

Literature and the legacy of Empire: Approaching Turkey's post-imperial condition through Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar

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journals.sagepub.com/home/psc**Johanna Chovanec**

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Abstract

How does literature engage with the legacies of Empire? This article examines how imperial decline and nation building are reflected in textual production after the First World War. With Turkey as a case study, it focuses on the post-imperial narrative as a form of narration dealing with the experience of imperial loss, political contingency and possibilities of national belonging. I argue that Turkey's post-imperial condition is shaped by coming to terms with the loss of the Ottoman Empire, on the one hand, and a nationalising present embedded in the experience of Western-dominated modernity, on the other. Against this backdrop, I examine essays from the compilations *Yaşadığım Gibi* (1970, 'As I lived') and *Beş Şehir* (1946, 'Five Cities') by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, a key intellectual of the early republican era. The analysis of these post-imperial narratives reveals how Tanpınar tries to root Turkey's national modernity in selected elements of the imperial past. For Tanpınar, continuity with (Turkified) imperial heritage is a prerequisite for a strong nation-state.

Keywords

Ottoman empire, Turkish literature, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, early republican Turkey, Ottomanism

1. Introduction: Literature and the legacy of Empire

This article engages with the complex interplay between empire and literature. Over the last two decades, there has been a growing interest in the after-effects of empire and an

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increasing recognition of the vital links between political transformation and literary production. Post-imperial studies emphasise the continuous after-effects of imperial demise at the intersection of political order and cultural production. Post-imperial studies mirror post-colonial endeavours in dealing with the ongoing consequences of imperial rule after the demise of traditional territorial empires like the Habsburg, Romanov or Ottoman ones. In line with post-colonial studies, the prefix 'post' points to the various after-effects of empire rather than its end (see [Bachmann-Medick 2016](#), 131). It is most notably in the field of post-Habsburg studies that the enduring after-effects of imperial demise in literature have been explored in systematic ways (see e.g. [Bobinac et al. 2018](#); [Magerski 2018](#); [Ruthner 2018](#); [Biti 2021](#)). While the scholarly engagement with Empire in the Turkish context is predominantly focused on contemporary neo-imperialist trends in politics and society (see e.g. [Walton 2021](#); [Yavuz 2022](#); [Haug and Roychoudhury 2023](#)), there are also some studies approaching Turkish literature through the lens of post-imperiality ([Günay-Erkol 2012](#); [Furlanetto 2017](#); [Kučera 2017](#); [Chovanec 2021](#)). In light of this 'imperial turn' in the humanities and social sciences ([Bachmann-Medick 2016](#), 279f; see also [Burton 2003](#); [Mikhail and Philiou 2012](#)), cultural and literary studies have established the importance of literature in the making and dissemination of imaginations of Empire that reach well beyond literary spheres and also co-shape political discourses.

This article introduces the (post-)imperial narrative as a specific form of narration capturing the far-reaching transition from an imperial to a republican order. The (post-)imperial narrative, broadly speaking, is a cultural, political or social narration related to, respectively, existing or bygone empires. It is a modern form of narration concerned with the transformation of order and, therefore, related to questions of experience and belonging. The (post-)imperial narrative also unfolds against the backdrop of modernity. Modernity understood as a macro-social phenomenon is determined by a broad variety of dynamics in almost all spheres of human engagement. From a global perspective, modernity relates to the economic practice of capitalism, an increasingly intertwined world market and European colonialism as well as imperialism, upon which the modern political world order has been based ([Venn 2000](#), 17). With regard to European spaces, modernity in the long 19th century often relates to processes of transition from empire to nation-state. Eighteenth-century France brought about the idea of the nation as the foundation for political claims, leading to an ideological overlap between nation and state. Nationalism and republicanism would have a lasting impact on the modern international order (see [Keitner 2007](#)). The transition from old to new on the path of linear development is inscribed in the concept of 'modernisation', entailing the - from a post-colonial perspective often criticised - idea of progression from traditional to modern societies (see e.g. [Chakrabarty 2011](#); [Friedman 2012, 2015](#)). In this teleological understanding of modernity, the notion of modernisation and related ideas such as development and progress define 'the Western-Occidental modern' as 'the normative core' ([Stöckmann 2019](#), 647).

While the modern (post-)imperial narrative can be studied across geographical and cultural contexts, this article turns to the case study of Turkey. Given the dominance of Europeans across the different spheres of international life, the Ottoman experience of

modernity was inherently linked to questions of Westernisation (Çapan and Zarakol 2017; Mardin 1989; Zarakol 2011).¹ The Ottoman *tanzîmât* ('reorderings', see Topal 2017) attempted at coming to terms with the legal, institutional and social requirements of the new age and entailed 'extensive reform and change in various areas of administration and society, covering the period from the Gülhane Rescript of 1839 to the establishment of the Ottoman Parliament and the Constitution in 1876' (Köksal 2019, 9; see Ozil 2021). As Günay (2012, 13) has pointed out, 'modernisation' (*modernleşme*) was increasingly equated with 'Westernisation' (*batılulaşma*) in the second half of the 19th century up until the early republican era in Turkey (1923–1950).

The post-imperial narrative in early republican Turkey is based on the experience of contingency connected to the disintegration of Empire as an ordering principle in the context of Western-dominated modernity. More specifically, it is the immediate post-imperial narrative emerging from the ruins of World War I – shaped by authors who experienced the empire's downfall – that captures the liminal moment between old and new. I argue that an analysis of this new form of narration between empire and nation-state is particularly insightful when it comes to constructing images of Selfhood in early republican Turkey. Focussing on essays by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar as a well-known intellectual living through and reflecting on this period of change, I examine in what ways his writings approach the quest of belonging in early republican Turkey. Tanpınar can be regarded as one of the most important figures of Turkey's intellectual life: as an author, professor, literary critic, and politician, he contributed to major public debates of his time. In terms of his literary writings, he has been referred to as a key representative of conservative modernism (see İrem 2002).² While Tanpınar was supportive of the idea of progress, he also aimed at imagining 'an alternative cultural modernity' (Ertürk 2012, 531) adapted to what he perceived as local needs and values. Tanpınar's post-imperial narratives – notably essays from the compilations *Yaşadığım Gibi* (1970, untranslated, 'As I lived') and *Beş Şehir* (2019 [1946], translated as *Five Cities*) – provide a rich array of insights into how the author approaches and tries to deal with Turkey's post-imperial condition in the face of modernity.

