

Observations on the Concept of National Language and National Literature in the Turkic World

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1. Introduction

Modernization movement in Ottoman Turkey, took the form of state reforms (1839 and 1856) which created a superstructure in the administrative and social system in the first half of the 19th century. As such it initiated an era of Westernization particularly influenced by European civilization. The movement not only led to adoption of 1876 Constitution, parliamentarism, a new regular and trained army and military schools, but also to widespread education and training institutions for the first time in Turkish history, a marked civilianization of society, and human rights as a requirement of the age. Newspapers, magazines, and theaters, as unique cultural institutions of an urban civilization, were linguistic and literary phenomena emerged in the second half of this century and developed rapidly. Having completed this century with great human and territorial losses on the battlefields, the Ottoman Empire reached the status of a modern nation and acquired a sense of nationality, which were arguably the most valuable outcomes of the modernisation process. Modernization was usually considered a natural historical progression, through which Ottoman State gave way to the Republic of Turkey.

The Turkic World, on other hand, when the Tsarist army occupied the vast geography from the Volga (Idil) River to the borders of China, from Siberia to the Caucasus since the mids of the 16th century to the late 19th century, turned into a colony, and lived through the same era under conditions very dissimilar to those in Ottoman

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Turkey. Muslim communities of Turkish origin, called Russian Muslims or Russian Turks, initiated a religious and cultural reform under the influence of both the modernization of Russia initiated by Peter I (Tsar Peter the Great) in the 18th century and the Ottoman modernism.

This paper focuses on the commonalities between Ottoman Turkey and the Republican period on the one hand, and Turkish World on the other by scrutinizing the main pathways through which modernization influenced the development of the national language and national literature. The second part examines the ideas and perspectives of the pioneering masters of language in Turkey and the Turkic World about the concepts of nation and national language. The third part focuses on the development of these phenomena and national literature under the influence of modernism in the Turkic World. The conclusion part emphasizes the commonalities in the emergence processes of the new national literature and the new literary language based on the folk language in both geographies.

2. Nation, National Language

Contemporary societies have languages based on a dialect or a way of speaking of a mother tongue, and these languages undoubtedly have roots older than their written history. However, the phenomenon of “national language” (Fr. *langue national*, Sp. *Lengua nacional*, Turkish *milli dil*) that we aim to deal with here, and the phenomenon of “national literature” that develops in conjunction with it, is an innovation of the last centuries. Taking into account all of its appearances, national language does not date back as far the mother tongues of contemporary nations, and only appear with the development of modernism, the sense of nationality, and finally replacement of the notion of folk by the phenomenon of nation that has a sociological and political character.¹ In much of the Turkic World, which has lived through the Soviet experience since 1917, we can observe that the term *folk* has been injected in the language of our kin communities, since nation is considered the product of

¹ Yusuf Akçura, *Türkçülüğün Tarihi Gelişimi* [Historical Development of Turkism] (İstanbul: Türk Kültür Yayıncılığı, 1978).
Eric John Hobsbawm, *Milletler ve Milliyetçilik - Program, Mit, Gerçeklik*, [Nations and Nationalism - Program, Myth, Reality] 6th Edition (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2017).

the bourgeoisie. We first would like to focus on the development of the phenomenon of nation in the Turkic World.

Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, who says “Modern Turkish literature begins with a civilizational crisis!”, provides a detailed analysis in his article titled “Currents in Turkish Literature.” The organization of a new army that started in 1826, the modernization of state institutions and society with the *Tanzimat Fermanı* (Imperial Edict of Reorganisation) in 1839, the First Constitutional Monarchy in 1876, the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908 and finally the Republican period in 1923 in Turkey are the turning points on which he bases his opinions.² Tanpınar, as the great historian of modernism, identified Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Mehmet Mufit Pasha and Ibrahim Şinasi as “the three architects of innovation”, who became the pioneers of the “Turkish Enlightenment” in every sense. Namik Kemal, Ahmed Midhat, Recaizade Mahmud Ekrem and Abdülhak Hamid who founded the New Turkish Literature in all their efforts, were directly related to this first generation.³

