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Oh No! Turkish Jews sing Spanish songs: A Discursive Analysis of a News Story in the 1930s Turkish Press

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Abstract

By arguing that the Turkish press of the 1930s reproduced Turkish political discourse because most newspaper journalists, columnists, and editors were also members of the Turkish parliament, this article aims to shed light on the discursive construction of Turkish national identity in the Turkish press of the 1930s. The article analyses a news story, published in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper on 18 July 1932, about the Turkish Jewish community's attachment to Spanish music, language, and culture. The story problematizes the lack of Turkish language skills in the Turkish Jewish community because, in Turkey's early republican years, all Turkish citizens were expected to speak Turkish, be fully committed to Turkish ethnocultural values, as well as to Turkish economic and political interests.

Keywords: storytelling; discursive construction of Turkish national identity; *Kulturnation*; *Staatsnation*; semantic strategies

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Introduction

After the First World War, the multiethnic, multilingual, and multireligious empires in Europe and the Middle East – namely the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) in the Middle East, the Russian Empire (1721-1917) in eastern Europe and central Asia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918) in eastern and central Europe, and the German Empire (1871-1918) – dissolved and many nation states were founded. For example, when the Ottoman Empire collapsed in 1922, the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923; in place of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the new nation states of Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Poland, and Czechoslovakia were founded in 1918; and the German Reich became the German Republic (see Cornwall, 2000; Hobsbawm, 1992; Judson, 2016; Mazower, 2000; Macmillan, 2001; Sugar 1995; Zurcher 2004). These newly-founded nation states included various ethnolinguistic and religious minorities, which was a cause for concern for them. In modern nation states, a common language and common ethnocultural characteristics have always been at the forefront. In this respect, most of them tried to assimilate their minorities by forcing them to use the official language of their countries and to integrate them into the sociocultural values of their countries through education and discourse – Slovaks, Germans, and Hungarians were forced to integrate into the ethnocultural and linguistic characteristics of Czechoslovakia; and Romania controlled its Hungarian newspapers in order to spread Romanian culture (see: Brubaker, 1996; Gerwarth, 2016; Orzhoff, 2009; Wingfield, 2007; Livezeanu, 2005; Steinmetz, 1999). As one of the nation states founded after the First World War, the question of how the Turkish Republic dealt with its multilingual, multiethnic, and multireligious society in its first few decades is also an important topic of research. If we look at the first decades of the Turkish Republic, on the one hand, through Article 88 of the Turkish Constitution of 1924, the Turkish state tried to guarantee equal citizenship to all its citizens regardless of language, ethnicity or religion. On the other hand, Turkey endeavoured to achieve a kind of ethno-symbolic homogeneity among its citizens. During the first years of the Turkish Republic, however, it was a challenge for Turkey to create an ethnically, linguistically, and culturally homogeneous society, as Turkey had already inherited the multiethnic, multireligious, and multilingual society of the Ottoman Empire. In 1927, for example, 13.58% of Turkish citizens were not Turkish speakers (Cagaptay, 2006, p. 16). This percentage corresponded to 1,764,985 people. Of this number, 1,184,446 spoke Kurdish; 134,273 Arabic; 119,822 Greek; 95,901 Circassian; 68,900 Judeo-Spanish; 64,745 Armenian; 21,774 Albanian; 20,554 Bulgarian; 11,465 (Crimean) Tatar; 8,456 French; and 7,248 Italian (Cagaptay, 2006, p. 16). Furthermore, in 1927, Muslims made up 97.36% of Turkey's population, which corresponded to 13,269,606 people, while non-Muslims made up 2.64%. The number of Orthodox Christians, Armenian Christians, and Jews in 1927 was 109,906, 77,443, and 81,872 respectively (Cagaptay, 2006, p. 16). In order to standardise the Turkish language among Turkish citizens, the state decided that five hours of Turkish must be taught in primary, elementary, and high schools of the minority communities (Aslan, 2007, p. 251). In 1931, the state decided that the children of ethnic Turks must be enrolled in Turkish schools

for their primary education (Aslan, 2007, p. 251; Çapar, 2005, p. 410; Göyünç, 1976, p. 1048). In 1926, the Turkish parliament decided that the official language of business in Turkey must be Turkish (Aslan, 2007, p. 251).

In the early years of the Turkish Republic, systematic indoctrination by the Turkish state was also necessary to create a nation based on speaking Turkish, which according to Article 2 of the Turkish Constitution of 1924 is the official language of the Turkish Republic, and to create a socioculturally homogeneous nation. As a Western type of modern nation state, the Turkish state was also the most important centralised actor that defined the boundaries of collective national identity and communicated this via its control of mass public education and the printed mass media to its citizens through its state organs, state-run associations, its intelligentsia. For example, the Turkish state established state associations to improve and inform its citizens about the expectations of the Turkish Republic. In this context, the Turkish state established the Turkish History Society in 1931, the Turkish Language Society in 1932, the People's Houses in 1939, the People's Rooms in 1939, and the Village Institutes in 1940 (Göksel, 2022, p. 8). Their aim was to explain the Western type of nation-state identity of the Turkish Republic to Turkish citizens (Göksel, 2022, p. 9) and to convince the Turkish public to accept modernisation reforms, including the abolition of the caliphate in 1924, the secularisation of the education system in 1924, and the secularisation of the legal codes in 1926 by adopting the European legal system, the introduction of the Latin alphabet in 1928, the introduction of surnames in 1934, and the adoption of the Gregorian calendar (see Ahmad, 1993; Dumont, 1984; Findley, 2010; Heper, 1991; Karpat, 1967; Keyder, 1987; Mardin, 2000; Parla & Davison, 2004; Timur, 1987; Zürcher, 2007, 2010). In addition to these state-controlled associations, the Turkish state of the early republican years regarded mass public education as an important tool for raising a new generation based on the principles of Westernism, modernism, secularism, and nationalism (Kili, 1969, p. 45; Üstel, 2004, p. 4). The state directly controlled education in schools by supervising the curriculum, textbooks, and teachers. The aim was to spread the Turkish language and a collective Turkish national identity (Ford, 1939, p. 137). Moreover, the Turkish state utilised the intelligentsia – including bureaucrats, teachers, academics, writers, poets, and judges – to reshape society (Smith, 2005, p. 440).