The article is structured as follows: I first outline the characteristics of the (post-) imperial narrative as a form of narration in (post-)imperial societies and will then move to the context of post-imperial Turkey as my case study. The following section deals with Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and how he negotiates questions of belonging in a context he describes as shaped by crisis (*buhran*) and restlessness (*huzursuzluk*). Critical of the radicality of Westernisation and modernisation processes taking place since the Tanzimat period, Tanpınar explores possibilities of continuity (*devam*) with the past for the sake of a national rootedness in (a Turkified) imperial tradition and heritage.

2. The (post-)imperial narrative as a genre

The concept of 'Empire' is 'commonly understood as a particular form of governing expanding geographical regions with flexible borders through vertical mechanisms of power and through the subjugation of peoples' (Chovanec and Heilo 2021b, 11; see Münkler 2014, 16–21). Empires, however, can not only 'be defined by means of legal,

dynastic, historical or religious formations and foundations but should also be understood by means of the cultural “texts” written in relation to and about them’ (Chovanec and Heilo 2021b, 11). Empires are thus not only political, juridical and social entities but also complex narrations entailing sets of symbolic and cultural values and attributions. Consequently, empires can be narrated – both during their time of existence and after their demise – in a broad variety of different sources, including literary and non-literary texts: ‘Understanding the empires as “narrated” allows us to expand on the intrinsic relation between empire, narratives and identities’ (ibid.). Literature, such as novels or essays, is a seismographic medium that captures societal trends and mentalities, images, and visions of belonging. I suggest the (post-)imperial narrative as a form of narration dealing with the socio-political and cultural factor of Empire. (Post-)imperial narratives are being formulated, disseminated or displayed through, for example, arts and literature, essays and articles, but also through political rhetoric.³ They entail positive, negative and ambiguous references to empire as images of belonging and/or differentiation. While the imperial narrative is connected to still existing or gradually disintegrating empires, the post-imperial narrative relates to already dispersed empires. The downfall of the Empire as a political, social, legal, cultural and symbolic order marks the vague turning point between the imperial and the post-imperial condition.

The imperial narrative actively engages with a given imperial order such as the Ottoman Empire or the Habsburg Monarchy, both of which have been rather described as imperial than colonial entities (see Münkler 2014).⁴ It can be used to strengthen existing – or introduce new – frameworks of belonging supposed to create solidarity among subjects with the Empire as an ordering principle. It can also be part of anticipatory efforts to prevent the looming demise of the empire. The late Ottoman Empire, for instance, was politically and intellectually narrated⁵ as a multinational umbrella for its diverse religious, cultural and ethnic groups through the discourse of Ottomanism (*Osmanlıçılık*). Similarly, ‘dynastic patriotism’ (Unowsky 2005) in the Habsburg Monarchy entailed the active promotion of Kaiser Franz Joseph as a ‘living symbol of a common Austrian identity during a time when nationalist political movements threatened the unity of the Austrian state and thus the formation of an Austrian identity’ (Deak 2006, n.p.). Magerski (2018, 12–22) has unpacked the complex interplay between the empire as a political form, its (expansive) imperial mission⁶ as a legitimisation strategy in the cultural realm as well as the myth of the appropriation of Empire in the fields of arts and literature. As modern narrations dealing with (the demise of) multi-national political orders, imperial narratives co-emerged with nationalism as a new political narrative developing partially dissociated from the imperial order. When the empire as a political form collapsed and its mission remained without foundation, myths often continued to live on and reverberate in various fields of society.

With the downfall of several empires after the First World War, post-imperial narratives, in turn, were often formulated as a melancholic or nostalgic response to the uncertainties of the now national(ist) present. The post-imperial narrative sometimes builds on, transforms and/or transcends imperial narratives. It (re-)invents the fantasy of Empire according to contemporary needs – be it as an opportunistic political discourse, an oppositional response to established powers, a paradoxically nationalist identity

formulation, a marketable commodity, a critique of contemporary local and global developments connected with the modern age or an aesthetic exploration of the past. These aspects can also coincide, opening up complex webs of communication between the (selective) remembrance or imagination of the past, the search for meaningfulness in the present and a vision of rootedness for the future.

Especially the literary and essayistic post-imperial narrative aestheticises the experience of contingency and the effective collapse of empire. Faced with an uncertain, fleeting present, it negotiates other 'possible worlds' coexisting or competing with the 'real world' (see [Schedler 2007](#), 74). The notion of Empire, either explicitly articulated or implicitly put forth through certain aspects relating to 'the past', is a central reference in this form of narration. Unfolding in the context of modernity, it deals with the experienced break from or the loss of imperial order. It negotiates questions of belonging in the present through the lens of Empire or what is evoked as such. What I suggest referring to as the 'immediate' post-imperial narrative is written by authors who were born and educated in imperial times and who witnessed the empire's dissolution and subsequent processes of political and cultural reorganisation. Their texts, often produced in the context of the formation of a national canon, capture the complexities of the new political, societal and cultural orders that were established. In contrast to the 'mediate' post-imperial narrative, written by authors who have no personal memory of the empire, the 'immediate' post-imperial narrative is fed by the direct experience of the transformation of order.

Overall, imperial and post-imperial narratives are characterised by their engagement with a, respectively, contemporary or past imperial order that is reassured, refused and/or subverted. With regard to its manifestation in different genres, the (post-)imperial narrative is an umbrella term for a variety of texts – it can refer to (post-)imperial novels, autobiographies, travel reports, short stories, newspaper articles or essays. What these texts have in common is that they react to or engage with the (possibility of the) disappearance of the empire, usually through the political experience of contingency that motivates literary engagement with order-related questions (see [Magerski 2018](#), 30f).

3. Turkey's post-imperial condition

Turkey's post-imperial condition refers to the collective experience of a lost empire and the reorganisation of society in the wake of the foundation of the nation-state in 1923. Evolving constructions of national Selfhood in early republican Turkey are negotiated in the context of the far-reaching societal changes in the 1920s and 1930s. Partially building on the late Ottoman debates on Westernisation and Europeanisation, radical Westernisation processes form the historical backdrop of Turkey's post-imperial condition. Political, juridical and social reforms – first through the late imperial Tanzimat (1839–1876) and then via early Kemalist policies – shape the transition from empire to nation-state. These changes were undertaken to symbolise and promote the move from what is imagined to be an Eastern past to a Western future and, at the same time, help strengthen emancipation from foreign occupation in the context of the Turkish Independence War (1919–1923). For Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Turkey's first president, Westernisation was a prerequisite for engaging with Western powers on an equal footing (see [Zarakol 2011](#)). In

line with Western-dominated modernity's bias towards Western standards, a number of fundamental changes were thought to have redefined the underlying characteristics of the national Turkish Self: the replacement of the Islamic lunar calendar with the Gregorian calendar aligned Turkey with European notions of date and time; the hat reform, replacing the Ottoman *fez* with European headwear, changed public appearance in line with Western standards; and the alphabet reform, changing letters of the Turkish alphabet from Arabic-Ottoman to Latin, symbolised the cultural alignment with the West and the sharp break from the written heritage of the Ottoman past (Günay 2012, 155f). The differences between past and future, empire and nation-state or East and West⁷ were further symbolised by the relocation of the capital from (imperial) Istanbul to (modern) Ankara upon the foundation of the republic.

