importantly based on culture, language, political loyalty, and social estate. For these two reasons, the Ottoman imperial citizenship and constitution could not pass on to the successor Turkish Republic.

Violent state death as a result of gradual ethnic minority secessions and foreign invasions created collective thinking that a state-led national identity based on territoriality must be created for unity and survival. The collective memories about the Ottoman imperial past forced the founding fathers of the new republic to adopt a citizenship model grounded on ethnic assimilation and religious unity, recognizing the non-Muslims as minorities only. Likewise, the relative ease with which Russian Empire managed its ethno-religious minorities passed on to the successor Soviet Union. Since there was no violent state death, ethnic secession/partition, or foreign invasion, the founders of the Soviet Union aimed to keep the diversity of the population and adopted citizenship policies that celebrated ethnic pluralism. Therefore, the legacies of nation-state building processes as well as collective memories that usually take the form of a traumatic defining experience may have enduring legacies in the institutional development of citizenship and nationhood. Finally, these adopted models on nationalities were further reinforced by the official state ideologies. Whereas in Turkey the official ideology as put by the founding elites attempted to create a monocultural nation-state along Western lines, in the USSR the founding elites tried a unique model of communism that ultimately rejected a monocultural national identity and defied the West.

The Russian Empire and the USSR

Great power politics

Since the time of Peter the Great, the Russian Empire as a frontier state expanded in multiple directions, bordering many countries. Territorial expansion of the Empire was completed in the late nineteenth century and its vast territories with diverse ethnic groups and cultures made Russia a great state. Starting from the late seventeenth century, the Russian state's efforts to modernize the empire and ensure its place among European powers, for the most part, guided its foreign policy and its system of ethno-religious diversity.

The Russian Empire was not like nation-states of Europe and its historical development precluded it from becoming a nation-state. Borrowing Charles Tilly's useful conception of the national state, which does not necessarily mean nation-state (1990, p. 2), I maintain that the Russian state as a non-colonial empire-state developed into a national state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There were obviously historical factors that forced Russia to become a multi-ethnic empire. In addition, Russia's international prestige was depended on its ability to hold onto the diverse ethno-religious structure and vast lands it ruled. From 1815 to the collapse of its empire, Russia's main concern was to ensure not to lose territories it gained in the previous centuries (Jelavich 1964, p. 43). Its grandiose empire was Russia's international pride and its vast territories and resources in fact made it a major great power among European countries since Napoleon's defeat and Alexander I's invasion of France in 1815.

After its defeat of Napoleon, Russia presented itself as the savior of Europeans and assumed an air of Europeanness in its foreign policy. It was among the leading architects of the Congress of Vienna that aimed to suppress nationalist movements across the continent. Catherine the Great believed that Russia was enlightened despotism and it should be more respectful of minority rights unlike those of Oriental despotic states of the Ottomans and Persians (De Madariaga 1990, pp. 27-29). The Russian imperial elites considered European nationalities more civilized than ethnic Russians. Eighteenth century accounts concerning the political origins of the Russians considered the Vikings as the founder of the ancient Kievan state, a deliberate reference to Russia's western ties for the purpose of legitimacy and prestige (Geraci 2018, p. 9). Russia always sought for affirmation and recognition of its Europeanness by the West: "...Russia's honor has been defined as the honor of being a part of the Western world and defending its core values" (Tsygankov 2012, p. 5). Yet, Russia's prestigious position within the so-called family of nations was not guaranteed. In fact, Russia was never considered an organic, true part of the civilized world. It was always half-European. Although the empire persistently clanged to its European identity, it was not deemed as a truly civilized nation by the Europeans. With its Eastern Orthodox religion, outmoded autocracy, and backward society that lacked middle class and liberal values, Russia culturally was not located in Europe. Russia's place among the civilized nations was not readily admitted by European circles that saw it "as a less successful police state than others" (Neumann 2008, p. 28).

Accordingly, Russia's self-presentation in relation to Europe should not be conceived monolithic (Neumann, Russia and the Idea of Europe). There were times when Russian interests conflicted with those of Europeans, most notably in the Crimean War (1853—1856). The war created a context in which the cultural gap between Russia and the West became wider. Although Russia never doubted its geopolitical destiny as a great power with other European countries, it turned

its attention to a reformist agenda at the domestic level and adopted a politics of pan-Slavism in the Ottoman Balkans starting from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. One important cause of this shift in Russia's political re-orientation was the secularization of international relations in the late nineteenth century. After the national unification of Germany in 1871, the moralistic international order in Europe changed to *realpolitik* (Chadwick 1975, p. 134).