In addition to all these tools mentioned above, the printed press was another instrument used by the Turkish state to create a collective national identity among Turkish citizens. According to Anderson (2006), newspapers – in particular – play an important role in the process of constructing national identities in modern nation states, as they constantly affect their readers and are easily accessible in readers' everyday lives – e.g., in the metro, at the hairdresser's, or around the neighbourhood (Anderson, 2006, pp. 35-36). In this article, it is important to note that there was a close connection between the Turkish press and Turkish politicians in the early years of the Turkish Republic. Interestingly, Turkish editors, columnists, and some newspaper owners were also members of the Turkish parliament. The editorialist Mahmut Nedim Soydan of the *Milliyet* newspaper, for example, was elected as a member of parliament in the 1927, 1931, and 1935 elections. He was not only an MP for the

Republican People's Party, but also editor-in-chief of the *Milliyet* newspaper (Biyografya, n.d.). Abidin Daver, who had a column in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper entitled '*Hem Nalına Hem Mihnâ*' ('*Having it Both Ways*'), was an MP between 1939 and 1943 (Deniz Ticaret Gazetesi, 2016). Asım Us, the founder of *Vakit* newspaper, was an MP from 1927-1950 (Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü, n.d.). Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu was not only the editor of the newspapers *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *Hakimiyet-i-Millîye*, but was also an MP from 1923-1934 (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi, n.d.). In this sense, in this article, by emphasising the connection between the Turkish press and Turkish politics, I argue that the Turkish press of the early republican years was mediated by Turkish politics and reproduced Turkish political discourse.

If we look at the above-mentioned process of creating a national identity in Turkey, it certainly bears the hallmarks of modern nation states with a Western character. The basic characteristic of Western and modern nation states is that the sociocultural and civic rights, honour, and property of citizens are guaranteed by the state. In return, citizens must be loyal to their countries and show their commitment to their country by paying taxes, speaking the official language of the country, and by fully integrating themselves into the common cultural values of their country (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 81; Smith, 1991, p. 9). This is the exact combination of the two concepts that make up a nation, namely *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation*. *Staatsnation* (a French model) is based on the idea of equal citizenship, where all citizens have the same rights and duties before the law and the sociocultural rights, property, lives, and honour of all citizens are protected by the state (Bärenreuter, 2005; Thaler, 2001). The concept of *Staatsnation* refers to citizenship independent of common ethno-symbolic and linguistic characteristics. It emphasises the need for a recognised compact territory under the guarantee of a state with institutions and a constitution (Thaler, 2001, p. 6). On the other hand, the *Kulturnation* advocated by the German Romantics, including Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), and Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), emphasises neither citizenship guaranteed by state institutions and a constitution nor a compact political territory, but rather common ethnolinguistic characteristics, a common ancestry, and a common past, as constitutive elements of a nation (Brockmann, 2006; Thaler, 2001, p. 7). The collective national identity of a country is based on the concept of both the *Kulturnation* and the *Staatsnation* (Bärenreuter, 2005, p. 195).

In Wodak et al. (2009), which examines the discursive construction of Austrian national identity after the 1990s by analysing the commemorative speeches of Austrian politicians and conducting public and semi-public interviews with Austrian citizens, it becomes clear that Austrian national identity is based on a mixture of the concepts of the *Kulturnation* and the *Staatsnation*. These two concepts are interwoven in their work (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 83). The following quotation comes from the Austrian politician and former president Thomas Klestil (1932–2004), who spoke at the Ostarrichi ceremony in Neuhausen on 19 May 1996:

“According to the experts, we Austrians are a Willensnation, which means that it is not a common language, culture, or ancestry which determines our Austrianness, but only the determination to have this community. And I think this is an excellent foundation, because

it distinguishes itself from no one automatically and it excludes no one. Allegiance to Austria does not mean saying no to anybody, it means only saying a definite yes to Austria” (in Wodak et al., 2009, p. 76).

The above passage contains the concept of the *Staatsnation*, where all Austrian citizens are equal regardless of their ethnic, cultural, or linguistic background. Klestil clearly emphasises that, as long as an Austrian citizen is committed to Austria and fulfils their civic duties, they will not be isolated from Austria and will be included in the Austrian identity regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or language.

In addition, Wodak et al. (2009) found in their interviews that, when defining the criteria for being Austrian, interviewees primarily emphasised the importance of their desire to be Austrian, namely through commitment and attachment to the Austrian language, Austrian culture, Austrian people, and Austrian sociopolitical and idealistic values (Wodak et al., 2009: 152). This emphasises the values of the *Kulturnation*.