Post-imperial Turkish literature emerges from this transformation of an imperial towards a national order, and it deals with the ongoing after-effects of empire. Unfolding against the backdrop of Westernisation attempts, this transition relates to vivid debates about civilisational belonging in the context of Western European imperialism and cultural dominance. Outside the Western European core that has come to stand for the 'West' in modern times, Turkey's political goal to become accepted as part of the 'advanced' Western world goes hand in hand with discussions about how this endeavour can be combined with the ethical ideal of keeping an 'original voice' in cultural expression. Against the background of the cultural reforms in early republican Turkey, some intellectuals feared abandoning an 'authentic' way of life connected with the past and what is perceived as the 'Eastern heritage'. Consequently, ideas of Europe as the epitome of modernity and images of the past Ottoman Empire are intertwined in a complex way in post-imperial narrations of belonging that were formulated in a rapidly Westernising political framework. As one of the most important intellectuals of his time, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's writings explore the various implications of Turkey's post-imperial condition.

4. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar

Contrary to the socio-political context in which many late 19th-century novelists and intellectuals embraced Ottomanism as an overarching framework of belonging, the Ottoman Empire in early republican Turkey had become a culturally ambivalent and politically outmoded historical reference. Therefore, authors in this period navigated through challenging terrain. While the political, social, cultural and hence also symbolic collapse of the empire left behind a complex mesh of individual and collective memories, violence, cultural references and traditions, it was unclear to what extent, in what ways and if at all the past legacies should or could play a role in the present and future. The empire, however, undoubtedly played a pivotal role in the autobiographies of many (post-)imperial authors and intellectuals.

Born and raised during imperial times, the writer, poet, journalist, literature professor and politician Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901–1962) became familiar with the Ottoman Empire's peripheries and centres. Because of his father's work as an Ottoman government official, Tanpınar moved throughout the imperial realms as a child, living in places like Kirkuk and Mosul (Mitler 1988, 240). As a young adult, inspired by the famous poet

Yahya Kemal Beyatlı (1884–1958), Tanpınar studied literature in Istanbul and graduated in 1923, the year in which the Republic of Turkey was founded and Ankara became the new capital city. He first worked as a teacher at schools in Erzurum, Konya and Ankara and then became a professor of literary studies in the Faculty of Letters at Istanbul University in 1939. Together with Bursa, these cities would feature prominently in his collection of essays *Beş Şehir* (*Five Cities* 1946). Tanpınar was not only a teacher, scholar, poet and author but was also politically active. He was selected as a deputy for the Kemalist Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) in 1942 and served in the Grand National Assembly as a representative of the province of Maraş.

In the poem ‘Ne İçindeyim Zamanın’ (‘Neither Am I Inside Time’), Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s (1976, 17) lyrical ‘I’ describes the harmony of an all-embracing, endless moment.

Ne içindeyim zamanın,/Neither am I inside time,
Ne de büsbütün dışında;/nor am I entirely outside of it;

Yekpâre, geniş bir ânın/In the unbreakable stream
Parçalanmaz akışında./of a complete, wide moment.⁸

Steadily but softly rooted in the present, the lyrical Self is peacefully embedded in the stream of time’s ‘now’. The first four lines of the poem are representative of the key themes in the intellectual’s outstanding oeuvre: By trying to bridge the gaps not only between time (past and future) but also in space (Europe and Turkey), Tanpınar explores possible sources of belonging in the early republican present. His literary works and essays focus on questions of how dispersed ‘fragments of time’ (*zaman kırıntıları*) (Tanpınar 1976, 71) could be harmonised and how a cut-off past could be reconciled with an uprooted, disconnected present.

Tanpınar’s literary and non-literary post-imperial narratives focus on questions of temporal rupture connected with the downfall of empire and the experience of Western-dominated modernity. As he notes in *Beş Şehir* (*Five Cities* 1946), ‘[i]n 1914, two events occurred, the Great War and modern times’ (Tanpınar 2018 [1946], 24).⁹ Many of Tanpınar’s works convey a mood of post-imperial melancholy (*hüzün*), a gloomy state related to unease and unrest about Turkey’s severed ties with the Ottoman legacy. His political orientation has been a cause of debate (see Sezer 2010). As the writer Elif Şafak (2014, 20) has remarked, ‘[d]uring Tanpınar’s lifetime he was misunderstood and underestimated by both the Left and Right; today, decades after his death, he is adulated in Turkey almost to the point of worship’. Despite being politically affiliated with the CHP, Tanpınar (quoted in Enginün and Kerman 2007, 40) positioned himself in the political middle:

The truth is that I am new to the Turkish language. But I am not new in the world... Rightists only talk about Turkey, and a blind, unchallenged and past Turkish history, only domestic politics and propaganda. The Left says that there is no Turkey and there is no need for it

anyway [...]. I am, on the other hand, in pursuit of a Turkey in the world, open to the future, and coming to terms with the past. This is my position in the country.¹⁰

Throughout his professional career, and in addition to his academic work as a professor of literary studies, Tanpınar published novels, poetry, short stories, essays and a broad variety of newspaper articles. Today, his novels *Huzur (A Mind at Peace)* (1949) and *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü (The Time Regulation Institute)* (1961) are considered major works in the literary history of Turkey. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's oeuvre as an author also includes a broad spectrum of essays printed by several newspapers between the 1930s and 1950s. While most of his articles were published in the national newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, some texts also appeared in other newspapers like *Ulus*, *Tasvir-i Efkar* or *Ülkü*. The majority of Tanpınar's essays was collected and published posthumously by Dergâh Yayınları such as *Yaşadığım Gibi* ('As I Lived', 1970), a compilation¹¹ aiming at 'representing the writer's concise ideas about our national culture as a poet, storyteller, novelist and literary historian'¹² (*Dergâh Yayınları [n.n.] 2020 [1970]*, 6). The collection comprises a number of Tanpınar's articles on humanity, love, literature, music, arts, history and civilisation. It also includes essays on Turkish cities that may have been the starting point for Tanpınar's book *Beş Şehir (Five Cities)* (1946) including chapters on Ankara, Bursa, Erzurum, Istanbul and Konya.

