

Political Excavations of the Anatolian Past

Nationalism and Archaeology in Turkey¹

In May 2004, when the movie Troy made its debut in Turkish theaters, people flocked to see this much-hyped American blockbuster depicting events that took place in their country thousands of years ago. On May 16th, shortly after the debut, an editorial published in one of the nationally distributed newspapers, Radikal², attracted public attention with its provocative title, “Were the Trojans Turks?”

The author of the column, Haluk Şahin³, had been writing on Troy for quite some time, but this particular editorial and the similar others he wrote throughout May and June 2004 generated much interest and crowned an ongoing debate among some intellectuals and columnists about the meaning of the Trojan War and the significance of the ancient city in modern Turkish history and identity. In the weeks that followed, expanded versions of Şahin’s articles on Troy and Turkish history appeared in Milliyet⁴, one of the most widely read newspapers in Turkey, in the form of a whole-page editorial series. Utilizing the issues of the discussion generated by Şahin’s column, a televised debate quickly followed suit on TV8 about the movie Troy and its possible readings from

¹ I thank Fatma Müge Göçek, Gottfried Hagen, and Aslı İğsız for their insightful comments on the earlier versions of this article.

² Radikal is a highbrow newspaper established in 1996, targeting liberal, educated, and urban readers (Bali 2002: 216-218). As the name suggests, the newspaper has a claim for and a public image of being ‘different’ from the mainstream Turkish media, yet it is the property of the same conglomerate, Doğan Group— analogous to Murdoch’s Media Empire on a national scale—that owns many newspapers, TV stations, and a major media distribution company in Turkey. Radikal has one of the highest online circulation rate, yet it sells on the average 45.000 hardcopies every day. The bestselling newspaper in Turkey, Zaman, sells approximately 750.000 copies daily [Source: DPP (Doğan Dağıtım) and MDP (Merkez Dağıtım), 2008].

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⁴ “Truvalılar Türk müydü?” 1-4, Milliyet, 30 May – 2 June 2004. Milliyet is a long-established mainstream newspaper, with a circulation of 250.000-300.000 copies daily [Source: DPP and MDP 2008]. It is owned by the Doğan Conglomerate, too.

the perspective of Turkish national identity, politics, and culture.⁵ Many readers commented on Şahin's columns on Radikal's and Milliyet's Web sites, and some of Şahin's colleagues engaged in a dialogue with him regarding his provocative question. In a matter of three weeks almost all major newspapers devoted columns to some aspect of the issue or covered events revolving around the reactions to the movie. Eventually, Şahin turned all of his recent editorials on Troy along with his previous writings on Aegean archaeology, history, and culture into a book titled "Were the Trojans Turks? The Past, Present, and Future of a Mythos" (2004)⁶.

The provocative question of whether there is a connection between Turks and Trojans is hardly a new one. It was first sparked in medieval Europe by the discussions on the fate of the Trojans who were spared the Achaean sword and to whom Roman Catholics traced their ancestry. Relying on arguments developed by historians and art historians such as Jean Poucet (2003), Stefanos Yerasimos (2003), and James Harper (2002)⁷, Şahin emphasizes in his book that the significance of this question lies in the fact that it was posed to mark the political and symbolic boundaries of Europe either to ally it with or to isolate it from the realm of the Turks. As Harper (2005) demonstrates for example, the medieval foundational myths prior to the fifteenth century contended that the leader of a band of Trojans, Turkus/Torquatus, was the ancestor of the Turks. It

⁵ The program, presented by Haluk Şahin himself, was called "Deep News" and it was broadcasted on May 26, 2004. The guests were Cevat Çapan, the poet, translator, and Professor of English Language and Literature at Yeditepe University, and Fahri Işık, Professor of Archaeology at Akdeniz University.

⁶ Şahin's questions and ideas on the site Troy's significance in terms of Turkish identity found reverberations in other newspapers one way or another and started a public dialogue, particularly after he opened the name of the site in Turkish to debate with his editorial "Truva mi Troya mi?" (Truva or Troya?) in Radikal, on March 7, 2004. Some examples that were part of this dialogue were articles by Tuncay Yilmazer in Zaman, 13 June 2004, Mehtap Yılmaz Gür in Zaman, 6 June 2004, Nevval Sevindi in Zaman, 1 June 2004, Hıncal Uluç Sabah, 28 May 2004 and 4 June 2004. Even before Şahin's serial on Troy was published, some columnists started to question the place of Troy and the myths surrounding it in relation to Turkish history. See for example Mustafa Armağan, "Truva Atına Hâlâ İnaniyor musunuz?" (Do You Still Believe in the Trojan Horse?) Zaman, 4 April 2004.

⁷ One of Şahin's major references, James Harper's article, "Rome versus Istanbul: Competing Claims and the Moral Value of Trojan Heritage" was a paper presented at the *Troy in the Renaissance Imagination Conference* organized by The Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 4-5 October 2002. Since Harper's article was not published as part of the volume that came out of the conference proceedings (Powell and Shepard 2004), I presume Şahin had access to the conference paper. Harper's paper was later published as a chapter in another edited volume (Kabir and Williams 2005). My subsequent references to Harper's arguments are based on the book version.

was believed that he led his people to safety in the Anatolian heartland, where his descendants lived for many centuries. In medieval Europe, this myth served as a discursive repertoire, a way of talking about the Papal position vis-à-vis the Turks. This way, the Ottoman expansion toward the West was made to befit into a pre-established order, in which the descendants of the Trojans were coming back to reclaim their rightful heritage. The Catholics drew upon this repertoire to signify a solidaristic attitude toward the Turks while they were at war with the Byzantines, “the decadent Greeks” (Harper 2005:156-57). However, when the Turkish threats finally reached farther into Europe, the increasing hostility and political strife between Rome and Constantinople resulted in a deep discursive move of identity differentiation. From that moment on, Renaissance popes and scholars devoted much energy to disassociate Turks from the Trojans and divorce the story of Turkish dominance in Byzantine lands from the story of Aeneas’s flight from the burning Troy and his subsequent foundation of Rome. Thus, by the sixteenth century, came the end of the narratives that find a common origin and ancestry for Catholic Europeans and Muslim Turks (Harper 2005:173).

Stefanos Yerasimos traces the associations of Trojans with Turks both in the medieval European representations and in the Ottoman historical narratives (2003). After mentioning Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror’s interest in Homer’s works, Yerasimos refers to the fifteenth-century palace historian, Kritovulos, who quoted the sultan saying “I have avenged Hector!” upon his conquest of Constantinople⁸. Relying on these sources, Şahin revives Sultan Mehmet’s apocryphal words and connects them with another apocryphal quotation attributed to Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Republic, who also fought in Gallipoli against the Allies. The Turks’ victory against the French and British fleet in Dardanelles, according to this association, was ‘yet another’ instance of the ‘Asians’ avenging the Trojan War and defending these lands against the offensive

⁸ For an English translation of Kritovulos’ work, see Charles T. Riggs’ translation (1962). The famous quote is on page 181-182.

'Westerners.'⁹ While granting that both of these quotes are apocryphal, Şahin does not hesitate to suggest that the historical figures like Mustafa Kemal and Mehmet II might just as well have said them because the statements fit the context of their utterances perfectly. In Gallipoli for example, Şahin reminds us, one of the invading British battleships was called Agamemnon and the fact that Turkish forces managed to sink this state-of-the-art battleship was one of the turning points in the battle.

At the Web sites of the newspapers, readers posted many comments on Şahin's editorials and reacted to each other's responses. Şahin mentions in the epilogue to his book that in addition to these responses he received many letters from his readers. Through an analysis of the Web site postings and the reader responses Şahin mentions in his epilogue, we can identify four discernible public narratives that readers have drawn upon connecting Anatolian past with national identity. These public narratives, some of which will be delineated and explored further in this article, inform the way readers interpreted Şahin's statements, the movie as well as the archaeological site Troy, and the archaeological practices in Turkey in general.