The aim of this article is to give an example of discussions in Turkish press discourse of the 1930s about the criteria for belonging to the Turkish nation. In this context, I will analyse a story written by the columnist Abidin Daver and published in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper on 18 July 1932. The title of the story is ‘A lesson from a concert’ [*Bir Konserden Bir Ders*]. The story is about the behaviour of some members of the Turkish Jewish community who attended a concert by Don José Mojica in 1932. The main aim of the story is to show the reader that the Jewish population of Turkey has not yet fully embraced Turkish culture and language, which was one of the criteria for belonging to the modern nation state.

To analyse the story, I will use the storytelling technique explained by van Dijk (1984; 1987). I will also analyse the semantic strategies the storyteller uses to make his argument plausible for the readers. In the following sections, I will explain my method and then present my analysis. Finally, I will draw conclusions.

Material and Methodology

This article is the result of my doctoral research on the relationship between the rhetoric of Turkish newspapers and the formulation of Turkish national identity in the years 1929-1938. During my doctoral research at King’s College London, I conducted archival research on the Turkish print press between 1929 and 1938 and attempted to collect editorials and columns related to Turkish national identity. During my archival research, I realised that the Turkish press of the early republican years propagated the collective national identity of the Turkish Republic. Firstly, I noticed that the Turkish press endeavoured to create a rhetoric of differences between Turkey and the Ottoman Empire in terms of administration, bureaucracy, domestic and foreign policy, as well as in its socio-cultural, political, and legal structures. Secondly, the Turkish press of the 1930s is full of editorials defining the Turkish nation on the basis of a civic-territorial citizenship that includes every citizen regardless of ethnicity, language, or religion. Thirdly, there were numerous editorials and columns in the Turkish press about the criteria for belonging to the Turkish nation on the basis of a common language, common interests,

and commitment to Turkey. In this sense, I came across numerous editorials and columns about Turkey's Jewish community in the context of the country's collective national identity. Interestingly, I found a few stories published in Turkish newspapers in the 1930s about the fact that the Jewish community did not speak Turkish and did not have sufficient ties to Turkey. I analysed three of these stories in my PhD dissertation. The stories I analysed in my dissertation are as follows: Mehmet Nurettin's story 'Insidious Thistles' (Sinsi Deve Dikenleri) in the *Haber Akşam Postası* of 18 April 1933, which is about the Turkish citizens of Jewish origin speaking Spanish on the ferry in Turkey; 'Our Jewish Citizens' (Bizim Yahudi Vatandaşlarımız) in the *Felek* column of the *Tan* newspaper of 9 July 1935, describing some Jews who did not respect a Turkish veteran on the bus; N.'s story 'Vermin' (Mikrop) of 7 June 1936 in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, describing two Jewish Turkish citizens interested in French politics.

For this article, I have chosen to analyse the story by Abidin Daver, which was published in *Cumhuriyet* on 18 July 1932. Daver tells the story based on his personal observations at a concert by Don José Mojica. In the story, Daver problematises the fact that Turkish Jews know all of Don José Mojica's Spanish-language songs. He argues that the Jewish community in Turkey is still committed to the Spanish language and culture, even though they were expelled from Spain and came to the Ottoman Empire a long time ago. It is true that in 1492, a large number of Spanish Jews were expelled from Spain by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (Marcus & Saperstein, 2015, p. 181). At that time, the Ottoman Empire allowed 50,000 Jews to settle in the Ottoman territories (Toktaş, 2008, p. 512). However, most scholars agree that Jews were already living in the Anatolian territories when the Ottoman state was founded (Gubbay, 2000, p. 59). Moreover, the Ottoman Empire had already received Jewish immigrants before 1492 – for example, Jews from Hungary in 1376 and from France in 1394 (Gubbay, 2000, p. 60). Since most of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire had already immigrated from Europe, they spoke European languages and were familiar with European culture (Gubbay, 2000, p. 61; Rodrigue, 1920, p. 25). Therefore, they were the merchants who did business with the Europeans (Rodrigue, 1920, p. 25), or they worked as translators in the Ottoman consulates in European countries (Gubbay, 2000, p. 61). In the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman subjects lived in semi-autonomous divisions in which they were categorised according to their religion (Bayır, 2013, p. 79; Toynbee & Kirkwood, 1926, p. 143). Ottoman society was divided into two sections: Muslims and non-Muslims. Both divisions had their own "religious jurisdiction" (Akgönül, 2013, p. 70). Accordingly, the religious leaders appointed by the Ottoman sultans governed their own ethno-religious communities (Rodrigue, 1990, p. 29). The rabbinate was responsible for regulating the communal, religious, educational, social, and business life of the Jewish community in the Ottoman Empire (Gubbay, 2000, p. 62; Rodrigue, 1990, p. 28). The Ottoman Empire did not expect its subjects to have a unified collective Ottoman identity based on a common language, a common religion, or common ideals. The Jews in the Ottoman Empire were not expected to speak Turkish; they spoke Ladino (a language based on Spanish and Hebrew). There were also French-speaking Ottoman Jews, as the Francophone schools of the '*Alliance Israelite Universelle*' were opened throughout the Ottoman Empire at the end of the

nineteenth century (Brink-Danan, 2012, p. 16; Rodrigue, 1990, p. 68). As already mentioned, the Turkish Republic was founded as a modern, Western-style nation state where all Turkish citizens were supposed to be able to speak Turkish in order to show a full commitment to Turkey. The fact that Jews spoke languages other than Turkish was a problem for the Turkish Republic. Therefore, the Turkish press of the 1930s contains numerous columns about the lack of command of Turkish and the lack of solidarity among Jews in Turkey.