The following section examines a selection of Tanpınar's articles – most of them from *Yaşadığım Gibi* and *Beş Şehir* – that focus on Turkey's post-imperial condition and the complex search for belonging.¹³ All these texts reflect Tanpınar's conviction that the radical transformation of Turkish society since the Tanzimat era has led to a wide range of individual and collective challenges. Turkey's post-imperiality, as Tanpınar argues in his article 'Medeniyet Değiştirmesi ve İç İnsan' ('The Shift of Civilisation and the Inner Human', 2020 [1951a], 38), is caught up in a 'state of crisis' (*buhran*) that has prevailed since the 19th century, as will be discussed below.

4.1. Caught in crisis (*buhran*)

Tanpınar's essay 'Kelimeler Arasında Elli Yıl' ('Fifty Years Between Words', 2020 [1950]) begins with the opening of a newspaper. With reference to this daily habit, Tanpınar (2020 [1950], 90) evokes the general speed of modernity that is accelerated by the fact that people have become witnesses of 'events' through the regular reception of printed up-to-date information:

I opened my newspaper. Pondering that in this moment or a little earlier, millions of people will, like me, come into contact with the world through a newspaper, I look at the headlines. For 150 years, humanity has been waking up in the midst of events.¹⁴

Further reflecting on this transformative period, Tanpınar (*ibid.*, 94) goes back to the 19th century, evoking the seemingly endless stability of Habsburg Austria¹⁵ under Kaiser Franz Joseph and an industrialising Germany¹⁶ that seemed to promise an age of security and progress. For Tanpınar (*ibid.*, 96), retrospectively, these were 'harmonious,

comfortable and peaceful years' (*rahat seneler*)¹⁷ characterised by slow but steady progress that were increasingly swallowed by the strong suction of the early 20th century and eventually ended in the 'hell of 1914' (*1914'ün cehennemi*). Wondering about what words historians would use to describe the first 50 years of the century, Tanpınar (ibid., 91) concludes emphatically that it 'without a doubt would be termed crisis [*buhran*]'.¹⁸

In contrast to what he perceives as a relative stability of (other) European empires, Tanpınar traces the roots of what he describes as Turkey's general societal crisis – with the downfall of the empire as its peak – back to the Ottoman Tanzimat. According to his article 'Medeniyet Değiştirmesi ve İç insan' ('The Change of Civilisation and the Inner Human', Tanpınar 2020 [1951a], 38), a forced movement – namely, 'our transition from one civilisation to another' (*bir medeniyetten öbürüne geçmemiz*) – took place in the context of the reform era. Tanpınar evokes an image of the Ottoman Empire as 'originally Eastern', and laments its fading authenticity in the wake of Westernisation. This 'movement' (*hareket*) from East to West, Tanpınar (ibid., 39) argues, 'must push towards the good, towards enlightenment, push us and those around us towards a completely modern consciousness'.¹⁹

Despite the Ottoman Empire's 'original' belonging to the Eastern hemisphere, Tanpınar regards its move towards the West as a 'historical necessity' (*tarihî zaruret*) (2020 [1943], 45) or 'fundamental historic destiny' (*asıl tarihi mukadderimiz*) (2002 [1934], 36). In two articles, Tanpınar (2002 [1934]; 2020 [1943]) implies that because of the Ottoman Empire's decline and Europe's colonial aggression, adaptation to Western modernity had become almost inevitable. However, the form-focused rather than content-oriented adoption of Western practices and the lack of a concomitant intellectual foundation in Turkey has led to a social 'tragedy' (*trajedi*), as Tanpınar (2020 [1943], 45) argues in his article 'Asıl Kaynak' ('The Original Source'). For Tanpınar (2020 [1951a], 39), the intellectually unprepared, forced and overall superficial shift from Eastern towards Western civilisation has brought about a general 'illness' (*hastalık*) or even 'psychosis' (*psikoz*). This 'societal disease' has led to a far-reaching crisis of 'duality' (*ikilik*). According to Tanpınar, duality here refers to the inner rift and strife between two civilisations, neither of which can be embraced completely. This crisis of Turkey's modern duality plays out on both collective and individual levels: 'At first, this duality began in public life, then it divided our society into two with regard to the mindset, and finally, by deepening its processes, settled inside us as individuals' (ibid., 38).²⁰ For Tanpınar (ibid.), the duality crisis is the result of the discontinuity brought about by the Tanzimat reforms: 'In fact, I said that this discontinuity governs our whole lives and that underneath it a certain mindset and inner human crisis are at work'.²¹ Based on the assumption that 'a civilisation is whole',²² to the extent that it offers comprehensive coherence, Tanpınar (ibid., 39) suggests that the shift in civilisational references Turkish people have experienced has shattered and fragmented the framework of belonging that once was 'complete.' The notion of loss is thus central to the societal and individual post-imperial crises Tanpınar describes. What is lost, above all, is the notion of organic and natural civilisational belonging, leading to individual and collective trauma that cuts off the present from the past. In what Tanpınar (ibid.) refers to the contemporary 'doomsday

crisis' that stems from experiences of discontinuity, 'it is as if we have lost our existence and essence of history'.²³

This 'loss of Self' – archetypal represented in the image of the 'originally Eastern' Ottoman Empire – results from an indissoluble tension between the civilisational form and content, playing out in a position torn between East and West. Since the Tanzimat times, 'our society got used to the ideas and arts of the West, our people got to know the machine and the state became Europeanised' (ibid., 41).²⁴ Tanpınar (ibid.) argues that this acceptance of what he defines as Western practices and thinking is best understood as the result of the 'collapse of the old' (*eskinin çökmesi*) rather than euphoria about the new. Society has adapted to new Western standards mostly on a superficial level, while 'inner' affiliations have largely remained Eastern. As a result, an authentic life – understood as the compatibility of form and content or the congruence between the inward and the outward – is made impossible. In Tanpınar's (ibid.) words, the 'inner condition [or internal state]' (*iç vaziyeti*) of individuals and society at large was not reflected in outward changes and did not conform with 'new life forms' (*hayat şekilleri*). For late Ottoman and Turkish society, this torn duality has become an entrenched reality: 'we have always lived divided into two' (ibid.).²⁵ And although Tanpınar (ibid.) regards some changes as positive – such as the increased participation of women in public life – he asserts that 'we did not believe in most of what we did'²⁶ (emphasis added). For Tanpınar, the individual self is in a harmonious state when its internal and external conditions are in congruence. For the modern Turkish individual, however, authenticity seems impossible: inscribed in the (Turkish) Self is always the (Western) Other, '[b]ecause for us, the other, the other way, has always been present' (ibid.).²⁷