Since the beginning of the “Turkish Enlightenment”, writers and scholars such as Ahmed Midhat, Ömer Seyfeddin, Şemseddin Sami, Necib Asım, Yusuf Akçura, Ziya Gökalp, Fuad Köserâif, Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, Veled Çelebi, Necib Türkçü, Rıza Tevfik, and Fuad Köprülü not only brought the Turkology publications produced in the West to Turkey but also strived to create a written Turkish language, and more generally at the political and cultural level a Turkish national identity.⁴

Among these, it is clear that Ziya Gökalp has made a great contribution to the formation of the concept of modern nation in the Turks. Uriel Heyd, who wrote a valuable review about him, makes the following observation:

² Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, “Türk Edebiyatında Cereyanlar”. *Edebiyat Üzerine Makaleler* içinde, [“Crisis in Turkish Literature” in *Essays on Literature*] (İstanbul: Dergâh, 1977), 101.

³ Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *19^{uncu} Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* [History of the 19th Century Turkish Literature], 5th Edition (İstanbul: Çağlayan, 1982), 159-215.

⁴ Uriel Heyd, *Türk Ulusçuluğunun Temelleri*, [Foundations of Turkish Nationalism] (Ankara: Ministry of Culture Publications, 1979), 123-172.

Agah Sırrı Levend, *Türk Dilinde Gelişme ve Sadeleşme Evreleri* [Stages of Development and Simplification in Turkish Language]. 3rd Edition, (Ankara: TDK, 1972), 300-388.

Hüseyin Sadoğlu, *Türkiye’de Ulusçuluk ve Dil Politikaları* [Nationalism and Language Policies in Turkey]. (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Publications, 2003), 107-187.

“Gökalp borrowed from the Durkheim school the theory that society has passed through four main stages in history. These stages are primitive tribal society (*ashirat*), society based on racial affinity (*kavim*), society based on common religion (*ummah*), and society connected by culture (*millet*).⁵

Ziya Gökalp was the most famous thinker of Thessaloniki-centred Turkism movement until 1912 (others were Ali Canip and Ömer Seyfettin). The other center was Istanbul, where Yusuf Akçura (and others such as Hüseyinzade Ali and Ahmet Ağaoğlu) has been very influential in the conception of nation and nationality in the Republic of Turkey.⁶ Akçura stated that Germans and Slavs defined the concept of nation on the basis of the race and language, i.e. the historical requirement; whereas the French based on desire and will, that is, individual freedom; and finally Italians based on land and language, that is, geographical and historical requirement. According to Akçura, “Nation is a human society in which unity and solidarity have occurred in their social conscience due to the fundamental unity of race and language.”⁷

Sadri Maksudi Arsal also clearly separated the concept of millet (nation) from *kavim* in his work titled *Milliyet Duygusunun Sosyolojik Esasları* [*Sociological Principles of the Sense of Nationality*] (1955), which is still widely used:

First of all, it is necessary to point out the subtle difference between the terms *kavim* and *millet*. Here, we will use the term “*kavim*” in the sense of people (ethnos, peuple, Volk) and “*millet*” as the equivalent of the term *nationalité* in European languages. The relationship between these two terms is as follows: Every *kavim* that has completed its formation as a result of its historical and political development is a *millet*.⁸

In saying so, the scholar made an observation which provides us a foundation for further thinking even today.

⁵ Heyd, *Türk Ulusçuluğunun Temelleri*, 71.

⁶ Zafer Toprak, *Cumhuriyet ve Antropoloji* [*Republic and Anthropology*], (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2012), 417-419.

⁷ Yusuf Akçura, *Türkçülüğün Tarihi Gelişimi* [*Historical Development of Turkism*], (İstanbul: Türk Kültür Yayını, 1978), 35.

⁸ Sadri Maksudi Arsal, *Milliyet Duygusunun Sosyolojik Esasları*. [*Sociological Principles of the Sense of Nationality*] 4th Edition (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1979), 66.