While religiously and culturally Russia was distinctive from European nation-states, it was still trying to retain a special relationship with Europe and be a part of the European family of nations in international politics by utilizing its material capabilities. Where idealism fell short, pragmatism provided Russia to continue cooperation with the West through participating in international initiatives and organizations (Morrill 1974). Against this background, the Ottoman Empire was culturally and religiously even more distant to Europe than Russia. In this sense, the Russian Empire focused on highlighting the civilizational distinctions between itself and the Ottomans. What can be called Russian Orientalism toward the Ottoman Empire can be most clearly seen in Russia's entanglements through pan-Slavism in the Ottoman Balkans and its position along with other European powers in the Eastern Question. Overall, because of the Russian Empire's prestigious status as a great power and its Christian identity, its nationality problems such as the Polish question or Muslim question in the North Caucasus were not internationalized by the Europeans. So long as the empire was able to retain its prestigious state with multi-ethnic people and vast territories, its great power status remained unchallenged. As a latecomer of the modern European state system, Russia's special attention to its international standing at times through ideology and at times through *realpolitik* created a context in which it was free from European interventions in its governance of minorities. When compared to the Ottoman experience, religion constituted a common ground between Russia and other great powers. Thus, the status of Russia's minorities did not constitute a concern for European public opinion.

Governance of diversity

The Romanov dynasty lasted for three centuries and the borders of its empire covered vast territories from the Far East to Central Asia to Finland. Although the Russian culture was the core element of imperial national identity, this prioritization had more civic than ethnic aspects. The difference between *Rossiskii* and *Russkii* reflects this reality. The Russian Empire was officially called not *Russkaia Imperiia* but *Rossiiskaia Imperiia* (Szporluk 1990, p. 2). Practically, the use of *Rossiiskaia* signaled a gap between the state and society. According to Robert C. Tucker, Russia had a dual image: the state was official Russia with its multi-ethnic structure and autocracy, whereas the society was unofficial Russia with no particular ethnic or national attachment (1963, p. 70). For instance, by 1897, ethnic Russians made up only 44 percent of the entire population (Geraci 2018, p. 10). The Empire's model of governance was a direct outcome of the Protestant Reformation and Enlightenment. In the absence of the Church as a political actor, post-Reformation princes of German states took an active and role to ensure and promote the social and religious order by creating an "interventionist and regulatory *Polizeistaat*" (Raeff, 1975, p. 1223). Incarnated in the ideas of cameralism and enlightened despotism, the *Polizeistaat* was adapted to the Russian context by the policies of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, who respectively subordinated the Eastern Orthodox Church under state authority and introduced administrative reforms to make the Russian state more compatible with

European state system (Raeff 1975). Moreover, Catherine the Great extended this institutional framework to the indigenous Muslim peoples of the empire through her reforms (Werth 2014; Crews 2006). The administrative incorporation of religious minorities provided a model for governing the diversity in the Empire. Officially institutional incorporation of religious minorities to the Empire was very similar to the Ottoman *millet* system that incorporated religious diversity by granting religious tolerance. In this sense, the two empires had an important common ground. The religious distinction was important in Russia, but it was not the only one; the differences in hereditary status (*soslovie*) were equally important (Geraci 2018, p. 8). In the Russian Empire, there were three main criteria to define its minorities: Political loyalty; estate and social aspect; and cultural aspect such as religion and language (Kappeler 2003, p. 170-1). For instance, while most of the majority Orthodox Russians were peasants and serfs, Muslim minorities were never placed in serfdom and their nobles could serve in the Russian imperial high culture as bureaucrats and public servants (Kappeler 1994, p. 143-4).

