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**THE REVITALIZATION OF NATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH ETHNO-SYMBOLIC
NATIONALISM;
THE STUDY OF *THE BLIND OWL, BETWEEN THE
ACTS, ONCE UPON A TIME AND DUBLINERS***

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of MPhil

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Abstract

The rise of nationalism in the early twentieth century, in the build-up to the world wars, was contemporaneous with unprecedented upheavals in literature, particularly the advent of modernism. Then, ethno-symbolic nationalism was theorized by Anthony D. Smith. This approach relies on the myths, memories, symbols and values of a nation to try to surpass the divergence and “polarization between primordialism and modernism” (Özkirimli, 2000, p.168). It also enables readers to perceive the importance of memories, myths and symbols and makes them realize the common roots and backgrounds that lead to the affinity and cohesion of nation-members. Studies such as *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986), *Nation and Ethnoscape* (1997), *The Nation in History* (2000) and *The Antiquity Of Nations* (2000), all emphasized the historical/cultural images, myths, symbols and memories of each nation as opposed to the modernist nationalists or primordialists - who accentuate the concept of the nation-state or geography.

This recent ethno-symbolic approach created new possibilities on the analysis of literary studies. Having been adopted by many theorists to refine the concept of nationalism and analyse the process of the formation of nationhood, the ethno-symbolic approach has been chiefly involved with political theory. It is very rarely discussed or applied in the field of art and literature.

Building on the literature from the birth of modernism (Joyce and Jamalzadeh) and later modernism (Woolf and Hedayat), my thesis aims to take the ethno-symbolic nationalism and apply it to literary texts from the early twentieth century to explore the creation and critique of national identities through literature. It also aims to critique literary scholars’ traditional understanding of nationalism. Texts like *The Blind Owl*, *Between the Acts*, *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* are made up of images, symbols, myths and figurative events that subject traditional nationalisms to ethno-symbolic critique.

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Contents

Abstract.....	II
Acknowledgements.....	III
Chapter I: Introduction.....	5
1.1 Introduction.....	5
1.2 Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.3 Research Questions.....	10
1.4 The Intention of Study.....	11
1.5 Contribution to Knowledge.....	12
Chapter II: Theories of Nationalism and the Ethno-symbolic Approach.....	13
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Nationalism or Patriotism.....	15
2.3 Reviewing the Key Concepts and Definitional Issues of Nationalism.....	17
2.3.1 Nation, State and Nationhood.....	17
2.3.2 Ethnicity or Ethnic Identity.....	20
2.4 Sub-theories of Nationalism.....	23
2.4.1 Primordialism vs. Perennialism.....	23
2.4.2 Modernism.....	25
2.4.3 Ethno-Symbolic Nationalism.....	27
2.4.3.1 Nationalism and the Glorious Past of the Nation.....	30
2.4.3.2 Myths, Memories and Symbols of a Nation.....	31
2.4.3.3 Religion and Nationalism.....	32
2.5 Conclusion.....	36
Chapter III: Analysis; Jamalzadeh’s <i>Once Upon A Time</i> vs. Joyce’s <i>Dubliners</i>.....	39
3.1 Introduction.....	39
3.2 Culture, Traditions and Basic Portrayal of the Nation.....	47
3.3 Religion.....	60
3.4 Conclusion.....	75
Chapter IV: Analysis; Hedayat’s <i>The Blind Owl</i> vs. Woolf’s <i>Between the Acts</i>.....	79
4.1 Introduction.....	79
4.2 Looking for the Glorious Past of Nation.....	85
4.3 The Use of National Memories.....	100
4.4 Myths, Figures, Symbols and Metaphors.....	118
4.5 Conclusion.....	134
Conclusion.....	140
Bibliography.....	145

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

National identity or consciousness is a form of identity which is constructed or inspired through different vehicles such as school study books, literature, history, movies, documentaries or other TV shows. Taking its lead from the latest approach to the study of nationalism, ethno-symbolic nationalism, this thesis focuses on Persian literature in English by Sadegh Hedayat and M. A. Jamalzadeh as well as British literature by Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Thus, the study proposes to examine the process of formation or inspiration of national identity or consciousness by different authors who were writing in the same time span but in different countries. As collections of short stories and written in almost same period, *Once Upon A Time* written by Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh in 1921 is analysed and compared with James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914) from an ethnosymbolic point of view. A similar analysis is applied to *The Blind Owl* written by Sadegh Hedayat in 1937 – and known as one of the major prose literary works of Persian literature in the twentieth century – and Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts* (1941). It should be highlighted that the intention of this study is to apply the ethno-symbolic approach to the selected texts and therefore looking at them through nationalistic lens to explore their nationalistic elements, rather than suggesting that their authors straightforwardly intended those texts to be nationalistic.

The second chapter of this thesis focuses on the concept of identity and its different forms, national identity in particular, together with the formative elements of nationhood. Therewith, it studies the related literature in that regard to portray a better perception of the theory of nationalism and the ethno-symbolic approach. Identity - as a description of the combination of individual qualities and behavioural characteristics which shape the entity of an individual - is used to locate an individual in a social group and to distinguish them from others. The feeling of identity encompasses a collection of different senses such as unity, harmony, belonging,

independence and confidence (D. Sheikhavandi, 2001). The usage of identity, certainly, dates back to prehistory when human beings came out of caves and started looking for the definition and identification of their tribe, ethnicity and nationality to discover others who were different. Manuel Castells, in *The Power of Identity* (1997), defines it as a meaningful origin that people look for through history, territory, religion, traditions, etcetera. The constructive components of identity are divided by intellectuals into imaginative, historical and psychic.¹ The imaginative components contain materialistic belongings. The historical references contain traditional or cultural values, beliefs, norms, territory, symbols and awareness. The psychic elements such as social, national or ethnic belongings, then, are formed when people struggle to explore others' existence. National identity – as one of various types of identity – originates in critical situations such as war, ethnic harassment or collective orientation and mass unification and integrates personal identity with social identity. Raising significant sacrifices and empathy, national identity or nationhood leads to solidarity and the nationwide unity of citizens.

Almost every nation throughout the world has been interested in the recognition and retrieval of its national identity and this motif has often been attended to in particular times of history (Z. Hayati, 2007). Although there is no clear date for the origination and early history of national identity, it is believed the conceptualization of nations initiated national consciousness. Based on a hypothesis developed by Professor Steven Weber (2011) it might have been unintentionally produced in the fifteenth century. The construction of nationhood and/or citizenship – which nations are generally branded with – demands social, political and ideological implications and is considered as one of the main objectives of the ideology of nationalism. National identity as a collection and organization of common myths, symbols, values and memories widely shared among the nation-members leads to the coalition of the nation (Vakili, 2010). As a powerful and determinant factor in the configuration and performance of a nation, it enumerates, targets and collects analogous historical, cultural and social structures current between members of a society (Vakili, 2010). According to Leopold Damrosch (1980), nationhood and citizenship embraces every “subjective, alienated” member of the state and integrates them to the bigger community. Therewith, the nationhood “gives status

¹ James, William (1890) ‘The Principles of Psychology’ in *Classics in the History of Psychology*. York University press: Toronto, Ontario.

and meaning” to the nationalist theory (ibid). Nationhood or citizenship sentiments, as Vaikili (2010) adds, function as a codec flowing in the state and it defines the margins and borders of each nation (Vakili, 2010). In so doing, it creates common but invisible imagery among those who live in the nation-state and draws the visionary picture of the “imagined community” (Anderson, 2006).

The theoretical framework of this study will be conducted in the context of works done by Western and Iranian nationalist theorists or historical critics who studied historical events/conflicts in societies and focused on the constructed ideologies for reforming prior identities and creating new identities.² Moreover, a literary history of Iran and Britain – as case studies – will be sketched to acquaint readers with the main issues as well as renowned icons, obstacles and major events. A summarized historical background of both cases will be elaborated to explain the problems and obstacles of nationhood and identity among the citizens of those countries. The study will also include various perspectives on citizenship and nationhood issues reflected in the articles or publications of other critics or theorists to examine the depths and roots of heterogeneity of their respective nation’s shared identity. An attempt will be made to elaborate the diverse perceptions of nationhood among British, Irish and Iranian citizens. Other required and related literature in the fields of nationalism studies, constructions of nationhood and citizenry, and Irish and Persian literature in English will be included to express how national identities have been constructed and represented.

This chapter also reviews the theory of nationalism, its definitions, key concepts and multiple approaches - to outline the traditional or classic approaches to nationalism which provides the ground for further discussions about the ethno-symbolic approach - that is going to be used as the main perspective of the study.

The concept of nationalism has been defined differently by theorists. As a result of plurality in approaches toward nationalism, the concept of nation – as the basic element in this

² The scholars that are chosen for the research are Mary Boyce, Anthony D.Smith, Benedict Anderson, Frantisek Palacky, Ernest Gellner, J. Hutchinson, Eoin MacNeil, J. Armstrong, Manuel Castells, Daniele Conversi, Clifford Geertz, Nicolas Iorga, Leopold Damrosch, Eric Hobsbawm, Adrian Hastings, Homi Bhabha, Narges Fallahi, Mohammad Reza Sarshaar, M.R. Goudarzi, Masha-Allah Ajoudany, Shervin Vakili and Dariush Baradary.

discourse – has been subject to ambiguity in definition and concept. Although there is no scientific definition of a nation, it is defined in general as a community of people who feel togetherness and share deeply common heritage and often a state. Undoubtedly, for a nation to be formed and considered as such, its members should have a sense of common destiny for the future, while they possess common and distinctive elements of culture, a sentiment of cohesion and they occupy a common territory (Smith, 1998).

Benedict Anderson invented a very inclusive and efficient idea of describing nations as “imagined communities” (Anderson, 1981, pp.15-16). Anderson called the nation an “imagined political community” as it is impossible for every nation-member to know the others in spite of a shared unity and togetherness as they imagine it (Anderson, 1991, p.6). Thus, to achieve nation-building as one of the main goals of nationalism, the unification of nation-members and the institution of citizenry become inevitable and receive more attention.

The establishment of an alliance between citizens depends on the construction of a cohesive, collective, national self-determination which unites them within the nation-state. In this regard, as Gellner (1983) mentions, people should be literate, dynamic and homogenous; also, a common culture is required to embrace and unite masses. National consciousness or nationhood relies on the pervasive perception which includes all ethnicities and religious, aboriginal and cultural minorities and mobilizes them all to pursue the common interests of society.

With regard to Anderson’s consideration of nations as “imagined communities”, it should be highlighted that the institution and development of national identity is a long and complex process. As Dominic Thomas (2002) states, this imagination needs to be engineered and created. With the use of Stalin’s concept of “the engineers of human souls”, Dominic Thomas refers to intellectuals, writers, historians, poets, journalists, and musicians who innovate practices, methods, techniques and theories to engineer and manufacture that imagination; thereby, they disseminate this culture that provides the imagination for the nation. In other words, literature, media and popular culture function as vehicles that create images, concepts, themes and definitions that are historically or socially cultivated; they already exist in the minds of nation-members and only need to be re-narrated, represented and reminded. Their contributions lead to

the propagation of the sense of commitment that features as a cement and binds the individual nation-members, constructs a collective ‘us’, associates the independent human subjects in the system and represents them at a more dignified level.

The initial inspiration for this research was Anthony D. Smith’s new approach of ethno-symbolic nationalism. This approach relies on the importance of the myths, memories, symbols and other ethnic/national values of a nation to try to surpass the divergence of that nation (Özirimli, 2000, p.168). Ethno-symbolic nationalism also enables readers to perceive the importance of memories, myths and symbols and makes them realize the common roots and backgrounds that leads to the affinity and cohesion of nation-members. Studies such as *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986), *Nation and Ethnoscape* (1997), *The Nation in History* (2000) and *The Antiquity Of Nations* (2000), all emphasized the historical/cultural images, myths, symbols and memories of each nation as opposed to approaches that consider the modernist or primordialist versions of nation, which accentuate the concept of the nation-state or geography. Since the ethno-symbolic approach has been chiefly involved with political theory, it has very rarely been discussed or applied in the field of literature.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As mentioned earlier, the theoretical framework of this study – to analyse selected literary texts and media sources – will use an approach that explores ‘ethno-symbolic nationalism’ championed by Anthony Smith and developed by John Hutchinson, Daniele Conversi, J. Armstrong, Adrian Hasting and Ernest Gellner. Ethno-symbolic nationalism is an approach which explores the myths, memories, symbols and values of a nation to try to surpass the divergence and “polarization of between primordialism and modernism” (Özirimli, 2000, p.168). This approach enables readers to perceive the importance of memories, values, myths and symbols. Of all these, the myths and memories of a ‘golden age’ of past splendour are the most important (Smith, 1991, p.109).

Ethno-symbolic nationalists often emphasize the connection between pre-modern and modern nations, insisting that some elements like myths, memories, values, traditions and

symbols form the continuity of national identity of a nation. Featuring as the “chroniclers” of the past and history of the nation, those elements bridge the past and present and to elaborate those memories which can link the modern nation back to its ‘golden age’ (Hutchinson, 1987 & Conversi, 2000). “They stress similar processes in their explanations of national phenomena” to defend the glory and reverence of the past (Armstrong, 1982, p.4). Accordingly, ethno-symbolists emphasise that the formation of nations should be examined in the “time dimension of centuries”, for the emergence of today’s nations cannot be understood properly without taking their ethnic ancestors into account (ibid). That is why the glorious past of the nation, as they assume, functions as one of the central points in ethno-symbolic nationalism (Hutchinson, 1994, p.7). The ethno-symbolic theory focuses on the concepts that create a linkage between nation-members and the sentiments of citizenship or national identity.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Reviewing related literature through comparative study from an ethno-symbolic point of view will expose the gap in knowledge about how intellectuals generated and modified creative themes to reawaken national consciousness as opposed to resisting and opposing policies applied by the state authorities - particularly in early twentieth century Iran and Britain. The study will be guided by the following research questions;

- 1- How can application of an ethno-symbolic approach to nationalism amends or modify literary critics’ understanding of nationalism?
- 2- What are the common nationalistic social, cultural and historical attitudes in the works of different authors from different countries and continents?
- 3- How have different literary texts applied nationalistic notions in various ways?
- 4- How do the ongoing policies, governing authorities, the situation of the country etcetera affect the approaches of nationalist elites?
- 5- How do the identified issues (indications to the glorious past of the nation, frequent utilizations of myths, memories and symbols) trigger the sense of national consciousness or citizenry in the case studied countries?

1.4 THE INTENTION OF STUDY

This research mainly studies the ways in which the traditional description of nationalism can be challenged or reviewed by the application of an ethno-symbolic approach. Therewith, it aims to elucidate the analysis of literary studies and offer new approaches to and analysis of the literary sources. Moreover, this research highlights how dominant state policies affect the source and nature of national consciousness and to what extent those dominant policies influence the narrative forms amongst nationalist writers in different regions (Pericles, 2000). It also evaluates and theorizes how various narrators' literary or pictorial techniques and transcriptions inspire, reshape individual's consciousness and redeem their nationalistic inclinations through portraying memories, covert symbols and myths. Analysing chosen texts, it will investigate how elites, such as pioneering writers, in different countries - Iran, Britain and Ireland - and under dissimilar political and social circumstances, create motivating factors to either encourage national consciousness, to resist against exterior incursion or to rally vernacular people against despotism, bureaucracy and colonialism, in the Irish case, and imperialism, in the Iranian case. It will be worthwhile to mention that Ireland was under the control of Britain until 1922 and was politically governed by the British government under the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. From around 1916 until 1921 when Ireland acquired its independence, Irish nationalist elites were opposing the British government in every possible way (McGee, 2005). Iran, on the other hand, was never practically colonized; however, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Britain has tried to set up and maintain its influence in Iranian state through protectorate governments or other various conspiracies. Needless to say, Britain was the foremost superpower in the world in the late seventeenth century and its colonies, dominions, trust territories, dependencies and protectorates covered one quarter of the world's land area. The research also examines and analyses the process of reawakening of national consciousness in the work of nationalist authors. In order to provide a more accurate view of the formation of nationhood or citizenry a broad range of anthropological, historical, literary and sociological information will be utilized. Via comparative evaluation of English and Persian texts, this research will offer a topical and important contextualized framework to represent the uniqueness of the construction and inspiration of nationalism in each domain.

1.5 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

Particular case studies and the findings will make an important assessment of how and in what ways literature can be used in the formation or inspiration of national consciousness and nationalism. The contribution of those elements to the creation or awakening of a sense of belonging, the integration of citizens into their nation-state and to the development of nationalism will also be explored. It should be highlighted that due to the applied policies - Royal or Islamic - over the last 50 years in Iran's state as well as the colonial dominance of Britain in Ireland, publications regarding nationalism and any related dialogues have been intensely scrutinised and controlled by the state's powers. To justify the choice of British, Iranian and Irish literature, it should be indicated that the findings of this study can provide a framework and resource for future scholars on the basis of comparative studies. Furthermore, it will significantly add to the knowledge on creative literary and visionary methods which create and inspire nationhood and would fill the current gap on nationalism studies in Iran resulting from the lack of adequate research and arguments. Moreover, the use of ethno-symbolism as a perspective will elaborate the importance of symbolic dimensions of literary texts and their need to be considered and shed a light on further studies and researches about ethno-symbolism in the field of literature.

CHAPTER II

THEORIES OF NATIONALISM AND THE ETHNO-SYMBOLIC APPROACH

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Nationalism or to have faith in nations and nationhood is a type of collective consciousness which has also been defined as national awareness. National consciousness often breeds loyalty, passion and devotion of the nation-members to the constituent element of the nation such as race, language, traditions and customs, social values, morals, history and general culture. Nationalism also may create an exaggerated respect or belief in the superiority of national symbols or nations. The term nationalism or *nationalismus* was created by John Gottfried Herder in the late 1770s after the theory of nationalism was founded and started to develop (Blanning, 2003; pp. 259-260). The development of the theory of nationalism led to the emergence of four sub-theories or interpretations. Ethno-symbolic nationalism is the most recent approach toward classic nationalism which will be elaborated and applied as the main focus of this study.