One group of readers read Şahin's narrative as a piece of "actual proof" for Turks being of Trojans descent. These readers believe a Turkic racial continuity in Asia Minor throughout the ages is what Şahin set out to prove. Another group joins the first in reading Şahin's argument as a claim for ethnic continuity, however vehemently oppose to this association and blame Şahin for resurrecting the racist historical narratives of the early twentieth century¹⁰. Another group

⁹ Şahin's source is Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, a well-known writer, translator of classics, art critic, and one of the first archaeological documentary film producers of Turkey. Eyüboğlu was among the ardent adherents of the Blue Anatolia movement, to which we will turn in the later part of this article. Eyüboğlu, in his book Mavi ve Kara, relates the memories of a colonel who served with Mustafa Kemal in the independence war. The colonel claimed that after a battle against Greeks and the Western allies, the founder of the Republic said "We avenged Trojans!" (Eyüboğlu 2002:188).

¹⁰ Şahin mentions two Turkish citizens of Greek decent who also read his claims as an argument for a Turkish ethnic continuity in Anatolia. They criticized him severely for trying to Turkify Homer, whose 'Greekness', in their opinion cannot be questioned. Although their critical stance resembles that of the second group, their interpretations rely on an essentialist approach to Greek ethnic identity, which comprises the other extreme end of the dichotomous Greek-Turkish nationalist history writing. In that sense their interpretations also resembles with those of the first group with ethnic essentialist views.

applauds the quality of research behind the editorial and embrace “the forgotten chapter” of their history, which they deem to be identical to the history of their land. Dominant assertion in this type of reading is that the land, not ethnic or racial origins, constitutes the basis of historical heritage of a nation. Finally, according to Şahin’s epilogue, Islamists¹¹ have not shown much interest in the debate, since most of them deem the pre-Islamic history of Asia Minor as simply irrelevant to Turkish history.

The articles and the ensuing public debates diverted the eyes of the people in Turkey to the archaeological site Troy for the summer of 2004.¹² The MPs of the Justice and Development Party, the conservative government currently in power in Turkey, visited the site as part of their party’s recreational program; children bought day trips for their fathers as Father’s Day presents; schools had on-site history lessons.¹³ Interviews with the archaeologist Manfred Korfmann, who had been excavating the site for many years, were published.¹⁴ Meetings were held, and the state’s neglect of this aspect of the Anatolian history was criticized. The fact that the section displaying artifacts from Troy at the Istanbul Archaeology Museum had been closed due to lack of resources was brought to public attention and was denounced; calls for a museum at the site were made.¹⁵ The Ministry of Tourism and Culture was applauded for its promotional, tourism-advocating advertisement

¹¹ Şahin’s term “İslamcı kesimler” can be translated as “Islamist groups”. There are many connotations and definitions for the highly politicized terms like “Islamist” or “secularist” in Turkey today. These elusive terms are rarely defined by their users as this dichotomy is thought to be ‘common sense’ particularly among people who share a similar habitus. They may signify various perceptions ranging from deep ideological divergences and related political camps to registers of different life styles, tastes, and daily practices. I will be using the category “Islamist” as a name for the family of resemblances among the writers and readers who express an Islam-oriented understanding of history or form a historical narrative regarding the identities of the peoples living in Turkey today by foregrounding the Islamic elements and the supremacy of Islamic cultures and state formations.

¹² Besides Milliyet and Radikal, other newspapers with different ideological orientations also closely followed the controversies, events, and news surrounding the movie, registering the increased attention to the archaeological site. See Sabah, 16 April 2003, 25 May 2004, 30 May 2004, 11 December 2003; Zaman, 16 April 2004, 16 May 2004, 19 May 2004, 29 May 2004, 21 June 2004; Vakit, 17 May 2004.

¹³ Zaman, 30 May 2004, 21 June 2004; Sabah, 10 May 2004.

¹⁴ Milliyet, 14 May 2004; Zaman, 31 March 2004, 15 August 2004.

¹⁵ Radikal, 14 May 2004, 19 May 2004; Sabah, 13 May 2004, 14 May 2004, 15 May 2004.

campaign in European movie theaters where Troy was shown, but it was also heavily criticized for its lack of strategy to attract foreign film crews to document the glorious past of Anatolia.¹⁶

Books about Greek mythology, ancient Anatolian history, and archaeology started to dominate bookstore windows during this wave.¹⁷ One of these books, Cevdet Saraçer's Osmancık: Tarihsel Doku İçinde Unutulan Kent (Osmancık: The City Forgotten in the Historical Landscape), even started a conflict between the mayors of the two cities, Çorum and Çanakkale, about the place of Achilles' grave. According to Saraçer, contrary to common belief, the grave was not in Dardanelles (Çanakkale) but in the town of Osmancık within the modern city borders of Çorum, at the heart of central Anatolia. Each city, declaring that "the hero is buried in [its] bosom," claimed Achilles as one of their own. When Çorum finally declared Brad Pitt (Achilles in the movie) as its honorary citizen, Çanakkale's mayor threatened to sue the town. Meanwhile Milliyet reported on the dispute with the headline "The Second Trojan War."¹⁸

At first glance it is hard to see what really is at stake in this second Trojan war. What kind of symbolic capital do these two cities and the people who claim Troy as part of their national identity and heritage hope to accumulate? What kind of shared repertoires of historical narratives do such public discourses mobilize when Trojans are declared to be Turks or when Mehmet II's conquest of Istanbul and the battles of Gallipoli are allied with Trojans' heroism in Homer's epic? How does the contemporary political context interact with the readings of the movie in Turkey so that such readings firmly entangle Troy with Turkey and Trojans with the current citizens of the country?

¹⁶ Zaman 25 May 2004; Radikal 18 May 2004, Sabah 9 June 2004, Yüksel Aytuğ in Sabah 16 May 2004, Şelale Kadak in Sabah 21 May 2004.

¹⁷ Among these books the ones leading in sales were Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Eski Yunan Tarihi (Ancient Greek History) by Oğuz Tekin, Mitoloji Sözlüğü (Dictionary of Mythology) by Azra Erhat, the translation of Lindsay Clarke's book The War at Troy, and the translation of Clemence McLaren's book Inside the Walls of Troy. Besides the books and the movie, the Troy wave made its way even into the culinary circles through recipes included with articles on what Trojans used to eat. Ali Esad Göksel, Sabah, 19 June 2004.

¹⁸ After the controversy, when 1600 copies of the first edition were sold out, the second edition of Saraçer's book came out (Milliyet 5 June 2004). For further details of the Achilles' grave controversy see Milliyet 20 May and 7 June 2004. Radikal also reported on the incident on 6 June and 7 June 2004. For some columnists who commented on these events, see Hasan Pulur, Milliyet 9 June 2004; Hakan Köksal and Utku Gürtunca, Sabah 10 June 2004.

Understanding the kind of assumptions behind the social imaginary from which such narrative identifications between the past and present of Turkey are established requires placing the “Were the Trojans Turks” debate or “the Second Trojan War” into a larger historical and discursive context and examining the ways in which archaeological practices, politics of historiography, and the state’s cultural policies have been articulated in Turkey since the late nineteenth century, a legacy that continues to shape public conversation today.

Şahin’s column, the reactions it elicited from the public and the other participations in the debates are indicative of the larger historical discursive repertoires in circulation in the contemporary Turkish national public sphere. Whenever archaeological artifacts or sites find their way into media or into the lives of Turkish citizens, these discursive repertoires serve like a cognitive heritage box, from which various phrases, imageries, ideas, arguments, and rhetorical devices are selectively summoned to make sense out of them. Through this very act of “making sense” and placing current representations into a larger historical narrative, Turkish citizens reinterpret the excavated past of their country and refract it through the prism of the major political issues on the current agenda. Turkey’s bid for the European Union membership is one such political issue: The European stipulations for ascension necessitate a discursive shift in the self-definition of the nation. The process flames a collective existential angst as it puts the extant official discourse, upon which the national unity stood for more than a century, to a stress test. Particularly, the stipulations challenge the mainstream formulations of Turkish identity and the hegemonic nationalist accounts of history in two aspects: the place relegated to the minorities in history and the increasing untenability of an ethnocentrically defined unity in a transnational world. One of the prevalent public responses such issues and tensions generate is the increased currency of the historical discourses that can offer an alternative to the strained hegemonic narrative. Anatolian Civilizations Discourse is such a discourse and this chapter aims to document its historical

development, meaning against the contemporary Turkish political context, and current circulation mechanisms.