Despite an extensive accommodation of diversity, the Russian Empire was not very progressive in terms of citizenship rights. This feature could be more clearly seen when compared to the mid-nineteenth century Ottoman legal developments. In fact, the Russians did not develop universal citizenship until the Revolution of 1905, but they dealt with citizenship through *ad hoc* solutions, which started with the emancipation of the serfdom, Russification, and the Great Reforms in its Western borderlands as a measure to counterbalance minority nationalisms. Geopolitically being free from Europe's pressures and having defined its imperial order not necessarily on religious bifurcation, the Russian Empire enjoyed its imperial citizenship at least until it was aborted by the nationalities problem after the 1905 period. Another odd situation about the Russian experience of citizenship is that the Russians never composed and created an imperial decree that legally defined the rights as in the Ottoman Empire. The earliest official attempt to create an imperial decree of rights is Mikhail Speranskii's classification of Fundamental State Laws of the Russian Empire. However, this attempt was quite rudimentary and the rights defined in it aimed more at the state's rights and barely the rights and duties of the subjects. This set of codified laws were issued after 1905 and until this time, the Russian Empire maintained imperial membership through the preservation of classical strategy of minority management in empires as in pre-reform Ottoman Empire.

Equally important in Russian citizenship was the integration of the Russian Empire into the liberal global economy at the turn of the nineteenth century. This integration resulted in a more complex society with the effects of rapid industrialization. The bulk of Russian citizenship at the practical level through immigration policies came into a being during this transformation that started in the aftermath of Russification (Lohr 2012, p. 5). Furthermore, it should be noted that the Western borderlands of the empire were the window to the West and they had the first that encountered policies regarding the rights. One fruitful outcome of this process was the emergence of an educated class of people who learned to develop a civic sense of responsibility in an autocracy, approaching the imperial problems, not thorough a nationalist perspective, but through a national perspective (Lincoln 1990, p. 196). Overall, despite its sporadic policies of ethnic cleansing that targeted minority communities in the Caucasus and the Crimea, the Russian Empire's overarching framework for governing diversity proved to be very durable as it somewhat passed onto the successor Soviet state. In addition, minority nationalism did play little role, if any, in the breakup of both the Russian and Soviet empires. This outcome also indicates

that the chances of multi-ethnic nation building for Soviet Russia in the twentieth century were highly likely. In what follows, I will try to show this point by drawing on the collective memories of Russian political *modus vivendi*.

Collective memory

With the notable exception of the North Caucasus region and Poland throughout the nineteenth century, the Tsarist empire did not have serious secessionist challenges from its minority groups. The most ethnically conscious region was perhaps areas in the western borderlands. Even though the tsarist regime developed serious doubts about the loyalty of borderland minorities and securitized them, with the exception of Poland, the kind of ‘national awakening’ that can be seen in the Ottoman Empire did not emerge in Russia. Although ethnic Russians mainly settled in Ukraine and Siberia, they did not constitute a sizeable community in places that were primarily populated by indigenous peoples such as Finns, Poles, or Caucasians (Suny 1997, p. 6).

It is true that during the First World War, Russia was under German occupation and the Russians still had to defend their country until the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. Important territories of Western Russia such as Finland, Poland, the Baltic states, and Belorussia and the Caucasian nations seceded. Of these, the Caucasian countries soon joined the new Soviet Union, while the Baltic states and Belorussia were integrated by the Second World War started. Overall, the territorial change from the Russian Empire to the Soviet Union did not bring much change. The new Soviet empire was as extensive as its tsarist predecessor. In addition, the absence of a violent state death¹ that may have resulted from nationalities problem meant that the revolutionary Soviet elites could retain the tsarist state’s multiethnic character. Despite their revolutionary break with the past, the Bolshevik’s territorial continuity with the past also demonstrates their positive attitude about multi-ethnic character of the successor Soviet state. This became all the more apparent with the Bolsheviks’ gradual territorial expansion to incorporate the parts of the former tsarist empire.

Official ideology

Given the political development of the Russian Empire, it makes sense that the successor Soviet Union retained the multi-ethnic character. Yet, this outcome was not inevitable as a number of competing ideologies emerged after the toppling of the monarchy. The Bolshevik’s unique reconfiguration of nationalities allowed the official accommodation of ethnic diversity. As a successor to a multi-ethnic empire, the Soviet communist regime’s unique approach to nationalism led to a nation-building model that embraced ethnic pluralism through an overarching ideology (Hirsch 2005; Martin 2001).