To introduce the ethno-symbolic approach, developed by Anthony D. Smith, a broad picture of a national literature with some key concepts and formative elements will be provided. Readers will then be able to understand why many people remain so deeply attached to their ethnic communities and nations in the early time of globalization. They will also comprehend why the myths, memories, and symbols of the nation inspire such widespread loyalty and devotion and eventually why so many people are still prepared to make considerable sacrifices, such as giving their lives, for their nation and cultures.

The study of nationalism varies from a general assessment of the main theories and disciplines to the identification of the key issues and problems in the study of nationalism. Moreover, some scholars explain nationalism as a political doctrine while others describe it as a “modern and secular surrogate for religion, emerging in the period of transition to modernity”

(Özkirimli, 2000; p.14). In Iran, for instance, the modern nationalists helped to shape Iranian nationalism by infusing it with distinctly secular ideologies and diminishing the influence of Islam on Iran. For instance – in an attempt to reduce the power of the mullahs (Islamic clerics) by seeking to modernize Iran – the state authorities changed the names of various towns, parks, monuments in the country to honour pre-Islamic Persian kings and mythological heroes.

Taking those points into consideration in this section, first, the various definitions for the concepts of nation, ethnicity, nation-state, nation-building, race, identity and nationalism will be reviewed and the most suitable and applicable ones will be found for they will be constantly used later throughout this study. Then, I will explain the current ambiguities associated with them. Since most of the answers are embedded in three main categories in the study of nationalism – primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism – this chapter will examine the various historical and cultural paradigms of nationalist movements by exemplifying those sub-theories. Therewith, the chapter will examine the issues like the application of political religion as well as the de-codifying the ethno-symbolic approaches. After considering the relations between race, ethnicity and nationalism, and comparison between nationalism and other extremist nationalistic tendencies such as fascism, the chapter will conclude with some reflections on the international dimension of ethnic conflict and the future prospects of nationalism.

Nationalism has a variety of definitions amongst sociologists, politicians and nationalist theorists. However, the most common definition of nationalism describes it as a discourse which mainly focuses on the attitude of a nation towards their national identity and the actions they take when seeking to achieve or sustain some form of political sovereignty. Furthermore, nationalism assigns the creation and maintenance of a fully sovereign state owned by a given ethno-national people as a primary duty of each member of the group (Smith, 1991). As was mentioned earlier in the Iranian case, nationalistic tendencies which were beginning to be formed in the Reza Khan era aimed to reduce the influence of clerics as well as the foreign intrigues, diminish ethnic divisions, eradicate tribalism and promote a common and cohesive nationalism. Simultaneously, those nationalistic inclinations intended to lead the Iranian state to have more European-like educational institutions, modernized women, the new economic structure with state-owned companies, networks, investment banks, and department stores. This nationalistic climate

infused the country with a form of secular nationalism which brought it into conflict with the country's clerical class.

2.2 NATIONALISM OR PATRIOTISM

Considering that the readers might come across with “patriotism” in the context of the analysis of this study, the terminology should be elaborated in brief to prevent the probable confusion between patriotism, nationalism and racism. Alongside classic nationalism, there is another moderate approach to nationalism which is less demanding than classical nationalism. ‘Patriotism’ is the more moderated and universalized version of nationalism which – contradictory to the classic method centred on ethno-cultural communities – is practised for valuing civic community and loyalty to one's state. Patriotism is a love of one's country that includes connections between nation and state together with its customs and traditions, pride in its history, and devotion to its welfare. Patriotism is considered respectable because it refers to the defensive, heroic attitude of the nation under attack. In this perspective, Arjun Appadurai defended patriotism on the basis of the readiness of the citizens to die for their country (Appadurai, 1993), compared to nationalism that only involves those with aggressive and expansionist politics. In other words, it is a kind of vigorous feeling of collective responsibility which conveys a pride of one's country mainly for what it historically was (Sobran, 2001). Moreover, nationalism is an abstract or an illusive concept of understanding which needs symbols for representation. It should be considered that since the patriot and the nationalist often use the same words, one may not realize the different senses in their words. In order to offer more clarifications about the differences, it is useful to quote Joe Sobran, the well-known American nationalist columnist. According to Sobran;

Patriotism is like family love. You love your family just for being your family, not for being “the greatest family on earth” or for being “better” than other families. You don't feel threatened when other people love their families the same way. On the contrary, you respect their love, and you take comfort in

knowing they respect yours. You don't feel your family is enhanced by feuding with other families.³

According to him, patriotism is a form of affection while nationalism “is grounded in resentment and rivalry”. Nationalism is rigid and “militant by nature and its typical style is belligerent”. On the contrary, patriotism is relaxed and “peaceful until forced to fight”.⁴ In spite of the nationalists who identify the state with abstractions like freedom and democracy and therefore see the war as an opportunity to spread those abstractions around the world, the patriot seeks only contentment at home and wants his country to be just strong enough to defend itself. As opposed to the researchers like Appadurai who preferred patriotism to nationalism, some other commentators, like Michael Ignatieff, disputed such ideas by claiming that “no one can have patriotism without nationalism” (Ignatieff, 1999; p. 141). Many nationalists, in fact, consider patriotism and nationalism as two sides of the same coin. Furthermore, patriotism invokes the historical past of the nation to raise the sense of identity, pride, belonging and loyalty to infuse nationalism. To conclude this discussion, it should be referred to what George Orwell suggested in his essay – “Notes on Nationalism”. In his opinion, patriotism is more positive and “defensive in both military and cultural” dimensions whereas nationalism is more of a “desire for power” and may even invoke assaulting others to secure the power and prestige for the nation (Orwell, 1945; online). It should be noted that what is discussed so far was about classic or traditional nationalism and what the ethno-symbolic approach proposes is different, positive and awakening; therefore, to some extents, is closer to patriotism as it mainly alerts and introduce citizens to their shared characteristics rather than provoking them to fight.

With regards to the multiplicity of definitions and considering that the evaluation of the motifs, dimensions and theories of nationalism, a further elaboration of some key concepts in the study of nationalism is required. With the classification and re-description of those concepts, this chapter will facilitate the deeper and further perception of the readers about the analysis of the selected pieces of Persian and British literature.

³ <http://www.fgfbooks.com/Sobran-Joe/Sobran081024.html> (Accessed at 14/03/2014)

⁴ <http://www.sobran.com/columns/1999-2001/011016.shtml> (Accessed at 11/09/2007)

2.3 REVIEWING THE KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONAL ISSUES OF NATIONALISM

Simultaneous to the appearance of governments and modern nations in Europe during the 19th century and afterwards, intellectuals and politicians elaborated and expanded the definition of a 'nation'. Their definitions mainly concentrated on the features that could play an important role in unifying the nation. In order to have a better perception of this process, one should be familiar with some of the key concepts within the discourse.

2.3.1 NATION, STATE AND NATIONHOOD

Since the main issue of nationalism is its concern for "the mapping between the ethno-cultural domain", namely as ethno-cultural nation, and the domain of political or social collective organizations, so the discourse should be broken into its component and elements⁵. As the members of the nation importantly care about their national identity, this point raises many questions. The first descriptive issue which should be discussed is the elaboration of the nation and national identity.

Nation - as one of those basic elements within the discourse - is defined as a community of people who have a feeling of togetherness, share deeply common elements of heritage and believe in a common destiny for the future, while they possess common and distinctive elements of culture, a sentiment of cohesion and they occupy a common territory (Smith 1998:188). In a similar way, Hugh Seton-Watson added that "A nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation or behave as if they formed one" (Seton-Watson, 1997). Ernest Renan stated that two factors constitute a nation; one is the possession of a rich legacy of memories and the other one is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received (E.Renan 1990). Iran can be a good example to perceive the meaning of what was indicated in this paragraph. As the 18th largest country in the world in terms of area, Iran is the state that consists of people of many religions and ethnic backgrounds cemented through 'Iranianhood'. Based on

⁵ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/Nationalism.htm> (Online) Accessed in 03/09/2007

UN programme and statistics, the main ethnic groups who constitute the nation of Iran are Persians (51%), Azeris (24%), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8%), Kurds (7%), Arabs (3%), Baluchi (2%), Lurs (2%), Turkmens (2%),Laks, Qashqai, Armenians, Persian Jews, Georgians, Assyrians and others.⁶ The country was known as ‘Persia’ until 1935 when Reza Khan - the Shah of Iran at the time who favoured a return to ancient Iran and emphasis on the pre-Islamic nation-state – ordered the change to Iran and asked European and other governments to use the native of Iran in their official correspondences with the country. In a similar way, “Ireland is also consisted of Irish (84/5%), Irish Travellers (0.7%), Ulster-Scots and various immigrant populations such as Poles, Americans, Lithuanians, Scots, Latvians, Germans (9.1%), Nigerians and other black African ethnicities (1.4%), and Chinese and other Asian backgrounds (1.9%).⁷ Therefore, it is so obvious how different groups, tribes and ethnicities with various traditions, languages and even different religions and beliefs may get together under the umbrella of one single nation; and when it comes to protect the state, they all may become one.

In order to enjoin people to struggle for the national interest, one must have some ideas about what a nation is and what it is to belong to a nation. National struggles are done for independence and sovereignty and they are concerned with the issues of state and state-hood. The ‘state’ is one of those elements which may be seen by nationalists as a political unit that belongs to one ethno-cultural group. It is indicated as a principle that should be protected and its traditions should be promulgated (Emerson; 1962 page.95). Coming back to the case of Iran, when Iraq attacked the state in 1980, the variety of races, ethnies and tribes confederated to protect the country from the invasion of the enemy.

Accordingly, the ‘state’ is an officially composed unit which protects its inhabitants from internal insecurity and external hostility (Özkirimli 2000:33). The nation-state, therefore, is a state that has become largely identifiable with one people (Deutsch 1969:19). Territory is another similar concept to the state, but there is a crucial difference between them; the national territory is a moral, ethical entity whereas the state territory is a legal, official entity. Here it would be

⁶ <http://iran.unfpa.org/Country%20Profile.asp> (Online). Accessed in 7/12/2013.

⁷ 2011 Census Results;

<http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/census2011pdr/Census%202011%20Highlights%20Part%201%20web%2072dpi.pdf> (Online) Accessed in 7/12/2013.

appropriate to mention that nationalism functions in different ways from time to time; it can emerge as a democratic antiauthoritarian movement, or as an agent to promote wars between nations to obtain the unification or subdivision of territory. Nationalism can also act as a force seeking the liberation of a territory from ‘foreign’ domination.

However, classical nationalism is not only concerned with the creation of a state but also with its maintenance and strengthening. Nationalists generally take various approaches toward the state; sometimes they may promote claims for its expansion and sometimes opt for its isolation. Likewise, the methods and ways of nationalists in Iran also have been diverse and various. While some of the intellectuals merely relied on the glorious past of Persia and tried to highlight and promote its supremacy in their works, the other nationalists were perfectly conscious of the fact that, in order to survive the state’s glory, it was not enough to depend upon the antiquity of Persian civilization. Abdul-Rahim Talebof⁸ and Fatali Akhoundzadeh⁹ belonged to this group of nationalists in Iran. Akhundzadeh, who lived during the Qajar era, was one of the prominent figures in the Progressive movement and also one of the founders of Iranian nationalism (Millar, James, 2004). Likewise, Talebof was one of the prominent icons in the Qajar era as well as the Constitutional Movement. Although, he was influenced by the Western thinkers and philosophers such as Bentham, Voltaire and Rousseau and promoted the adaptation of Western innovations and improvements, he stressed the independence of Iranian State and the glorification of the Iranian history (Ajoudani, 2007).

In the case of state-led nationalism, the rulers may demand that citizens subordinate all other interests to those of the state, which led to the subsequent emergence of nations. Thus - according to their point of view - “the nation is a territorially bound and self-governing collectivity” which is shaped and constituted by its territorial and political frame (Oommen, 1997; p. 94). Nationhood in this view is dependent on political territory. It is an emergent

⁸ Mirzā Abdul'Rahim Talebof (1834 – 1911) was an Iranian intellectual and social reformer. His ideas considerably influenced the arrangement of the Constitutional Movement. Unlike most of the scholars of his time, he was not entirely opposed to religion. Like other secularists, he emphasized on the separation of religion from politics (Arkanzadeh, Saeed, 2008).

⁹ Mirza Fatali Akhundov Mirza Fatali Akhundzade (1812, 1878), was one of the 19th century celebrated authors. He was also a playwright, philosopher, and founder of modern literary criticism (Millar, James, 2004). His ideas had remarkable impact on the formation of the Constitutional Movement in Iran.

property of certain territorial policies. Indeed, nationhood and nationality is another important concept which one may label and define with when it comes to national affairs.

On the other hand, 'Nationality' or 'nationhood' may be considered as a collective identity which the people of the nation acquire by identifying with the nation. For a nation to be sustained the people should be in a position to communicate with one another; and for that they should have a common language. It should be highlighted that three bases of constructing national identity are religion, language and tribe, which try to build the harmony amongst the entire nation. However, the language needs not to be their ancestral language in some cases (Oommen, 1997; p. 33). For example, Iran has always been a multi-ethnic and multicultural country. Persian (Farsi) may be the official language, but it is only in recent years that speakers of the language have become a majority of the population. There are many other language-groups, including Turks - spoken by Azeris and Turkmen - Kurdish, Baluchi, Armenian and some others. In spite of this, most Iranians, who speak these languages, perceive their ethnic identity as a complement to their national identity. "Indeed, it has long been understood and widely accepted that this diversity is an asset to one of the world's oldest continuous civilizations" (Tohidi, 2006).¹⁰

2.3.2 ETHNICITY OR ETHNIC IDENTITY

There are a large number of nationalists including E. Renan (1882) and M. Weber (1978) who mainly emphasized the voluntaristic definitions of the nation. As opposed to them, there is another school of nationalists who focus upon the non-voluntary community of people within a larger society, having common origin and ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, language, tradition and "a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements of their peoplehood" (Schermerhorn, 1996; p. 17). In their view, a nation is an ethno-community of origin and culture that comprises a language and customs. Indeed, in order to underscore its ethno-cultural values

¹⁰ Tohidi, Nayereh (2006) *Iran: regionalism, ethnicity and democracy*. *Opendemocracy* [Online]. Available At: http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-irandemocracy/regionalism_3695.jsp [Accessed At 8th December 2013].

rather than purely civic loyalties, this group inclines to nationhood on this basis of 'ethno-nation'. This group of nationalist scholars mainly stress one's ethno-cultural background and, thereby, claim that it is chiefly this factor which validates and endorses one's membership in the community.

Let us now turn to the issue of the origin and "authenticity" of ethno-cultural groups or ethno-nationalists. According to Bulmer, an ethnic group is a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared past and cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements which define the group's identity, such as kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance (Bulmer, 1986; p. 54).

As opposed to 'racism' which is an ideology and practice based on the assumed superiority of certain races, the term 'ethnicism' is proposed by some writers to refer to discrimination based on ethnic differences. The content of ethnicity is essentially cultural and to be culturally different does not imply superiority or inferiority. Unlike racism which is almost universally condemned as negative, ethnicity is increasingly being viewed as positive. Ethnicity functions as an identity marker and provides possibilities for searching for roots. What makes it positive is mainly that it takes pride in one's race – as an affirmation of collective self-hood – without necessarily disparaging other races. "Thus the two terms ethnicity and ethnicism ought to be used to refer to the positive and negative aspects of ethnic group" (Oommen 1997:26). In an ethnically diverse country like Iran, for instance, although Persians form the majority of the population, the interethnic relations between ethno-linguistic groups of Azeris¹¹, Kurds¹², Baluchis¹³, Turkmen, Armenians, Assyrians, and Georgians¹⁴ were more or less amicable. Notwithstanding any superiority or inferiority of a particular group - while many Iranians identify with a secondary ethnic, religious, linguistic, or regional background in some way – they all become unified under the same umbrella of 'Iranian-ness'. In a very similar way in Britain,

¹¹ Azeris live in a wider area of Iranian plateau and have a mixed cultural heritage of Turkic, Iranian, and Caucasian elements.

¹² The Kurds are an ethnic group who are indigenous to a region of Kurdistan, an area which includes adjacent parts of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Kurdish communities can also be found in Lebanon, Armenia, Azerbaijan.

¹³ The Baluchis are inhabiting the region of Balochistan in Iran and Pakistan, Iraq, Syria as well as neighbouring areas of Afghanistan and the southeast corner of the Iranian plateau.

¹⁴ The Georgians who originate in Georgia but are an ethnic group living in current Iran. They are Twelver Shia Moslems.

the White and white Irish travellers (87.2%), Indian British (2.3%), Pakistanis (1.9%), Bangladeshis (0.7%), Chinese (0.7%) and other Asian ethnics (1.4%) constitute the ethnic composition of the United Kingdom.¹⁵ Many of these ethnic groups in Iran have their own languages, cultures, and often literature, their languages and cultures are essentially regional variations of Persian – or closely associated with Persians as an Iranian language – and are all native to Iran, similar to the relationship between Welsh, Scottish, Irish and English cultures, which are all similar and are native to Britain. Accordingly, this stance, like in Iran's example, intensifies the idea that the main reason of ethnicity lies nowhere else than in the socially and culturally different myths, values and symbols.

The belief in ethnicity has become reasonable simultaneously with the collapse of colonialism and the universal disapproval of fascism and Nazism. As human beings are identity-seeking animals, so people can openly claim some ethnic identity without lessened respect; they can even show they are proud of it, and in many cases, actively seek to restore the inequalities in terms of their identity. Ethnic identity often emanates out of collective self-definition and the search for roots, and hence is viewed as legitimate. But the tendency to include race into ethnicity has actually masked the oppression specific to race. This is an important reason why the distinction between race and ethnicity should be maintained (Oommen, 1997; p. 35).

As one can easily perceive, due to the combinations of cultural characteristics, there are a variety of definitions for 'nation'. Similarly, nationalism has not appeared in a single form. In the following section, the main theories of nationalism will be illustrated, however, the main focus will be on the 'ethno-symbolic' nationalism as the main methodology to analyse the selected Iranian and British literature.