It also contained many negative publications about the Turkish-Jewish community. For example, when Elza Niyego, a Turkish citizen of Jewish origin, was murdered in 1927 by Osman Ratip, the aide-de-camp of Sultan Abdulhamid (who ruled between 1876-1909), the Jews in Turkey protested against this murder at Niyego's funeral (Bali, 1999, p. 112). In response to the Jews' protests, the Turkish press emphasised that the Turks had always been tolerant of the Jews and that the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic were the countries where Jews were able to live without being harassed and humiliated. The editorial of *Milliyet* newspaper from 29 August 1927 stated that the Jews were protesting against Turkey after the murder of Niyego, even though Turkey took them in when they were expelled from Spain (*Milliyet*, 1927). Furthermore, in July 1934, the homes and businesses of Jews in the cities of Çanakkale, Tekirdağ, Edirne, and Kırklareli in the region of Thrace were looted (Bali, 2013, p. 20). The anti-Semitic press discourse in local magazines, journals, and newspapers contributed to the outbreak of anti-Semitic attacks in Thrace. For example, the magazines *Orhun* in Edirne and *Inkilap* in İzmir published anti-Semitic articles. For example, the following short quote comes from an article by Nihal Atsız which was published in *Orhun* on 25 May 1934:

"No one in the world loves the creature called 'Jew' except Jews and bad people. For while mankind has always honoured strength, heroism, and goodness, the Jew is the example of cowardice, humiliation, malice, and lack of character." (Atsız, 1934).

In order to analyse the news story, I will use the semantic strategies and storytelling categories explained by van Dijk (1984, 1987). Stories describe our lives, the experiences we have had, the people we have interacted with, and the events we have witnessed (van Dijk, 1984, p. 79). In general, stories must attract the attention of the recipients – they must be interesting and worthy of being read or heard; they must be barely predictable; and they must deal with dangerous events that threaten our lives or our sociocultural norms. (van Dijk, 1984, p. 79). Therefore, stories about foreigners or ethnolinguistic minorities are often told to attract the attention of the recipients (van Dijk, 1984, p. 79). These stories are the platform on which the subjective opinions, feelings, or judgements of the majority group about minorities or foreigners are presented (van Dijk, 1984, p. 80). Through these stories, members of the majority group portray foreigners/minorities from their own perspectives (van Dijk, 1984, p.80). In these stories, foreigners or ethnolinguistic minorities are portrayed as those who behave in a way that deviates from the socio-cultural norms and values of the majority group (van Dijk, 1984, p. 80). The negative portrayal of minorities and foreigners as opposed to the positive portrayal of the majority group is very common in these stories. These negative stories are an important part of

the argumentation about minorities and foreigners, because they provide evidence that makes the negative opinions of the majority group more defensible and concrete (van Dijk, 1987, p. 62).

The narrative structure of stories about foreigners/ethnic minorities is as follows:

- **The summarising category** presents the tale and depicts it as something unusual, attractive or something worth listening to (van Dijk, 1984, p. 82);
- **The setting category** informs the reader when and where the story took place, who the actors were and what the event/case was (van Dijk, 1984, p. 82);
- **The orientation category** is the path that leads to the complication, it describes the behaviours of the actors, which can lead to the complication (van Dijk, 1984, p. 87);
- **The complication category** introduces the problem that the storyteller thinks that the attitude of the foreigners/minorities is in conflict with the interests of the storyteller (van Dijk, 1984, p. 88);
- **The evaluation category** shows how the storyteller perceives and interprets the problematic event (van Dijk, 1984, p. 92);
- **The resolution category** emphasises the actions that need to be done to solve the problem (van Dijk, 1984, p. 90; 1987, p. 70);
- **The coda** is the conclusion, including suggestions for future steps (van Dijk, 1984, p. 93).

According to van Dijk (1987, p. 86), the aim of speaking and writing about minorities is to portray the minorities negatively, while the speaker/writer is portrayed positively. In this respect, speaking about minorities is very delicate and the speaker/writer must take social norms and values into account. In order to have a positive effect on the recipients and to convince them of his or her arguments, the speaker/writer must pay attention to how he or she talks about the minorities and how they are perceived by the recipients (van Dijk, 1987, p. 86). The recipients will obtain an impression of the speaker's/writer's style when talking about the minorities; therefore, the speaker/writer has to use semantic strategies not only to maintain a positive self-presentation when talking about the minorities, but also to make sure that he or she can explain his or her ideas sufficiently and make a good impression (van Dijk, 1984, p. 115; van Dijk, 1987, p. 86). In the following, I will explain some of the semantic strategies that speakers/writers use when speaking about sensitive issues such as ethnolinguistic and religious minorities.