Revolutionaries adopted a moral superiority over both the capitalist world and Russia’s ‘backward’ indigenous peoples. Historic Russia’s autochthonous minorities were accepted as equal citizens without imposing on them a national or ethnic identity. Since they were historically backward due to their lack of experience with capitalism, the Bolsheviks officially expedited their ‘enlightenment’, so that they would loyal to socialism and polemicize in their

¹ Here I borrow Tanisha M. Fazal’s definition of state death: “the formal loss of control over foreign policy to another state” (Fazal 2007, p. 17).

own native languages (Slezkine 1994). In addition, the Bolsheviks somewhat embraced the egalitarian premises of the French Revolution (Tsygankov 2012, p. 35). By granting full citizenship rights without class distinctions, the Soviet elites stood closest to the French-nation building model. Moreover, the ideology that they wanted to export to Europe and other parts of the world as an alternative to Western capitalism came from the Western world. However, it has to be admitted that the Soviet Union came up with a unique model of nation-building and constituted an example for the later multi-ethnic communist regimes of the twentieth century.

The Soviet Union is indeed in a unique place in twentieth century history, especially when one considers the long-term effects and persistence of this multi-ethnic nation-building model and inclusive citizenship rights. However, the impressive progressiveness of Russian-Soviet citizenship lost its emancipatory rhetoric as the USSR under Stalin increasingly turned totalitarian starting from the 1930s. Stalin abandoned some of the progressive ethnic and citizenship policies of the earlier period. Citizenship for foreigners became very difficult due to the wartime conditions and the state outlawed the Latin alphabet and made Russian the mandatory language in education in the entire Soviet Union in the late 1930s. Similarly, mass deportation of indigenous ethnic groups of the Caucasus and Crimea to Siberia and Central Asia were simply practices that went against the inclusive characteristic of Russian/Soviet citizenship and nation-building model. Yet, this overall assault on ethnic diversity did not mean the Soviet nationhood was giving way to Russification through ethnic homogenization. Totalitarian Soviet leadership also adopted similar strategies when dealt with the peasant question; ethnic minorities, peasants, artists, scientist all were given many rights when the state lacked social power, but once the state gained enough governing power later on, the society altogether was suppressed (Kenez 1999, pp. 14-40). Finally, despite Stalin's exclusionary policies, the multi-ethnic nationhood model in Russia persisted into the twenty-first century.

The Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic

Great power politics

The Ottoman Empire wanted to take its place among the European powers not because of the so-called cultural identity and social drives but because of modernization of its bureaucracy, army, hospitals, schools, etc. Ottoman modernization can be traced back to the late eighteenth century when the Empire began to encounter series of challenges by the Russians who had at the time already started their modernization with the rigorous endeavors of Peter the Great. The Ottoman ruling elites, especially during the reigns of Sultan Selim III and Mahmud II, first met modernist initiatives through modernization of the Empire's armies and hospitals to remedy its position in Europe. To this end, the Ottoman elites, unlike their counterparts in Russia, sought the solution in science and technology and concentrated on having as many doctors, engineers, and technicians as possible. European thinking and culture thus were not immediate concerns for the Ottoman modernization. What was to be done, in the eyes of Ottoman elites and modernists alike, was to keep up with the European warfare technology in order for the survival of the state. Interstate competition and the threat posed by Tsarist Russia were an important drive for the Ottomans to save their international prestige and security within the European state system.

After the Congress of Vienna of 1815, the Ottoman Empire was not included in the Concert of Europe. Instead, it was considered as the Sick Man of Europe as coined by Tsar Nikolai I. The Concert was a conservative system, aiming at the preservation of monarchies and repelling the possibility of revolution. Its members were Britain, Austria, France, Prussia and Russia. The Ottoman Empire would be admitted to the Concert only after the Crimean War of 1853—6. The most important goal of the Concert was to show zero tolerance to any nationalist uprising on the continent. However, it violated this principle as early as during the Greek independence. The Ottoman Empire's as a member of the Concert lasted only until 1878, but even then, it was not considered as a legitimate member of the Family of Nations because it was an appendix to Europe and not Christian.