Based only on this literature, which we consider scientifically reliable and meticulous, it should be emphasized that the denominations in the form of “Turkish tribes” or “Turkish clans” can only be valid for historical periods. Today these terms are insufficient for studies analyzing the contemporary Turkic World in its political and cultural diversity.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic and probably the most recognizable figure of Turkish nationalism, was actually resonating the contemporary nationalism he grew up in when saying “The bond between national sentiment and national language is very strong. The language being national and rich is the main factor in the development of the national sentiment.”

With its first written documents dated back to the 8th century AD, the great Turkish encyclopedist Mahmûd Kâşgarî in the 11th century identifies about 20 different forms of speech of Turkish language, which spread from Turkestan to the Volga River and Anatolia and were naturally differentiated. The most prevalent of them were documented along with their grammatical structures and vocabulary. It is understood that the Turkish dialects, which he sometimes gives political names such as *Hâkaniye* and or tribal names such as *Oghuz* and *Kipchak*, are the spoken languages of the great tribes.⁹ This great encyclopedist, whose fame extended beyond his lifetime, generally called all the peoples (Bulgarian, Suvar, Becenek, Kyrgyz, Kipchak, Oghuz, Toḥsi, Yagma, Cigil, Uyghur etc.) of the lands he called “Turkish country extending from the Greek country to Machin”¹⁰ and their dialects as *Turks*.

Whatever the naming, historical literature clearly shows that only some dialects have shown the power to create a literary language in the written history of the Turkish language, which is longer than its European contemporaries: Köktürk literary language, Uighur literary language, Karakhanid literary language, Khwarezm-Turk literary language, Chagatai literary language, Old Anatolian and

⁹ Akartürk Karahan, *Divânü Lugâti't-Türk'e Göre XI. Yüzyıl Türk Lehçe Bilgisi [11th Century Turkish Dialect Knowledge According to Divânü Lugâti't-Türk]* (Ankara: TDK 1078, 2013), 31.

¹⁰ Kâşgarlı Mahmut, *Divânü Lugâti't-Türk*, ed. S. Erdi, S. T. Yurteser (İstanbul: Kabcı Yayınevi, 2005).

Kâşgarlı Mahmut, *Divânü Lugâti't-Türk*, ed. A. B. Ercilasun- and Z. Akkoyunlu, (Ankara: TDK 1120, 2018).

Ottoman Turkish literary language.¹¹ The Oghuzs and Kipchaks with crowded tribes could have the written language only in the 13th century, when historical conditions matured in their new homeland. Here, we consider it unnecessary to deal with the naming problem and the quality of the grammar and dictionary contents of these written languages, which have always been called Turkish either in an objective sense (with the naming of foreign travelers, scholars or neighboring communities or with the scientific terminology developed in the last century) or a subjective sense (with the character of self-naming in Old Turkish inscriptions, in Karahanid, Mamluk, Chagatai texts or in the Republican era in the 20th century) for a millennium.

According to the findings of Turcology which have developed rapidly since the end of the 19th century, all grammatical structures and vocabulary of these historical literary languages could be individually matched with a contemporary Turkish written language living from Southern Siberia to the Balkans. As a result, it is indisputably clear that all of them have carried their “national” characteristics until today due to their characteristics based on the Turkish mother tongue, yet what we call “national language” is an entity that belongs to communities living the modern nation stage.

In his well-known work, *Nations and Nationalism*, E. J. Hobsbawm proposes three criteria for the transition of a population to the level of a nation:

“(1) Its historical ties to the present state or its linkage to a deep rooted past that extends to recent times; (2) The existence of an established cultural elite with a written national literary language and administrative mother tongue; (3) A proven ability to conquer”.¹²

The author also draws attention to the linguistic dimension of this phenomenon, which we call modernism or modernization: “Most students today will agree that spoken or written standard national

¹¹ Sema Barutçu Özönder, “Türk Dilinin Tarihi Dönemleri Üzerine Birkaç Söz” [A Few Comments on the Historical Periods of the Turkish Language], *Türkbilgi*, no.3 (2002): 203-210.