The Public Embodiments of the Anatolian Civilizations Discourse

In Turkey practices of representation that nationalistically territorialize ancient civilizations by evoking images of archaeological artifacts and sites emerge in as many different visual and narrative forms as dance shows, TV series, documentaries¹⁹, cracker commercials, museum exhibitions, city annals, tour agencies' brochures, government and commercial Web sites' organizational logic. These are usually identified, composed, and narrated under the common title of "Anatolian Civilizations". These representational practices, which circulate in the official, commercial, and local media and in various aspects of everyday life, share certain assumptions about the relationship between geography, people living in Turkey, and the excavated material culture of ancient civilizations. As such they comprise a particular discourse on the ways in which Turkish national identity, the landscape of the country, and nationalist historical writing are intertwined. A primordial and territorially akin people of Anatolia and its collective identity brewed across ages, which is supposed to have reached its most amalgamated and perfected consistency in contemporary Turkish nation is circulates in the public imagination. Adopting the well-known title, albeit with an emphasis on its discursive nature, I call this formation of historical narratives, rhetorical gestures, and imageries that generate and sustain the territorialization of the national identity *the Anatolian Civilizations Discourse (ACD)*.

¹⁹ The analysis of TV dramas and documentaries fall outside the perimeters of this project for the purposes of manageability and brevity. However, one can find a preliminary list of the relevant documentaries in Can Candan's paper presented at the first workshop of the Social Archaeology Platform (Erdur and Duru 2003: 115-120). For a brief analysis of TV depictions of archaeologists and archaeological sites in Turkey see Çiler Çilingiroğlu and Necmi Karul's paper in the same volume (93-96).

Before describing main elements of ACD, however, the ubiquitous and polysemic use of the analytic term discourse in the social sciences and humanities calls for the clarification of its meaning. Here, discourse is used as public conversations comprised of narratives regarding a particular set of spaces, issues, groups, and events, which are circulating through various public media channels and institutions. In and through this process of public dissemination and debate, these issues, spaces, groups, and events are construed as 'subjects' and the basic assumptions about these subjects get institutionalized and normalized and become a part of what is considered 'everyday', 'taken for granted' and 'common sense'. In this article, such narratives and assumptions pertaining to 'Anatolia', 'homeland', and 'Turkishness' are examined to elucidate the ways in which relationships between the present and the past of 'Anatolia', among 'its' histories, peoples, and cultures are constructed and circulate through public narratives²⁰. As such, the intention is to turn the analytic lens not only on the agency of the readers and the tellers of these public narratives and their acts of representations regarding archaeology, but also on the capillary nature of the circulating discourse. Discourse as such is generated and transformed through those very acts of representation, although its distributive, decentralized, historical, and impersonal nature exerts power upon collective consciousness and 'common sense' beyond the power of the individuals and the groups that help generate and circulate it.

The ACD is the product of the communicative networks in the Turkish public sphere through which a certain politics of culture gets crystallized. Through the discursive production of media representations a community across ages that shares a common identity of "Anatolian-ness," an essence primordially engraved in the homeland, is imagined. The underlying assumption of the public narratives comprising ACD is that common exposure to the same nature and landscape produces essentially similar cultures, all of which share a unique essence that unites these cultures

²⁰ For a more detailed definition of the concept see Michel Foucault (1972, Part II: 21-78) and on the relationship between discourse and communicative action in the public sphere Craig Calhoun (1992: 8-9 and 26-29). Calhoun's theorization of the ways in which discursive practices are constitutive of nations can be found in *Critical Social Theory* (1995: 233-240 and 249-253).

on a linear, chronological, and continuous path of development. The current Turkish state and the nation are constructed as the inheritors of the sedimented wisdom of the Anatolian Civilizations that evolved from one another. Imagining a continuous cultural thread that ties citizens of Turkey to the people who lived in their homeland in the past, to their “ancestors,” is an expression of collective affiliation and affection which I call “territorial kinship.”²¹ Through narratives of territorial kinship, the central organizing signifier of the discourse---Anatolia --- ceases representing merely a geographical region, and is merged with the most central signifier of many nationalist discourses: homeland. Through discursive practices propagating and disseminating these assumptions, Anatolia’s meaning is intensified: it comes to signify simultaneously a political territory of the sovereign nation-state, the homeland of the citizens of Turkey, and the homogeneous national culture defined by a shared primordial essence. The name of the land not only maps all of these dimensions onto one another, but also unifies them in collective imagination, rendering their entanglement unimaginable.

One way of looking at the nation-state form and nationalism is to approach these social phenomena as “systems of representation” and to think predominantly of their communicative aspect.²² From this point of view, the public sphere is seen as a space in which the members of the national political community talk to each other by providing themselves routinely with images of the very constitution of their group as a body politic, the “nation,” which is a discursively constituted subject (Calhoun 1995:251). If the production of citizens’ discourse about themselves is crucial to nations’ existence, in our age such self-talk is a preeminently mass-mediated discourse. Thus, discursive production of the nation is not just an ideal process where every member of the community has equal access and equivalent power to set the tone, the theme, and the perspective; instead, the marking out of the national cultural terrain in a public domain is materially

²¹ For further information on the territorial kinship concept and how archaeological museum visitors imagine themselves as territorial kin of the peoples of the Anatolian civilizations, see Gür (2007).

²² Stuart Hall very succinctly delineates this perspective based on approaching social phenomena as discursive formations and representational practices (Hall and Gieben 1992:291--295).

underpinned by a range of institutions, political, economic, and communicative. Their narratives of history and identity are crucial to the ways in which certain assumptions about historical continuity and cultural homogeneity seep into public discourse.

The chronological evolutionism as well as the melting pot narratives of the ACD underscores a variety of public expressions of the Anatolian past. For example, almost all the official Web sites of the Turkish Republic (the Web site of Turkish Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in particular) organize their historical narratives according to this evolutionary logic of Turkish history rooted in Asia Minor²³. These official representations of national identity through the interpretation of archaeological sites are also replicated in the construction of local identities and histories. The local governments of many cities in central Turkey publish annals that give current information about the city and its environment. These annals are published almost every year, finances permitting; and many of them tell the “10,000-year-old history” of their own city. The format remains identical regardless of the location.²⁴ The history starts with the Paleolithic, followed by the Neolithic, with special emphasis on the archaeological sites within the jurisdiction of the municipality. Thus, a current geopolitical category---municipality---is construed as a 10,000-year-old local entity. For example, one central Anatolian town, Aksaray, presents itself as one such

²³ As it is often the case in geographical signifying practices, ‘Asia Minor’ is not a neutral term. It is a political and cultural category that is constructed throughout ages from a Eurocentric point of view. However since its historical and political connotations are not rooted just in one nationalist narrative and for the lack of a better term, it is deployed here as the extant name of the geography upon which various nationalist narratives of the 19th and 20th century are written. A different project focusing on the genealogy of the term Asia Minor would have to prefer an alternative name to mark the difference.

²⁴ In the last ten years, Web sites and short online movies have been replacing these annals. Some examples for the incorporation of pre-historical past into today’s local narratives are Çumra’s municipal website where the town presents itself as “The town of Çatalhöyük” and Ağlasun’s municipal website where Sagalassos occupies a special place. More research is needed on the media constructions of local identities by municipalities, governorates and provincial universities employing narratives that incorporate archaeological practices, how such incorporations change over time, and in what ways such representational changes correlate with the politics of culture propagated by the parties in power in Turkey. For one of such rare ethnographies on how local identity construction by such governmental actors is influenced by the practices of a nearby archaeological site, see Bartu (2007). The pages on the interaction of the villagers and the mayors with the site (77-84) are particularly relevant to my discussion here. Recently similar observations have been made by participants in the excavations in Attouda and Sagalassos regarding the relationship between the villagers of Sarayköy and Ağlasun with the excavation sites near their towns (Erdur and Duru 2003: 43 and 82).

ancient Anatolian city. After a salvage excavation in 1989 had rekindled the attention paid to Aşıklı Höyük, the oldest settlement near Aksaray, Aşıklı took its place in the proud chronological narrative of the city annals as the original Aksaray the following year; and the denizens were invited to cherish the heritage of their höyük.