While the Europeans ideologically looked down on the Ottoman Empire as uncivilized, the values and ideas represented by the notions of civilization and nation were not shared by all of the Concert's members. The two pioneering countries of France and Britain differed vastly from the other three because they were not considered as progressive as the two countries. In addition, for liberal Victorian Britain, the illiberal Austrian and Russian way of preserving peace and status quo would create a 'European police' (Mazower 2012, p. 7). Instead, the British liberals promoted the "national interest" in intervening in other people's domestic affairs through international legal procedures, thereby creating a global vision that some states are legally "more sovereign" than others (Mazower 2012, p. 7-8). Victorian internationalism was inextricably tied to the idea of nationality (Mazower 2012, p. 48). Victorian Britain was the norm carrier country of the era and it introduced some legal concepts of international relations such as non-intervention, sovereignty, and humanitarian intervention. However, the principle of non-intervention only applied to the civilized countries that were members of the Family of Nations and hence, the Ottoman Empire did not have the right to non-intervention (Rodogno 2012, p. 22).

It was in this context that the Ottoman Empire faced the European military stepping under the banner of humanitarian interventionism on behalf of the Christian minorities. Even when it was a member of the Concert, it faced these interventions. These interventions by the Europeans were justified on the grounds that the oriental despotic system of the Ottoman Empire was a prison for uncivilized Christian minorities whose basic human rights were violated. Even though such concern over Christian minorities reflected an international legal context, similar concerns over Muslims who were massacred by Christians as in the case of Circassians in the Russian Empire did not develop. Overall, Europeans wanted to get rid of the Ottoman *millet* system and replace it with the European notion of citizenship because they considered it barbaric and out of the age that violated basic human rights (Rodogno 2012, p. 27).

By the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was a decaying actor and its decline was internationalized with the Eastern Question. By 1878, Europe's attitude about the Ottoman Empire was shifting from ideological concerns to geopolitical concerns. The unification of Germany in 1871 had altered the balance of power in the continent and Britain and France were now more interested in spreading the idea of civilization to the entire world. The Eastern Question was a European response to how the Ottoman decline should be handled. Out of geopolitical concerns, especially those of Britain over India, the partition of the Ottoman Empire was considered too costly to choose. Thus, European powers required the Ottoman Empire to

carry out reforms for its minorities. As the Ottoman Empire failed to carry out these reforms, it received harsher reactions from the European powers and more secessionist demands from the Balkan nations. Overall, the great power politics of the nineteenth century shows that the Ottoman Empire was too weak and subject to many European interventions with having no right to non-intervention. Under such circumstances, its imperial citizenship project was doomed to fail. In what follows, I will trace the extent of this outcome.

Governance of diversity

Although the lineage of the house of Ottomans can be traced back to the people of Oghuz Turkic origin in the Middle Ages, over the centuries, it developed into a multi-ethnic empire in which the Turks did not have any privileged status. In this sense, the relationship between the Ottoman dynasty and Turkish-speaking people was similar to the relationship between the Romanov dynasty and ethnic Russians. Nevertheless, the Turks were mainly Muslims and it was this religious identity that actually made them privileged along with their co-religionists over non-Muslim subjects. The Ottoman Empire was a universalist empire with an overt Islamic identity. Religious differences were the most and single difference in the empire. Since the conquest of Constantinople, the Empire developed a mechanism for governing diversity through what is called the millet system. This system consisted of the core millet of Muslims, Greeks (including Orthodox Slavs as well), Armenians, and Jews. The Ottoman Empire's governance of diversity traditionally rested on this hierarchal order of ethno-religious groups that lasted until the late nineteenth century. The nineteenth century constitutional reforms introduced the idea of universal citizenship and removed the legal discrepancies between the Muslim and non-Muslim peoples.

The modern conception of justice that emanated in early modern Europe mainly rested on the principle of equality before the law. This was a system based on homogenized norms and regulations that take citizenship as the basis and treats everyone equally. Although such an interpretation of justice based on the lawful assurance of individuals' lives did not technically exist in the multi-ethnic empires up until the mid and late nineteenth century, Ottoman Empires legally recognized each ethno-religious group's cultural, religious, juridical, and economic autonomy by institutionalizing church and courts of each.

Even though social ranking in the Ottoman Empire was based on the service to the state and not entirely religion, the millet system created both religious universalism in the case of Islam and local parochialism in the case of the status of the dhimmi, non-Muslim peoples (Karpas 1982, p. 147-149). This was perhaps one of the most important differences between the Ottoman and Russian empires when it comes to governing diversity. Intermixing of diverse people in the Russian and Soviet empires because of the administrative framework was one of the key factors that made the imperial citizenry quite durable. However, in the Ottoman context, the administrative mechanism did not allow the interpenetration of different ethnic groups and hence, diverse ethnic groups could not form greater political units (Karpas 1982, p. 147).