2.4 SUBTHEORIES OF NATIONALISM

Based on what is mentioned, the ethno-symbolic nationalism will be utilized as my main theoretical framework to analyse the selected works of James Joyce and M. A. Jamalzadeh,

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics. "How do you define ethnicity?". 4 November 2003. Archived from the original on 27 March 2008. Retrieved 11 October 2009 & 2011 Census.

Virginia Woolf and Sadegh Hedayat. I believe that in order to introduce the readers to the ethno-symbolic approach and examine it in the field of literature, it should be considered, applied and evaluated in the context of a larger body of literature on nations and nationalism. In other words, since the main concerns and aims of ‘ethno-symbolism’ emerged as a response to problems raised by the other major paradigms, I will outline the theoretical context in which they emerged. In that respect, I will epitomize that since ‘primordialism’, ‘modernism’ and ‘ethno-symbolic’ nationalism are used to classify various theories with regard to their common characteristics, explaining them in brief will enable the readers to distinguish and compare them systematically. I shall begin, therefore, with a brief statement of the main features and problems of the primordialist and modernist paradigms.

2.4.1 PRIMORDIALISM: INNATE POWERFUL SENSE OF ATTACHMENT VS. PERENNIALISM: LINKING THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Primordialism, known as the earliest paradigm of nationalism, is an approach that generally appeals to emotional and instinctive constraints as the ultimate explanations for national mobilization (Smith 1995). Primordial nationalists typically date the origin of nationhood back to remote epochs. “They suggest that nations have existed since time immemorial without subscribing to the view that they result from any kind of primordial ties” (Özirimli, 2000; p. 68). In other words, they claim that nations have been formed based on the “intrinsic characteristics” of the members over the centuries (ibid; p.68). Steven Grosby (1995), a primordialist, refers to the “significance of vitality which man attributes to, and is constitutive of, both nativity and structures of nativity”, including lineage, family, and, most importantly, territory (Grosby, 1995, p.192). Primordialism seems to be an intemperate approach which emphasizes primitiveness and inevitability of nationhood in human societies and describes ‘nationality’ or ‘nationhood’ as a natural part of human being, “as natural as speech, sight or smell” (Özirimli, 2000; p. 64). Every person has a nationality the same way as they have a nose and a pair of ears. The nation to which a person belongs is naturally predetermined.

Perennialists' points of view are very similar to the primordialists. They assume that nationality is derived from the biological nature of humans and seek to demonstrate that everybody inclines to his/her own ethnic group, "as an extension of his/her own family" (Van Den Berghe, 1981; p. 17). George Santayana, one of the renowned primordialists defines nationhood as:

Our nationality is like our relations to women: too implicated in our moral nature to be changed honorably, and too accidental to be worth changing. (Quoted in Gellner, 1983, p.1)

In this approach, ethnic families are defined as the natural division of humanity who are willing and inclined to conflict. According to this view, one is recognized with his/her ethnic identity which emerges naturally. Furthermore, since relationships within in-groups are more peaceful, orderly and supportive so ethnic similarities often will lead to cooperation. Conversely, because the relationships with out-groups are rebellious, anarchic and disparaging, ethnic difference leads to conflict.¹⁶ According to Frantisek Palacky, Eoin MacNeil and Nicolas Iorga, the main common point of primordialism with other theories of national discourses is that the past, in all of the various theories, is the story of the nation's everlasting effort for self-realization. (Hutchinson, 1994; p. 3).

Edward Shils is believed to be the first person to employ the term, in his article published in 1957. He used 'primordialism' to refer to the relationships within the family (Eller and Coughlan, 1993; p. 184) and disputed that the potency of the attachments everyone feels toward his/her family, does not stem from interaction, but from "a certain ineffable significance...attributed to the tie of blood" (Shils 1957:142). So, Shils named those attachments as 'Primordials' to describe the nature of ethnic boundaries.

It should be highlighted that no one can consider primordialist nationalism without the debate on ethnicity, mainly due to the fact that the primordialist's first arguments are based on

¹⁶ Source: www.uni-muenster.de/Politikwissenschaft/Doppeldiplom/docs/85-13/09/2007

the explanations of the origin and the strength of ethnic identities. In addition, “primordial identities are ‘given’, un-derived and prior to all experiences and interactions” (Özirimli, 2000; p. 72). Since this approach accentuates the exclusive and unpredictable nature of ethnic bonds, some scholars denounce the primordial view as they believe the primordialists seem to discourage further scholarly enquiry into the causes and solutions to ethnic conflicts (Horwitz, 2004; pp. 72-3).

2.4.2 MODERNISM

Associating nationalism with modernism came as a response to the arguments of the primordialists, and has long been the dominant trend not only in nationalism studies, but also in related fields. According to Smith, classical modernism achieved its canonical formulation in the model of ‘nation-building’ in the 1960s. This was pursued by various models and hypotheses which all considered nations as historical/cultural formed constructs, and regarded nationalism as intrinsic to the nature of the modern world and the revolution of modernity (Smith, 1998; p. 3).

The first glance at the wide picture of modernism represents that there are diverse attitudes in which modernists stress different factors in their accounts of nationalism. Apart from the basic idea of modernism which regarded nationalism prior to the nations, modernists have very little in common. Moreover, modernists are divided into different categories based on the factors “they prioritize in explaining nationalism”. Thus, it shows that modernists have identified a set of factors – and not a single feature – in their theories (Özirimli, 2000; p. 86).

The first category belongs to those who emphasize economic and industrial factors in nation-building. Ernest Gellner - as one of the major figures in this approach of modernism - and his advocates associated modernity with the spread of industrialization and its economic and social aftermaths. For them, industrialization brought some unique and pervasive changes that disordered the traditional balance of society and thereby created new collections of shared interests. They considered that the combination of modern culture and the state often breed nationalism. Gellner, himself, attributed the emergence of nationalism “to the epochal shift from pre-industrial to industrial economies”. Therewith, he argued that “as forms of social

organization become more complex and intricate”, they call for a “more homogenous and cooperative workforce and polity” (Gandhi, 1998; p. 104). A nation, in this method, is defined as common membership in a shared ‘high culture’ which is the product of a secular and modern imagination. In turn, nationalism is described as “primarily a principle that holds that the political and national unit should be congruent” (Gellner, 1983; p. 1). Therefore, modernists mainly do not regard nationalism as an awakening and shocking element for the nations to find their self-consciousness; they, instead, view nationalism as an aspect which formulates nations where they do not exist (Gellner, 1964; p. 168). In doing so, modernists mainly concentrate on the establishment of the prototypical national homeland which is in fact the reminiscent of the historical state. Thus, they assume that the various societies, in each state, tend to adopt the model of nation-state and organize themselves accordingly; and that is how the nation-states are arranged and formed in the passage of time (Gellner, 1983). According to another related statement of Gellner - who pushed the “invention” of nations’ argument to its logical consequences - state-enforced homogenization incites the reactions of those who have been either excluded or demitted by their own choice in order to protect their own culture (Gellner, 1964; p. 168). In the following chapters, Gellner’s ideas together with the application of ethno-symbolism will expose how religious authorities and political leaders aim to establish a new prototypical national homeland and national belongings according to their own descriptions and views.

Tom Nairn, the Scottish intellectual, is another renowned modernist who has contributed to the development of this approach. Nairn states that nationalism can be understood in materialist terms. So he maintains that the first duty of a modernist theorist is to find the right descriptive framework in which nationalism can be properly evaluated. Accordingly, he identifies the roots of nationalism in the internal dynamics of individual societies and infers that the only explanatory framework which can portray nationalism is the ‘world history’ as a whole. Nationalism, in this sense, is “determined by certain features of the world political economy” (Nairn, 1981; p. 332).

2.4.3 ETHNO-SYMBOLIC NATIONALISM

The term ‘ethno-symbolist’ is used to signify those scholars who intend to expose the symbolic inheritance of pre-modern ethnic identities for today’s nations (Smith, 1998; p. 224). In other words, ‘ethno-symbolic nationalism’ is an approach which relies on the myths, memories, symbols and values of a nation to try to surpass the divergence and “polarization between primordialism and modernism” (Özirimli, 2000; p. 168). This approach enables the readers to perceive the importance of memories, values, myths and symbols. Of all these, the myths and memories of a ‘golden age’ of past splendour is the most important (Smith, 1981; p. 109).

According to Anthony Smith’s explanation in *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism; A Cultural Approach*, this approach is more of a new perspective, rather than a scientific theory (2009, p.1). Ethno-symbolism, as Smith suggest, focuses on the symbols which define the nation’s heritages and distinguish them from other nations. Therewith, it enables the readers to understand nationalism through the exploration of symbolic features and particular dimensions (ibid, p.23). Cultural elements such as national symbols, myths, shared values and memories, traditions and rituals are all considered by ethno-symbolism vital in shaping the national structure and reviving the current nation-members with the past generation.

Ethno-symbolic nationalists often emphasize the connection between pre-modern and modern nations, persisting that some elements like myths, memories, values, traditions and symbols form the continuity of national identity of a nation. They act like the “chroniclers” of the past and history of the nation who elaborate those memories which can link the modern nation back to its ‘golden age’ (Hutchinson, 1987). In general, they identify a bridge between the past and present, and also link the “ethnic myths and their modern translations” (Conversi, 2000; p. 23). Defending the glory and reverence of the past, “they stress on similar processes in their explanations of national phenomena”. Accordingly, they underline that the formation of nations should be examined in the “time dimension of centuries” (Armstrong, 1982; p. 4), for the emergence of today’s nations cannot be understood properly without taking ethnic ancestors into account. In other words, “the rise of nations needs to be contextualized within the larger phenomenon of ethnicity which shaped them” and dates back to the deep history of those nations

(Hutchinson, 1994; p. 7). By analysing the selected texts, *The Blind Owl*, *Between the Acts*, *Dubliners* and *Once Upon a Time*, this study is not going to directly claim or remark the authors as nationalist or ethno-symbolists. However, the role of their writers as literati in re-narrating their nations' past and linking the present nation-members with their heritage will be highlighted.

Anthony D. Smith, one the best-known academics in the field of interdisciplinary studies, underlined the role of ethno-symbolic intellectuals and names them as the creators, inventors, producers and analysts of ideas who, elaborating the memories of the past, can link the modern nation back to its 'golden age' (Smith, 1981; p. 109). Then, he expanded the circle of intellectuals to encompass philologists, archaeologists, poets, literati, historians, painters, musicians, sculptors, photographers, novelists, playwrights, actors, film directors and television producers, all of whom play a key role in 'conveying the ideas' and founding a connection between the present times and a national 'golden age'. They imagine, characterize, codify and set the boundaries of the nation and initiate nationalism. Finally, for Smith, they are the ones who have capacity to construct a national identity and, also, have the ability to reinterpret and resurrect their ancestral myths. Smith also identified ethno-symbolists' strategic creation and usage of national symbols as an ideology which popularizes the idea of unity in the nation-state, awakens the nation emotionally and helps the modern nation "to draw sustenance from a re-lived ancient past" (Smith; 2009, p.72).

John Armstrong is another leading academic and the author of many classic nationalistic books who is regarded as the 'founding father' of ethno-symbolism. Trying to originate the creation of nations and the subsequent invention of national identity, he proposes that nations did exist before nationalism, and that like other human identities, national identity has been an invention (Armstrong 1995:36). Furthermore, he believes that ethnic identity and consciousness is a deep-rooted feature and the most important part of this consciousness, according to him, is its persistence. Consequently, the formation of ethnic identity should be evaluated and examined in a time dimension of many centuries (Armstrong, 1982; p. 4).

Armstrong suggests that ethnic identity or consciousness is inspired as an "uncanny experience" when the people or group is forced to be silenced in society (Armstrong, 1982; p. 5).

Therewith, the “inability to communicate initiate[s] the process of differentiation” which, as a result, leads to a recognition of ethnic belonging (Özkirimli, 2000; p. 168). Such a conception of ethnic identity, further, reveals why ethnic ties are often affected by religious practices or class loyalties. In an effort to specify and analyse the factors which may affect, change or reshape those ethnic identification, Armstrong explores the factor of religion that, he believes, plays a main and undeniable role in reinforcing the reformation of identity. He indicates how universal religions - like Islam or Christianity – gave birth to different civilizations, myths and symbols that influence the formation of ethnic identity or nationhood in their own specific ways. Later, he claims that most of those religious myths are used as “transferences for political purposes” (Armstrong, 1982; p. 13).

Armstrong’s works provide a much more inclusive overview of the process of nationhood or ethnic identity formation than other comparable studies in this field. Anthony D. Smith confirms that few works other than Armstrong’s attempt to bring together such a variety of evidences and factors – administrative, military, religious, political social and linguistic – which construct and form the national identity. He adds that Armstrong made a strong case for the long-term influence of ‘myth-symbol complexes’ on the construction of nationhood (Smith, 1998; p. 185).

Adrian Hastings, a historian, is another expert who highlights his idea about the role of religion in the formation of nationhood and nationalism. He challenges the secularists’ positions and maintains that nations, nation-states and nationalism go far back in time, beyond the late eighteenth century. He underlines the role of religion in nationalism by analysing the act of translating the bible as a sacred text into the European vernaculars which encouraged the development of ethnicities into pre-modern nations. He further describes how the act of translation inspired a sense of sacredness and attached it to their collective identities by supplying a sense of God-sent chosen-ness (Hastings, 1997). He infers that “the Bible provided ... the original model of the nation. Without it and its Christian interpretation and implementation, it is arguable that nations and nationalism, as we know them, could never have existed ...”; This is why, today in the West, Christian values play a key role in generating national feeling and cultures; and indeed, it is through the mirror of the Bible which some

nations were initially conceived (Hastings, 1997; p. 4). Hastings argues that when nations and nationalism are found outside the Christian world, they bear witness to 'a process of westernization', and of the 'imitation' of this world (Hastings, 1997; p. 186). Later, he attacked Islam as the most powerful antidote against nationalism that 'deconstructs' nations (Hastings, 1997; pp. 200-2). He ascertained that the sacred centrality of Arabic as a God-given tongue makes the development of vernacular nationalisms unlikely. Since then, nationalism and religion have had an ambivalent relationship; secular nationalism has usually rejected religion and likewise religious people or leaders have opposed ideologies of nationalism. In the following sections, I would proceed with the complete discussion over the collision between religion and nationalism as one of the core basic theories that I am going to apply in analysing the selected texts of Iranian and British literature.

2.4.3.1 NATIONALISM AND THE GLORIOUS PAST OF THE NATION

Probably the central point of consideration – not only in this type but also in the other types of nationalist theory as well – is the role of the past in the creation of the present. The 'past' is the main point from which the divisions between theorists of nationalism are derived. Nationalists including primordialists, modernists or ethno-symbolists have presented us with very different interpretations of that 'past'. "The manner in which they have viewed the place of ethnic history has largely determined their understanding of nations and nationalism today" (Smith, 1995).

In a simple word, for primordialists, the nation is immemorial. National forms may change and nations may break up, but the identity of a nation or nationhood is fixed and unchanging. Primordialists feel themselves responsible for rediscovering and appropriating a submerged past in order to build the better on it. On the other hand, modernists consider the past as basically irrelevant. For them, the nation is a modern phenomenon, an expression of industrial modern society and the product of nationalist ideologies. They believe that a modern nationalist is free to use ethnic heritages, but nation-building can proceed without the aid of an ethnic past; "Hence, nations are phenomena of a particular stage of history, and embedded in purely modern conditions" (Smith, 1995). Finally, for the ethno-symbolists, the past is more challenging.

Though nations are modern and the product of modern cultural conditions, ethno-symbolic nationalists, who want to advertise and broadcast the concept of the nationhood and nationality, make liberal use of elements from the ethnic past, where they appear to answer to present needs and preoccupations. So modern nationalist intellectuals will freely select, invent and mix myths, memories and traditions in their quest for the imagined political community (Smith, 1995).

In a nutshell, the ethno-symbolists undertake this burden to remind their compatriots of their glorious past, so that they can restore and relive those glories. Rediscovering and reinterpreting the past in order to regenerate the community, they play a main role in the construction of nations. Their interpretations of old myths and memories re-explore, authenticate and re-appropriate the ethnic past and, therewith, link the active national present to the ancient ethnic heritage (Smith 1981:5-6). “In this continually renewed two-way relationship between ethnic past and nationalist present lies the secret of the nation's explosive energy and the awful power it exerts over its members” (Smith, 1995: pp. 3-23).

2.4.3.2 MYTHS, MEMORIES AND SYMBOLS OF A NATION

As mentioned earlier, for ethno-symbolists, nationalism gets its power from the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of national heritages which are rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias. It is from these elements of myth, memory, symbol, and tradition that modern national identities are reconstituted in each generation, as the nation grows bigger and its members cope with new challenges.

Ethno-symbolists reconstruct those myths, memories and symbols to resurrect the history and culture of the nation. History and culture provide the motives for nation to conflict and get united. Myths and symbols of the glorious past are not simply pretexts being manipulated from atavistic emotions. With the reference to Hobsbawm's statement, the elements of history and culture are not just merely invented traditions but also they have been designed to channel and control the energies of the newly mobilized masses (Hobsbawm, 1983; Ch.7). It highlights the motivating and inspiring dimension that those elements carry and transfer.

Many scholars or intellectuals like John Armstrong, John Hutchinson, Anthony Smith and Sadegh Hedayat have regarded or considered the recollections, legends and certain historical or cultural codes as alternative approaches to a perception of the continuing power of nationalism and the nation in the modern world. Applying those myths and memories, ethno-symbolic nationalists try to beat the limitations of modernism, while acknowledging its insights. Indeed, a central theme of ethno-symbolism is the creation of a relationship between shared memories and collective cultural identities. Symbols, legends and reminiscences of the old age are integral to cultural identity and the cultivation of them is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identities. By providing material or documentary evidence for events and personages being respected by the community, ethno-symbolists highlight and strengthen the shared memories and aspirations of nation-members.