There are many ways in which Anatolian Civilizations Discourse is crystallized in public images and narratives. Even in a cracker commercial for example, tenets of ACD, particularly territorial kinship, constitute the backbone of the approach to history. In the cracker commercial by Eti, a big and long standing food production company, a group of primary school students are visiting the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. The teacher is telling them about the history of Anatolian Civilizations in general, Lydians in particular. She emphasizes that many 'firsts' of human history took place in Anatolia, in 'our land', and spread to the world from there. She specifically mentions the Lydians and their invention of the coins. In the meantime, camera focuses on one of her students looking around, examining the statues. He is carrying an Eti cracker on the outer pocket of his backpack. He is oblivious to the fact that statues in the hall come alive as he passes by them and are following him with their eyes. They are interested in the cracker he is carrying, looking at it desirously. As the teacher goes on and on, their impatience grows. Finally, not being able to bear it any longer, one of the Lydian statues becomes fully animated, smoothly pulls the cracker out of the students backpack, and gently leaves a Lydian coin in the boy's pocket. The commercial ends with a slogan introducing the latest seductive addition to the "Eti Flavor Civilization".

By suggesting that its products are yet another contribution in the long chain of the discoveries and innovations Anatolian Civilizations introduced to the world, the company, Eti, presents itself as part of a national and civilizational saga. It is no coincidence that the company, Eti is relying on such a discursive repertoire. It was one of the institutions of the Turkish Republic named after the Hittites. The company still sports, as its emblem, the Hattian ceremonial object

popularly known as the 'sun-disc'²⁵. Eti, a Turkish noun for 'the Hittite', was a popular name for the burgeoning new companies of the Republic, the proud symbols of national production. The public image of the company continues to draw upon this heritage, contributing to the cultural repertoire of ACD.

Another example of a public representation, into which the historical assumption of territorial kinship and other motifs, images, and narratives from ACD are incorporated and put into public circulation, is a dance show called the Sultans of Dance that debuted in 2001. The first show the company staged with the same title gained tremendous and unprecedented popularity in Turkey in the summer of 2001, attracting thousands of people. The entire summer program was sold out in a matter of weeks, and ever since the shows of the company, each one a variation of the initial show's theme, generated commercial success.²⁶ The show in essence is a modern interpretation of Turkish folk dances from various regions of the country collaged into a narrative of Anatolian-ness throughout the ages. The choreography is comprised of classical ballet and contemporary dance movements mixed with various regional folk dance repertoires. The background is a giant screen on which the images of the archaeological sites and artifacts are projected and blended with the computer generated audiovisual effects. Although the show failed to receive the esteem of the art critics and most often was called "kitsch," the overall media response was mostly favorable, describing the show as a "national success," a perfect "synthesis of East and West," "of modern and traditional."

Sultans of Dance projects an image of Anatolian synthesis. The disparate times, events, and spaces within the territories of Turkey are united by employing various archaeological sites and artifacts to symbolize a cultural bricolage, a bricolage interpreted as a synthesis that resolves the

²⁵ For the various contexts in which the bronze ceremonial object excavated in Alacahöyük come to signify popular cultural imageries, its politization and the misconceptions surrounding it, see Wendy Kural Shaw (2003:33-41).

²⁶ In 2005 the show toured the world under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture in order to introduce and popularize Turkish culture.

contradictions of today's Turkish society expressed through binaries such as West-East, traditional-modern, Islamic-secular, urban-rural, Kurdish-Turkish. The narrations of the show in the booklets appealed to a shared Anatolian-ness and the ancient Anatolian civilizations as the source of this harmony and cultural synthesis. Sultans of Dance is one of the most sensational embodiments of the ACD---the narrative of a "Turkified melting pot". The emotional outburst it evoked and the public attention and approval it continues to receive from audiences attest to the pervasiveness of the historiographical operation taking place in the public imaginary that associates Anatolian civilizations with Turkish national unity and reproduces a unified cultural essence out of the diverse historical paths and cultural formations in Asia Minor.

Although the ACD is a cultural discourse and as such can be thought to be less essentializing than racialized versions of national identity constructions, it still preserves the notion of an "essence"---the notion of an immutable yet transferable uniqueness. It renders the nation timeless through territorial kinship and territorializes the culture, confining it to the nation-state's geopolitical borders. Archaeological findings that are frequently incorporated into the Turkish media and everyday life in Turkey are very much colored by nationalistic interpretations. It is hard for a Turkish citizen in the street to think or talk about these representations without resorting to the nationalist underpinnings of the conceptual repertoire of the ACD. Therefore delineating the historical development of the collective assumptions and narratives comprising ACD is key to the cognitive map of the national media and the conceptual landscape of the national public sphere, the two major forces mediating how citizens read, envision, and talk about archaeology, archaeologists, the sites and the excavated artifacts in Turkey today.

The Mutually Transformative Influence of Archaeological Practices and Nationalism

Archaeological excavations and exhibitions of archaeological artifacts are key practices in the spatiotemporal construction and representation of the nation. What distinguishes a nation from

other forms of community is that it imagines its identity as tied to a territory and homogeneous within national borders. Consequently, the historicizing of the ties imagined between the territory and the human collective living on it constitutes the core of nation-building projects and a crucial aspect of the nation-state's cultural politics. Archaeology, because of its integral relation to both land and culture, plays a special role in bridging the national territory and the imagined past of the nation.

Scholars of archaeology and nationalism have demonstrated that postcolonial nationalist practices of archaeology emerge simultaneously as a reaction to colonial powers and as a celebration of a nation's newly achieved right to write its own histories. After World War I, decolonized communities had to compete for sovereignty and independence over a given territory. Legitimization of their claims depended largely on a skillful mobilization of scientific knowledge on the political and symbolic fields the boundaries of which were set by the Wilsonian principles (the right to self-determination) and positivism. In such a context it is hardly surprising that letters, like history writing, folklore, anthropology, and archaeology, became one of the most vigorous fields of national identity construction.

After the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, as it was the case in the Late Ottoman Empire, archaeological practices and museums continued to be seen as the success barometers of the Westernization project (Cezar 1971; Bartu 1997; Shaw 2003). The new regulations and laws pertaining to archaeological excavations and findings became important issues where the state, on behalf of the nation, claimed responsibility and exercised the nation's right to protect its own cultural heritage.²⁷ To create a core cadre of Turkish archaeologists, the Turkish Ministry of Education sent a group of students to Germany and France and opened archaeology departments at

²⁷ For more information on the institutionalization and regulation of archaeology in Turkey, see Akın (1992), Özdoğan (1992, 1998), Özdemir (2003) and Pulhan (2003). The interviews with the leading archaeologists and historians on the past and future of the discipline in the volume edited by Erdur and Duru (2003) and in the special issues of the two journals, *Cogito* and *Sanat Dünyamız*, edited by Pulhan (2000, 2001) shed anecdotal light on the history and prospects of archaeology in Turkey.

the public universities.²⁸ Many “national” excavations were started, particularly at Hittite sites in central Anatolia.²⁹ Subsequently, museumification of the findings and their public display became pressing concerns. Upon the national leader Mustafa Kemal’s orders, the Ministry of Education and the Turkish History Foundation engaged in planning a Hittite museum in Ankara that would later be named the Anatolian Civilizations Museum.³⁰

The early excavations and museumification projects were parts of the larger project of rewriting Turkish history.³¹ The major institutional form of this larger project, the Turkish History Foundation, started many studies on history and culture of the Turks specifically for the purpose of defining a homogeneous “Turkish culture.” At that time, the Kemalist historians traced the origins of Turkish identity to the Hittites. This official historical narrative was known as the Turkish History Thesis and it was purported to show a Turkish ethnic continuity in Anatolia since the prehistoric times.³² According to the thesis, Hittites were part of the Turkic tribes that migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia. This narrative shaped most of the anthropological, folkloric, and archaeological projects of the 1930s. The drive underlying this overarching argument was to make a case for a primordial Turkish existence in Anatolia and hence to naturalize the claim that the Turkish nation-state is the “heir” of Anatolia in the international arena³³. Symbolic Turkification of

²⁸ During this period the faculty of these departments was composed mostly of German professors, some of whom had fled to Turkey during the Third Reich. For details, see Canpolat (2001) in the catalog of the exhibition *Hittitology and the Discovery of Hittite World from Karatepe to Boğazköy*.