The religious identity was the most decisive social category in the Ottoman ethno-religious diversity. In fact, it would be inaccurate to consider the decay of the classical millet system as a result of ethnic fault lines because religion also largely shaped the national awakening of non-

Muslim communities both in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman contexts (Karpas 1982; Akturk 2009; Anscombe 2014). Moreover, many of the Ottoman minority nationalities made their way to national independence by nationalizing their church and severing the ties with the Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul. The millet system by the nineteenth century began to dysfunction because of the expansion of European capitalism into the Ottoman territories, European powers' intervention in the Empire on behalf of Christian minorities, and the Ottoman government's attempts to reform the polity and stabilize the Empire (Quataert 2000).

The Ottoman government responded to the decay of the millet system through a series of reforms that introduced imperial citizenship in successive stages in 1839, 1856, and 1869. In these reforms, the Ottoman state offered the Ottoman identity as a supra-national identity that somewhat assumed a civic tone. This policy, also known as Ottomanism, aimed to guarantee civil liberties for all subjects of the Empire regardless of ethnicity or religion. Ottomanism was formulated on the model of French civic patriotism (Al 2019). Yet, French civic patriotism developed out of nation-state building and in opposition to the Church. Even though religious tones and references were now toned down with the reforms, the Ottoman Empire was sociologically way far from establishing a secular state at that time. Moreover, the declared impartiality on ethnicity and religion by the Ottoman edicts were never taken seriously by the European diplomatic circles. Moreover, after the mid-nineteenth century reforms, the status of ethnic and religious groups relative to each other was largely conceived by their numerical advantage, thereby creating majorities and minorities (Karpas 1982, p. 163). Under these circumstances, Ottoman citizenship did not take root unlike its Russian counterpart. In fact, it would not be inaccurate to claim that the reforms only accelerated the speed of national independence of Ottoman minorities. By the beginning of the Second Constitutional Era (1908), Bulgaria, Serbia, and Albania were on the verge of gaining their independence.

Collective memory

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire can easily be tied to its struggle with nationalist secessions, which accelerated after the further internationalization of the Eastern Question. The disintegration of the empire had ethnic consequences as it gave birth to around 27 nation-states. When the Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923, it was a territorially residual state with no clear national or ethnic identity. Just as during the heyday of Ottomanism, Islamic patriotism still helped define the national identity of the population in Anatolia during the war of independence (Zürcher 2010). Since the late nineteenth century, nationalist secessions forced the empire into a constant counter-insurgency program. The nationalist-insurgent groups in the Balkans and the newly founded Balkan nation-states constituted a model for the decaying Ottoman state: war made state; state made war (Tilly 1992). The Ottoman state's war that started in 1912 still continued even after it formally ceased to exist in 1918. In this sense, the violent state death and the Istanbul government's consent to the Treaty of Sevres simply created a collective outrage. The gradual pace of violent state death was finalized when the Treaty of Sevres was signed.

Many of the key elites took up the task and tried to liberate the residual territory of Anatolia from external invasions. Moreover, the ongoing expulsion of Muslim populations from the Balkans, flooding mass refugees into Ottoman Turkey, and resulting Turkish-Greek population exchange also reinforced the perception that non-Muslims do not fit the newly emerging national

imagining. Even though the non-Muslim former Ottoman subjects were given the status of citizenship, they were not considered as equal members of the nationhood in the post-imperial period for reasons related to the violent Ottoman state collapse and the produced collective memories related to the failure of the state to survive.

A new nation-building path with a strong emphasis on secularism was adopted by the founding fathers for reasons related to legacies and collective memories of violent Ottoman state death. Founding fathers knew that neither a cosmopolitan ethnic pluralism nor an overarching religious identity that turned a blind eye toward intra-ethnic distinctions within Islam prevented the collapse of the state. So, they came to a position that only a territorial nation-state with citizenship rights and a secular framework can ensure the security of society and the state. That was the main justification for the secular development of Turkish nationalism in the Republican period.

