Identity, Diversity, and Cohesion in Globalizing Nation-State

with particular reference to Turkey

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Concepts & Definitions

- **Globalization**: Global expansion of the Western system both with its infrastructure (capitalism) and superstructure (Western culture).

- **Nation-state**: Which purports to build a monolithic nation. It may use assimilation and/or ethno-religious cleansing. Variations.

- **Cohesion Ideology**: The main ideology of a society holding people together. It is formulated by the dominant class/group but is also approved by the masses, otherwise it won't be successful.

- **Focus of Supreme Loyalty**: Symbol used by cohesion ideology to hold people together.

- **Umma/Millet**: Religious community (Islam).

- **The *Millet* System**: Social system of the Ottoman Empire (1454-1839) which divides the subjects of the Sultan as *Millet-i Hakime* (Dominant Muslims) and *Millet-i Mahkume* (Dominated Non-Muslims).

Concepts & Definitions (cont'd)

- **Infra identity**: Inherited from one's ethno-religious group.
- **Supra identity**: Identity attributed by the State to the citizen in order to build cohesion.
- **Objective identity**: Which comes with birth; tantamount to infra identity.
- **Subjective identity**: Which the individual chooses voluntarily. Free will.
- **Sèvres Treaty**: Versailles Treaty of the Ottoman Empire, only worse.
- **Compulsory citizen**: One who lives in his/her country because one has to.
- **Voluntary citizen**: One who lives in his/her country because one likes it.
- **Autochthonous people**: Native. Existent before the State was founded. Very keen on their identity.
- **Non-autochthonous**: Settled after the State was founded. Easier to assimilate.
- **Assimilation**: Resetting the social memory of a «different» group. Unconditional surrender.
- **Integration**: In Nation-state lexicon it may rather mean: assimilation.
- **National security State**: Where fictitious security matters constitute a valid reason to violate human rights (as opposed to: **Human rights State**).

Cohesion and Diversity

- To start with, what disturbs Cohesion in a country is not Diversity, but the non-updated, antiquated version of the Cohesion Ideology in that country (i.e., one which refuses to respect diversity, resorts to hard power instead of making reforms).

- Before we go into this: Historically, what do we mean when we refer to «Cohesion»? .
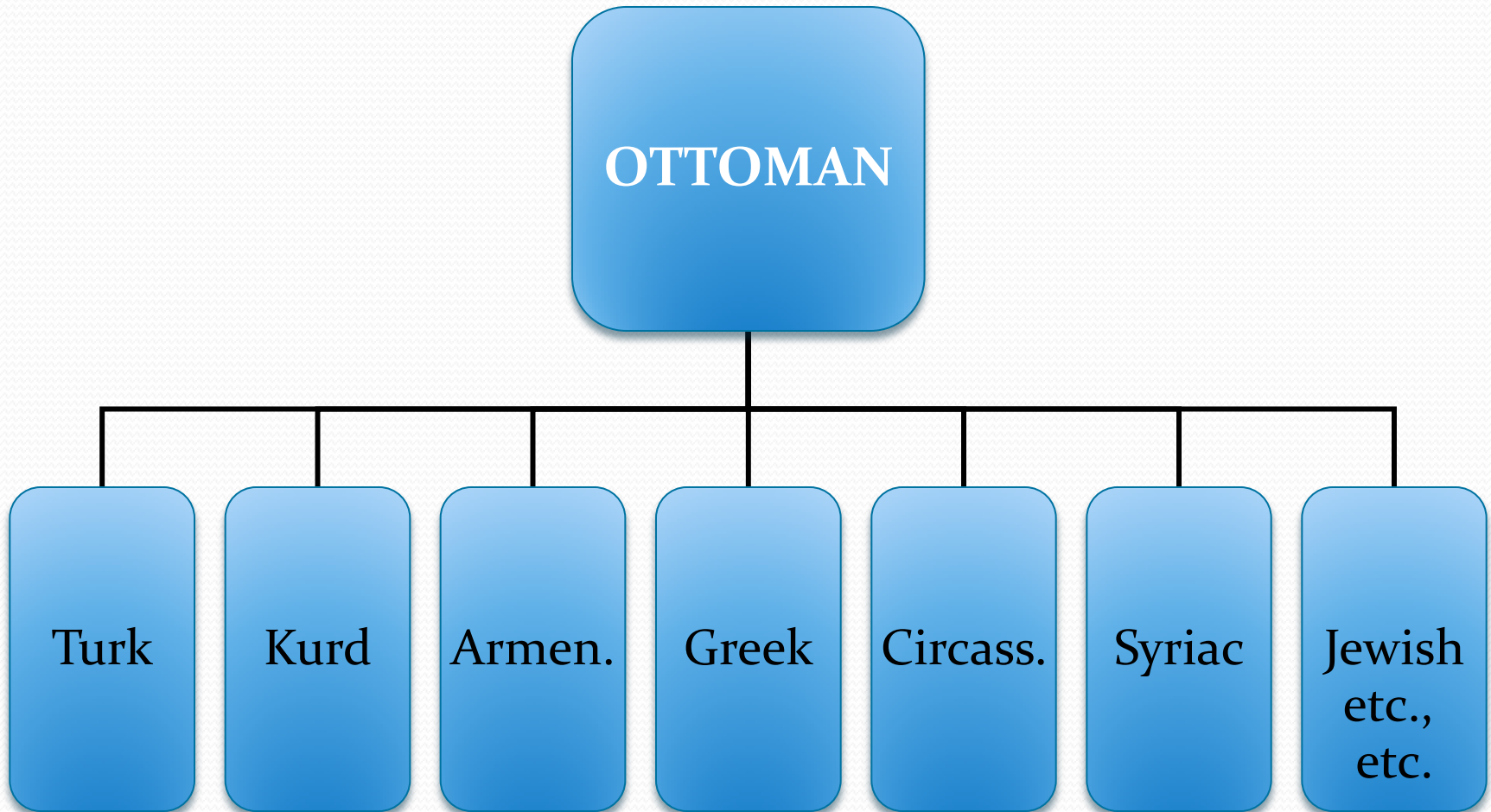
Cohesion Ideology / Focus of Supreme Loyalty