²⁹ Hittitologists estimate that the Hittites migrated to Anatolia around 2000 BC. However, it is still debated exactly when they first migrated and where they came from. Hittites established the earliest known centralized authority in central Anatolia. Thus, they occupy an important place in the early nationalist history writings. For further information on the Hittites and their art, see Gurney (1990), McQueen (1996), Darga (1992), Akurgal (1997), and Yener, Hoffner and et al (2002).

³⁰ The Anatolian Civilizations Museum in Ankara is the epitome of the institutional embodiment of ACD. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the museum exhibition and the consolidation of ACD, see Gür (2007).

³¹ For the historical development of the larger official history writing projects in the early Republican period, see Berktaş (1983a and 1983b), Copeaux (1997) and Ersanlı (2003).

³² The best primary source of information for the Turkish History Thesis is the transcriptions of the lectures by Afet İnan in the various Congresses of the Turkish History Foundation, for example see İnan (1933) and İğdemir (1973). The detailed account of the archaeological practices of the Turkish History Foundation in the first decade of the Republic conducted from the perspective of the thesis can be found in İnan (1938, 1949).

³³ Turkist nationalists and state officials are by no means exceptions in their ambitions and ideological orientations given their historical context. Within the literature on how archaeological practices have been

pre-Islamic Anatolia was a nationalist, anti-imperialist, and counter-Orientalist move. The Turkish nationalist archaeological discourses reinterpreted the chain of historical continuity constructed among European, Greek, and Mesopotamian civilizations by inserting Turkish culture in the chain. This provided a rich discursive repertoire for nationalist elites eager to construct a national narrative that could draw historical connections with European culture (Ersanlı 2003:227). The investigations that the Turkish History Foundation undertook were among the first rings in the chain of the nationalist archaeological projects of the postcolonial world.

During the 1920s and 1930s Turkey witnessed heated debates among different nationalist ideologies competing for hegemonic status, each having a different perspective on the specific ways in which peoples living within the national borders were to be defined as a “nation” and the geopolitical unit as a “homeland.” These ideological debates among the different brands of Turkisms³⁴ had a significant effect on the Turkish History Foundation’s archaeological practices and museumification projects and the nationalism institutionalized by the Kemalist regime. Besides the better-known and much-studied Pan-Turanist versions of Turkism that extended ethnocentric national imagery beyond the national borders as far as to Central Asia, a group of university professors and students cultivated an alternative social imagery in the journals they published in 1924-25 (Tachau 1963:167--170). One of the major contributors to this intellectual movement, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, called this social imagery memleketçilik (homelandism) (2001(1966):477--487).³⁵ Homelandist students and professors from different generations and disciplines came

interpreted for the ideological purposes of colonial, national and postcolonial history writing around the world, the volumes by Silberman (1989), Kohl and Fawcett (1995), Jones (1997) and Meskell (1998) are most useful and insightful.

³⁴ For more information on the various ideological fractions within Turkish nationalists and their influence on the formation of Kemalist nationalism, see Tachau (1963), Berktaş (1983a, 1983b), Parla (1985), Landau (1995), Üstel (1997), Özdoğan (2001), and Ersanlı (2003).

³⁵ The movement, fractioned within itself, assumed different names during this period: “Türkiyecilik” (Turkeyism), “memleketçilik” (homelandism) and Anadoluçuluk (Anatolianism). However all of them concentrated on creating a territorial kinship based national identity based on ‘Anatolia’. The Anatolia-centric ethnicism has a longer genealogy that goes back to the nineteenth century. Although Ülken does not mention these earlier writings as sources of inspiration for the homelandist movement, a prototypical version of the notion that Anatolian cultures can be traced back to Turks first germinated in the writings of Enver

together and wrote on various subjects, ranging from folklore, medieval history of Asia minor, nationalistic poetry, and archaeological excavations. The journals enabling these networks were Anadolu (Anatolia), edited by Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, professor of history at Istanbul University, and Hilmi Ziya Ülken, philosopher and professor of sociology at Istanbul University, and Millet (Nation), edited by Remzi Arık, a Sorbonne alumnus archaeologist.³⁶ The homelandists insisted that common culture created by ethnic and religious identification would not suffice to form the basis of a united nation. They argued that identification with the fatherland was indispensable to national identity formation, the history of the Turkish Republic needed to be rewritten as the history of Anatolia, and that the historical subject of the narrative should be the Anatolian peasant³⁷. While most of the homelandists were educated in European philosophical and academic institutions and drew upon European scholarly literature in their works, they were critical of borrowing from the West without synthesizing it with the ‘genuine’, ‘local’ values and traditions that are ‘quintessentially Anatolian.’

The homelandists’ relationship with the Turkists was rather complicated. At times these two different strains of discourse converged and at other times diverged, like a double helix. For example, the homelandists emphasized the economic and cultural rift between the elite and the peasants since Ottoman times and pleaded for a rediscovery of the “true” peasant culture at the heart of Anatolia. In this respect they shared the ethnocentric nationalists’ motto of “toward the Volk” (Özdoğan 2001:257). However, the two groups had different notions of who this volk is. Homelandists, rather than the migration thesis and the ethnic continuity between Central Asia and Anatolia, focused more on homeland as the common denominator of that ethnicized cultural

Celaleddin Pasha (Özdoğan 2001:85) and of his father, Mustafa Celaleddin Pasha. Mustafa Celaleddin Pasha’s book *Les Turcs Anciens et Modernes* was published in 1869 (Berktay 1983b: 2457).

³⁶ Both M. Halil Yinanç and Remzi Arık were among the founding members of the Turkish History Foundation.

³⁷ According to Ülken, such early homelandist writings were mostly written against Islamism, Ottomanism, and Turanism (2001(1966):480). However Remzi Arık and the other contributors to the journal Millet also contributed to the nationalist journals of the Turanist brand.

continuity as it is embodied in the persona of Anatolian peasant.³⁸ As such, although they were more inclusionist in certain aspects and foreshadowed the departure from some Pan-Turkist formulations of the 1930s and 1940s, they remained within the ethnonationalist paradigm and organized their thoughts around a notion of Turkified Anatolia.

Although homelandism had no known larger social effects at the time and the readership of the journals, Anadolu and Millet, was rather limited (Tachau 1963:169), their impact on some key figures in the development of archaeology and museumification in Turkey in the 1930s is significant. In particular, Remzi Arık and Zübeyir Koşay, both influenced by homelandist thought, came to occupy key positions in the formation and direction of the Turkish History Foundation and its initial archaeological projects, such as the establishment of the Anatolian Civilizations Museum and the excavations in Alacahöyük (the first excavation entirely conducted by national funds and archaeologists). Furthermore, Arık's numerous articles and books on the relationship between geography and history, written for educational and introductory purposes and targeting a nonacademic audience, were published by the state's official publishing houses and distributed to the schools and the People's Houses reaching even the remotest corners of the land (Arık 1936, 1947, 1956, 1975). Hence, homelandists within the Turkish History Foundation cadres and in charge of national archaeology projects left their indelible mark on the early official policies and institutions of the Republic.