- **Explanation:** Providing information about the causes/reasons for the sensitive topic (van Dijk, 1987, p. 92);
- **Example/illustration:** Citing verifiable truths and realities to support the argument or opinion (van Dijk, 1984, p.130; 1987, p. 90);
- **Contrast:** Emphasising the discrepancies between the majority and the minorities. In general, negative evaluations are attributed to the 'they-group', while the positive evaluations are attributed to the 'we-group' in relation to their behaviour, which serves to polarise the 'we-group' against the 'they-group' (van Dijk, 1984, p. 131);
- **Generalisation:** Generalising a negative experience with minorities to the entire group of minorities (van Dijk, 1987, p. 90). The sentence 'It's always same for them' can be an example of this.

- **Mitigation:** As a positive self-presentation strategy, the speaker presents themselves as a person who is tolerant and unbiased and who understands the problem (van Dijk, 1984, p. 131) by softening negative opinions (van Dijk, 1987, p. 87).
- **Indirectness/implication/vagueness:** Negative statements about a person or a group without saying so directly through the use of some pronouns, unclear statements, or unfinished stories or narratives (van Dijk, 1984, p. 132).
- **The Perspective Establishment Move:** Shows the speaker/writer's opinion and evaluation about the event (van Dijk, 1984, p. 121). "I think", "I feel", "from my perspective", can be some examples of this move.

Having established the theoretical background, the research questions for this article are as follows:

- *Does the news story contain the categories mentioned in van Dijk (1984; 1987)?*
- *What is the storyteller's style?*
- *Does the storyteller use the semantic strategies mentioned above?*
- *If so, what kind of semantic strategies does he use and for what reasons?*

Analysis of the Story

In the following section, I will present the English translation of the story and my analysis of it. I have numbered the sentences so that readers can follow my analysis.

'A Lesson from A Concert'

"1. The famous cinema actor Don José Mojica, who has a wonderful singing voice, gave a concert at the Glorya Cinema on Sunday evening. 2. He sang French, Spanish, and Mexican songs. 3. The audience gathered at the cinema was a perfect example of the cosmopolitan population of Pera. 4. Turks, Greek Turks, Armenians, Jews, foreigners... 5. We listened to the famous concert and applauded. 6. But something about this concert caught my attention.

7. Don José Mojica's program was divided into three parts: French songs, Spanish songs, Mexican songs. 8. When the tenor had just finished his first French song, voices were raised from above, below and from the balcony demanding a Spanish song. 9. Apparently the French songs were not to the taste of some. 10. One young Jewish man in particular, who was sitting at the very back, wanted to hear nothing but Spanish songs. 11. Finally, it was time for Spanish songs. 12. The Jews applauded these songs vehemently. 13. The young man got so carried away that he had either forgotten or did not know that he had a terrible singing voice and tried to sing along with the tenor. 14. But apparently, he knew these Spanish melodies quite well.

15. The artist asked those who knew the chorus of his final song to sing along. 16. It turned out that many people here in Istanbul knew this song, which was composed in Mexico. 17. Many sang the chorus along with the artist.

18. What struck me was the keen and enthusiastic interest of our Jewish fellow citizens in the Spanish language, Spanish music, and Spanish culture. 19. Although they suffered persecution in Spain and eventually had to flee or were expelled from that country, it is quite natural that Spanish culture has shaped the Jews, as they have been living together for centuries. 20. What is not natural is the fact that the same people have in no way been able to forget Spanish culture and warm to Turkish culture, despite dwelling and living together with the Turks for centuries.

21. *The fact that Jews have not lost the language, music, and a single word of the culture of a country that persecuted and oppressed them is the work of a double-edged mistake, and half of the blame lies with the Ottomans and the other half with the Jews.* 22. *The era of the Sultanate failed to bind the Jews to Turkishness and did not attempt to remove Spanish from their language.* 23. *On the other hand, the Jews have made no effort to unite with the land in which they live and the people with whom they rise and fall.*

24. *The two parties must work together to rectify this double-edged mistake.* 25. *Until, in a few years' time, the son of Don José Mojica will come here and our Jewish citizens will no longer applaud him because he sings songs in Spanish, but because he is an artist!"*

Abidin Daver, from the column "Having it both ways", *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1932.

This story consists of the parts Setting, Orientation, Complication, Evaluation, and Coda. The first four sentences of the first paragraph are the setting category, in which the storyteller informs the reader about the actors (Turks, Greek Turks, Armenians, Jews, and foreigners), the event (Don José Mojica's concert), the place (the Glorya cinema), and the action (Don José Mojica sang French, Spanish, and Mexican songs) and the time (a Sunday evening). In the first sentence, the description of Don José Mojica as a 'famous cinema actor who has a lovely singing voice' is a move by the storyteller for his own positive portrayal, because he would like to portray himself as a person respecting musicians and actors from all countries. He is also signalling that he attended the concert without prejudice or bad intentions. With this sentence, he is implying that he did not go to the concert to observe the behaviour of the audience, but only to listen to the music and songs of Don José Mojica. In the second sentence, Daver tells the readers that the tenor sang Mexican, Spanish, and French songs. Here, he not only wants to inform the readers about the languages and origins of the songs in the concert, but also to indicate that no Turkish songs were sung in the concert.