2.4.4.3 RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

Religion has had a prominent place in theories of nationalism. The use of religion as one of the national factors or symbols to remind the nation-members of their shared legacy has also been prevalent among ethno-symbolists. Undoubtedly, there have been numerous cases where the nation-states have relied upon or been dominated by religious images and practices. The place of religion within nationalism, or rather to specify ethno-symbolic nationalism, and the perspectives and thoughts of different scholars have been conversed in brief earlier and will be discussed more in the analysis chapters to provide a clarification. Readers will notice in the following chapters of analysis that religion has played a key role in the application of ethno-symbolism and inspiring unifying ideas by the authors to either remind the reader of their shared past, legacy, heritage or alert them to the dissimilar and diffusing element which are often dictated by the colonizers or the state authorities. This, has made it necessary to allocate a place for the religion and its relation to the classic nationalism as well as to ethno-symbolic nationalism.

It is worthwhile to also mention that regardless of this contentious relationship between nationalism and religion, in most cases they have rejected each other. When nationalism emerged in the eighteenth century, it acted as somehow anti-religious. The theories and opinions of the

pioneers of nationalism such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau or John Locke were mainly based on the idea of taking religion away from the public life. Though at the time, religion was less political than it is in the contemporary world. Later in the middle of twentieth century and after the end of the Second World War, the ideology of nationalism that had been advertised as ‘modernization’ or ‘nation-building’ triggered the inclinations to create a sense of loyalty, unity and devotion in community members. Since then, nationalism and religion have been seen as opponents or rivals. Nationalism, mainly in developing or formerly colonized countries in Asia or Africa, was practised in two completely different ways formed by secular groups on one side and the religious authorities on the other. Religious activists in the world criticized the notions of nationalism. As one of the figures related to this study, Ayatollah Khomeini, the Iranian religious leader,¹⁷ was the first known leader who started accusing nationalism as a Western intrusion. Although Iran was one of those countries that had never been colonized, Khomeini claimed that America and Europe were trying to influence and control the culture and economy of the country under the guise of ‘nationalism’ (Fathollahi, M.A, 1999).

While analysing the texts chosen from Iranian literature, this history of clash and denouncement between Islam and nationalism in the Iranian state will be frequently encountered with. Therefore, it should be briefly clarified in the following chapters. It will also, as a related example, shed a better light and help the readers apprehend the place of religion in nationalistic theories. Therefore, to understand the rejection of nationalism by religious leaders and state authorities in Iran, the Islamic views and perspectives of nations and nationalism need to be discussed.

Islamic fundamentalism prescribes political Islam as a substitute for the nation state. The islamic mode of nationhood codifies it and nationality as fundamental religious categories, cunningly distinct from statehood and citizenship. The Islamic institutions of nationhood and personal nationality comprise a system of religious classifications - an organizing principle of “vision and division” (Oomen, 1997; p. 86). They reject the notion of secular sovereignty, postulating a universal community (Ummah) under the sovereignty of God. Therefore, nationalists with their ideas of territorial unity have come into clash and crisis with the type of

¹⁷ Khomeyni became the leader of Iran from 1979, following the Islamic Revolution and was in power until 1989.

political Islamic regimes which act as agents of God (Oomen, 1997; p. 44). Subsequently, the ideology of nationalism was considered as an enemy of Islamic society and they called for political organizations to overthrow, even by force, this Western influence and to establish a political order based on Islamic laws. Furthermore, religious governors identify nationalism as promoting a unified world order. According to them, nationalism promotes a single central political authority and unified world society and culture and therewith prepares the conditions for the establishment of a new world order.

As opposed to the anti-nationalistic propagandas of religious activists, nationalists followed the same procedure as anti-religious movements. They often came with the idea that religion is an insufficient basis for political unity or national development. Besides, in an effort to prove the inadequacy of religious-based politics for dealing with modern problems, classical nationalists have insisted on the hypothesis that politics is harmful to religion. Therefore they emphasized that in order to retain the purity of the religion, it should be kept out of the political area. Regarding this issue, Abdolkarim Soroush¹⁸ – one of the post-revolutionary pseudo-philosophers in Iran – claimed that the political involvement of Islamic in his country corrupted the purity of religion.

After all, several factors like language, race, history, background, culture, traditions and territory are involved in the process of nation-building. However, it seems that in some countries, such as in Iran for instance, religion has played a much more important role – particularly after the revolution – in that process than any other element. The ancient Persians who were Zoroastrians fell apart in national communities on the basis of religion. Then another religious level of nation emerged who identified themselves with Islam and clearly distinguished themselves from the religions' proponents.

Let me explain the issue with presenting a comparison between Western and Asian countries. Although the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries had different languages, the population mainly had the common religion of Christianity. However,

¹⁸ He is leading Iranian thinker and reformist who maintained that one should distinguish between religion and socio-historical factors as well as politics.

for the reason that the Anglo-Saxons were in majority, their language - English - became the popular and prevalent language, specifically in Great Britain. Therewith, the speakers of other languages with different ethnic or racial backgrounds adopted English – though not as a first language. It practically homogenized America, Britain or Europe in terms of language. Hence, not many issues related to religion or language arouse in the western countries. Unlike in the West, most countries in Asia were linguistically or religiously diverse. Before the colonization in many Asian countries – and before the invasion of Iran by Arabs – most ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities were faithful to the dominant dynasty and the ancient shared traditions, culture or religion. However, those events – colonization and the invasion of Arabs of the Iranian plateau – changed living conditions to be more challenging and competitive and provoked all the diverse groups and minorities, especially religious ones, to compete with each other for a share in political power and authority. Thus, those conflicts made religion one of the basics of the identity in these countries. In order to advance and promote their own political interests, therefore, most of the religious elites in power, in Asian countries in particular, raised and used religious sentiments.¹⁹ Likewise in Iran, after the invasion of Arabs and their long-lasting dominance, they emphasized the superiority of Muslims to the ancient Zoroastrian inhabitants. Accordingly, religious identities began to be highlighted in political preferences.

Nevertheless, and to conclude the mentioned discussions, it should be indicated that most of nationalist activists and theorists believed that religion and nationalism would not have been in any clash if they both had functioned in their own domains²⁰. They, more or less, ascertained that religion is a spiritual force and democracy a political one, but serious problems arise when religion transgresses its limits to interfere with politics and democracy transgresses its limits to use religion for political ends – as what exactly happened in Iran. The history of Iran and the experience of nationalism there shows that - after the Arabs’ invasion or even recently in Islamic revolution - when religion was used only for identity politics and only for power politics, it resulted in confrontation between the religious communities and other ethnic identities within the nation-state. Therefore, nationalist – especially ethno-symbolic ones – deduced that religion

¹⁹ For further information please see the Source:
http://www.wluml.org/node/1722?&lang=en_us&output=json&session-id=32bd4b6c665c40cec9449129d0a1521a

²⁰ For further information please see the Source:
http://www.wluml.org/node/1722?&lang=en_us&output=json&session-id=32bd4b6c665c40cec9449129d0a1521a

should be used for spiritual growth and for inner needs of the soul not as a factor or element for the identification of the nation-members (Engineer, 2004).

2.5 CONCLUSION

All the theories that were discussed in this chapter clarify different aspects of the rise of nations and nationalism. Primordialism suggests kinship-like vision of common descent in nationalistic insights. In other words, the primordial view of a nation was believed in as a sort of natural entity, a timeless association of human beings based on the identification of one or more shared characteristics of a given population, such as common ancestry, race, religion, language and territory (Oomen, 1997; p. 59). Hence, actual ethno-cultural nations have either existed “since times immemorial” or at least for a long time during the pre-modern period (Hasting, 1997).

The second approach is from the modernists, who view and place the origin of nations in modern times. The modernists consider that nations are real but distinctly modern and instrumental creations of capitalism (Gellner, 1983 & Hobsbawn, 1992). However, there are some modernists who have anti-realist views about nations and regard nations as merely “imagined but still powerful entities” (Anderson 1991). For them, as Anderson explains in depth in his *Imagined Communities*, nations do not exist in reality and are not palpable but more of imaginary phenomena in the minds of nation-members who share similar factors and elements and feel that they belonged to the same community as nation.

Besides those two divisions of perspectives, there is a more popular and moderate version founded by Anthony Smith under the name ‘ethnosymbolism’. It seems to me that it combines instrumental ethnicity and symbolic nationality to preserve a nation’s cultural identity which gives birth to the motive force for state formation. Ethno-symbolists mainly focus on the centrality of myths and memories of ethnic descent. Those myths, memories and symbols serve to affirm the nation’s foundation. They interpret the meaning of the memorable past events and dictate them in terms of a collective to encompass and surround all the members of the nation. Nowadays, by the help of nationalists in different sectors, the application of those myths, legends

and symbols have not been limited to the history books. There are numerous opportunities for enactment of a nation's repertoire of myths, memories and symbols; in ballads, stories, poetry, art, dance, music, commemoration, jokes, acts of worship, political activism, eating of certain foods, wearing of certain dress, etcetera. This thesis explores a range of literature using an ethno-symbolic approach to demonstrate such subtle construction of nationalism and national identity through a new lens and perspective.

Nationalism as an epochal thought or deliberation has been the subject of hundreds of analyses, the source of inspirations for dozens of theories and the centre of attention for sociologists and historians for about half a century. It is considered as a doctrine, ideology or a social movement which seeks to identify a behavioural entity of the nation. In order to achieve this goal, nationalist movements implement certain political and cultural methods. Although, many intellectuals such as Sohui Lee (2006) oppose the theory and regard it as anti-democratic and detestable, nationalism is presented by other sociologists and researchers such as A.D. Smith (1998) and Pricles Lewis (2000) to be like an accelerator that can lead the community to modernism and democracy. According to the opinion of the similar unanimous group of nationalists in Iran, as an example, the social upheavals and mutations which had been grounded by the dictators like Bismarck in Germany (1871-1890), Napoleon in France (1804-1815) and Franco in Spain (1939-1975), were followed by 'Reza-Khan'(1921-1941) as King of Iran (Ghani, 1998; pp 40-43). Thereby, they regarded the nationalistic evolutions as positive base which caused noticeable improvements and progresses. Reza Khan was the king of Iran from 1925 to 1941 and the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty. Soon after establishing his reign, Reza Khan issued new state orders which brought various social, political and economic reforms aiming to change the nation-state to the modern Iranian state. Moreover, he controlled the publication and media, confiscated numerous independent newspapers, annulled MPs' political immunity and eliminated many political parties. It was during his reign when the "modernization Party" – who had faithfully supported him – was replaced by the "New Iran Party" in 1963 which originally was founded as the "Progression Party". The "Progression party" was an organization to emulate Benito Mussolini's Fascist Party, and Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Republican Party. However, this party was also suspected of promoting Republican ideologies and was dissolved. In the process of the evolution of nationalism in Iran, Reza Khan's period and

the constitutional era - which led to the establishment of a constitutional system - have eminent places. The success of the constitutional movements initiated a new period in which modernist tendencies and nationalistic affinities were consolidated. In other words, the necessity of instituting an established, potent and constant nation-state with strong and reliable national security after Reza Khan's coming to power drew more and greater attentions to the ideology of nationalism and archaic nationalism in particular.

Ireland is often regarded as one of the most religious countries in Europe. The religious nature of Irish society became one of the major "defining factors of Irish national identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (White, 2007; p. 47). Irish nationalism began as a reaction against British colonialism and encompassed an effort to recreate or return to an ancient Gaelic culture. The longing to revolt against the oppression of British colonial dominance unified the different aspects of Irish society. A dominant religion, Catholicism, played a vital part in forming a national unity that was necessary for nationalism to become a moving force (Bruce, 2003; p. 46; Girvin, 2002; pp. 3-14). In the case of Irish nationalism, the Catholic Church became an influential political power after its successful resistance against British colonialism from 1860 to 1870 (Larkin, 1987). Thereby, religion was – to some extent – amalgamated with nationalism.

CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS; JAMALZADEH'S *ONCE UPON A TIME*
Vs. JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the two books *Once Upon A Time* by Mohammed Ali Jamalzadeh and *Dubliners* by James Joyce are studied, compared and analysed. Branded as one of the first examples of modern fiction-writing in the history of Persian literature, *Once Upon A Time* is a collection of short stories published by Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh in 1921. As a contemporary Iranian author and translator, Jamalzadeh is known as the father of Iranian short story. His writings grounded the modernist and realist styles in Persian literature. Similar to *Once Upon A Time*, *Dubliners* is collection of fifteen short stories written by James Joyce in 1914. Picturing the routine life of the Irish people in the early years of the twentieth century - during the peak period of Irish nationalism, *Dubliners* explores the history and culture of the nation to look for the roots of Irish national identity.

Each of these texts is regarded as a key moment in the advent of modernism in their literary cultures, and it is significant that both texts consist of short stories. Both texts are innovative as they dared to describe everyday life in sordid detail – often in shocking ways. They describe aspects of everyday life that were, until then, considered taboo subjects. Also, in both cases, they do so in everyday language, deliberately breaking from a previous style of ‘flowery’ or ‘poetic’ writing in order to capture the directness of ordinary, modern speech and language. As a result, both were considered shocking. *Once Upon a Time* was banned, and *Dubliners* had its publication delayed by 10 years because of its controversial aspects.

Using an ethno-symbolic approach, this chapter sheds new lights on the two books and uncovers the nationalistic intentions of both texts and their authors. To do so, the chapter focuses on the parables, similes, metaphors and symbols that are used in the books and reveals the

stimulating objectives behind them. However, based on what was mentioned earlier, I need to highlight that due to the circumstances of the time these writers were writing their books, they were not able to overtly express their ideas with clear examples. For that reason, the available examples within those books often need to be interpreted before being analyzed through ethno-symbolic approach. Studying the chosen texts' creative literature by the new approach through the comparison of both authors' methods and styles, this chapter measures how these books contributed to the formation of national identity by re-narrating or re-building the constructive elements of nationhood.

It should be noted that, apart from having been written in almost analogous span of time, there are many other similarities between *Once Upon A Time* and *Dubliners*. Significantly, each text, or its writer, attempts to describe a particular culture from within – that is from the perspective of someone who knows and loves that culture – and yet each is nevertheless highly critical of the conservative forces holding the culture back from a successful embracing of modernity. It also should be noted that both Joyce and Jamalzadeh chose the path of exile: they lived most of their lives away from the homelands they clearly felt such fondness for, while nevertheless writing about the cultures they had chosen to leave behind them. Meanwhile, back in Ireland/Iran, their books were banned.

After the establishment of the Pahlavi's dynasty in 1925 by Reza Shah, the objectives of the Constitutional Revolution²¹ of Iran were revitalized. Concurrently, many Iranian intellectuals and elites felt that the country should be modernized. It became a general public consensus that the country should be modernized, even by compulsion, by someone, whether it be a government or a system. Subsequently, the Iranian activists who were influenced by the wave of Modernism in Europe started to look for changes. In attempting to do so, they emphasized the important constructive elements of national identity and historical roots of Iranians which itself made these topics popular at the time. Hence, the role of the intellectuals, before and after the Constitutional Revolution, to promote the ideas of modernity as well as to develop and amplify the relationship between national identity, religion, language leading to the emergence of new literary styles and

²¹ The Persian Constitutional Revolution started in 1906 and continued till 1909. It led to the conversion of the totalitarian regime of the Qajar to a constitutional system of rule and resulted in the formation of Iran's first parliament and the approval of the constitution.

philosophical thoughts in Iran on that period is undeniable (Basiri, B, 2011). As Basiri states, the core of Jamalzadeh's ideas and thoughts was shaped in this era and under the mentioned circumstances. By using new literary methods, Jamalzadeh attempted to form a cultural bridge between European modern civilization and traditional Iranian society. Jamalzadeh's ideas about literary, economic, historical, philosophical, cultural fields are traceable in his writings. As Basiri continues, Jamalzadeh aimed to bring fundamental changes to the traditional style of Persian literary writing. He did not shun from criticizing the traditional mentality of writers and scholars of his time Iran in the preface of his *Once Upon A Time* – which is known as the 'manifesto' of modern Persian literature (Basiri, 2011). For him, their traditionalism was a sheer backwardness that provided “the essence for the Iranian political tyranny” that hindered modernism and democracy (ibid, 2011). His modernist approach, however, was in contradiction with his archaism²², nationalistic intentions and his attitude towards the national past. For Jamalzadeh, one of the basics in understanding of a nation-state and planning for its future development is to study its past history and attain a full recognition of it (Basiri, 2011). It should be noted that in spite of Jamalzadeh being biased towards the national past and history, he emphasized that bigotry and chauvinism in any thing would prevent the society from improvement and development.

James Joyce, on the other hand, was an Irish author and poet whose *Ulysses* is considered as one of the best novels of modern English literature. Known as one of the most prominent modernist writers of the twentieth century, he wrote three novels, two books of poetry, a play and a collection of short-stories. Joyce migrated to France and then to Switzerland in 1912; however, his writings were mostly related to or about Dublin. Likewise, his *Dubliners* is set in Dublin in the early twentieth century with its precisely defined landmarks and urban layout which, according to Maria. R. Moran (2000), allows its citizens to appreciate its splendid setting by narrating the scenes and events with very precise details. As Moran continued, James Joyce's *Dubliners* portrays a geographical, social, political and religious depiction of Dublin - as the second city of the British Empire – in which he has applied his nationalistic views with a satiric approach. Along with W. B. Yeats and Douglas Hyde but with a different style and approach,

²² Archaism or archaic nationalism is the use of ancient form of speech or referencing to the almost forgotten antique but national symbols, figure, myths to revive and re-narrate the national past and history (McArthur, 2005).

James Joyce was one of the main writers who contributed to the “Irish Literary Revival” (Potts, Willard, 2001; p.2). However, he often avoided fierce debates as part of the Revival and insisted that literature should be instructive and elevating (Ibid; p. 50). Emphasizing Irishness in a wider perspective and context, he also criticized mourning over Ireland’s sad history as he believed it would only make the Irish nationality narrow and merely historical. Based on Willard Potts’ statement, the idea of uniting two Irelands as a central idea was fashioned between the late eighteenth century and the mid-nineteenth. Having been founded as “the Irish Revival”, that movement emphasized Irish nationalism. The Irish-Ireland movement was another notable development which occurred in those years and influenced Joyce. The Irish-Ireland movement, as Tomás O’Riordan (2011) describes, was initiated by the writings of Thomas Davis in 1840s and continued by Douglas Hyde’s in 1892. The movement’s authors emphasized “the necessity of de-Anglicizing Ireland; they argued that Ireland should follow her own traditions in language, literature and even in dress” (O’Riordan, 2011). James Joyce was partly congruent with the movement but he was not compliant with them in terms of language, religion and some other Irish traditions - as opposed to them who insisted on the use of the Irish language (Moran, M. R, 2000). This attitude of Joyce has encouraged scholars and critics not to consider and address him as an Irish nationalist. According to Emer Nolan (1995) and his rationalization, Joyce’s literary imagination was not constrained by any social and political conditions of Ireland and was naturally classified as cosmopolitan. The other main reason, as Nolan stated, was that Joyce did not limit himself in his writings to struggle with native traditions; instead, he articulated his own (Nolan, 1995; p.15). James Joyce’s writings such as *Dubliners* carried multiple notions which reflected his specific approach towards the Irish nationalism (Loeffler, Toby, 2009; pp.29-56).