Following Tanpınar, in post-imperial Turkey, the crisis has led to tension between the political impetus to move forward as well as the collective and individual resistance to relinquish the old in favour of the new, contributing to social stasis. Any form of organic development or action, he argues, had been made impossible since the forcefully modernising framework of the Tanzimat: 'Indeed, for the majority of those who have grown up since the Tanzimat, almost every action ends with a loud or silent resignation, with a kind of repentance, with self-denial' (ibid., 42).²⁸ For Tanpınar (ibid., 43), the whole psychological state of being caught up between *alafranga* (literally French or more broadly European way of life) and *alaturka* (Turkish way of life) has led to a debilitating impasse that makes meaningful change impossible in the present: 'Above all, this state of mind ceases to be dynamic over time, taking a static form. It is as if it has established unchangeable boundaries within us'.²⁹

As Tanpınar (2020 [1951b], 37) argues in his article 'Kültür ve Sanat Yollarında Gösterdiğimiz Devamsızlık' ("Discontinuities We Display on the Road of Culture and Art"), this almost static 'civilisational, cultural and internal human crisis' (*bir medeniyet, bir kültür ve iç insan buhranı*) however also produces 'a form of rhythm' (*bir nevi ritim*). A central aspect of that rather negatively framed rhythm is the repetitive cycle of 'giving up' (*vazgeçmek*): the careful observer of social conditions, he argues, can predict which aspects of culture and society are to be abandoned within a decade.³⁰ According to Tanpınar, overall, Turkey's post-imperial condition is shaped by a historically deep-rooted crisis (*buhran*). What once was intended to be a reform *movement*, turned out to be an

impasse consisting of the dilemma of being stuck between both past and present and between what is imagined as Eastern and Western civilisation.

4.2. In quest of peace (*huzur*)

The word which, for Tanpınar (2020 [1950], 91), best describes the inner condition of people under the influence of this crisis is *huzursuzluk*, ('the absence of a peaceful mind'). As Tanpınar (ibid.) argues, 'all the mental states relating to our century find voice in this expression'.³¹ For Tanpınar, the post-imperial individual and collective Self is predominantly characterised by this feeling of disquiet, which also affects the cultural realm. With *Huzur* (1949) and its melancholic main protagonist Mümtaz, Tanpınar has devoted a whole novel to this state of restlessness that ties those affected by it to the past, preventing them from moving forward (see Chovanec 2022). The condition of *huzursuzluk* is thus linked to a form of gloomy stasis, reproducing the Orientalist dichotomy of an inactive East unable to keep the pace of a progressive West. Tanpınar (2020 [1950], 91 and 93f) connects *huzursuzluk* with the terms 'civilisation' (*medeniyet*), 'progress' (*terakki*) and 'technology' (*teknik*), which are introduced as key words of the 20th century though they were already discussed by late-Ottoman intellectuals (see Topal 2017, 2021). In this 'age of civilisation and progress' (*medeniyet ve terakki devri*) in which the speed of the West sets the pace, the 'people left behind' (*geri kalmış insanlar*) in the East are trapped by the feeling of unease, while people in the West see their material living conditions improve (Tanpınar 2020 [1950], 91 and 93f).

In order to find peace of mind (*huzur*), Tanpınar (cited in Misikoğlu 2017 [1952]) suggests tackling the repetitive cycle of 'giving up' in the realm of culture leading to uprooted stasis. Instead of giving up the past, Turkey's nation building should partially be built on selected aspects of what is evoked as Ottoman grandeur. According to his former student Ahmet Misikoğlu's notes on Tanpınar's 1952 university courses (*ders notları*), Tanpınar connects literary images of mobility with the imperial past and suggests utilising them rhetorically in an emancipatory effort (Misikoğlu 2017 [1952], 50f). He notes '[w]hat we look for in literature are images of dynamism [*dinamik imaj*]',³² in contrast to 'images of stasis' (*statik imajları*). The 'image of a mountain' (*dağ gibi imajı*), he remarks, symbolises stasis. As an important 'form' (*şekil*) of dynamism, however, images of the 'past' (*mazi*) take centre stage. In his notes, Misikoğlu writes that emancipation from the petrifying forces of *huzursuzluk* – 'to transition from stasis to dynamism' (*statikten dinamiğe geçmek*) as stated by Tanpınar (ibid. 51) – is not only an individual and social endeavour but also the responsibility of literature, its authors, and readers. For Tanpınar, reversing the modern(ist) movement from old to new or from past to future is to move back to the past and to re-establish connections with its heritage that should form the basis for sustainable societal progress.

The image of the mobile Ottoman Empire as the epitome of a dynamic East plays a central role in Tanpınar's analysis of post-imperial Turkish cities in *Beş Şehir*. Here, too, for Tanpınar, it seems as though Eastern progressive mobility and inventive dynamism are mostly located in the distant past, notably in the context of Ottoman grandeur. Economic dynamism, conquest, intellectual confidence and cultural ingenuity are evoked as lost

aspects of previous Ottoman and Eastern mobility. In his essay on Ankara, for example, Tanpınar refers to Mimar Sinan – the 16th-century architect – as one ‘of our ancestors [who] dominate the map of our native country’, representing a culturally prosperous age (Tanpınar 2018 [1946], 11):³³

[T]here are very few major cities that don't have a share of this genius of the Ottoman Empire. When I hear his name I immediately see, like a string of beautifully cut jewels, an endless line of buildings, large and small, that stretch from Hungary to the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Basra (ibid.).³⁴

It is historical Erzurum that Tanpınar describes as an economically flourishing quintessential Eastern place, a meeting point of merchants and a nodal point of caravan routes living off the movement of people and goods (ibid., 23f). At the ‘crossroad of eastern trade routes’,³⁵ Erzurum, ‘the city of eastern commerce and luxuries that poured in from all directions’, (ibid. 24f)³⁶ epitomised the dynamic Ottoman economy before its collapse in the wake of World War I (ibid., 24f). Based on his first visit to the city in the late days of the Ottoman Empire, Tanpınar describes Erzurum as a proud, orderly, and self-confident society, shaped by the market and connected to social movements that made for relatively convivial social hierarchies (ibid., 28f). When Tanpınar visits Erzurum again in 1923, however, he finds few traces of that bustling place:

The city I was seeing for the second time was no longer the old Erzurum, the economic centre of eastern provinces, rose of the uplands, its beauty praised in most of the folk songs of the region. War, emigration, massacres, typhus and every kind of disaster had reversed and crushed all (ibid., 21).³⁷

This moment of destruction and despair, however, is framed as only one sequence of an otherwise energetic and buzzing place. Together with Ankara, Erzurum is described as a symbol of the Turkish nation fighting against immanent servitude on behalf of the East. According to Tanpınar, the mobility inherent in the constant back and forth of the historical centre of trade and migration is also the starting point for Atatürk and the Kemalist movement: ‘it is again in Erzurum that the earliest foundation of National Struggle was laid. [...]. Atatürk began his work in Erzurum and like previous conquerors marched from there to the Anatolian interior’ (ibid., 53).³⁸

Tanpınar thus suggests that the Turkish nation-building process in the (in many ways unsettling) post-imperial condition could be consciously related to the long trajectory of mobility (and conquest) it builds on, a dynamism that resonates with Ottoman connectivity across today's national borders. The national Turkish Self, hence, is called on to emancipate from the critical melancholic stasis and unrest captured by the notion of *huzursuzluk* and to reconnect with the image of an active Ottoman Empire. Overall, for Tanpınar, progress is possible only through productivity and reasonable transformation, both of which Tanpınar thinks are lacking in (contemporary) Turkey. Beyond his accounts of historical Anatolia shaped by bustling activity and economic exchange, it is the

nationalist movement led by Atatürk that, for Tanpınar, embodies a Turkish promise of mobility that – through collective efforts – may be able to keep up with the West.

4.3. *Invigorating continuity (devam)*

As Tanpınar notes in his article ‘Kültür ve Sanat Yollarında Gösterdiğimiz Devamsızlık’ (‘Discontinuities We Display on the Road of Culture and Art’), the state of temporal ‘discontinuity’ (*devamsızlık*) affects all spheres of social life – politics, industry, economics, arts and literature – on both collective and individual levels (Tanpınar 2020 [1951b], 37). In a certain way, however, the foundation of the republic has brought clarity with regard to Turkey’s ‘civilisational’ affiliation and solidified discontinuity. On a political or institutional level, hence, the year 1923 marks ‘the end of this unequal struggle between the old and the new’,³⁹ (Tanpınar (2020 [1943], 47) since the newly founded Turkish nation-state officially identifies as part of the Western hemisphere. The post-imperial individual, however, continues to be affected by the perceived temporal rupture and spatial ambiguity. Tanpınar’s post-imperial and modern Self is caught up between the old and the new, without being able to synthesise them. Turkey’s post-imperial condition is thus shaped by the tension between a new order embracing ‘the West’, and its subjects with ambiguous affiliations. On the one hand, Tanpınar (2020 [1951a], 43) argues, ‘we are followers of and fighters for the new’, but, on the other hand, ‘we are tied to the past’.⁴⁰ It is this perpetual and restless swaying between the old and new, as well as the requirement to settle with the new through the oppression of the past in the context of Kemalist modernity, that burdens the modern individual: ‘In some periods of our lives, as the man of the new, we hear the force of the old; in other periods, as the man of the old, we live under the pressure of the new. This polarity reversal has ruled our lives for a century’ (ibid., 43).⁴¹ In this state of temporal rupture, the past often appears like a ‘paradise’ (*cennet*). Similar to *Huzur*’s protagonist Mümtaz’s blissful dives into the sunken worlds of the Ottoman yesterday in Istanbul’s flea markets and bazars, Tanpınar’s (ibid.) essay also refers to the past as a ‘treasure that preserves the wholeness of our soul’ (*ruh bütünlüğümüzü saklayan bir hazine*).

In this context of institutional and political discontinuity, Tanpınar suggests to emphasise continuity (*devam*) with the imperial past in the cultural realms in order to overcome the crippling crisis (*buhran*) and re-establish *huzur*. Essential aspect of the Turkish nation-building process should consequently be the integration of selected, and Turkified, aspects of Empire. Even though Tanpınar (2020 [1943], 47) observes how general neglect of the (Ottoman) past continues to hold sway, he also witnesses what he perceives as positive developments in Turkish society in the 1940s: ‘Today, a rightful respect for the past has begun to grow in every corner’.⁴² The melancholic approach to times gone by and worlds long lost can be regarded as an attempt to counter the modern emphasis on rupture, novelty and future going hand in hand with ‘modernising’ reforms in a context often framed as ‘non-European’.

It is noteworthy that Tanpınar, as the advocate of the continuity paradigm, also embraces the modern idea of progress. He overall subscribes to the idea of temporal linearity in which the old is at least partially replaced by the new and mainly laments how,

in the Turkish case, the course of transition has unfolded. Like *Huzur*'s protagonist Mümtaz, who argues for the necessity of social progress, Tanpınar also argues that the attachments to the past should persist into the present and future as well. Actively building and maintaining harmony between past, present and future, Turkey – if emancipated from disruptive temporal restlessness – could become more agile, creative and productive and, eventually, would be able to achieve progress based on the Western model.

5. Conclusion

This article has argued that empires and their legacies have recently enjoyed increasing attention among literary scholars, and that post-imperial studies emphasise the continuous after-effects of imperial demise at the intersection of cultural production and political order. In stark contrast to the surge in publications about neo-Ottomanism in Turkish politics, Turkish literature – notably early republican literature – has only to a limited extent been approached from the perspective of post-imperiality. Against this backdrop, I have introduced the (post-)imperial narrative as a form of narration capturing the ‘threshold moment’ of the transition from an imperial to a republican order. While the imperial narrative approaches social, cultural and political aspects of an existing – or disintegrating – empire, the post-imperial narrative deals with the reverberations of empire after its downfall. With reference to the immediate post-imperial narrative as a form of narration crafted by writers that have personally experienced the demise of the empire, I have introduced Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar as a major intellectual of the early republican era in Turkey. In order to understand his approach to Turkey’s post-imperial condition and its quest of belonging, I have analysed selected post-imperial narratives from the compilations *Yaşadığım Gibi* (1970, ‘As I lived’) and *Beş Şehir* (2019 [1946], *Five Cities*).