In the third sentence, he informs the reader about the audience at the concert. He describes it as a 'perfect example of the cosmopolitan population of Pera'. This description is very strategic. The term "Pera" was used in the Ottoman Empire to refer to the street "İstiklal" in İstanbul. Pera was the place where Ottoman non-Muslims in İstanbul preferred to live and thus symbolised the multicultural, multireligious, multilingual, and multiethnic character of the Ottoman Empire (Pera Palace Hotel, n.d.). Here, by referring to the population of Pera, the storyteller Daver attempts to remind the readers of the socioculturally, linguistically, and religiously heterogeneous character of İstanbul of the Ottoman Empire and to suggest that Turkey still has remnants of this heterogeneous character. This serves to positively portray the Turkish Republic as a tolerant country that does not oppress non-Turks or non-Muslims.

Although Daver was vague in the third sentence because he did not mention the audience's ethnolinguistic structure, in the fourth sentence he becomes more explicit about who he is talking about: he clearly categorises the audience as 'Turks, Greek Turks, Armenians, Jews, foreigners'. With this categorisation, Abidin Daver is possibly trying to create a hierarchy between the actors that illustrates the degree of their importance for Turkey. According to this hierarchy, the Turks are in first place and the non-Muslims of Turkey (the Greeks, the

Armenians, and the Jews) in second place, with foreigners in third place. At the same time, he uses the generalising synecdoche to refer to the audience. According to Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p. 45), the categorisation of the actors as we-groups or they-groups can be realised in the form of “tropes, biological, naturalising and depersonalising metaphors and metonymies, as well as by synecdoches in the form of a part standing for the whole (*pars pro toto*) or a whole standing for the part (*totum pro parte*)” (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 45). The tropes which contain either generalising or particularising synecdoches are used to homogenise the actors (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001). According to Bussmann’s definition, synecdoche is a “rhetorical trope that refers to something with a semantically narrower term or a broader term” (Bussmann, 1996, p. 1163). In this story, the use of ‘Turks, Greek Turks, Armenians, Jews, foreigners’ is a generalising synecdoche that serves to homogenise each group and to attribute the behavioural characteristics of these groups of people to their entire nation.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh sentences are the orientation category, which not only informs the reader about the actions and behaviour of the actors but also provides the ‘background’ for the complication category (van Dijk, 1987, p. 87). In the fifth sentence, he informs the reader about the behaviours of the actors (‘We listened to the famous concert and applauded’). In the sentence, the use of ‘we’ creates a we-group of the audience in the concert. It is an inclusive ‘we’ that includes all people in the audience regardless of their ethnicity, gender, language, or age. According to van Dijk (1984; 1987), the orientation category signals that something problematic is looming for the storyteller in the story. The conjunction ‘but’ in the sixth sentence shows that the storyteller will talk about the concern or problem he sees.

There are two complications in the story. The first is the fact that the Jews in the audience preferred to listen to Spanish songs rather than French songs and the second complication is the fact that the Jews joined the singer to sing along with the Spanish songs. The complication lies in the second and third paragraphs. In the first complication (in the eighth, ninth, and tenth sentences), even though Don José Mojica’s concert consists of French, Spanish, and Mexican songs, the Jews in the audience were only interested in the Spanish ones and insisted on hearing and taking part in them. In the eighth sentence, where he describes the audience’s desire for Spanish music, the author gives details by saying that those who demanded Spanish music were ‘from above, below and from the balcony’. Van Dijk (1987, p. 306) argues that honesty and the provision of accurate and truthful information can increase the credibility of an author or speaker. Moreover, he states

“small details in story (jumping through the window, broken window sill, and so on) that enhance the observational dimension and, hence truthfulness, and so on. The very length and details of the story show how the interviewee has represented the situation, and persuasively shows the interviewer that this is a true experience” (van Dijk, 1987, p. 296).

In this story, he gives these details because he wants to increase his credibility. The ninth sentence emphasised that ‘some’ in the audience did not want to hear the French songs. By using ‘some’, the storyteller seems to use a vagueness/indirectness in which he does not describe who

‘some’ are. In Turkish, the speaker sometimes uses ‘some’ to refer directly to a group without mentioning their names. This usage also implies anger and irony in how the speaker or writer is addressing the so-called group. This is exactly what happens in the ninth sentence. However, while the storyteller does not explicitly say who is meant by ‘some’ in the ninth sentence, he is more explicit about who he means in the tenth sentence, saying that ‘one young Jewish man in particular, who sat at the very back, wanted to hear nothing but Spanish songs’. In this sentence, the adjectives ‘young’ and ‘Jewish’ and the use of the quantifier ‘one’ – as well as the description ‘sitting at the very back’ – for the young Jewish man again show the storyteller’s attentiveness and his keen observation of the audience, which increases his credibility.

Sentences 12 to 17 form the second category of complication, which refers to the fact that the Jews in the audience sang along with all the Spanish songs in the concert. In sentence 12, the storyteller explicitly states that ‘the Jews’ sang along with the Spanish songs. Here, ‘the Jews’ is used as a generalising synecdoche that encompasses all of the Jews in the concert, regardless of their age, gender, or profession. The narrator’s aim is to transfer their behaviour to all of the Jews in Turkey by implying that all Turkish Jews can sing Spanish songs. In the same sentence, ‘vehemently’ emphasises the Jews’ great interest in Spanish music. By stating in the thirteenth sentence that ‘The young man got so carried away that he had either forgotten or did not know that he had a horrible singing voice and was trying to sing along with the tenor’, he wants to portray the young Jewish man negatively. This construction could have three meanings:

- a) The storyteller could view the ‘terrible singing voice’ as a physical inability or failure, highlighting the young man’s disadvantage;
- b) The storyteller could be trying to portray the young Jewish man as selfish and disrespectful of other people, either because he is too selfish to realise that he does not have a good singing voice, or because he is disrespectful for not even considering the possibility that other people could be bothered by his bad voice;
- c) The storyteller might want to generalise these characteristics of the young Jewish man to all Jewish people, implying that they do not have good voices and are either selfish or ignorant.