Although studies of nationalist movements in Turkey examine homelandism, they often do not mention the significance of the practice of archaeology in shaping this cultural perspective. The leading figures writing in Millet or Anadolu such as Koşay and Arık are mentioned; however, the

³⁸ Incorporation of Balkan immigrants, who either came during the Balkan Wars or with the Turkish-Greek population exchange, into the discourses constructing an 'Anatolian peasant' identity has been a poignant issue in Turkish national politics since its first inception. Tachau mentions that homelandists were also torn about this issue, since the migrant peasants were Muslim and considered to be Turkish, yet were not 'of Anatolia' (1963: 168). For a deeper analysis of the ways in which national body politics was complicated with the incoming immigrants as a result of population exchange see Aktar (2000, 2003); Iğsız (2007), and the volume edited by Hirschon (2003).

crucial role of their identity as the first generation of Turkish archaeologists and their active engagement with the archaeological practice go largely unnoticed. Next to the attention paid to the impact of political ideologies on archaeology, we have little on the impact of the educational and visceral experiences of archaeologists on their ideological orientations and on the movements they subscribed to. Local archaeologists like Arık provided new evidentiary resources for nationalist historical writing projects such as the findings from Hittite sites and their particular interpretation, and took ethnic essentialism a step further to the extent of identifying Hittites as Turks. However, homelandists' search for the ancestors of Turks in Anatolia and reinterpreting the migration thesis in light of the archaeological excavations also had the consequence of developing an alternative imagery of a Turkified Anatolian culture that is related to, yet distinct from the cultures of Turkic Central Asia. Thus, one can argue that homelandists trimmed the political and cultural aspirations of Pan-Turkist versions of ethnic nationalism that could not be contained within the national borders and were thus unfit for the post--World War I world order.

In the 1950s and 1960s another group of literati, quite different from the homelandists in their social backgrounds and political orientations³⁹, would adopt the notion of a homeland-based culturalism as the basis of national identity and transform it by refracting these ideas through the prism of humanist philosophy and European classical literary cannon. They called themselves "Anatolianists" and their movement "Blue Anatolia". Anatolianists' mark on the ways in which archaeological sites are interpreted and on the historical narratives based on the ancient past of Western Anatolia would have a significant longevity and social impact for generations to come and would appear in such disparate forms of representations as the Troy debate, the Sultans of Dance performances, cracker advertisements, government Web sites, tourist brochures, and scholarly interpretations of the excavated artifacts.

³⁹ In contrast to the more provincial backgrounds of the earlier Anatolianists, most of the Blue Anatolia intellectuals were from elite families. Their politics was progressive and "leftist".

The Blue Anatolia Movement: Cultural Essentialism with a Humanist Twist

In the various narratives of the origins of national history and heritage, different Anatolian civilizations are attributed varying degrees of contribution to the formation of the present Turkish national identity. The different ideological constructions of the territorial kinship charts and hierarchically imagining which groups are included in the Turkish family circle or considered more distant kin: these remain politically charged issues and constitute a terrain on which ideological battles are fought. Such culture wars influence which civilizations are covered in public education textbooks, how they are narrated, which excavations receive more attention from the state, and which cultural groups gain more legitimacy in the national public sphere by successfully establishing themselves as the 'real Anatolian' or fail to do so and fall into the category of an internal 'other.'⁴⁰

Against the background of the extant European discourses on the Hellenic origins of Western civilization and the opposition between the nationalist ideologies of Turkism and Hellenism, the interpretation of the archaeological sites in western coastal Turkey and their incorporation into the nationalist discourses required a more complex historiographical operation than that of the other ancient Anatolian sites, such as the prehistoric höyüks or Hittite settlements. Similar to many other nation building projects, Turkish and Greek nationalist historical narratives anchor their national identities in a primordial past rooted in a geographical location⁴¹. The history

⁴⁰ In some cases, such as in the case of Urartian civilization, to which both Armenian and Kurdish nationalists trace their ancestry deploying essentialist and ethnocentrist historical discourses, the interpretations and narratives of the archaeological findings blend with the debates on the minority rights in Turkey and become even more politically charged. They may also attain a status of a taboo in public sphere as they present challenges to the hegemonic, official, and institutionalized argument that Turkified Anatolianness is an overarching enough identity to represent the synthesis of all cultures under its aegis, past and present.

⁴¹ There is a vast literature on the historical constructions of Greek national identity, in which books by Jusdanis (1991), Leontis (1995) Herzfeld (1997), and Peckham (2001) are particularly useful. For a treatment of the relationship between Greek and Turkish nationalism see Birtek and Dragonas (2005). For the various spheres in which archaeological sites and artifacts are used to create nationalist images and narratives of Greece, Yannis Hamilakis' works (1996, 1999) and the edited volume by Brown and Hamilakis (2003) are excellent sources.

of the lands upon which the scripts of ancient Greece are written includes some of contemporary Turkey's western provinces. Since the international system based on the nation form advocates formulation of discrete and mutually exclusive ethnic identities that the nation-states come to stand for and politically represent, the fact that Greek and Turkish nationalist scripts discursively primordialize their respective national identities by anchoring the present of their citizens in the past of overlapping geographical areas has turned the history of the ancient civilizations in these lands into a subject of vigorous contention.

In the Wilsonian world of 1920s, where a shared ancestry was understood to be fundamentally challenging for the sovereignty claims of discrete nation forms, Turkish and Greek nationalist movements were competing for the same territories through warfare. In consequence on both sides of the Aegean, ruthless projects of erasure and rewriting of the shared past followed. The Turkish-Greek population exchange (1923) was the epitome of these acts of mutual erasure attempting to efface the Greek imprints in Anatolia and Ottoman imprints in the Peloponnesian Peninsula and the Aegean Islands⁴². Against this background, although classics was recognized as an important academic field of study in the Turkish Republic's modernization project, connections between anything Hellenic and Anatolian was unpalatable to the nationalist cultural map of Anatolia redrawn. ⁴³ Thus, in the early national archaeological and museumification projects endorsed by the Turkish Historical Foundation, the Greco-Roman sites were relegated to the discursive background, as shadows of 'Anatolian Civilizations'. Reşit Galip, one of the leading historians of the time, captured the new official stance in 1932 in the Turkish Historical Foundation's Annual Meeting with the following interpretation of the Aegean civilizations and their place in the official historical narrative:

⁴² For detailed information about the political and economic blueprints and consequences of Turkish-Greek Population Exchange in 1923-24, see Aktar (2000:17-66) and Iğsız (2007).

⁴³ For more on this issue also see Copeaux (1997) and (1998:83, 90-91).

It is an increasingly accepted argument that there is no unique Greek civilization and the civilization carrying this name is nothing but an emergence of the Anatolian and ancient Aegean civilization around a new center. (Akyıldız and Karacasu 1999: 30 ftn:3).

The Blue Anatolia movement emerged in the wake of this historical context and brought the material culture of ancient Greek civilization and its connections with Anatolia back into the public discourse. A group of Turkish intellectuals, artists, and writers---Bedri Rahmi, Eren and Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Mina Urgan, Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı, and Azra Erhat⁴⁴---started to publish the travelogues of their “blue voyages” along the Aegean coast⁴⁵. The artworks that their visits to Anatolian villages inspired, as well as the books and articles they wrote on the ancient history of the region popularized the mythology and Aegean archaeology and inserted them into the nonacademic cultural repertoire.

Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı, the leading figure of the Blue Anatolia movement, had majored in history at Oxford and was a journalist. He arrived at Halikarnassus (Bodrum) for the first time as an exile in 1924. After serving his three-year sentence, he settled in the village for good and assumed the name (not just as a *nom de plume*) ‘the Fisherman of Halikarnassus.’ Many of his friends, who

⁴⁴ All of these figures are cult figures in Turkish literary history and their works are canonized. They were also important personalities in the art world of the country at the time. Both Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu and his wife, Eren Eyüboğlu left many paintings, sculptures and poems in their wake. Sabahattin Eyüboğlu was a popular essayist, and a very well known translator of several important classics into Turkish. Mina Urgan was an author, translator and professor of English literature and Azra Erhat was a literary critic and the authoritative translator of Iliad and Odyssey into Turkish. All of the members of the movement were deeply involved in literature and the project of translating classical texts of Western European literature into Turkish. Among them, only Sabahattin Eyüboğlu had connections with the bureaucratic cadres of their time. He actively participated in the realization of the time’s Minister of Education (also a poet and author), Hasan Ali Yücel’s dream that every village library in Anatolia would one day be equipped with the copies of all the canonical works of the Western literature. Cevat Şakir, as the leader and the most popular figure of the movement had a special place, to which we will come back later in the chapter. It is also worth noting that eminent archaeologist Halet Çambel, a founder of the prehistoric archaeology department at Istanbul University was also a part of the group and frequently participated in the blue voyages.