Having a specific approach towards national identity similarly applies to M. A. Jamalzadeh and his literature. His *Once Upon A Time* is a collection of six short-stories which includes ‘Persian Is Sugar (Farsi Shekar Ast)’, ‘The Political Figures (Rajol’e Siyaasi)’, ‘With Friends Like That (Doustiy’e Khaleh Kherseh)’, ‘Molla Qorban Ali’s Complaint (Darde De;haye Molla Gorban-Ali)’, ‘What’s Sauce For The Goose (Bileh Dig Bileh Choghoundar)’ and Veylan Al-Dowla”. Mirroring the author’s own childhood and adolescence memories, *Once Upon A Time* includes terms and expressions common in Persian language and offers a glimpse of Iranian culture and customs from the Constitutional era until the end of Qajar period. Through

the publication of this book, Jamalzadeh contributed to the reformation of Iranian culture as well as to the revival of Persian language as the main elements which constructed the national identity of Iranians (Mohebbi, Azadeh, 2005). For instance, Jamalzadeh's book starts with a satirical story called 'Persian Is Sugar', the message of which is the importance of language. It narrates a story of a man who meets a group of three others - a middle class man, a Sheikh and a young lad with a felt hat – when he is on his way back to the country after a long while being in abroad. The book benefits from vulgar expressions and slang sayings to criticize the ongoing social and political condition of the state while aiming to inspire new ideas. In *Once Upon A Time*, Jamalzadeh focused on the existing social, political and cultural backwardness and challenged political tyranny as well as other elements which caused the underdevelopment. 'The Political Figures', for example, pictured an image of the failed ideals of the Constitutional Revolution and related how opportunists replaced true revolutionaries.

As Mohebbi (2005) points out, all the characters within the stories of the book represented certain minorities, races, groups or levels of society. According to her, Jamalzadeh's style in *Once Upon A Time* was concentrated on a single theme which later influenced the writings of Sadegh Chubak²³ and Sadegh Hedayat. In order to get a better perception of Jamalzadeh's prose writing as well as his style in the story-telling, and to study his role in the development of short-story writing in the history of Persian literature, his works should be considered along and compared with the works of his contemporary writers such as Mirza Molkom-Khan and Akhundzadeh (Jahani. Amir, 2009). Mirza Molkom-Khan (1834-1908) was an Iranian intellectual, modernist writer, journalist and politician. He published the Qanun newspaper for the first time. He was one of the prominent figures of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran. Fath-Ali Akhundzadeh (1812-1878) was an Iranian author and playwright who is considered as the founder of modern literary criticism in Iran²⁴. In a similar way to Mohebbi, other critics such as Mansour Rastegaar Fesayi (2001), Jamal Mirsadeghi (1986) and Yaqoub Azhand (2004) indicate that Jamalzadeh's style did not change during the long years of his literary career; based on their endorsement, he tried to include as many slang, vulgar and rare terms and expressions as possible with the hope that it would help the Persian language to be

²³ He was one of Iran's prominent short fiction, drama and novel writers of the 20th century.

²⁴ Adamiyyat, Fereydun (1970) The opinions of M.F. Akhundzadeh. Kharazmi Publications, First Edition. Iran.

reviewed, reformed and supplemented and the literature would be available, accessible and perceptible to everyone. In doing so, as these critics claim in different ways, Jamalzadeh aimed to teach his readers that they could do and be better than who they are. After *Once Upon A Time*, most of Jamalzadeh's writings such as *The Doom's Desert* (Sahraye Mahshar), *Bittersweet* (Talkh 0 Shirin) and *The Story of Stories* (Ghesseye Ghesse-ha) had similar prose styles and narrated the analogous themes.

Joyce's *Dubliners* has much in common with *Once upon A Time*. All of the stories of the book happen in Dublin in spite of the fact that the author had left Ireland to live in France. Maria R. Moran (2000) stated that even though Joyce fled from Ireland, his views about the Irish struggle for independence remained untouched and became the major issue with which he was concerned. In a similar way to Jamalzadeh, one of the main themes or objectives that Joyce is aiming for, in *Dubliners*, is to depict the fact that people in the nation-state are living their routine lives without being really conscious of the status, conditions and terms under which they are living (Haj Dayi, Fariba, 2010). According to Haj Dayi, this incautious and reckless attitude, which results from lack of awareness about the past, history, traditions, language culture and religion of the society, makes them lose their collective national identity. Having a deep self-conscience and awareness of original Irish identity, James Joyce strove to recover and retrieve that ignored, forgotten and lost national identity throughout *Dubliners* and that is one of the main reasons why he wrote about Ireland although he had left it years ago (ibid, 2010).

Each of the *Dubliners* stories is a manifestation of the unhappiness and misery of the Irish people as a nation, the supremacy and domination of the Church and religion over the state, alcoholism and the decadence with which the middle class people are struggling. The first story, called "The Sisters", is about an old priest who dies and a child whom the priest had taught realizing from the nuns' whispering that they are blaming him for breaking the holy chalice which caused Father Flynn's death. It is indeed through the representation of Father Flynn and his cruel authority over the unnamed boy that the story depicts the dominance of the Church on the nation-members. When the priest dies, the boy understands the idleness and emptiness of those religious practices with which he has been pressured. It is the death of the priest, indeed, that releases the boy from further misery. A similar attempt to demonstrate the impact of the

church-schools and the relentless thoughts and practices of the priests can also be observed in “An Encounter”. It narrates the story of two National School boys who escape from the sombre and boring establishment of military like disciplines of the school and their encounter with a deviant man expands and widens their awareness of the world around them. Joyce offers same criticism of the old-fashioned and outdated traditional values backed by the Church in “The Boarding House”. The story depicts how those traditional values crush the souls of the citizens and weaken them.

“Araby” - the third short-story of the novel - starts from a gloomy apartment located in a dreary area in Dublin where a young teenager discovers three old books by Walter Scott and they lead him to the land of fantasy, imagination and romantic dream. The story then develops in an upcoming bazaar where the boy tries to buy a present for his friend’s sister with whom he has fallen in love. “Eveline”, another short-story within the book, narrates the story of a nineteen year old immature and undeveloped girl who lives in a semi-rural area where the majority of the houses are made from clay and in brown colour. When new red-brick buildings start to appear all around the vicinity, it confuses the girl to decide whether she belongs to the old brown or new phase of the neighbourhood.

In “Ivy Day in the Committee Room”, James Joyce refers to the anniversary of Charles Stewart Parnell, one of the remarkable nationalist and patriot figures in the history of Ireland who struggled against British colonial rule, to uncover and criticize the ongoing corruption of Irish politicians. Different characters and figures of the story represent various levels of the Irish society; while Joe Hynes represents the active nationalists, who are still loyal to the ideals of the likes of Charles Parnell and are critical of degraded politicians, John Henchy exemplifies those key decision-making authorities who are corrupt and prone to compromise with any anti-state powers for money. This story also pictures the working class, represented by “Old Jack”, who do not have a clear view or knowledge of the past of the nation and the present situation of the state and would only follow and support whoever employs or feed them. The use of the remarkable nationalistic events such as the reference to the Irish Revival Movement continues in “A Mother” to portray Mrs. Kearney and her family’s life and status.

One of the other common points which is evident in both *Once Upon A Time* and *Dubliners* is that both texts criticized their respective countrymen for their reluctance to work for positive change and for a better nation-state (Moran, M.R, 2000). Highlighting the nation's inaction, ignorance and indolence, both texts convey the fear of decline, disparity and heterogeneity and, therefore, encourage the citizens "to move away from static paralysis towards a sense of collective agency for positive change" (ibid, 2000). To achieve this goal, both books pictured the shortcomings of the distressed way of life from various perspectives and emphasized the nation-members' need to fight for it. As a consequence of these thematic public condemnations several criticisms were received which positioned these two works in opposition to the classic nationalism. Ghader Hatami (2000) criticise this approach in Jamalzadeh and his writings and claimed that to criticize the nation and standing against them would exclude Jamalzadeh from the circle of nationalist authors. Likewise, Seamus Deane (1985) situated *Dubliners* and its author's relationship with nationalism in a binary opposition as he believed Joyce had frequently renounced nationalism in his unique and remodelled aesthetic way. This matter will be discussed later and the reason why both authors saw their fellow citizens and their lack of knowledge as obstacles in the development of nation and its relevance to the intentions of the writers to be in the favour of their nations and nationalism will be discussed.

This chapter focusses on themes such as the formation of national, racial, linguistic and religious identity of nations together with the provision of various examples chosen from both texts. The main attention in this chapter will be to study how the two authors pictured Iran and Ireland and highlighted some fundamental elements which, whether appropriately or inappropriately, were central to the construction of the concepts of Iranianness and Irishness as solid and components of collective identity. Therewith, the extent of the literature's involvement with national identity and its various aspects in different states is studied. Consequently, with the use of the lens of ethno-symbolism, "the supposed antagonism to nationalism that inheres throughout" their works will be reinterpreted and the contribution of both texts in promoting nationalistic/patriotic ideas as well as the formation of their nations' national identity will be evaluated (Loeffler, H, 2009; p.31).

3.2 CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND BASIC PORTRAYAL OF THE NATION

According to Edward Said, one of the main characteristics that separates and differentiates the recent descriptions of or approaches to nationalism from the traditional nineteenth-century European nationalism is the heroic or romantic narration of the nation (Stated in Nolan, 1995; p.139). The concept of the nation is not merely formed by allegorical or imaginative portrayals of its past but is also achieved through the construction and development of a political and cultural identity which could be shared by the whole nation (Brennan, T, 1989). Timothy Brennan states that it would be contradictory, in the present-day, to merely “lament for the necessary and regrettable insistence of nation-forming” while there is no recognized national identity with which to mark the nation (Brennan, 1994; pp.4-26). The use of cultural symbols and applying frequent metaphorical references to the customs and traditions of a nation, in both *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time*, signified the role of those texts in the revival of their nation’s national consciousness. This characteristic also entitles the two texts to be seen as ethno-symbolic nationalistic books.

There are a number of Iranian and Irish nationalist writers, such as Sadegh Choubak, Nader Naderpour and Sadegh Hedayat as well as Thomas Davis and W. B. Yeats who played a key role in the cultural reform and decolonization of their countries and could be classified as what is indicated as romantic nationalists, for they often glorified the past of their nations. Avoiding extreme glorification, James Joyce and Jamalzadeh’s texts included that tone to refer to the past of their nations, whether it be vividly or in a very covert register. However, they mainly dealt with the daily occurrences in a realistic and secular style to conceptualize the nation and state in the current time and space and contribute to the formation of a putative national identity and nation-wide harmony. In Philippe Sollers’s view, Joyce was not strictly in favour of traditional nationalism and what he aimed for was to rearticulate the historical, cultural, mythological and religious traces of the nation (1978; pp.107-121). Likewise, Valerie Evans (2010) refers to the last decade of the nineteenth century and the Irish cultural revival and indicates how the Irish strove to redefine their national identity and revive national traditions and culture. This applies to Jamalzadeh and his *Once Upon A Time* in a similar way.

Probably, one of the best examples to study the role of the Irish nation in reinvigorating cultural values within Joyce's *Dubliners* would be in 'The Dead' where Miss Ivors asks Gabriel about his intention travel:

'Go where?' asked Miss Ivors. 'Well, you know, every year I go for a cycling tour with some fellows and so—' 'But where?' asked Miss Ivors. 'Well, we usually go to France or Belgium or perhaps Germany,' said Gabriel awkwardly. 'And why do you go to France and Belgium,' said Miss Ivors, 'instead of visiting your own land?' 'Well,' said Gabriel, 'it's partly to keep in touch with the languages and partly for a change.' 'And haven't you your own language to keep in touch with – Irish?' asked Miss Ivors. 'Well,' said Gabriel, 'if it comes to that, you know, Irish is not my language.' Their neighbours had turned to listen to the cross-examination. Gabriel glanced right and left nervously and tried to keep his good humour under the ordeal, which was making a blush invade his forehead. 'And haven't you your own land to visit,' continued Miss Ivors, 'that you know nothing of, your own people, and your own country?' (Joyce, 1914; p.98).

With regards to Valerie Evans (2010) reference to the Irish cultural revival movement when the Irish nationalism was in its peak, Gabriel's dialogue with Miss Ivors makes them quarrel over Gabriel's opinion which put the Irish language in a less culturally valued position compared to other European languages. Through the debate over the destination of Gabriel's travel and the Irish national language, Joyce's *Dubliners* stresses the legitimacy of the Irish language and emphasizes the fact that the Irish people have the right to use it as a medium of communication. However, it does not mean that Joyce utterly and entirely accepted or endorsed the insular, backward Irish traditional nationalism in terms of merely using the Irish language - the way it was promoted by the Irish Literary Revival. It should not be ignored that Joyce was not a strict supporter of the use of Irish language since he himself wrote his books in English. What is implied from the above example and the following discussion is that by comparing and contrasting Gabriel and Miss Ivors, who symbolizes the traditional nationalism which Gabriel despises, *Dubliners* criticizes both the traditional nationalist approach to the Irish and the view

which denigrated or considered Irish values and culture as lower than the other Europeans. When Miss Ivors questions Gabriel over his destination and then calls him a ‘West Briton’ for simply going to somewhere other than Ireland, she regards him a traitor who has no interest in or loyalty to his motherland. The dialogue between the two characters surely suggests that, unlike Irish nationalists of Joyce’s time who preferred to live in an insular Celtic fantasy, Irish culture is a European culture. Yet, based on Joyce’s public lecture in 1907 in Trieste, this Irish culture was “ceased by the foreign occupation to an intellectual force in Europe” (Stated in Howes, 2006; p.257). Eventually, the main criticism of the story is on Gabriel’s extreme attraction to the English and other European cultures as well as his reaction that degrades the Irish language as it has low value and credit to be learnt and used for communication compared to other European languages. Therewith, ‘The Dead’ challenges the traditional nationalism and their idea of supporting one language as the national language of the state while at the same time respects and promotes every nation’s right to freely use its ancestral language. Taking the element of language as part of the Irish nation’s culture and values, it is emphasized that the language should be available for the Irish to learn and communicate in, yet, everybody should be given the choice to choose.

A very similar issue regarding the elevation and promotion of language, as part of the national values, is mirrored in Jamalzadeh’s *Once Upon A Time*. The stories of the book contain various figures that use Arabic language such as the Sheikh in the prison cell in ‘Farsi Is Sugar’ who recites:

Believer! Deliver ye not the reins and thy rebellious and weak soul to anger and rage, for ‘those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind....’ [The shaikh’s speech is sprinkled with Arabic verses from the Koran, which he pronounces as if they were Persian] (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.35).

And it is due to the same reason that “the sheikh’s speech stunned the felt-hatted boy. Recognizing only the word ‘Kazem’²⁵ in ‘Those who control’, he replies, ‘No, Reverend, your servant’s name isn’t Kazem, it’s Ramazan. I only meant to say that we could at least know why

²⁵ Kazem is a masculine name and in Arabic means someone who controls his/her anger and was cited in the verses that the sheikh recited.

we've been buried alive" (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.35). The sheikh, as the religious representative, is trying to calm and soothe everyone in the cell. He insists on using Arabic verses to provide religious evidence and rationalize the situation:

This time, with the same consummate declamation and composure, these words emanated from the holy precinct: "May God reward ye who believe. The point is well taken by your advocate's intellects. Patience is the key to our freedom. Spero²⁶ that the reason of our imprisonment shall become manifest ex tempore²⁷; but whatever the case, whether sooner or later, it most assuredly will reach our ears. Interea²⁸, while we wait, the most profitable occupation is to recite the name of the creator, which in any event is the best of endeavours" (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.36).

The above example resonates with the use of Latin words and phrases in Joyce's work. The estrangement of the citizens from the language signifies a classic colonial condition, as Marjorie Howes states, where the texts attempt to highlight how the colonizer - or invader in Iran's case - "has forced their language and culture upon colonized" (Howes, 2006; p.257). The objective of Joyce's text in using the terms that sound foreign to the ears of Irish citizens is to mark the Latin language as the official language of the Catholic Church, overshadowing Irish identity and highlighting its dispossession. They remind the readers that it has created two opposite 'familiar' and 'foreign' in the language which is one of the basic elements in the construction of Irish national identity. In a similar way, taking the clerics and those who believe in them as the representations of the traditional level of society, *Once Upon A Time* challenges their behaviour, beliefs and even the language they use. Remarking upon them as disharmonious to the norms of the nation-state, the story depicts how ordinary people are so unfamiliar with Arabic language which is loaned and remained from the Arabs and their invasion of the Persian Empire. It also criticizes the use of numerous Arabic words and phrases that have been preferred and replaced the Persian terms by the authoritative level of society such as the clerics and politicians.

²⁶ Spero: "I hope" [cited in Arabic language].

²⁷ Ex tempore: "Forthwith [cited in Arabic language].

²⁸ Interea: "meanwhile" [cited in Arabic language].