Focus of Supreme Loyalty	**God**	Nation	The Individual ?
Cohesion Ideology	Religion	Nationalism	**?**
Economic Market (Motherland)	Manor	Nation-state	The Globe
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORDER	Feudalism	National Capitalism	Global Capitalism

Diversity & Cohesion in the Ottoman Empire

- Diversity was the basis of the Ottoman Empire, as is the case in all empires.

- Cohesion was no problem:
  - First, the Millet System accorded autonomy to dominated «diverse» communities (non-Muslims) and also offered them appropriate opportunities for trade,
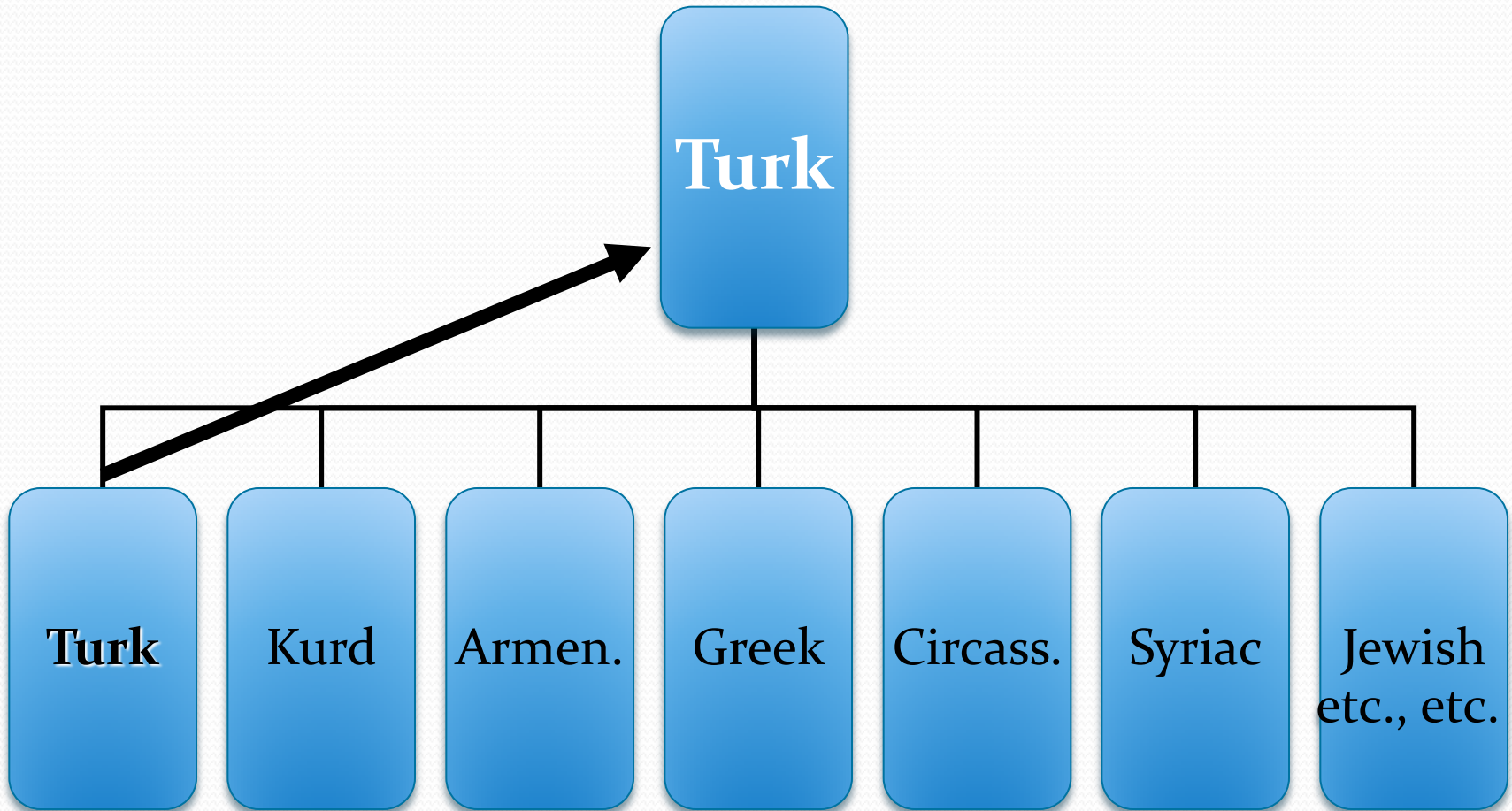 - Second, its supra identity made no reference to any particular group.