Ethem R. Tenişev, “Millî Döneme Kadarki Türk Edebî Dilleri” [“Turkish Literary Languages Until the National Period”], *Turkish Language Studies Yearbook-Belleten*, no.37, (1989): 301-307.

¹² Hobsbawm, *Millletler ve Milliyetçilik* 58-59.

languages cannot emerge from the printing house as such before the mass literacy and therefore mass education phases.”¹³ Niyazi Berkes also drew attention to the ability of the printing house to spread the written language to large masses of people with striking comparisons:

“During the siege of Istanbul by Mehmed the Conqueror, Gutenberg was preparing his first book to be published in the heart of Europe. After three years of struggle, the first book was published in 1456. The religious awakening movement, which was one of the events caused by printing, and Martin Luther’s opposition to the Roman Church by translating the *Bible* into German (1519), coincides with the times of Bayezid II (1481-1513), Selim I (1512-1520) and Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566). By 1500, printing houses were opened in more than sixty German cities. It is estimated that 1,700 printing houses were established in Europe in the 15th century alone, and 15-20 million books were printed.”¹⁴

Halil İnalçık also describes the nationalization that concerns us among the main changes of the New Age (1453-1689):

“The Middle Ages considered *Respublica Christiana* idea to unite all Christian nations under the command of the pope and one emperor. In the New Age, completely sovereign, rival nation-states emerged in the Christian Europe; these states were internally heading towards a complete absolutist regime. (...) Nations’ discovering their own identities, that is, prominence of the national language, national literature and national interests can be considered as an indicator of the principle of individuality that generated the new age.”¹⁵

On the other hand, the idea that the presence of national identity and national language, which we think are closely related to the history of modernism, are as old as history itself complicates our subject. E. Hobsbawm noted that the concepts of state, nation, and language in the modern sense did not exist in the Dictionary of the Spanish Royal Academy before 1884: “Before 1884 the word *nación* simply

¹³ H. J. Hobsbawm, *Milletler ve Milliyetçilik*, 25.

¹⁴ Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma. [Modernization in Turkey]* Prepared by. A. Kuyaş, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003), 17.

¹⁵ Halil İnalçık, *Rönesans Avrupası – Türkiye’nin Batı Medeniyetiyle Özdeşleşme Süreci [Renaissance Europe – Turkey’s Identification Process with Western Civilization]* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011), 4-5.

meant “all the inhabitants of a state, a country, or a kingdom” and it also meant “a foreigner.” However, with the 1884 edition, the words acquired a meaning of “a state or political unit that recognizes a common administrative center above all else”, as well as “the lands formed by this state, which is considered as a whole, and the people living in these lands.”¹⁶ An interesting finding of the author is that based on his conceptual research in Western languages, the modern meaning of the Latin word nation does not date back farther than the 18th century.¹⁷

As a matter of fact, the Turkish word *millet* of Arabic origin, did not have its current meaning at the end of the 19th century, when modernism developed considerably: Şemseddin Sami Bey, the writer of *Kâmûs-ı Türki* which is considered the first comprehensive Turkish dictionary, gave only the religious, sectarian implications of “nation” and defined it as “community based on a religion and sect.” Şemseddin Sami Bey also drew attention to the confusion of the concepts of *millet* and *ummah* in Turkish and stated that it was a mistake to use “Turkish nation.”¹⁸ Other Ottoman lexicographers such as James Redhouse (1890), Muallim Naci (1899), Ali Nazimâ, and Faik Reşad (1901) gave the same religious and sectarian meanings to the word *millet* (*millet-i İslam*, *millet-i beyzâ*, *millet-i mesiha*, *Frenk milleti* etc.). Ahmed Vefik Pasha, one of the founders of the Turkish national language, is a little different from them: In *Lehçe-i Osmani* (1876), he defined *millet* (nation) as “the primary religion and sect; ummah, tribe, community” and *milliyet* (nationality) as “tribal sentiment.”