As the title of the first story, 'Farsi Is Sugar' suggests, the Persian language is more sweet, pleasant and conceivable for people whose ancestors used it for communication and certainly has no less value than the Arabic language. Without any attempt to denigrate and defame the Arabic language, Jamalzadeh's book aims to remind and elevate the reputation of the Persian language as the original and ancestral language of the Iranian state. Highlighting those discordances with the use of satirical language, Jamalzadeh's text aims to influence public opinion and make them conscious about what truly belongs to the nation and what does not. Yet, the text does not hesitate to ridicule those who have been westernized in terms of customs and behaviour:

I was so dismayed at first that I could barely see, but, as I gradually got used to the darkness, I sensed that I wasn't the only guest in the cell. I first noticed one of those notorious "western oriented gentleman" who will serve as monuments to coddling, idiocy, and illiteracy in Iran until the day of Resurrection.....My Wog companion was perched in an arched alcove wearing a collar as tall as a samovar chimney and as black as the smoke of some Caucasus diesel train as sooty. Pinched by the collar, which propped up his neck like a pillory, he was immersed in a French novel, reading in the light and shadow of the cell (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.34).

While *Once Upon A Time* rejects the old-style and outdated traditions in the nation-state - such as the dissonant language by the clerics or religious practices and culture with which the nation-members are following – it does not endorse all aspects of Western modernity. Indeed, they are portrayed as discordant as the outdated traditions and beliefs. It should not be ignored that promoting modernity and the growth and development of the nation-state is one of the main objectives of the book. Nonetheless, Jalamzadeh's text does not approve the unconditional and blind pursuit of Western models. This approach of the book caused some confusion and received criticism. Behrouz Basiri (2011), for instance, defines that Jamalzadeh sometimes sounds very supportive of and preoccupied with the original and ancestral culture, traditions and values of the nation, but at times, he presents the same traditions and beliefs as the main causes of the nation's

backwardness. As opposed to his idea, it should be added that, based on what is mentioned, the text was only not supportive of the blind pursuit of customs and tradition, whether they be old and ancient or modern and recent. In order to clarify and rationalize this method of the author and his text it is needed to refer to ethno-symbolic nationalism.

Based on what is mentioned in earlier chapters, the ethno-symbolic approach to nationalism underlines the formation and continuation of national identity through myths, memories, values and symbols (Conversi, D, 2006; p.21). In Anthony D. Smith's ethnosymbolism, intellectuals such as writers, poets, painters, photographers, literati, archeologists and historians play key roles "as the creators, inventors, producers and analysts of ideas" (Smith, 1981; p.109). Revitalizing and refreshing the memorable values, symbols and myths of the nation, they link the current and modern nation to their ancestors and the nation's past (Conversi, 1995 & Hutchinson, 1987). National language, culture and the ancestral traditions of a nation are parts of the values that intellectuals envision, define and array to let the nation re-live their ancestral heritage (Conversi, D, 2006; p.22). Joyce and Jalalzadeh's books attempted to form a new modern national identity for their own nations which did not rely on the sheer use of a particular language as the national one. Instead, elevating the culture, values and traditions of the nation, they suggested an updated and reinterpreted national characteristic and provided their nations with a chance to re-live their ancestral traditions, cultural values and customs. What Jamalzadeh and Joyce have done in their respective books is to focus on the positive and negative aspects of their nations' culture, traditions, customs and values and attempt to revitalize the positive but fading values and obliterate the outdated traditions which no longer suit the requirements and interests of the nation-members. In doing so, both *Dubliners* and *Once Upon a Time* scrutinized the key reasons that have caused backwardness and inhibited their nations and states' development. Supporting this idea, Masoumeh Afshar (2007) states that Jamazadeh tried to expose the chaos and disorder after the Constitutional Revolution – and in Joyce's case after the Revival Movement – and stress the conflict between the old, traditional culture and values and the modern and more updated culture and customs; the conflict which led the community and nation-members even not to be able to understand each other as we could see from the conversation between the reverend and the Westernized man in the cell. This is similarly mirrored in *Dubliners*:

The indelicate clacking of the men's heels and the shuffling of their soles reminded him that their grade of culture differed from his. He would only make himself ridiculous by quoting poetry to them which they could not understand (Joyce, 1914; p.92).

The above lines depict Gabriel as he wishes to quote English poetry and refer to Robert Browning or Shakespeare, instead of using Irish poetry or literature and underscored the fact that even though he is an Irish citizen, he is not quite familiar with his national literature and culture than with English poetry and British culture. This, however, does not mean that Joyce approved of British colonialism or English imperialism. Based on Masoumeh Afshar's opinion, the text and other various examples highlighted that neither the old traditional values nor the very modern ones have been very inclusive to contribute to the formation of a coherent state. Satirizing and mocking those mentioned aspects, *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* aimed to suggest more inclusive values which are more shared by the mass and suitable and applicable to the current need of the country. In a similar way to Afshar, Valerie Evans (2010) indicates that the stories of Joyce's *Dubliners* have something in common, which is the paralysis within the Irish nation-state. Based on Evan's account, some of the values of the Irish community such as religion have become nothing more than convention for the citizens and the subsequent apathy have paralyzed them:

Religion for her was a habit, and she suspected that a man of her husband's age would not change greatly before death. She was tempted to see a curious appropriateness in his accident.....She believed steadily in the Sacred Heart as the most generally useful of all Catholic devotions and approved of the sacraments. Her faith was bounded by her kitchen, but, if she was put to it, she could believe also in the banshee and in the Holy Ghost (Joyce, 1914; p.78).

Taking religion as one of the theological values in society, the text clearly criticizes the inefficiency of the values and customs which have evolved the nation-members and do not emotionally or practically satisfy them. Realizing those elements and understanding the

frustration that lead to the Irish nation-state's paralysis, Joyce's text - and in a very similar way, Jamazadeh's *Once Upon A Time* - exemplified them in a satirical language to condemn their inefficiency. In 'The Dead,' where Mary Jane is playing the piano:

The patting at once grew louder in encouragement and then ceased altogether. Gabriel leaned his ten trembling fingers on the tablecloth and smiled nervously at the company. Meeting a row of upturned faces he raised his eyes to the chandelier. The piano was playing a waltz tune and he could hear the skirts sweeping against the drawing-room door. People, perhaps, were standing in the snow on the quay outside, gazing up at the lighted windows and listening to the waltz music. The air was pure there. In the distance lay the park, where the trees were weighted with snow (Joyce, 1914; p.105).

The scene portrays a wonderful afternoon at a dinner party when the guests listen to Mary Jane playing a waltz on the piano. Everybody has gathered together and is having a pleasant time, while singing and dancing. As opposed to the representations of the religion which suppress the life of the citizens and often create sullen and dark atmospheres, music has provided a peaceful sphere in which the citizens can experience joyful time and share it with the other as a collective practice. It should be emphasized that the music, here, is not being considered and analysed in terms of genre, as 'Waltz' is not Irish or national music. Instead, the music has been regarded as a notable aspect of culture and is, therefore, analysed as a cultural element. What Joyce's text attempts is to reconstruct and revive the cultural element and offers the replacement of culture in the formation of national unity with problematic factors such as religion. With the reference to the statement by Dorothea E. Hast and Stanley Arnold Scott (2004) in their respective books, music can be considered as a symbol which stands for the culture. It integrates many diverse cultures and forms the basis or platform for practicing unity and harmony (Hast & Scott, 2004). Based on Hast and Scott's argument, music includes historical, cultural or traditional information as they relate to the present (ibid, 2004). Also, music – which has been used to represent culture and cultural elements here – can offer an attractive and focused introduction to the national traditions of a country. Moreover, it may mirror the historical, social and cultural values that are fundamental for the construction of a national identity in that country.

Through music, cultural and historical issues of identity, community, nationalism, emigration and gender can be raised and discussed (ibid, 2004). Setting up a pleasant atmosphere in the Christmas dinner party and using the music to stand for cultural value, James Joyce's story subtly provides the basis for its comparison with elements such as religion and suggests their replacement. By describing the air as pure and untainted and the surroundings as all covered with the snow, the text aims to literally depict the scene as peaceful and pleasant as opposed to the religious places and spheres where the air or conditions are often heavy, grey, dark and unpleasant. Again, as a contribution to the formation of new symbols, elements and basics which construct a national identity and consciousness, *Dubliners* suggest that the elements such as religion should be replaced with cultural elements like music, that, unlike religion, could bring the nation together.

In addition to music, snow symbolizes beauty. It contours the plants, trees and foliage and adds astonishing designations to their exquisite shapes. It helps the cycle of life for the greenery and vegetation and prepares them for new growth. It embraces diverse meanings as various characters feel differently about it. While Gretta sees it as blessing or Aunt Kate relates it to the celebrations, Mr. D'Arcy does not appreciate the snow. So, snow also symbolizes the comfort, innocence, recreation, celebration and increased intimacy with family and friends. Falling snow helps the text to inspire the idea that wherever - or whenever - cultural values are dominant, there will be more peace, comfort, unity and improvement.

Snow also has a cruel nature as it is too cold to enjoy without having a proper protection. Therewith, in a metaphorical way, the story suggests that relying on the cultural values would bring more comfort and cohesiveness. However, to achieve the collective goals would not be easy for it would need hard-work, preparation and knowledge to protect the individuals from being excluded or ignored. Moreover, the story depicted the character of Gretta, who "would walk home in the snow if she were let", and represents her walking on the snow as a victory for she has no fear of the snow's bitter cold and even appreciates it (Joyce, 1914; p.92). This example also supplemented the idea that following cultural values would lead the nation towards victory, prosperity and development. Later, when the snow lies "on the branches of the trees" and forms "a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument", it enhances the statue's

definition and, thereby, draws more attention to the Irishness (Joyce, 1914; p.99). Although, the Duke of Wellington is a prominent figure in the discourse of Britishness, he was born in Ireland. Therefore, symbolizing the national identity and pride, Wellington's statue is resistant against the cold of the snow for it is not alive; it "wore a gleaming cap of snow that flashed westward over the white field of Fifteen Acres" (Joyce, 1914; p.105). This depiction strengthens the Irish nationhood as it implies that, while people die and the time passes, the symbol of Irish national identity will always remain the same and tenacious against oppressions. Eventually, the snow reminds Gabriel and Gretta about their affectionate moments in the past and refers to the fact that love, passion and devotion of the past can lead into the future and paralysis caused by the snow's freezing cold will not last forever. Consequently, with the application of this imagery, the text enunciates better days for the nation provided that they revive traditional values and cultures.

Analogous to Joyce's *Dubliners*, Jamalzadeh's *Once Upon A Time* employs the same metaphorical use of the snow and other Iranian national symbols to refer to traditional and cultural values and heritages of the nation as the fundamental elements in the formation of Iranian national identity:

The night was one or two hours old. The clouds covering the tract of sky had lifted and the round-cheeked moon moved westward with full majesty along its multi-millenary course across the meadow of the spinning stars. The snow coated both time and space and lay on the unclaimed corpse of Iranian soil like a shroud. A constant breeze blew from the west: from the great palace at Ctesiphon, tomb of the grandeur and glory of ancient Iran, past Qasre-Shirin and Behistun, the site of Khosrow's success and Farhad's failure, to the orchards of Kangavar, where it whined in the leafless, fruitless branches of the trees with heart-stricken wail and sail in a tongueless tongue, 'World! World! What destiny, what deceit! Once the kingdom of Kay Kavus! Now, stamping ground of the Cossack Rus! Alas, alas, a thousand times, alas!' (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.74).

Once Upon A Time uses the image of snow to denote its freezing cold and covering side. Several references to the historical sites as the symbols of Iranian identity implied the ancient,

historical and traditional values and inheritance of the nation. Ctesiphon was the imperial capital of the Empire of Persia during the Sassanid era and one of the main cities with high military importance for the rival powers. It was captured nearly five times by Romans but was eventually returned back to the Persians. Having been referred to as the ‘tomb of the grandeur and glory of Ancient Iran’, Ctesiphon’s image was used to remind the reader of the glorious past and the invaluable heritage of the Iranian nation. Symbolizing the national identity of Iranians, it also indicated that the ancient, traditional and original identity of the nation would and should remain untouched or unaltered even after having been invaded or suppressed by imposed elements. Qasre-Shirin was also a metropolitan city in the Sassanid Persia with over 2000 years of history. Located in the Kermanshah Province in today’s Iran, Qasre-Shirin was known as the city of love for the castle which Khosrow, the twenty-second king of the Sassanids, built for his beloved Shirin. With the indication to Iranians ancestors by Khosrow and Iran’s nation-state by Shirin - a female figure, this image also metaphorically referred to the effort and hard-works the ancestors of Iranians undertook to build and develop the nation-state. The example highlighted the value of the ancient, traditional and historical legacy which should be acknowledged, treasured and protected.

Behistun, the site of the ancient Persian multi-lingual inscription which glorifies Darius the Great, is another symbol of Iranian national history, traditions and cultural values. Subsequently, Kangavar is a city in Iran whose name is derived from Avestan, the language of Zoroastrian scripture (Wells, 1990). All the symbols of the ancient Iranian history and inheritance - which have played fundamental roles in the formation of Iranian national identity - have been arrayed to introduce the reader to the original and authentic factors that should be employed to reconstruct Iranian national identity. In order to contribute to the reformation of the Iranian national identity, Jalamzadeh’s story mentions historical places to remind readers of the shared ancient past and offers the inclusion of elements such as historical past, myths and memories in the construction of Iranian-ness. In the context of the book’s critical approach towards elements such as religion or blind Westernization or other superstitious beliefs, it suggests that Jalamzadeh’s story underlines that those cultural, historical and traditional values have been replaced with the mentioned imposed ones.

Coming back to the image of snow, Jamalzadeh's book uses a different side of it as opposed to Joyce's text. Snow, in *Dubliners* - as the representation of cultural beauties - adds more details to nationality and national symbols; however, the employed images of snow in *Once Upon A Time* carry the harsh, cold, bitter and enveloping side of it. Snow on the sites and symbols in Jamalzadeh's book denotes that those historical, traditional and cultural elements have fallen under the influence of imposed ideologies and policies. Nonetheless, they have remained until today in spite of being subjected to the harsh climate and disregard. Later, when the narrator of 'With Friends Like That' goes to "pay a visit to Habibollah to say a last goodbye and read some verses over his grave", he "saw that the unfortunate boy's body had disappeared under a blossoming stack of snow and that there was no trace of him or the vile-natured Russian's footprints" (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.75). Here, through the use of snow, the narrator indirectly suggested that the time would pass and generations would change, the invaders and imposers would also leave or perish but the true Iranian-ness would always be intact and everlasting. Furthermore, the scene in which the narrator "looked at the snow" and he "heard Jafar Khan calling" him "from far away" saying that "Khan, the cold is fierce!" suggests that the nation-state is in a crucial period and the dominant conditions are not quite salubrious or favourable (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.75).

Back to the last example chosen from Joyce's text, the statue of Wellington in *Dubliners* on which the snow lay and covered the top belonged to Arthur Wellesley known as the first Duke of Wellington. Being a native of Ireland and from an Anglo-Irish ascendancy, he was one of the foremost military and political figures in the 19th century (Severn, John, 2007). He passed Catholic emancipation through Parliament to evade civil disorder on an unimaginable scale. Regardless of the fact that he served in Ireland as aide-de-camp for a while and was even elected a member of parliament in the Irish House of Commons, he was referred to as a British soldier as he became the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army (Drew, Joseph, 1852). Through the image of Arthur Wellesley, the story indirectly indicates the 19th century and its prominent place in the national history of Ireland. Apart from the Great famine in the mid-19th century - which ravaged the country and forced hundreds of thousands of Irish people to leave the homeland for a better life elsewhere - the Irish nation-state witnessed a number of rebellions and revolutionary movements against the British domination (Woodham-Smith, Cecil, 1991). Rebellions by Irish

republicans in 1798, 1803, by Robert Emmet and his followers in 1848 and by the Young Irelanders such as of Thomas Francis Meagher and his supporters in 1867 were the most notable revolts, which - despite having failed - resuscitated the mainstream of nationalism in the 19th century Ireland.

Using Wellington's figure, along with some other examples within the various stories, the example alludes to the influence of Britain in the formation of Irish nationality. This outlines one of the crucial points where Joyce's way of nationalism and narrating the Irish nation separated from the other writers of the Revival such as Yeats. Based on what Emer Nolan (1995) states, James Joyce was not entirely against the idea of the influence of Modern Britain and its literature, culture and other achievements for he used frequent indications to acknowledge it. Therewith, the classic nationalism offered by the Irish Literary Revivalist authors received Joyce's critique and it led to his partial repudiation of the Literary Revival (Nolan, 1995). As Nolan argued, the type of nationhood that the Irish Literary Revivalist writers such as Yeats promoted was based on a pure native and folklore culture "which was both ideological and artistic" and enhanced people's "awareness of their common identity" (Nolan, 1995; p.24). Similarly, George Russell argued that the nationalism of the Literary Revival was more based on "the epical interpretation of the Irish past" and the subsequent nationality was funded on the celestial and divine history which synthetized heroic figures, warrior individuals and stunning moments (Stated in Nolan, 1995; p.25). Conversely, Joyce inaugurated a different approach in which he suggested that nationality should not be built upon past traditions, customs or beliefs and, therefore, endorsed a refined version of Irish nationhood. With the beginning of the land settlements endorsed by the British authorities and the subsequent Land War in the 1880s, which was followed by Wyndham Land Act in 1903, the Irish nation-state became the subject of many economic and political changes. The fundamentalist peasantry then was transmuted into a class of small landowners as a result of the British-funded reforms, which somehow popularized the Anglo-Irish culture. Joyce and some of his like-minded colleagues, who were bred by this culture, challenged the views of the Revivalists and accused them of denouncing the representations of the Irish people for depicting them as "crooning Barbarians crazed with morbid superstitions" (quoted in O'Connor, Theresa, 1992; p.171). Supporting the idea that the nation gains its self-conscience in an external unity as well as in relation with others, Joyce and

his followers endorsed the synthesis of European and Irish culture. Believing that the period of classic nationalism had come to an end in the globalized and modern world, Joyce and his companions tended to offer a portrayal of society in which the nation-members acquired more significance and profit of their own lives.

On the other hand, the example from *Once Upon A time* referred to Russia and to the presence of the British Army to highlight the foreign influence of the two superpowers of the time and their ongoing oppression of Iran's nation-state. It should not be forgotten that the text had already challenged the invasion of Arabs and their influence on the language, traditions and religion of the nation-state. Unlike Joyce's case, this approach in Jamalzadeh's text was congruent with the ideologies which were promoted by the supporters and writers of the Constitutional Revolution on the time, as they opposed the foreign influence and interference and, therefore, this attitude put Jamalzadeh in the similar line with other Constitutionalists.