Infra and Supra Identities
(Ottoman Empire)

From Empire to Nation-state

- This cohesion lasted until «parallel cohesion ideologies» poped up in the 19th Century: Nationalism. Unable to update (reform) its Cohesion Ideology, the Empire disintegrated.

- The heir of the Empire was the Turkish Republic which adopted Turkish nationalism as its Cohesion Ideology and drastically changed the nature of the Focus of Supreme Loyalty to place the Turks above the others.

Infra and Supra Identities
(Turkish Republic)

Building the Secular Monolithic «Nation»

- After the foundation, Turkish Republic started to «build» its secular and ethno-religiously monolithic «nation» applying:
  - 1) Assimilation: non-Turkish Muslims:
  - 2) Ethno-religious cleansing: non-Muslims
  - 3) Discarding Islam and Islamists altogether .

Assimilation: The Non-Turkish Muslims

- Except for the Kurds, assimilation of non-Turkish Muslims to Turkishness was a natural and easy process:
  - Immigrating to Turkey had saved their lives (the Balkan & Caucasus refugees),
  - They came from ex-Ottoman lands (except people from Caucasus),
  - They were Muslim (the main factor of identity in the Balkans and Middle East is neither language nor ethnicity, but <u>religion</u> [Millet System]),
  - They were not autochthonous.

Assimilation: The Kurds - From «Prospective Turks» to «So-called Citizens»

- Many Kurds were assimilated. But one year after the first constitution (1924) which upheld Turkishness, consecutive insurrections proved that Kurds were different from other non-Turkish Muslims:
  - They had always enjoyed a *de facto* semi-autonomy in the Empire,
  - They were numerous and densely populated in mountainous areas difficult to reach,
  - They spoke a totally different language,
  - Their mode of production differed from the rest of the population,
  - 25 per cent was Alevi,
  - They were autochthonous.
- When the Turkish Republic understood that Kurds would not be assimilated, the Chief of General Staff called them «The so-called citizens». A couple of Kurdish children had reportedly stepped on a Turkish flag in March 2005.

Ethno-religious Cleansing: The Non-Muslims

- Religion being the main factor of identity, non-Muslims living in a Muslim land were impossible to assimilate.
- They were cleansed in successive waves: 1915, 1923, 1964, etc.
- This «nationalism» delayed the development (industrialization) of Turkey by at least half a century because the non-Muslims subjected to cleansing were the only bourgeoisie of the country.

Outcomes of Kemalist Nationalism

- Kemalism's «respectable citizen» was «Secular Muslim Turk». This had 5 qualifications: Secular (Laik), Hanefi, Sünni, Muslim, Turk. In short: **LA-HA-SÜ-MÜ-T**.
  - **Secular** (laik) discarded Islam and Islamists,
  - **Hanefi** discarded the Kurds who were Shafii,
  - **Sünni** discarded the Alevi,
  - **Muslim** discarded the Non-Muslims,
  - **Turk** discarded the Kurds again.
- Therefore, Kemalism struck 4 identities mainly :
  - The Non-Muslims: They disappeared, or almost,
  - The Alevis: They were alienated and dispersed,
  - The Kurds: They revolted,
  - The Islamists: They came to power.