American linguist Einar Haugen (1906-1994) in his comprehensive article titled “Dialect, Language, Nation”, implies that national languages have offered membership in the nation, an identity that gives one entree into a new kind of group, which is not just based on kinship, government, or religion, but a novel and peculiarly modern brew of all three.¹⁹ Antoine Meillet expresses a good example of French-style nationalism as follows. “A nation does not depend on

¹⁶ Hobsbawm, *Milletler ve Milliyetçilik*, 31.

¹⁷ Hobsbawm, *Milletler ve Milliyetçilik*, 17.

¹⁸ Şemsettin Sami, *Kâmûs-ı Türki*, (Dersaadet: İkdâm Press, 1317-1899), 1400.

¹⁹ Einar Haugen, “Dialect, Language, Nation.” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 68, no. 4 (August 1966): 933.

any material support, not even language. Belonging to a nation is a matter of feelings and will.”²⁰

Ernest Renan (1823-1892) was a pioneer very influential in the contemporary understanding of nationalism in the Turkish Republic and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s. In his conference “What is a Nation” published in 1882, Renan examines race, language, religion, unity of interest and geography, the five main factors that make up the nation, one by one and shows that none of them can be sufficient on its own:

A nation is a spirit, a spiritual principle. Two things which, properly speaking, are really one and the same, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is the past, the other is the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present consent, the desire to live together, the desire to continue to invest in the heritage that we have jointly received. (...) A heroic past with great men and glory (I mean true glory) is the social capital upon which the national idea rests. (...) A people shares a glorious heritage as well, regrets, and a common program to realize. Having suffered, rejoiced, and hoped together is worth more than common taxes or frontiers that conform to strategic ideas and is independent of racial or linguistic considerations. “Suffered together”, I said, for shared suffering unites more than does joy. In fact, periods of mourning are worth more to national memory than triumphs because they impose duties and require a common effort. (...) A nation is therefore a great solidarity constituted by the feeling of sacrifices made and those that one is still disposed to make. It presupposes a past but is reiterated in the present by a tangible fact: consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life.²¹

The French thinker ends his analysis with his famous phrase, which is frequently quoted later: “A nation’s existence, please excuse the metaphor, is a daily plebiscite.”

Considering that the Anatolian land has become “Turkey” since the 11th century, it is an indisputable fact that the Turks of Turkey are also objectively a nation. However, the new human type created by the

²⁰ Antoine Meillet, *Les langues dans l’Europe nouvelle*, (Paris, 1918), 96.

²¹ Ernest Renan, *Nutuklar ve Konferanslar - Millet Nedir [Speeches and Conferences - What is a Nation?]*, (Ankara: Sakarya Press House, 1946), 120,121.

state-based institutional reforms in the 19th century on the one hand, and the liquidation of the empire along with the enormous land losses, on the other, have also created a subjective Turkish identity with a self-construed character. It can be argued that, a “Turkish nation” with a meaning close to its current content emerged at the beginning of the 20th century, at least after the Balkan Wars.

We should bear in mind that both in Ottoman Turkey and in the Idil-Ural, Crimea and Caucasus circles among the Russian Turks, the stage of becoming a nation in the modern sense, together with all the evidence, could only be realized in the 19th century.²² The most mature stages in the history of the “national language” were first, the “national literature” era, which had a great historical impetus in the 1908 Constitutional Revolution at the beginning of the 20th century, and secondly, the Republican Turkish period in which a complete “national revolution” was undertaken within the national state structure in the aftermath of the First World War through national schools, educational institutions, universities, and institutes spread throughout the country.