Official ideology

As a post-imperial state and a new republic, Turkey shared the egalitarian outlook of the French republican model, especially starting from the 1930s. The new republican ideology was accompanied by a shift from multi-ethnic Islamic millet conception to an anti-ethnic Turkishness (Akturk 2012) based on the conception of *ulus*, a Mongolian-originated word that highlighted a new secular national imagining. Even though the new Turkish state had a republican ideology, this was not a thorough ideology like the Bolsheviks came up with. In this regard, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is not comparable to Lenin because the former's ideas were quite pragmatic and less theoretical (Hanioglu 2012, pp. 32-33). The evolution of the new Turkish state's worldview toward Westernism and secularism was an outcome of competing ideologies since the beginning of the Second Constitutional Era (1908) and hence, secular republicanism as the dominant ideology was not pre-determined just like the way Bolsheviks' seizure of power in 1917 caught many by surprise (Hanioglu 2008, p. 210).

Despite a relatively loose ideology in comparison to the USSR, the major pillars of the new Turkish republican ideology were secularism, nationalism, and Westernism. As a latecomer to the family of nation-states or national states, Turkey assumed an anti-ethnic French republican model. The new Turkish Republic was simply an immigrant country indeed. Muslim immigrants from Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, the Caucasus, and many other places of the former Ottoman territories were incorporated as Turk. In this sense, Turkishness was the top-down applied method for national unity on the basis of French republicanism. Yet, despite this close relationship with the French model, the new Republic was also influenced by the German model, especially in terms of cultural determinants of membership in the national political community. While the population was homogenized for economic purposes (Toprak 1982), full citizenship rights were not granted to non-Muslim individuals because of the resulting collective memories. Being a Muslim became the most important element of Turkishness (Akturk 2009). One could not be a Turk with a Greek or Armenian indigenous ethnic identity. Thus, the emerging nation-building model was based on anti-ethnic assimilation. As such, it was not compatible with ethnic pluralism. However, the civic conception of the nation-building model was not all the way inclusive because of the religious factor. As a latecomer to nation-building development, Turkey shows a clear influence by France and Germany.

Conclusion

While both the Russian and Ottoman empires undertook a series of reforms starting from the late nineteenth century, the former did it independently, but the latter did so as a result of demands by European great powers. It is true that the Russian and Ottoman Empires strictly did avoid pursuing nationalist policies, for such a path would destruct the very foundation that they rested for centuries. Thus, they had to amalgamate civil rights for their subjects with certain centralization policies to implement those rights. What concomitantly comes out through such a hybrid attempt is a perception of a core, founding nation that the state builds itself upon through modernization and bureaucracy. In this respect, it is no coincidence that citizenship projects or reforms were intermingled with modernization policies in empires.

As Ernst Gellner suggested, nationalism is an evitable outcome of modernization. The modernization policies pursued by the Russian Empire made two promises which ultimately conflicted with each other and spurred nationalities problem, especially after the Revolution of 1905: The first is the governmental inclusion of subjects that aimed to alleviate general discontentment and the second is the reaction to the modernization and standardization policies of the empire by the local nationalities (Weeks 1996, pp. 16-7). This increasingly emerging gap between the core nationality and minor nationalities posed a great dilemma for the imperial order in the Ottoman and Russian Empires, both of which wanted to preserve the multi-ethnic structure with a gain of modernized state. This tension and the social mobilization between the core and minority nationalities showed itself in a more manifested way when the Great War broke out. This is because the empires' wartime policies, that is, deportation and population management, parted from earlier imperial projects of assimilation and integration through spurring the common perceptions among ethnic/nationalist lines (Lohr 2003, p. 7). More specifically, this clash was most apparent between the grander national identity and patriotism that the imperial elites set out in the first place and the wartime policies, which ruled out the former. The wartime policies created a setting in which fluent identities of nationalities turned into fixed identities that was most clearly manifested in common perceptions, attitudes, and policies regarding minority nationalities, like termination of their economic superiority through demographic means, deportation, and expropriation (Lohr 2003, p. 7). In this regard, it is also no coincidence that the fate of Germans and Jews in the Russian Empire was somewhat similar to the fate of Greeks and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. However, it is important to note that in the latter, the consequences were greater because the European influence was great. Hence, the failure of Ottoman citizenship was more catastrophic than the failure of Russian citizenship.

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