Why Kemalism Failed

- With time, Kemalism, which successfully contemporized the country in the 1930s, became the main obstacle to contemporary civilization because:
  - It evolved into an intrument to perpetuate privileges for bureaucracy, the Military to start with,
  - A serious «Sèvres Syndrome» developed because Kemalism never solved its most pressing problems, preferring to sweep them under the carpet, or, as the French say, stuff the dead bodies into the closet instead of burying them properly. They are now coming out of the closet like Zombies and scare the hell out of the Turkish State and people:
    - Armenian problem: Aggravated by genocide resolutions passed by various parliaments,
    - Kurdish problem: Aggravated by the quasi-civil war waged by PKK,
    - Islamism problem: Aggravated by the vote-oriented pro-Islamist discourse and deeds of AKP, which has put a stop to reforms altogether.

What is to be done?

- To repair a much shaken Cohesion, especially in so far as the Kurds are concerned, Turkey needs to change its Supra Identity because a radical change in Supra Identity means a radical change in Mentality.

- Supra ID should be formulated in a way to make people say: «This is MY country all right!» . For this, Supra Identity based on the ethnic understanding of citizenship, should be based on the <u>territorial</u> understanding of the term.

- In other words, not «English» but «British».

- But Kemalism, and now its opponent AKP, refuse to recognize infra identities fully, and insist on maintaining "Turk" as Supra Identity.

An Overall View of the Reform Process in Turkey

	Ottoman Empire	Turkish Republic 1st Wave of Mod. (1920s et 30s)	Turkish Republic 2nd Wave of Mod. (2001 →)
STATE	Sultan's Property (semi-feudal empire)	Nation-state (Nat. Security State)	Democratic State (Human R. State)
SOCIETY	Umma	Nation	The Individual
PEOPLE	Sultan's subjects	Citizen (Compulsory)	Citizen (Voluntary)
SUPRA IDENTITY	Ottoman (Muslim)	Turk (Muslim) (Ethno-religious)	Türkiyeli (Territorial)

Diversity and Cohesion: How to Achieve a Win-Win Situation?

	Diverse Citizen	State	Result
Situation-1	Accept supra-identity as subjective identity	Satisfaction	VOLUNTARY ASSIMILATION
Situation-2	Refuse supra-identity	Harsh reaction	TRAUMA secession/massacre
Situation-3	Accept supra-identity, but insist on infra-identity	Respect infra-identity and apply a territorial supra-identity	SOCIAL HARMONY (Cohesion)
		Insist on assimilation and blood-based supra-identity	SOCIAL CONFLICT

Turkey and Germany: Hard Experiences Under the Impact of Globalization

- Since 2001 Turkey has worked hard to transcend the Nation-state:
  - 8 «EU Harmonization Packages» and 3 constitutional amendments,
  - Recognition of Kurdish and Alevi identities.
- But Turkey is making many zigzags in this process and still has a long way to go, both as a State and as a Society.

- Since 2000 Germany has worked hard to transcend the Nation-state (important: many of the «internal pressures» are extensions of «external pressures»):
  - 2000 Nationality Law (Internal pressure: SPD+Greens),
  - 2005 Immigration Law (Int. pressure (ageing+immigrants in politics)+Ext. Pressure (glob./«talents»),
  - 2006 Anti-discrimination Law (Ext. Pressure: EU),
  - Even parts of the CDU are slowly changing: Integration Summit , Islam Conference (2006).
- But there is serious reaction from certain political parties and the Society:
  - CDU campaign against double citizenship, Hessen, 1999,
  - Immigration Act cancelled by Constitutional Court, 2002 (CDU-governed states),
  - «Sarrazin debate», 2010.

Turkey and Germany: Similarities and Differences of Two Nation-states

	TURKEY	GERMANY
Supra Identity	Turk	German
Recognition of and respect for infra identity	- State: Started but… - Society: No	- State: No problem, but… - Society: controversial
Leading Culture	- State: yes - Society: yes	- State: Getting weaker but… - Society: Partly yes
Claim of Homogeneity	- State: Yes - Society: Yes	- State: No prob., because… - Society: Yes
Discrimination	- State: Yes - Society: Yes	- State: No problem but… - Society: Yes
Assimilation	- State: Yes - Society: Yes	- State: No problem, but… - Society: Controversial
Ideal supra identity	**From Turkey** *Türkiyeli*	**From Germany ("Deutschländer" ?)**

Turkey and Germany:
Advantages and Disadvantages of Two Nation-states

	TURKEY	GERMANY
Advantages	- Same religion (Kurds), - Non-Muslims too few.	- Muslims are not authoch. (no secession), - No kin-state or kins in the neighborhood, - Democratic culture already exists, - Prosperity
Disadvantages	- Kurds authochtonous, quasi-civil war , - Kurds in the neighboring States - Democratic culture not strong enough, - Not prosperous enough.	- Religious, linguistic, ethnic, class differences. - New laws too recent.