3. National Language and Literature in the Turkic World

In the Turkic World, the development of “national language” is observed to have taken place almost at the same time as in Turkey. Both the Ottoman Tanzimat movement and the Russian reforms born with Peter the Great a century ago were influential for the modernization process that started in the 19th century in the Turkish cultural centers in the westernmost part of Eurasia, i.e. in Idil-Ural, Crimea and Caucasia. Within the context of Ottoman reforms, the movement was seen as establishing a new order to save the state, which was of course out of question for the Russian Turks, who did not yet have political sovereignty as of the end of the 19th century. The modernism movement of the Russian Turks, which carried a national and social character rather than a political or military one, has been the struggle of the society to get rid of backwardness and bigotry in both ideas and life, and to advance through enlightenment. In this period the old-new conflict was

²² Akçura, *Türkçülüğün Tarihi Gelişimi*, 35.

Ahmet B. Ercilasun, “Tarihî Akışı İçinde ve Cumhuriyet Döneminde Türk Dili” [Turkish Language in Its Historical Flow and in the Republican Period]. *BAL-TAM Turkishness Knowledge*, Prizren, no.1 (2004): 14,15.

experienced in the form of a *jadidist-ancientist* for the Russian Turks. In Ottoman Turkey, modernism developed in the form of state reforms (*Tanzimat*), whereas among the Russian Turks it came with a sociological, rather than an administrative character, which meant building a contemporary society which also involved a modernized religion.²³

Tatars were the first Turkish community to lose their political sovereignty with the fall of the Kazan Khanate in 1552. They were also earliest community to have formed a national sentiment, which reminds us of what E. Renan said, "in the talk of national memories, mourning is better than victories." The first enlightenment ideas in Idil-Ural geography came from men of religion and culture such as Abdunnasir Kursavi (1776-1812), Abdurrahim Utiz-Imeni (1754-1834), and Ibrahim Helfin (1778-1829). However, there was still no fertile ground for the spread of enlightenment ideas into the society at the beginning of the 19th century. In the mid-19th century, the ideas of enlightenment started to develop again among Tatars and the ideas and practices of representatives of Tatar reformism (*Jadidism*) such as Şehabeddin Mercani (1818-1889), Höseyin Feyzhanov (1828-1866) and Kayyum Nasiri (1825-1902) became more widespread.²⁴ The first to draw attention in this early form of modernism was the search for a modernist Islam and Muslim reformism. Figures such as Galimcan Barudi, Musa Carullah Bigiyev, Abdürreşid İbrahim, and Zakir Kâdirî sought a strong and modernized religion, whereas in others like Rızaeddin Fahreddin, Fatih Kerimi and Hadi Maksudi educational reformism was prominent.²⁵

In Caucasia, advances came in late 19th century, within the bourgeois society, formed as a natural consequence of commercial capitalism developed in centers such as Tbilisi and Baku. In these circles, educational enlightenment spread through not only madrasahs but also the *usul-i cedid* (new style) schools, where Russian was also taught. The reformers of the 20th century such as the influential people

²³ Mustafa Öner, "Türk Dünyasında Modernizm ve Dil Gelişmesi [Modernization and Language Development in the Turkish World]," *New Turkey*, Year 24, no. 101 (January-February 2018): 94-102.

²⁴ Yahya Abdullin, "Tanzimat ve İdil-Ural Tatarları Arasında Aydınlanma Hareketi" [Tanzimat and The Enlightenment Movement among and İdil-Ural Tatars]. Reported by: H. Develi, *Scientific Research*, no. 1, (1995): 175.

²⁵ Yahya Abdullin, "Ceditçeläk hem Hezërgë Zaman", *Millet Yazmıştı, Uylanuvolar* (Kazan: Science Publishing, 1995), 45.

including Mirza Fethali Ahundzade, Abbaskuluğa Bakıhanof, Mirza Cafer Topçubaşı, Mirza Kazım Bey, Celil Memmedguluzade, Üzeyir Hacıbeyli, Hüseyin Cavid, who knew both Russian and the Western languages, pioneered the development of modern Azerbaijani literature.