In his essays, Tanpınar connects a general societal ‘crisis’ (*buhran*) emerging from the Tanzimat reforms with social stasis. It is the hastened attempt to engender a ‘change of civilisation’ (*medeniyet değiştirmesi*) that has caused both the individual and collective inability to move forward. Turkey’s state of in-betweenness – between (Western) modernity and (Eastern) tradition – is described as a ‘duality’ (*ikilik*) that becomes visible in all parts of daily life. Tanpınar’s image of Turkey’s post-imperiality strongly draws on notions of immobility and stagnation. The psychological state of being caught up between *alafranga* and *alaturka*, often leading to the ‘abandoning’ (*vazgeçmek*) of traditional ways of being, leads to an impasse. Against the backdrop of the speed of Western modernity, *huzursuzluk* – for Tanpınar, one of the central terms of the 20th century – captures the feeling of restlessness felt by those who are unable to move forward, connected to a form of melancholic stasis. The pre-Tanzimat Ottoman Empire is predominantly narrated in mobile and active terms; evoked is an Ottoman past where both economic dynamism and cultural ingenuity formed the basis of flourishing societies in cities like Istanbul, Erzurum and Bursa. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s nationalist movement in Anatolia is discussed as the potential starting point for a new age of mobility in the Republic of Turkey. In the recovery of past dynamism, literature plays an important role: reversing the modern dichotomy of mobility relating to the new and stagnation relating to the old, Tanpınar argues that the

literary imagination of the past is intrinsically dynamic. In his stance towards history and belonging, however, non-Muslim and other marginalised voices hardly find representation.

Tanpınar's work presents East and West as inherently different civilisational spaces that are difficult to reconcile. With the West as agile and progressive, the East is described as somewhat belated. While Turkey joining Western civilisation is referred to as a 'historical necessity', its inner affiliations remain torn. Faced with the downfall of empire as the core of Turkey's post-imperial condition, Turkish society must deal with a loss of significance and feelings of meaninglessness. Ties with the Eastern civilisational framework have been formally severed but continue to evolve under the surface of Westernisation. Amid the fragments and ruins of the past, a complex individual and collective search for authenticity unfolds. For Tanpınar, authentic life in republican Turkey requires a certain level of continuation with the Ottoman past. The incongruence between form (oriented towards the West) and content (closely connected to the East) is the main reason for collective melancholy and anxiety.

Tanpınar's work evokes the substantial and ongoing ruptures between an increasingly distant past and an unclear future. Similar to his novel *Huzur*, Tanpınar's essays show that for him melancholy (about the lost past) and anxiety (about an unknown future) are defining features of Turkey's post-imperial condition. Overall, Tanpınar argues for continuity with the past and a more explicit engagement with what he evokes as Turkish society's 'established roots' (Tanpınar 2008 [1949], 288). With foresight, Tanpınar warns against the long-term effects of Westernisation efforts in early republican Turkey, in which one group of society becomes the 'mangled remnant of traditional culture and the other newly settled tenants of the modern world' (ibid.).⁴³ Tanpınar's analysis therefore foreshadows today's polarised political camps in Turkey that, in broad strokes, construct a dichotomy of conservative Muslims and Kemalist seculars.

The post-imperial narrative is an insightful source for the study of affiliations as it provides references to how the transformation and reorganisation of a political, social, cultural and symbolic order are dealt with. This also applies to more recent – or current – writings in contemporary Turkey that, in different ways, make reference to past imperial realities. In contrast to early republican literature, the mediate post-imperial narrative, written by authors who have no personal memory of the imperial period, is disentangled from the direct biographic experience of Empire. Yet, transgenerational memory and different approaches to history take centre stage in questions about specific versions of the (imperial) past that have been overemphasised or neglected, and about the extent to which they should inform identity building processes in the present.

The analyses of Tanpınar's writings provide steppingstones for future research interested in expanding engagement with constructions of Selfhood in post-imperial narratives. Insights from the case study of Turkey may be linked to and compared with other post-imperial contexts such as Austria or Russia. Future research on post-imperiality in Turkey may build on insights from the early republican era in order to identify continuities and differences regarding key elements and reference points in the intellectual engagement with the Ottoman Empire. The study of post-imperial narratives can also

contribute to a combined analysis with contemporary political developments such as those generally discussed under the banner of neo-Ottomanism.

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Notes

1. Seven Ağır (2022, 47) has recently discussed how the ‘Ottoman Empire experienced the strong pull of the European markets and eventually turned into a periphery through the formation of commercial, financial and political linkages with the core of the world economy’.
2. Following Friedman (2015), I approach modernism, that is, the expression of modernity, as locatable at any particular geo-historical conjuncture marked by rapid change and societal transformation. Immediate post-imperial Turkey is such a time and space. I understand literary modernism in Turkey in the republican period (1923–1950) as the aesthetic response to the ruptures, breaks and transformations during this time.
3. Overlaps and contradictions between political narrations of empire and artistic approaches complicate the engagement with the multi-layered phenomenon of ‘Narrated Empires’.
4. However, the question of whether aspects of Ottoman (see Makdisi 2002; Türesay 2013; Reilly 2020) and Habsburg rule (see Ruthner 2018) should be seen as a form of internal colonial domination is discussed as well. Following Deringil (2003, 312), most authors argue that the Ottomans ‘borrowed colonialism’ in their ‘drive to achieve modernity’.
5. To what extent Ottomanism was a state-led ideology (Çevik 2021) or a discourse among intellectuals across religious and ethnic affiliations (Elfenbein 2021; Guth 2021; Topal 2021) is a question the contributors to the book *Narrated Empires* (Chovanec and Heilo 2021a) have tried to answer.
6. As Herfried Münkler (2010, 26) claims, ‘the imperial mission can be attributed to the cultural power of an empire’ (*[d]ie ‘imperiale Mission ist der kulturellen Macht eines Imperiums zuzurechnen’*).
7. I understand East and West as imagined spaces of affiliation or identity. In terms of temporal belonging, the modern bifurcation between East and West informs a global mapping where ‘[t]he Orient comes to stand for tradition, the Occident for modernity’ (Hobson 2004, 16).
8. In this chapter, apart from the citations taken *Five Cities*, all translations of Tanpınar’s writings are my own.
9. ‘1914’te iki şey, Umumi Harp ve yeni zamanlar, bir arada gelmişti’ (Tanpınar 2019 [1946], 34).
10. ‘Hakikat bu ki ben Türkçede yeniyim. Fakat dünyada yeni değilim... Sağcılar yalnız Türkiye, gözü kapalı, ezberde almış ve geçmiş bir Türk tarihi, yalnız iç politika ve propaganda diyor. Sol Türkiye yoktur ve olmasına da lüzum yoktur diyor [...]. Ben ise dünya içinde, ileriye açık, mazi ile hesabını gören bir Türkiye’nin peşindeyim. İşte memleket içindeki vaziyetim’.