In the fourteenth sentence, the storyteller states that this young Jewish man knows all these Spanish songs. He emphasises his point by using the adverbs ‘apparently’ and ‘quite well’.

The second complication continues in the third paragraph. This paragraph contains the storyteller’s astonishment at the fact that the majority of Turkish Jews know Spanish songs. In the sixteenth and seventeenth sentences, the quantifier ‘many’ is used to emphasise the fact that most of the Jews in the audience know these songs. By emphasising the generic toponyms ‘Istanbul’ and ‘Mexico’ in the sixteenth sentence, he wants to highlight the rhetorical difference between Turkey and Mexico in terms of their geography, people, and language. This difference reinforces his astonishment that Jews in Turkey know songs from Mexico, which is culturally, linguistically, and territorially distant from Turkey.

The fourth and fifth paragraphs are the evaluation category of the story where the storyteller makes his comments on the subject. Beginning with the fourth paragraph ('What caught my attention'), the storyteller wants to emphasise that the following sentences reflect the storyteller's personal opinion and feelings. This is a perspective establishment move. Here the storyteller wants to ensure that he himself is of the opinion that Turkish Jews have a great interest in Spanish culture and language, and not the Turkish public or the Turkish state. Here he refrains from a negative portrayal of the Turkish nation and Turkey. In the eighteenth sentence, he problematises the fact that the Turkish Jewish community likes Spanish music, culture, and language. The adjectives 'keen' and 'enthusiastic' and the use of 'Spanish' three times in the eighteenth sentence serve to reinforce the Jews' interest in Spanish music. In the same sentence, the use of 'our Jewish citizens' is also very strategic. Firstly, Daver uses the plural possessive pronoun 'our' to show how much he owns the Jewish community and sees them as part of Turkey. This also serves his own positive self-presentation as a person who does not isolate non-Turks/non-Muslims. By using 'our Jewish citizens' here, the storyteller wants to imply that the Jews in Turkey are Turkish citizens and therefore should have no cultural and emotional attachment to any country other than Turkey, just like all other Turkish citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or language.

In the nineteenth sentence, the storyteller portrays the Jews as victims who were subjected to expulsion and mistreatment in Spain. The storyteller's endeavour to portray the Jews as 'victims' also serves the storyteller's positive self-portrayal. This constructs the storyteller as an honest and objective person who emphasises the suffering of the Jews in Spain in 1492. Furthermore, the storyteller is portrayed as a person who is not anti-Semitic or unbiased towards the Jews. In the sentence where he explains the reason for the Jews' ethno-linguistic attachment to Spain, he explains that the Jews in Turkey had lived in Spain for a long time before moving to the Turkish lands. This can also be seen as an attempt at empathy, where the storyteller tries to portray himself positively as an empathetic person who might be able to connect the Jews' attachment to the Spanish language and culture with their long stay in Spain. In the twentieth sentence, however, Daver finds it bizarre why the same Jews who had been living alongside Turks for a long time did not connect linguistically, culturally, and emotionally with the Turkish language and Turkish culture. In this respect, in the nineteenth and twentieth sentences, there is a rhetorical contrast between the Jews' attachment to Spanish and Turkish culture.

In the fifth paragraph (sentences 21, 22, and 23), Daver explains why the Jews does not speak Turkish and integrate into Turkish culture. In the 21st sentence, through 'double-edged mistake' and the use of 'one half and the other half', he attributes the responsibility for the Jews' lack of fluency in Turkish and their lack of attachment to Turkey to both the Ottoman Empire and to the Jewish community. Blaming both sides is a strategy of mitigation in which the storyteller refrains from naming only one party, either the Jews or the Ottoman Empire. In this way, the storyteller deliberately avoids his negative portrayal being understood as a prejudiced towards the Jews or the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, in the same sentence,

the storyteller refers to the Spanish language, the Spanish songs, and the Spanish culture that the Jews had in Turkey as the language and culture of the “country” that “oppressed” and “persecuted” them. Here, the use of “the country” might be intentionally used by the storyteller to refrain from the negative portrayal of Spanish culture and language; on the contrary, the storyteller prefers to portray the country (Spain in the fifteenth century) negatively. As it is not appropriate to comment negatively about a particular culture or language, such comments are generally perceived as xenophobic, prejudiced, biased, or racist. However, countries can be criticised from time to time for their decisions, foreign and domestic policies, rules, or regulations. Generally, criticising a country is not binding on its citizens or its public. Therefore, the storyteller criticises fifteenth-century Spain, which does not refer to contemporary Spain.