⁴⁵ Today, one of the most popular form of tourist travel in Aegean Turkey and a significant source of income for local boatmen, ‘blue voyages’ are daily, weekly or biweekly boat trips where various small coves of the Aegean coast are visited one after another incorporating landscape not accessible from land into the tourist routes.

were the leading artists and intellectuals of the time, visited him in his new home, which put this then-tiny fishing village on the intellectual map of Turkey.

As a humanist movement, the Blue Anatolianists wrote extensively about the importance of classical education for the intellectual landscape of the nation. Their ideas were a mixture of the didactic universalism of Enlightenment and the naturalism of romantic nationalism. Blue Anatolianists' writings defined world history as a common human heritage based on "European civilization" for which ancient Greek culture was indispensable. Although they put a lot of emphasis on the significance of ancient Greece in the development of this civilization, their humanism and universalism were also imbued with a culturalist nationalism by which they traced the origins of those elements of ancient Greek cultures which the nineteenth century European intellectuals, poets, and philosophers valorized, highlighted, and selectively appropriated, back to the ancient civilizations of Anatolia and Mesopotamia, particularly to the Aegean coast of Turkey. They vigorously supported the incorporation of ancient Greek and Latin texts in the public education, but they also discursively produced an Anatolian cultural essence which inspired these texts.

The Blue Anatolia movement is highly significant for the development of the Anatolian Civilizations Discourse, since the activities, art, and writings of the group members and their personal popularity brought sites like Troy, Halikarnassus, and other coastal cities of ancient Anatolia to the attention of the public and reclaimed the ties to the other side of the Aegean from its anti-Turkish connotations. In doing so, they altered the course of the public perception of pre-Islamic Anatolia profoundly and irreversibly. Studying and reinterpreting Greek mythology, the group moved away from the dominant ideology of Turkism in a much more pronounced way than the homelandists and "turned toward the essence of Anatolia." This discursive gesture of homecoming, the authorial gaze locked to the culture that the Anatolian lands nourished throughout the ages, resembled that of the homelandists. Their emphasis on a territorialized kinship among peoples of Anatolia, for example, was reminiscent of Arık's conceptualization of

Anatolia and its peoples. However, their interpretation of archaeological sites and Anatolian history in light of archaeological and textual evidence was less ethnocentric and more receptive to cultural diversity than these former examples. They were more interested in universalizing the historical narrative of the Anatolian past than contributing to an ethnocentrically defined particularism.

Blue Anatolianists focused on the stories of Asia Minor in the ancient Greek texts, and their narratives located the roots of the Greek myths and art in Anatolia, claiming the credit share of the Anatolian peasants in the formation of the Hellenic history, and the European civilization. For example, in the late 1960s, Kabağaçlı had a weekly radio talk show on Radio İzmir. In these shows he gave informal talks about the history of Anatolia throughout the ages. In one of the episodes he narrates Anatolia's significance in terms of the origins of the western civilization:

Civilization went to the West from Anatolia. . . . While the Gaul was still in barbarism even by 50 BC, the father of the poem in the world, Homer, was writing and reading Iliad in 900 BC in Izmir [Smyrna]. The father of history, Herodot [Herodotus], born in Bodrum [Halikarnassus], wrote the first historical narrative of the world in 500 BC. The father of European science, Thales, was born and wrote in Milet [Miletos]. The father of medicine, Hipokrat [Hippokrates], was also an Anatolian and started medicine in Anatolia. We can enumerate other founding fathers of civilization that came from Anatolia, but it would take a conference of two to three hours. In short, the seeds of culture and civilization were planted in and spread from Anatolia [2002:58].

As Kabağaçlı's narrative illustrates, one of the defining characteristics of Blue Anatolian agency was their ambivalence between, on the one hand, *embracing* Western science and culture and, on the other hand, *rejecting* it for its imperialist and self-centered narratives. As Partha Chatterjee (1993) and other postcolonial theorists illustrated, twentieth century nation building

projects operate within this tight discursive space of in-betweenness and ambivalence in order to stake a claim to a heritage of their own shaped in relation to the Eurocentric world histories. The cultural and political in-betweenness and ambivalence neither of the Turkish Republic's bureaucratic elites nor of the Blue Anatolianists, nor of the modern Islamists are exceptions. As such, the Blue Anatolian reinterpretation of the Eurocentric historical narratives attempts to decenter and recenter these narratives by mobilizing available repertoires such as archaeological practices, romantic nationalism, and the classics, of which they were scholars and translators. Though less well known and with less clamor than the Black Athena controversy, the Blue Anatolianists similarly attempted to write an alternative history of European civilization and emphasized the role of the peoples of Asia Minor in this narrative.

Scholars of Turkish literature and history have long debated over the cultural and historical significance of the Blue Anatolianism.⁴⁶ Although there is a consensus that Blue Anatolianists were elitist despite their populism, their place in the development of Anatolianism as an alternative basis for national identity is undisputed. Blue Anatolianists' humanist patriotism, based on territorial kinship assumptions, continue to resonate particularly among the secular, left-leaning intellectuals and scholars today. Their oeuvre and statements comprise an important resource for the perpetuation of ACD. To this day their books remain among the successful sellers.⁴⁷ Şahin, for example, draws upon Blue Anatolia essays when he finds parallels between Gallipoli and the Trojan War, referring to Sabahattin Eyüboğlu's book *Mavi ve Kara* (2006). In a similar vein, we come across references to Hector as an Anatolian boy in Kabağaçlı's writings (2002:28). Claiming not

⁴⁶ See Belge (1994), Akyıldız and Karacasu (1999), Açıık (2003), and Kahraman (2002).

⁴⁷ According to Bilgi publishing house that owns the copyrights for Kabağaçlı's major books since 1980s, each of his books sell 1000-2000 copies each year. Over the years his books have sold more than 20.000 copies each (Personal correspondence of the author with the director of the Bilgi Yayınevi, Bilgi Küflü. Unlike Mr. Küflü, the directors of the Remzi Publishing House, another holder of copyrights for Şakir's works, was not cooperative and did not respond to my inquiries). These numbers do not include the sales of street vendors who sell pirate copies. Pirate books are a major problem for the publishers today in Turkey, since illegal publications are estimated to approach 50% of the whole books market. These numbers are significant for a country with 38 million adult readers, but the best sellers are defined by sales of 10000-15000, and an average print run is 1000-2000. Furthermore Kabağaçlı's works are considered to be classics in Turkish literature and are part of the Public Education Ministry's suggested books list for schools.

only the Trojans but all the fallen heroes of the Trojan War as Anatolian is a frequent leitmotif in ACD. So when the municipalities of Çorum and Çanakkale fight over Achilles' grave and mobilize a discourse of territorial kinship, they actually compete over a symbolic capital that enables them to simultaneously claim participation in the world civilization and take pride in their local identity. The agents who engage with the conceptual framework of ACD may not be cognizant of the intellectual lineage of such associations they are making; yet these circulate frequently enough in the Turkish public sphere that their free adoption and interpretation give the discourse a life of its own, independent of the movements that helped to create and consolidate it.