11. The first edition ([Tanpınar 1970](#)) includes more than 60 articles, whereas in the second edition (i.e. [Tanpınar 2020](#)), around 20 essays are added to the compilation. Both editions are structured in seven sections: ‘İnsan ve Cemiyet’, ‘İnsan ve Ötesi’, ‘Üç Şehir’, ‘Paris Tesadüfleri’, ‘Türk Edebiyatı’, ‘Musikî’ and ‘Plastik Sanatlar’.
12. ‘Tanpınar’ın çeşitli gazete ve dergilerde yayımlanmış yazılarından derlenen ‘yaşadığım gibi’ yazarın, şair, hikâyecî - romancı ve edebiyat tarihçisi olarak mill kültürümüzle ilgili özlü fikirlerini yansıtmaktadır’.
13. Apart from the references to *Beş Şehir*, all translations of Tanpınar’s essays are my own.
14. ‘gazetemi açtım. Milyonlarca insanın bu anda veya biraz evvel bir dakika sonra benim gibi bir gazete arasından dünya ile temasa gireceğini düşünün düşünün başlıklara bakıyorum. İnsanlık yüz elli seneden beri hadiselerin içinde uyanıyor’.
15. Full quote: ‘Avusturya hemen hemen kendi yaşında denebilecek ihtiyar imparatorun etrafında çok eski bir meşenin etrafına toplanmış bir orman gibi orta Avrupaya kök salmış duruyordu’.
16. Full quote: ‘Almanya yarı feodal su katılmaz şekilde militarist idaresiyle gittikçe büyüyen sanayiyle kendi iç işlerini gürültüsüzce halletmekteki dirayetiyle istikbale emniyetin ta kendisi sanlıyordu’.
17. Full quote: ‘Bütün insanlığın bir bataklıkta yavaş yavaş boğulur gibi evvelden hazırlanmış çerçeveler içinde yaşadığı düşündüğü ve öldüğü rahat seneler...’
18. ‘Bu şüphesiz buhran kelimesi olacaktır’.
19. ‘İyiye, aydınlığa, kendimizi ve etrafımızı tam muasır bir anlayışa doğru itmesi lâzım gelen bir hareket’.
20. ‘Bu ikilik, evvelâ umumî hayatta başlamış, sonra cemiyetimizi zihniyet itibarıyla ikiye ayırmış, nihayet amelîyesini derinleştirerek ferd olarak da içimize yerleşmiştir’.
21. ‘hakikatte bu devamsızlığın bütün hayatımızda hüküm sürdüğünü ve altında da bir zihniyet ve iç insan buhranının çalıştığını söylemişim’.
22. ‘Bir medeniyet bir bütündür’.
23. ‘Sanki varlık ve tarih cevherimizi kaybetmişiz’.
24. ‘Cemiyetimiz Garp fikirlerine ve sanatına alıştı, insanımız makineyi tanıdı, devlet Avrupalılaştı’.
25. ‘Daima içimizden ikiye bölünmüş yaşadık’.
26. ‘yaptığımızın çoğuna tam inanmadık’.
27. ‘Çünkü bizim için bir başkası, başka türlü daima mevcuttu ve mevcuttur’.
28. ‘Doğrusu istenirse, Tanzimat’tan beri yetişenlerin çoğunda hemen her hareket, gürültülü veya sessiz bir istifâ, bir nevi tövbe-kârlık, kendi kendini inkârla sona erer’.
29. ‘Üstelik zamanla bu ruh halî dinamik olmaktan çıkıyor, statik bir şekil alıyor. Sanki içimizde değişmez hadler kurmuş gibi’.
30. Full quote: ‘O kadar ki cemiyet meselelerini tetkike alışmış dikkatli bir göz on sene sonra nelerden vazgeçeceğimizi şimdiden kestirebilir’.
31. ‘Asrımıza ait bütün ruh halleri onunla ifade edilir’.
32. ‘Biz, edebiyatta dinamik imajı ararız’.
33. Full quote: ‘Cetferimizden iki kişi vatan haritasını benimsemişlerdir. Bunlardan birincisi Mimar Sinan’dır’ ([Tanpınar 2019 \[1946\]](#), 22).
34. ‘İmparatorluğun bu dehadan payını almamış pek az büyük şehirdir. O kadar ki Sinan denilince gözümün önünde son derece nisbetli yontulmuş bir mücevher dizisine benzeyen irili

ufaklı binalar, tâ Macaristan içerisinden başlayarak Akdeniz'e ve Basra körfezine kadar iner' (ibid., 11).

35. Full quote: 'O, şarkın büyük ticaret ye transit şehirlerindedir' (ibid., 35).
36. Full quote: 'İşte eski Erzurum'un, dört yanından refah akan bu Şark ticaret şehrinin macerasını kapatan şey' (ibid.).
37. 'İkinci defa gördüğüm bu şehir, artık şark vilâyetlerinin iktisadî merkezi, yaylanın gülü, bu havalide söylenen türkülerin yarısından çoğunun güzelliğini övdüğü eski Erzurum değildi. Harp, hicret, katliamlar, tifüs, çeşit çeşit felâket, üzerinden ağır bir silindir gibi geçmiş, her şeyi ezip devirmişti' (ibid., 31).
38. 'Millî Mücadele'nin ilk temeli gene Erzurum'da atılır. Her şeye rağmen hür, müstakil yaşamak iradesi, ilkin bu kartal yuvasında kanatlanır. Atatürk, Erzurum'dan işe başlar. Tıpkı ilk fatihler gibi oradan Anadolu'nun içme doğru yürür' (ibid., 62).
39. Complete quote: '1923'te başlayan tasfiye, eski ile yeni arasındaki bu denksiz mücadeleye son verir'.
40. 'Yeninin taraftarı ve mücadelecisiyiz, fakat eskiye bağlıyız'.
41. 'Hayatımızın bazı devirlerinde yeninin adamı olarak eskinin tazyikini duyuyoruz; bazı devirlerinde eskinin adamı olarak yeninin tazyiki altında yaşıyoruz. Bu kutub değiştirme bir asırdan beri hayatımıza hâkim'.
42. 'Bugün her tarafta haklı bir mazi saygısı başladı'.
43. 'Birisini eski bir medeniyetin enkazı, öbürü yeni bir medeniyetin henüz taşınmış kiracısı olmasınlar. İkinin arasında bir kaynaşma lazım' (Tanpınar 2019 [1946], 251).

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