Sharing a similar point of view with Joyce's *Dubliners*, *Once Upon A Time* also promotes the idea of providing the public comfort for the citizens in the nation-state. While neither of the texts exaggerate the past of their respective nations or created any peak or golden times with numerous heroic characters, they both regret the replacement of traditional, cultural and historical values of the nation with the disharmonious and imposed ones to construct a more inclusive and coherent nation:

A spirit of unruliness diffused itself among us and, under its influence, differences of culture and constitution were waived. We banded ourselves together, some boldly, some in jest and some almost in fear (Joyce, 1914; p.78).

3.3 RELIGION

Iran, India, Palestine and Ireland - particularly in Joyce's time – are among the numerous examples of the nation-states that have relied upon or been dominated by religious images and practices. When nationalism emerged in the eighteenth century, it acted as somehow anti-religious. The theories and opinions of the pioneers of classic nationalism like Jean-Jacques

Rousseau or John Locke were mainly based on the idea of taking the religion away from public life. In Britain, the basis of Britishness was Protestantism, as Linda Colley (1992) argues. Later in the middle of twentieth century and predominantly after the end of the Second World War, the ideology of nationalism that had been advertised as ‘modernization’ or ‘nation-building’ triggered the inclinations to create a sense of loyalty, unity and devotion in community members.

As a result of having contentious relationships, nationalism and religion in most cases have challenged and disputed each other (Rogers Brubaker, 2012). Some theorists such as Durkheim (1995) and Smith (2003) believed that nationalism is intrinsically religious while others assumed it as secular; some scholars thought that nationalism appeared as a decline of religion and others presumed “that it emerged in a period of intensified religious feelings” (Brubaker, 2011, p.1). Based on Brubaker’s statement, some case studies can help to describe and rationalize the origin, the source of power and the unique characteristic of nationalism applied in them. The examination of *Once Upon A Time* and *Dubliners* allows discussion of religion and nationalism in two specific works and clarifies the position and role of religion in the two literary works which I analysed as ethnosymbolic nationalist writings.

It is very noticeable that *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* and their authors’ approaches toward religion seem more congruent with what Carlton Hayes found in 1926. Hayes suggested that nationalism was a religion on its own which involved faith to cause profound and persuasive emotions. Analogous to religion, nationalism has its ceremonial rites, holy days as well as its symbols such as flags. According to Brubaker, nationalism has a God, similar to any religion, which is the nation epitomized as motherland or fatherland. More recently, Anthony D. Smith offered a more updated and sympathetic version in which nationalism is more collectively stimulating and is considered as “the new religion of people” (Smith, 2003; pp.4-42). Based on Smith’s version, nationalism in both substantive and functional senses was so similar to religion, insofar as it involves a ‘system of beliefs and practices that distinguishes the sacred from the profane and unites its adherents in a single moral community’ (ibid, pp.4-42). It also, on Smith’s account, grants emotional potency and durability to the national identities and evokes deep and intensive feeling of loyalty (ibid, pp.4-42). In this context, *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* picture the position of religion in Iran and Ireland of the early twentieth century and try to

highlight the fact that religion has been misplaced in the process of the construction of national identity in those nation-states. In other words, through a critical approach or depiction, our case study texts aim to inspire the idea that religion is an unfitting part within the national identity and should be replaced with love of the country and faith in its everlasting future.

Aiming to transform the country into a better and coherent nation-state, James Joyce's *Dubliners* pictured people's daily lives and therewith attempted to address the defects and major issues with which the Irish citizens were struggling. The text was written at the time of the Irish Revival and carried the movement's notions, However, according to Emer Nolan, the element of religion was one of the factors which put James Joyce in opposition to other Revivalists (1995; p.16). Joyce resorted to his methodical modernism to demythologize pretensions in Irish literature. In doing so, in a creative way - as Nolan stated - Joyce liberated Irish literature "from parochial preoccupations" (Nolan, 1995; p.16). Stories such as "The Sisters", "A Mother" and "The Dead" emphasized the theme of religion and portrayed it as suffocating, corrupted, ineffective and inefficient factor that affected the lives of the Irish people in a negative way and prevented them from achieving better standards in life.

Different priests' characters within the stories reflect the text's pungent and sarcastic criticism to show how the nation-state and the nation-members within, were kept under control by religion and its unappealing figures:

It may have been these constant showers of snuff which gave his ancient priestly garments their green faded look, for the red handkerchief, blackened, as it always was, with the snuff-stains of a week, with which he tried to brush away the fallen grains, was quite inefficacious (Joyce, 1914; p.3).

So then they got the keys and opened the chapel, and the clerk and Father O'Rourke and another priest that was there brought in a light for to look for him... And what do you think but there he was, sitting up by himself in the dark in his confession box, wide awake and laughing like softly to himself (Joyce, 1914; p.6).

Almost all of the priests' in *Dubliners* are unpleasant figures in black or dark coloured faded, shabby outfits to represent the dissonance of religion and its role in daily life. Their faded costumes – which often are not even clean – portray poignant images of the religious figures. In a similar way, Jamalzadeh's *Once Upon A Time* carried the same sarcastic and critical approach towards the mullahs and clerics and presented the disharmonic, hypocritical and radical image of them as the religious figure of the nation-state. He chiefly depicted this by resembling religious figures to animals through the way they dress or act:

I looked in that direction and something that I first took for a shiny white cat curled up sleeping on a sack of charcoal caught my eye. It was actually a sheikh who had wrapped himself from ear to ear in his cloak and was sitting seminary-style: cross-legged, his arms hugging his knees. The shiny white cat was his rumbled turban, part of which had come loose under his chin and assumed the shape of a cat's tail (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.34).

Those words caused the reverend shaikh's turban to glide slowly like a wisp of cloud. A pair of eyes emerged from it and peered feebly at the felt-hatted provincial. From the phonic defile that, though not visible, must have been below the eyes, with perfect declamation and composure these words made their way slowly and deliberately to his assembled audience: "Believer! Deliver ye not the reins of thy rebellious and weak soul to anger and rage, for 'Those who control their wrath and are forgiving towards mankind.... (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.35)

Analogizing to animals such as a cat because of their dressing, Jamalzadeh made his religious figures even more unpleasant. Cats are often represented as being disloyal animals which easily abandon their homes or walk away from their owners for a better place or proprietor. The Islamic clerics normally wear a long, white dress along with sandal-like shoes, which date back to the early Islamic era. They believe that this dress with their long beard gives them a theosophical look. Conversely, Jamalzadeh compared this outfit and the look of religious customs or cloaks to the cat's skin. Highlighting the difference of their dressing as well as their use of old Arabic language, instead of the national language of Persian - *Once Upon A Time*

refers to the disharmony between them as religious figures and the nation-state, for they neither dress the way other people do nor they speak the language which common people can understand.

Their frequent use of Quranic verses, which are in Arabic as opposed to Persian language, the official language of the state, makes the image and their representation even more disharmonious and dissonant. These Quranic overtones resonate to Joyce's use of Latin, as the official language of the Catholic Church, in frequent Ecclesiastical contexts in the twentieth-century Ireland. The Latin language in which the priests and reverends speak separates them from people. According to Franz Klein (2007), Joyce made those disparaging references to criticize the spiritual authority of the Church over the state and rebel against the ecclesiastical imperialism of the Catholics. In a similar vein, in *Once Upon A Time*, when the Shaikh recites Arabic verses in the prison cell, Ramazan as an ordinary peasant Iranian character, does not "catch a word of the reverend Shaikh's sweet Persian" (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.36). Mashallah Ajoudani (2006) suggests that the prison cell, itself, is a metaphor for Iran's state. Different characters representing various levels of the society including intellectuals, middle-class citizens, working-class nationals and clerics have been portrayed in a covert way to reflect the author's discontent with the ongoing conditions and the political / religious tyranny which had immobilized the country.

The clerics in *Once Upon A Time* preach or give lectures about religious practices at the most inappropriate times. They always invite the citizens to do good deeds but they never follow the same practices. "Molla Qorban Ali's Complaint (Darde Dele Molla Qorban Ali)" narrates the story of a cleric whose profession is reciting religious elegies at funerals. He is a disapproving character who judges working-class people simply based on their appearances. He earns his money only by reciting religious verses which is not considered a hard job. Being a married man, his character is displayed as a distorted and pervert figure for he falls in love with a teenage girl who is not in good health. Once in a while, he gets out of bed in the middle of the night and, dressing in his only pairs of pyjamas and barefoot, climbs the stairs to the roof to jump to his neighbour's roof from where he peers through a hole in the gutter at the teenage girl. Later, when the teenage girl dies, he attends her funeral and while being alone with her corpse he even bends

to kiss the dead girl on her lips. Obviously, the figure of the teenage girl resonates a lot with the ethereal girl in Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* to indicate the nation-state whereas in Hedayat's story, the figure is used to symbolize the ancient, pre-Islamic Iran. Similar to Jamalzade's depicted figure, they both stand for the ideal of the Iranian nation-state which is dying or destroyed by the Islamic authorities. Through a satirical but tragic narration this symbol of the nation-state is possessed and victimized by the corrupted religious authorities and dies at the end to imply how religion took the advantage and control of the nation-state and eventually ended, or hindered, the development of a state with a glorious empirical past behind and a bright new future ahead of it.

Apart from the appearance and the customs of the religious figures in the stories, the churches and chapels in Ireland and the mosques and shrines in Iran where the priests and clerics spend their time are often described as dark, gloomy and, damp. In "The Sisters," Father Flynn loses his mind and becomes slowly crazy in a confessional box:

The former tenant of our house, a priest, had died in the back drawing-room. Air, musty from having been long enclosed, hung in all the rooms, and the waste room behind the kitchen was littered with old useless papers. Among these I found a few paper-covered books, the pages of which were curled and damp: *The Abbot*, by Walter Scott, *The Devout Communicant*, and *The Memoirs of Vidocq* (Joyce, 1914; p.11).

These representations throughout the stories of Joyce's book indicate religion's status not only as troublesome but also as inept, ineffective, backward, out of date and fusty. The image of the Catholic Church is displayed as paralyzing and ineffective as the Father Flynn gets paralyzed before he dies. He has no time left for he has had his third stroke. Religion is shown as a repetitive daily formality that occurs in the characters' lives and due to inefficiency and ineffectiveness does not lead to happiness, improvements or progress. At the same time, the symbolic reference – through the narrator's dialogue who uses the word 'gnomon' as an "interpretation of the column or pin on a sundial" – is made to indicate the striking of the clock and denote the fact that the Irish nation-state has been trapped and paralyzed by the inept religion

and the time is running out for the rebirth or the survival of the nation-state (Evans, 2010). Later, as Valerie Evans (2010) points out, the narrator of “The Sisters” refers to “the word simony in the Catechism” which metaphorically infers a connection between the religion’s imposition and the forcing power of the Roman Catholic Church and reminds how the Irish nation-state has been subdued and inflicted. Therewith, Joyce’s book suggests that the only way for the survival of the Irish nation and the development of their nation-state, which would bring “a sensation of freedom”, is to put religion aside to make them “freed from something by its death” (Joyce, 1914; p.3).

While religion is meant to make the citizens’ lives happier and make the nation-state a better and more peaceful and coherent place to live, the readers find Joyce’s Dublin is always gloomy, sombre, grey and dark where there are no streams, no illuminating sunlight. There are no happy and cheerful places within any of the stories. Most of the characters are lonely, isolated, frustrated, unable to love and have no clear and strong connection with Dublin or the other citizens living nearby. They mostly live their moments in the darkness and stillness of hours. Most of the stories inspire the intermingled status of life and death and illustrate the nation-state, which Dublin symbolizes, in a half-alive and in-between state where nation-members are leading their lives as dreadful and doomed. In some stories, such as “Araby,” religion is metaphorically represented as a devotion which is diminishing and is in decline. The other prevalent point about religion within Dubliners is its display as a regulatory factor which has trapped and strained the Irish citizens’ lives:

The duties of the priest towards the Eucharist and towards the secrecy of the confessional seemed so grave to me that I wondered how anybody had ever found in himself the courage to undertake them; and I was not surprised when he told me that the fathers of the Church had written books as thick as the Post Office Directory and as closely printed as the law notices in the newspaper, elucidating all these intricate questions (Joyce, 1914; p.3).

...and he had explained to me the meaning of the different ceremonies of the Mass and of the different vestments worn by the priest. Sometimes he had

amused himself by putting difficult questions to me, asking me what one should do in certain circumstances or whether such and such sins were mortal or venial or only imperfections (Joyce, 1914; p.3).

It is always religious figures who act as the governing agents, write the rules and make the orders and the citizens are the ones who should obey and follow their practices. The Irish characters often find themselves captivated by these cumbersome rules and principles. Their lives are so mingled with those religious practices that they are numb and unable to break through. When the priest dies in “The Sisters”, the boy, who is now freed from the priest and his religious preachings, still feels trapped and the phantom of the priest follows him in his dreams. He also finds some books hidden by the priest in a damp room after his demise which were not arbitrarily chosen and each of them symbolizes an aspect of the story. According to Wallace Gray (1997), ‘The Abbot’ is a story about Mary, the Queen of Scotland, and depicts her as a romantic and spiritual individual rather than a promiscuous person. The choice of this book echoes the author’s confusion and self-delusion about romantic, spiritual love, Gray suggests (Gray, 1997).²⁹ It, indirectly, alludes to the fact that the Irish nation is too fixated and deluded by their past and criticizes the Irish nationalists’ attempts to make the national past seem extra-terrestrial. Instead of exaggerating the national past and history of the nation, it should be easily accessible and presented to the people by the literati. This will include more nation-members, especially the lowly-educated ones – and will allow them to see the commonality of them with other members in the state and comprehend the shared past.

As Gray states, ‘The Devout Communicant’ is another book which could have denoted various works which “all of them reflect the impact of religion and pious language on the narrator's view of life and love” (ibid, 1997).³⁰ It signifies the role of religion and its place in the formation of the Irish nation as well as its influence on the mentality of citizens. Eventually, ‘The Memoirs of Vidocq’ narrates a story of a policeman who commits crimes and abuses his profession and power to hide them. As Gray continues, this book also echoes the theme of deception throughout the story and highlights the point that the narrator of ‘Araby’ is in

²⁹ Source: <http://www.mendele.com/WWD/WWDaraby.notes.html> [Accessed 9th October 2012].

³⁰ Source: <http://www.mendele.com/WWD/WWDaraby.notes.html> [Accessed 9th October 2012].

continuous state of self-deception (Gray, 1997). While reminding the readers of the decay and corruption of the authorities in the Irish nation-state, this book also refers to the bewilderment of the nation-members emanating from the misleading acts of the religious and political leaders. The presence of the books and their intentional choice is to increase the citizen's awareness and conscience about their national status, their heritage, culture and traditions that have been confiscated by the religious figure or political leaders. This incident also demonstrates the contradictory relationship between religion and the Irish nation and exposes how the authority of religion has prevented the nation from being aware and conscious of their eminence.

Correspondingly, the religious figures in *Once Upon A Time* perform authoritatively and command and control the nation-members. Inside the prison cell, in 'Farsi Is Sugar', after the Islamic clergy recites some Arabic verses from the Quran for the purpose of preaching;

Ramazan, poor sinister, didn't catch a word of the reverend shaikh's sweet Persian. He thought his eminence [the sheikh] was communing with jinns or spirits or was busy reading the Scripture to the dead; terror and dread marked his face. He said "Bismallah" faintly and prepared to retreat, but it appeared that the shaikh's venerable jaw was just getting warmed up (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.36).

The very same Islamic clergy, who sounds illiterate and "cannot read but by the grace of prophet's family has been blessed with a good memory and a quick mind so that he has to hear a recital once or twice before he can repeat it", reads a few of the same memorized recitals and therewith beguiles Ramazan – a representative of all ordinary working-class people – and others to supervise and control them in the cell (Jamalzadeh, 1921; p.78). In the same scene, the same clergyman who is supposed to be the one with the sacred spirit and gives hope to everyone else in the cell recites some verses with aggressive content and puts everyone in terror and misery. The way the clergy is depicted in *Once Upon A Time*, according to some critics such as M. Ajoudani (2006) and M. A. Katouziyan (2011), has been the influence of the constitutional revolution in Iran as well as the stream of modernism in Europe and indicate how Jamalzadeh desired and favoured the modernization of the nation-state. However, as they state, Jamalzadeh saw Islam and its traditional practices, which are firmly interwoven into people's lives, and also

the public naivety, superstition and their religious affiliations as the main obstacles for the nation-state to achieve the objectives of the modernity. *Once Upon A Time*, as his masterpiece, portrays the ongoing conditions in a society which is on the verge of modernity and focuses on the national language which is heavily influenced by the religion and its practices. This will be discussed later to criticize and challenge whatever inhibit the state from achieving modernity, reconstruction and growth (Ajoudani, 2006; p.73).

As with what is discussed in *Once Upon A Time*, what the reader mostly finds in *Dubliners* is the sinister, perverse and unhealthy relationship between the characters and the religious figures. Under this religious authority and dominance, we also find a lack of connection and coherence between characters within the nation-state and realize that their relationships with each other are often deceptive, dishonest and treacherous. Religion is meant to bring peace and reform to the nation-state and unify and harmonize the nation-members. Yet, Mrs. Mooney traps and obliges Mr. Doran to marry her daughter in “The Boarding House”. Also, Lenehan and Corely suspect each other of cheating in “Two Gallants”. Moreover, betrayal mainly frames the story of “Ivy Day in the Committee Room” when Parnell’s supporters find out about his collusion with the British government. As a result, those betrayed characters feel humiliated and displaced:

Yes,' said Mr Kernan. 'That's why I have a feeling for them. It's some of those secular priests, ignorant, bumptious—' 'They're all good men,' said Mr Cunningham, 'each in his own way. The Irish priesthood is honored all the world over.' 'O yes,' said Mr Power. 'Not like some of the other priesthoods on the Continent, said Mr M'Coy, 'unworthy of the name.' 'Perhaps you're right,' said Mr Kernan, relenting (Joyce, 1914; p82).