The discursive influence of ACD à la Blue Anatolia can also be observed on the public representations of Apollo as an Anatolian deity and this influence can be traced back to Erhat's and the Kabağaçlı's writings. According to the Dictionary of Mythology, written by classical philologist Azra Erhat, the entries on Apollo and Dionysus poses the question of the origins of the two deities as a pressing issue:

The myth cries out that Dionysos came from the East, emerged from Anatolia, managing to enter Greece with difficulty. This deity had to jump through many hoops till he could grant tragedy [to humans], which Nietzsche claimed to be the most surprising and essential part of the Greek heritage. In contrast to Dionysos, Apollo, with his rationality and his Muses inspiring art forms, was considered to be essentially Greek. Nietzsche probably never doubted that. With his centers of prophecy, myths, and temples Apollo had always been thought to be Greek and originated in Greece. Scien[tists] made this mistake, as they did not read ancient texts carefully, starting with Homer. When the contributions of archeology are considered, we hope that the reality will see daylight. Ours is just an experiment [Erhat 1984:48].³⁹

To strengthen her argument that Apollo is Anatolian, Erhat points out that the word Apollo is not a Greek word and that it might have derived from the names of various Hittite gods or words⁴⁸. Quoting from Iliad, she speculates in a lengthy essay that Apollo is an Anatolian deity, and his connections to Cybele, Anatolian goddess of fertility by virtue of his sister and mother are stronger than his connections to Helios, the Greek god of the sun. The same thesis pertaining to the origins of Apollo and the ideas and values he came to represent is extensively presented in Kabağaçlı's book Anadolu'nun Sesi: Tarih ve Hellenizm (Anatolia's Voice: History and Hellenism) (1971), too. Quoting the Latin poet Horatius and the historian Pausanias, Kabağaçlı argues that the biggest four temples of Apollo and his most sacred cities were Grinium, Klaros, Didyma, and Patara, all of which were in Anatolia. He interprets the Ionian Apollocentric belief system to be the evidence for the Ionians' devotion to their homeland, Anatolia, mapping the Trojan War onto the nationalist rival narratives of Greek versus Turkish nationalisms. As part of Turkish canonical literature, both Erhat's and Kabağaçlı's works continue to shape contemporary interpretations of archaeological sites, providing the vocabulary and the grammar for the journalistic debates and their reverberations in pop culture.

A current example of this enduring impact on the relationship between Anatolianist nationalism and archaeological practices is the public representations of the site Patara (78 km to Fethiye, Antalya). In order to bring the importance of Patara into public attention, the site is frequently represented as "the birthplace" of Apollo. Although a very limited portion of the site could be excavated and evaluated so far, the team members are convinced that Patara was one of the major centers of prophecy that can potentially overshadow Delphi⁴⁹. Besides the ancient myths,

⁴⁸ The recent excavations in Troy provide further supportive evidence for similar connections. For the new findings regarding the relationship between Hittites and the Trojans building up to the Homeric times, see Starke (1997) and Latacz (2001).

⁴⁹ Professor Fahri Işık (Akdeniz University), the head of the archaeological team in Patara until 2008, is an influential academic not only in excavations, but also in the education of the Turkish tour guides. His writings and lectures shape the way the tour guides read the Lycia sites and present them to the tourists. Fahri Işık lectures frequently in annual compulsory seminars of the Ministry of Tourism for the tour guides and the CDs

a colossal head of Apollo statue found on the site strengthened the hypothesis that an equally colossal temple of Apollo existed in Patara. Also, a temple dedicated to Leto, mother of Apollo and Artemis, was excavated nearby. Since Artemis and Leto were revered gods in many settlements at the Aegean coast, they are presented as ‘Anatolian deities’ and the kinship ties are evoked to argue that so was Apollo⁵⁰. Naturalization of deities in this manner, as it makes it easier for public to relate to, is a rhetorical device frequently employed by archaeologists to popularize their excavations. However, it is important to be cognizant of the discourses that shape the readings of the nonacademic audience and the frameworks that popular media is ready to apply to the interviews with archaeologists. The use of evidentiary language when blended with rhetorical devices that project contemporary identity categories onto the interpretations of ‘continuity’, ‘origins’, or the historical ‘rivalry’ between the two sides of the Aegean, a patriotic moral tone overtakes the tenor of the arguments communicated in the popular media. Then the narrative of the excavation turns into an indignant mission to reveal and claim what has been wrongfully denied to Anatolians: their due credit in the formation of European civilization.

The debates regarding Apollo cult or the continuities and relationships between Trojans and other cultures of Asia Minor are worth investigating and continue to shape the archaeological efforts. However such debates when they are carried to the popular media are subject to the vocabulary and assumptions of the hegemonic discourses. In this light, the Apollo debate’s significance and the way it lends itself easily to nationalistic interpretations surpasses its appearance as purely a matter of archaeological evidence. It illustrates one of the key aspects the

of his former lectures are sold by Istanbul Tourist Guide Association. Besides publishing his findings in scholarly journals in Turkey, Fahri Işık also gives interviews to popular magazines such as *Bilim ve Ütopya*. For an example see December 1999 issue.

⁵⁰ For example, in the magazine of the International Airport in Istanbul, the “Gate” (published and distributed for free by a private conglomerate known to be working mostly in the government projects), passengers can read these statements not as hypotheses subject to further investigation, but as facts. The article titled “Apollo’s Cradle” has no question mark in the heading and the story circulates and gets accepted as fact beyond the realm of its creation. In such popular media what it means to talk about ‘origins’, or ‘continuity’, when we talk about ancient cultures is never questioned.

process of national identity formation influence the archaeological sites' nationalization through international competition.

Turning these sites and cultures into pieces of evidence for the righteousness of national exceptionalism and essentialism is rooted in a dual anxiety characteristic of non-European nationalisms that take European experiences as paradigmatic in their readings of their own unfolding histories. On the one hand, the imagined lag between the “developed Western nations” and their own “developing nations” creates one type of anxiety crystallizing around the notion of “catching up,” which renders these nationalist projects continuously out of breath. On the other hand, the anxiety of constructing a national self imagined as unique and separate from any other national character, exclusive only to the citizens, limits the available discourses that can join these national histories and those of Europe. The constant oscillation between these two anxieties is resolved in the Turkish nationalist historical discourse by inserting Anatolia into the narratives of the Enlightenment, scientific progress, and civilizational maturity as the site where it all began and dispersed from. Thus claiming Apollo, creator of cities, deity of light and reason, and the most widely revered and influential of all the ancient Greek gods not just in ancient history but in the modern one, means claiming the Enlightenment for the ancient peoples of Anatolia and for their contemporary heirs: Turkish citizens. Thus, Anatolia, “Cradle of Civilizations,” while indexing a Turkish cultural uniqueness and exceptionalism, at the same time reunites the historical paths of Turks and Europeans that forked in the Middle Ages.

Conclusion

In order to highlight that Anatolianism offers a politically more pragmatic imagery of a homogeneous culture when compared to the Pan-Turkist or Pan-Islamist utopias, the ideologue of homelandism Hilmi Ziya Ülken pointed out in 1966 that “the ideal of the day” was “made out of the

contemporary realities.” (1966:487). If we consider the new millennium’s ‘realities’—such as the negotiations between Turkey and EU for accession with all the political, economic and cultural ramifications of such an enterprise—we see that there is a similar political appeal in the fragile balance ACD strikes between inclusion and exclusion to the national identity, and the malleability of this balance conducive to be fine-tuned and synchronized with the ‘contemporary realities’ that are defined by different groups for different purposes. Such flexibility, which is an alternative to the rigid, more exclusionary nationalist or religiously defined essentialist discourses prevalent in Turkey, might be the reason why Anatolianism endured since its earliest incarnations in the 30s and became an established leitmotif in many aspects of social life in Turkey today.

The new identity crystallizing around the narrative of Anatolian civilizations supported with various representations of archaeological findings is not just an academic exercise. Just like in all the other developing countries of the world that depend on tourism to pay their debts and keep their local economies vibrant, the role of archaeological sites in Turkish tourism and heritage industry is coffee house talk. In such a volatile industry, the livelihood of many villagers can depend on seemingly small representational practices as much as institutional ones. Thus, whether Troy becomes revitalized as a tourist attraction or whether the latest shipwreck located off the Bodrum shores can bring a few more euros becomes a question of sustenance. To give voice to these economic needs and the stakes their families have in such issues, people draw on narratives that circulate in the media, if they are solicited to talk about the nearest excavation site, make an appeal for a local museum, or comment on the state of tourist industry in Turkey. The ACD circulating in newspaper columns, state publications, TV programs, dance shows, political speeches, textbooks, and museum representations is readily available to utilize and legitimize these claims and arguments voiced when people are asked to speak to the microphones. This process transforms the ACD into a nationwide public discourse, gives a coherent meaning to the relationships between the past and the future of the country, and provides support for the claims made in the global market of

tourism, inexplicably intertwining economic stakes, archaeology, culture, and politics in the public imaginary.

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