In the twenty-second sentence, the storyteller uses the metonym ‘the Sultanate era’ to refer to the Ottoman Empire. This era was associated with the failure of the integration of the Jews into the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, the metonym ‘the Sultanate era’ might be used by Daver to refer to the administrative or bureaucratic differences between Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. In the Ottoman Empire the sultan was the central actor of governance: according to Islam, the sultan was appointed by God and his jurisdiction was not to be judged, but had to be accepted as concrete truth (Dood, 1979, p. 42; Heper, 1979, p. 6; Heper, 1985, pp. 34-35). In Turkey there was no sultan; according to the Turkish constitution, the primacy of any class or family was abolished and Turkish citizens were granted the right to govern themselves (Heper, 1985, p. 49; Kili, 1969, p. 91; Shaw and Shaw, 1977, p. 378). By attributing half of the responsibility to the Ottoman Empire here, the storyteller also distances the Turkish Republic from the Jews’ lack of knowledge of Turkish. This prevents the negative portrayal of the Turkish Republic in its role in integrating the Jews into Turkish ethno-symbolic values in the republican era. In the 23rd sentence, he also accuses the Jews of not having learnt the Turkish language and of not having adapted to Turkish culture. The use of ‘coalesce with the country they live’ and the use of ‘the people that they rise and fall’ in the same sentence is rhetorical and shows how much the storyteller expects the Jews in Turkey to integrate into the socio-cultural values of the Turkish Republic – and the Turkish people – with whom they have shared a common destiny over a long period of time. Here, the storyteller adopts the German Romantics’ ideology of the nation based on sharing common destiny and common past.

The last paragraph is the coda part of the story where the storyteller gives advice on how to solve this problem. In the twenty-fourth sentence, he uses ‘the two parties’ to refer to the Jewish community of Turkey and – this time – to the Turkish Republic instead of the Ottoman Empire. While in the previous paragraph the storyteller blamed the Ottoman Empire and the Jewish community for the latter’s inability to speak Turkish, this time he assigns responsibility in the last paragraph to both the Turkish Republic and the Jews for this lack of language skills, as he talks about the present and future of the Jews’ attachment to Turkish ethno-symbolic norms and values. Since the Ottoman Empire has collapsed and the Turkish Republic has been established, it is now Turkey’s responsibility to encourage the Jews to join Turkey. He uses a deontic modality through the use of ‘must’. Expressions such as ‘must’,

‘should’ and ‘ought’ are known as deontic modals (Suikkanen, 2018, p. 354). According to Suhadi (2011), “the deontic modality indicates whether a proposition expressed by a command is obligatory, advisable or permissible according to a normative framework such as law, morality or convention” (Suhadi, 2011, p. 173). In the twenty-fourth sentence, ‘must’ refers to a kind of obligation that the Turkish Republic and the Jewish community should fulfil. Interestingly, in this paragraph, the storyteller Daver does not mention what steps Turkey and the Jewish community should take to show the Jews’ commitment to Turkey. In the last sentence, he defines the criteria for the adaptation of the Jewish people to Turkish society based on a fictitious scenario. According to this hypothetical scenario, if in the future the Jewish people applaud Don José Mojica’s son, it will be not for his Spanish songs but for his artistic talents: this means that they will have integrated themselves into Turkish culture by that time.

Conclusion

In this article, I wanted to show an example of how criteria for belonging to the Turkish nation were reproduced in the Turkish print press of the 1930s. To this end, I analysed a story published in the newspaper *Cumhuriyet* on 18 July 1932. The story emphasised the necessity of commitment to the Turkish language and Turkish ethnocultural values for Turkish citizens, which fits into the combination of the above-mentioned *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation* concepts. In this context, I have shown in this article how the combination of *Kulturnation* versus *Staatsnation* concepts in Turkish national identity was discursively constructed in the Turkish print press of the 1930s. Secondly, I have used the storytelling techniques and semantic strategies explained in van Dijk (1984;1987). In those studies, van Dijk (1984; 1987) shows the discursive construction of Dutch identity in everyday conversations during the 1980s. In both works, interviews were conducted with white Dutch people to explore their perceptions of non-Dutch people, including foreigners, immigrants, refugees, and non-European labourers. These works analysed the semantic strategies that white Dutch people employed to talk about non-Dutch people and the storytelling categories they used when telling stories about non-Dutch people. In this paper, I have contributed to van Dijk’s (1984; 1987) analyses in three ways:

- a) **The time period:** As mentioned earlier, these works examined the 1980s, but this paper focused on the 1930s;
- b) **The empirical data:** While the empirical data of these works consists of the interviews, the empirical data of this paper is a story published in a newspaper column;
- c) **The topic:** While those works focused on the European discourse on collective national identity, this article focuses on non-European discourse, namely the discursive construction of Turkish national identity in the press discourse of the 1930s.

In this paper, I have shown that the storyteller employs a number of semantic strategies (such as explanation, vagueness, mitigation, empathy, and perspectivisation), all of which serve to establish his positive self-presentation as an unbiased and credible person and to convince

the reader of his arguments. I also found that generalising synecdoches such as ‘the Jews’, ‘the Greek Turks’, ‘the Turks’ and ‘the ‘foreigners’ were used by the storyteller to transfer either physical or behavioural characteristics of a small group to their entire nation. Furthermore, the negative portrayal of Jews as a community who lacks commitment to the Turkish language and culture is very evident in the story. Lastly, I have shown that the story I have analysed contains setting, orientation, complication, evaluation, and coda parts – interestingly, the news story about the Jewish minority in Turkey in the 1930s has identical categories to those mentioned in van Dijk’s (1984; 1987) works.

Endnotes

- 1 Translated by the author of this article.

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