Similar to how the Ottoman modernism shaped national literature in late 19th century, the greatest outcome of *jadidism* was the new literature. Its main characteristic of this national literature was its reliance on folk literature and spoken language. The glorious representatives of the Tatar national movement such as Abdullah Tukay, Fatih Emirhan, Ayaz Ishaki, Galiesgar Kamal, and Mecit Gafuri benefited greatly from the relative freedom that came with constitutionalism that started with the 1905 Revolution in Russia.

The twelve years from the 1905 Russian Constitutional Monarchy to the 1917 Soviet Revolution introduced the national literature and a new language based on folk language to the whole Turkic World starting from the cultural centers such as Kazan, Orenburg, Bahçesaray, Cayık (Uralsk), Tbilisi, and Baku, where the written civilization, the printing houses and printing of books and other publications such as newspapers and magazines developed. Similar to how the German written language, which Martin Luther founded with his pen translating the Latin Bible, went through a period of idolizing the folk language and literature within the scope of national awareness and pride in the styles of thinkers such as G.W. Leibniz, J. Grimm, J.G. Herder, and W. Humboldt, the new literature of the Turkic World at the early 20th century was also based on folk literature.²⁶

4. Conclusion

In sum, it is clear that the main pathways through which modernism gave way to a national language and national literature, first in Ottoman Turkey and then in the Republican period, were identical or similar to those in the Turkic World. Tevfik Fikret, Mehmed Akif and Ömer Seyfeddin became the founders of the new Turkish literature following the path by İbrahim Şinasi, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal and Ahmed Midhat. Pioneers such as Abdullah Tukay,

²⁶ Yaşar Öner, "Alman Dil Devriminin Ana İlkeleri" [The Main Principles of the German Language Revolution], *Ankara University Language and History-Geography Journal*, C. XVIII, no. 1-2 (1960): 141.

Abay Kunanbay, Abdulhamid Süleyman Çolpan, Musa Aybek, Ömer Faik Numanzade, Mehemed Ağa Şahtatlı, and Mehmed Emin Resulzade were also the founders of the new literature and the new literary language based on the folk language in the Turkic World. The fact that these language masters lived in completely different social and political conditions did not prevent them from establishing and developing the new national literature based on the national language.

The modernism movement of the Russian Turks, which carried a national and social character rather than a political or military one, has been the struggle of the society to get rid of backwardness and bigotry, both in ideas and in life, and to advance thanks to enlightenment. The old-new conflict was also experienced in the form of a *jadidist-ancientist* for the Russian Turks in this period. In Ottoman Turkey modernization came in the form of state reforms (*Tanzimat*) and thus had an administrative character, whereas among the Russian Turks, it acquired more of a sociological character, which aimed for establishment of a modern society along with a modernized religion.

Therefore, although modernism emerged under dissimilar conditions in Ottoman Turkey and among Russian Turks, it essentially reflected all its social colors in both, leading to the phenomena of national language and national literature. Although the national language (*milli dil*) is based on a primordial mother tongue and one of its dialects that has become prominent due historical development, it does not date back further than the formation of the nation created by the modernization process. The theoretical approaches of intellectuals such as Yusuf Akçura, Ziya Gökalp and Sadri Maksudi, who pioneered conceptualization of nation and nationality in Turks with their activities and works, provide a foundation for us to think about the political and sociological entity we call national language. From an administrative and political angle, the modernization process that has been experienced in the Turkish World for approximately one hundred and fifty years replaced absolutist monarchies with constitutional monarchies and republics at the early 20th century. With respect to social and intellectual shaping of societies, modernism also enabled establishment of the modern nation replacing the tribe. The final steps of this progress came in the form of the national language,

which had definite standards, established content and borders, and been widely taught, and a national literature, which was based on the common national sentiment and folk literature.

After the 1920s, Soviet socialism encouraged even the smallest communities to develop young written languages based on their own spoken languages with their own standardized grammar and dictionaries, in a way that would promote the new regime. The new literature of the Turkic World, which started to develop as a romantic and realistic movement at the beginning of the 20th century, lived in the spirit of socialism during the Soviet period after the 1920s, as a literature that was national, if not nationalist, in which folk language and literature were prominent.

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