Regardless of being ambiguous, this dialogue between the two characters within the story could be seen as how religion and nationalism are at odds, in Ireland’s case, or how both religion and nationalism can constrain a nation-state with old-fashioned conservatism. As a cohesive and collective element, religion is expected to contribute to the emergence and development of nationalism as well as to bring the nation under the same umbrella and unite them. Scholars such

as Weber (1958) and Gorski (2003) acknowledged that nationalism sometimes emerged as an unintentional result of religious growths. Conversely, in Joyce's *Dubliners*, it has vividly divided the nation for its prejudice impeded the citizens to acknowledge each other and it deferred their solidarity. In order to get a better grasp and understanding of the position of religion in Joyce's Dublin, the history of Ireland needs consideration. Ireland was primarily a Catholic country until the end of 17th century, when it was colonised by Britain. Protestant settlers from England and Scotland started to inhabit the north; it began in the 16th century but the large scale of settlement was in the early 17th century. As a result, the Catholic majority and their language, culture, religion, traditions and customs were disadvantaged. Moreover, many Irish Catholics, particularly in the north, grew up under the dominance of the Protestant faith (Pierce, David, 2000).

While two religious groups were in confrontation and had prejudice towards each other's religious faith, some intellectuals and elite Irish natives such as Theobald Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet and Samuel Neilson founded the Irish nationalist movement and promoted their ideology in the 1790s (Kee, Robert, 1972). Their ideology - which emphasized the unification of the Irish nation regardless of religious differences, reached its peak in the late nineteenth century (ibid; p.330). Supported by intellectuals such as James Joyce, Patrick Pearse and MacDonagh, modern Irish nationalism aimed to replace such elements as religion with Gaelic Irish culture, Irish language and also the shared historical heritage in the formation of Irish national identity (Sean Farrell, Moran, 1989 & Norstedt, Johann, 1980). The desire to replace native cultures with Universalist religious cultures was widespread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But when religion had a role in separating people from their oppressors, it was used with later negative consequences.

The hostility and encounter between Irish Catholics and Protestants in Ireland lasted for centuries and still exists today. Based on what is discussed earlier, religion is one of the cohesive elements which constructs a nation-state and is known as one of the basic elements in the formation of the national identity. However, in the Irish case, two different interpretations of the same Christian faith - which was supposed to make the nation-state coherent - made the Irish citizens view each other as dissimilar. The individual religious beliefs turned into power

struggles and enduring distrust, ferocity, and anger resulted out of this feeling of differences (Pierce, David, 2000).

As Benedict Anderson (1991) suggests, nationalist ideology is a process which generates a social, political and cultural homogeneity. Religion, however, may polarize the nations or even separate groups of people in the same nation, as was the case in Ireland, where on the whole Protestants supported the continuation of British rule and Catholics sought to reform or end it. When this mode of religion occurs, as Anderson continued, it places religion “in a competitive, comparative field” to nationalism (1991; p.17). Though, it might be suggested in the Irish case that religious conflict aligned with two different versions of national identity. Since Joyce’s text attempted to promote homogeneity, equality and unity within the Irish nation, it saw the factor of religion as an impediment which has caused the opposite. Moreover, religion can define the boundaries of the nation, on Roger Brubaker’s account, by “supplying myths, metaphors and symbols that are central and iconic representation of the nation” (2011; p.12). Nonetheless, neither *Dubliners* nor *Once Upon A Time* represent religion as creating any national myths or symbols. Consequently, it has not been considered as a helpful and efficient factor that is adding up to the formation of the Irish or Iranian national identity and their national coherence.

Along with religious representatives, the nation-members are also blamed every now and then for devoting themselves to religious beliefs, rituals and practices while ignoring their inherited national traditions and customs:

Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. And yet during all those years she had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken harmonium beside the coloured print of the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque (Joyce, 1914; p.14).

In “Eveline”, she (Eveline) cleans the picture of a priest which has been hung there a long while. It represents the emergence of religion in Ireland and the Irish citizens accepting and believing it. However, Eveline does not know the priest’s name which signifies that the nation-members have accepted the religion as a routine ritual without delving into its practices and having deep perception about it. This happens in the same room where there are other valuable and antique items with thick layers of dust on them to imply how the religiousness or ignorance of the citizens has prevented them from being conscious of the value of their ancestral and national heritage.

Based on the theories expanded by Hayes and Smith, it can be assumed that *Dubliners* has attempted to polarize religion and nationalism. The characters’ appearances and behaviours marked the element of religion as incompetent and inefficient. Therefore, the text suggested the replacement of religion with nationalism and nationhood and attempted to re-describe other constructive elements of nationhood to substitute the religious identity of the nation. According to Rogers Brubaker, nationalism has all basic sources and characteristics of “faith, reverence, liturgy, cult, god, salvation, scripture, sacred objects, and holy days”, and therefore can practically act as religion and serve as social, cultural or national identity (2011; p.3). Nationalism, based on the definition suggested by Roger Friedland (2002) and Juergensmeyer (1993), “is a form with variable content” with one of its forms being religious nationalism (Friedland, 2003; p.387). According to their conceptualization, the religious nationalism infuses nationalistic intentions through religious imagery or religious language. However, with regards to the historical background of the Iranian and Irish states, *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* challenge and confront religion through satirical narration, as they portray that those religions do not fulfil their nations’ requirements; therewith, both texts refuse to endorse the religious identity to be prioritized to nationhood.

Naming religion as a “totalizing order” which regulates every aspect of life, Friedland also acknowledged that religion should join the state, territory and culture of the nation by focusing on family, gender and sexuality (Friedland, 2002; p.390). Taking the traditional concept of family as a “key generative site”, in Brubaker’s phrase, it should produce moral practices and define distinctive communal values to promote socialization and interaction between nation-

members (2011, p.19). In addition to that, religion naturally, based on Friedland's account, tends to endorse gendered divisions and support restrictive regulation of sexuality. Other scholars such as S. A. Arjomand (1994) and Asad (2003) add that religion and its related movements often strive to acquire or influence the power within the nation-states. These characteristics are the other main points that bring religion to clash with modernism which both *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* favoured for their nations. As a result, on their way to promote modernism, nationhood and the development and growth of the Irish and Iranian nations, these texts repudiated the element of religion. Joyce and Jamalzadeh's texts attempted to emphasize the entity of the nation-state and underline that their countries should be prioritized. With regards to Arjomand and Asad's definitions, religion fails to comply with Anthony D. Smith's latest description of nationalism – which defines it as an ideology which focuses on the values, sources of legitimacy, object of loyalty and basis of national identity (1991; p.74). Since it does not deliver those functions within the stories of *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time*, and congruent to the arguments by modernist-nationalists such as Deutsch (1953), Gellner (1983), Breuilly (1994) and Hechter (2000), religion is found to be disconnected from the general interests of the Irish and Iranian nations and states. In other words, religion is found not to be a constructive element in the formation of national identity as suggested by those stories.

Along with the examples mentioned, there are other additional excerpts which endorse that nationhood is achieved through identifying oneself versus others through the construction of similarities and discrepancies “and of situating and placing oneself in relation to others” (Brubaker, 2011; p.4). Thus, different stories of *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* depicted different characters' lives and highlighted their problems and predicaments to let their nation-members identify themselves. While religion, according to Brubaker, is supposed to function as a mode of collective organization which channels, frames and establishes social relations between the nation-members, it fails to do so in the stories of both novels. For instance when Mr. Power in 'The Grace' says:

There used to always be crowds of Protestants in the chapel where Father Tom was preaching.' 'There's not much difference between us,' said Mr. M'Coy. 'We both believe in—' He hesitated for a moment. '... in the Redeemer. Only they

don't believe in the Pope and in the mother of God.' `But, of course,' said Mr. Cunningham quietly and effectively, `our religion is the religion, the old, original faith.' `Not a doubt of it,' said Mr. Kernan warmly (Joyce, 1914; p.84).

This example clearly shows how the religion has been a separating factor which has divided and segmented the Irish and the nation while there was supposed to be no difference between citizens. The story emphasizes the way in which the characters acknowledge the similarity of all types of religions and faiths, yet it criticizes how the Irish figures do not truly believe in that and still feel different and even probably superior to other believers. Calling this phenomenon as “institutional duplication”, Pierre Van den Berghe argued that in heterogeneous societies or nations - where members of different religious communities live - regardless of being territorially intermixed, religion can sometimes act as a pervasive axe to cause social or even national separation (Van den Berghe, 1967; p.34). Anthony D. Smith endorsed Van der Berghe’s argument by indicating that both religion and nationhood can generate social relations within communities or nation-states. Nevertheless, as it is visible through the frequent represented images within the stories of *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time*, if religious practices and commands are supplemented by clerical control or influence, they can recreate heterogeneity and segmentation over the long run (Smith, 1986; p.123). Moreover, as Smith (2003) Hutchinson and Lehman (1994) claimed, religious ideas, practices, motifs, symbols and events are supposed to provide and deliver “the deep cultural resources” required to construct ideologies to promote togetherness and coherence (Smith, 2003; p.254-4 and Hutchinson and Lehman, 1994). However, the religious figures and images neither represent nor reproduce any means to improve public life or to rebuild national coherence and solidarity.

In ethno-symbolic nationalism, the element of religion can contribute to the propagation and improvement of nationhood and unity in nation-states by “by generating new modes of imagining and constructing social and political relationships, promoting literacy in and standardization of vernacular languages, and bringing polity and culture into a tighter alignment” (Brubaker. R, 2011; p.8). Nonetheless, religion fails to do so in the chosen books. In the view of Joyce and Jamalzadeh, it creates divergence and dualism which eventually alienates the nation-members. One of the main characteristics of the religious institutions, based on the definition by

Ernest Gellner (1983), is equality. Normally, religion should make a fair society in which all the nation-members have equal access to shared heritage, culture etcetera. In such a society, as Gellner highlights, everyone's prime loyalty would be to the entity of the state and to its political protector (Gellner, 1983; p.142). Conversely, the characters' lives and different events within the stories of both texts, religion has failed to bring that supposed justice and equality to the public life in both Irish and Iranian states.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Although Joyce's *Dubliners* and Jamalzadeh's *Once Upon A Time* both narrate a series of individual stories to portray multiple citizens' lives and depict everyday life in different levels of their societies, they should be considered a whole due to the fact that both of them described and mapped the development of their entire nations and evaluated the potential revival of their nation-states. Having been candid depictions of Irish and Iranian histories, nations, politics, their respective religions, both books portray and study various formative elements of nationhood; questioning the creditability or applicability of those factors in their nations, then, they attempt to offer substantial alternatives which should play fundamental roles in the formation of the nations' identity and nationhood.

Around the early eighteenth century and towards the end of Safavids era, Iran, which was exposed to the stream of modernity and Western culture, experienced profound cultural, social and economic changes with long-term consequences. Influenced by change and ongoing modernism in the West, contemporary Persian literature bred many writers and poets such as Ali A. Dekhoda, Ashraf-oddin Gilani, Nima Youshij, and Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh who applied common & vulgar language to produce lyrics, poetry and fiction and brought modernism to Iranian literature. Jamalzadeh, in *Once Upon A Time*, portrayed the chaos and dissolution of the nation-state after the breakup of the Constitutional Revolution. Using satirical criticism and a humorous approach towards the continuing turmoil, the book represented the rulers and authorities as responsible for the disorder. This bold and reckless style of Jamalzadeh in his writing caused his book to be considered a turning point in contemporary literary criticism (Afshar, 2007).

Likewise, the originality of Joyce's style and his introduction of colloquial language into literature not only influenced other writers but paved the way towards modernity and the fragmented and experimental prose of his own later works. Bringing modernism into the world of Irish/British literature and introducing an innovative universe and multiplicity, Joyce opened new aspects on the description of Irish national identity and opposed the traditional ideology of Irish nationalism, which was based on racial identity and a mythologized and theologized history. This undoubtedly established him as one of the most important writers of the twentieth century.

Many scholars and critics have underlined Joyce and Jamalzadeh's opposition to Irish and Persian nationalism for they did not hesitate to criticize their own respective nation-members for their lack of awareness about their national heritage, traditions and culture. As their writings frequently suggested or hinted, lack of public knowledge about the national history often led the nation-members to be dogmatic or too fixated on a fantasized past, convention or culture. The other main reason on which those critics relied to highlight Joyce and Jalamzadeh's repudiation of nationalism was both writer's questioning and challenging approach towards the language, religion, traditions and customs of their nation. Critics such as Bruce Stewart mentioned "Joyce's antipathy to the revival" which "would supply him with numerous examples of brilliant and asinine excess for purposes of literary parody" (Stewart, 2007). According to Stewart, "Joyce emphatically did not participate in that programme and indeed regarded it as reactionary and anti-modern, but he did remark on an inherent dissonance in modern Irish culture connected with linguistic colonialism" (ibid, 2007). Joyce preferred to assimilate to the prevailing English culture, particularly when it was rooted in the common past of both nations and histories, rather than to have a romantic and sightless return to the nostalgic past and ancient traditions and cultural values of the Irish nation. Therefore, even those who have classified him as not involved or supportive of the Revival movement would acknowledge that Joyce has contributed a lot to the renewal of the formative elements that construct the national identity of the nation.

In a similar line to Toby Loeffler's argument and corresponding with ethno-symbolic nationalism, both authors' texts "never strayed far from the discourse" as they both were

invisibly concerned with Irish and Iranian nationhood, culture, politics and history and encouraged the reader to contemplate what Ireland and Iran are or what it means to be Irish or Iranian in the early twentieth century (Leoffler, 2009; p.30). To argue both writers' ultimate opposition to the Irish literary Revival and the Constitutional Revolution as well as their repudiation of nationalism, it should be regarded that most of the Irish literary Revivalists such as W.B. Yeats insisted on the formation of strong sense of nationhood and emphasized the reconstruction of native and folk culture in both ideological and artistic ways through the enhancement of people's awareness of their common identity. It, more or less, applied to the writers of the Constitutional Revolution and their mentality in Iran (Kermani. N, 1978 & Kasravi Tabrizi, 1980). This characteristic, which is visibly available and current in both *Dubliners* and *Once upon A Time*, confirmed these two texts to the objectives of the nationalist writers of the time in both Ireland and Iran.

Moreover, based on what Eric Hobsbawm signified as "apogee of nationalism", both *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* aimed to locate Ireland and Iran as well as Irish-ness and Iranian-ness in a modern world in which national identity has been formed as the essential, updated and world-wide accepted component of the identity of every citizen who lives in the nation-state (Hobsbawm, 1992; p.131). As Michael Billig points out, today's nations and their national identities are created from "the whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices that characterize them" (Billing, Michael, 1995; p.6). Acknowledging that and in an attempt to narrate their respective nations and their national identity, both texts aimed to reproduce those formative elements "in a banally mundane way enacted in daily routine life" (Billing, Michael, 1995; p.6).

Based on Valerie Evans, *Dubliners*, and by extension *Once Upon A Time*, using arbitrary languages and satirical approaches, move from the symbolic and the literal to raise snappish issues and draw immediate attentions to them (Evans. V, 2010). Embodying the religion by the priests, reverends and clerics as a constraining and incompetent element, both texts revealed straightforward attitudes to challenge those formative factors which no longer applicable in the construction of nationhood or at least – they reckoned – were not efficient enough in their time. Again, the attention is drawn to the fact that both books attempt to recreate what Leoffler has

called “national character” (Leoffler, Toby, 2009; p.34). Consequently, as critics such as Vincent Cheng (1995) and Michael Billig (1995) stated about Joyce’s works and Dariush Ashouri (1997) claimed about Jamalzadeh’s writing, the stream of nationalism might not be that overt and objective in their respective texts, but their nationalistic intentions were faded into the background as they mostly focused on the formation of this national character or identity using the mixture of the most recent updated elements with the tradition and values that were not outdated and also were inclusive. Knowing that nationhood is not just about fictional structures represented by a flag, both writers used their writings - or their writings could be seen as – the “act of rebellion against traditional modes of representing” Irishness or Iranianness (Deane, 1985; p.99). *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* address the national crises in their nation-states and then reproduce a collective image using a common language which is conceivable to every citizen-member with lowest literacy and create their national identity using various experiences, symbols, cultural values and customs.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS: HEDAYAT'S *THE BLIND OWL*
Vs. WOOLF'S *BETWEEN THE ACTS*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter studies and analyses a work by Sadeq Hedayat, one of the most important Iranian novelists, and compares it with the work of a significant Anglophone modernist novelist, Virginia Woolf. In particular, it compares two novels: *The Blind Owl* by Hedayat and *Between the Acts* by Woolf. Both novels were written at around the same time, 1937 and 1941 - when there was great tension in each nation towards their national history and identities. While discussing the authors' creativity and the contribution of their texts to the construction or formation of the national identity, the chapter investigates what lies between their lines and highlights an ethno-symbolic nationalist interpretation of their contents. By comparing the literary qualities and themes of *The Blind Owl* - as one of the important early texts in the advent of Iranian modernism - with those of Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts* - as one of the most consequential later texts of the modernist era - the contribution of these authors to the formation of various aspects of Iranian and British identity is examined.

Focusing on different themes such as the formation of national, racial, linguistic and religious identity of nations together with the provision of various examples chosen from both texts, the chapter studies unique or common approaches of the different authors at a time when their nation-states were influenced and affected by major social, political, cultural and economic changes. By doing this, the extent of the engagement of literary texts with the national identity and its various aspects in everyday life in different states is studied. Likewise, the trace of the historical events on the formation of national characteristics is examined. Therewith, it makes a critical synthesis in which the contribution of both texts in the formation and construction of their nation's national identity is discussed and their nationalistic aspects are exposed.

Hedayat was Iran's foremost modern writer. He wrote about 10 fictions, 3 dramas, 2 travelogues, and more than 16 articles and researches in criticism and miscellanea. Virginia Woolf wrote 9 novels, 4 short story collections, a drama and 7 autobiographical books. Both writers were recognized widely in the world of literature and lived and completed their writings in, approximately, the same era. Following the analysis and comparison of two texts in this chapter, I will explain the reason for why *The Blind Owl* and *Between the Acts* have been chosen for this study will be explained further.

The Blind Owl is Hedayat's most suitable writing that can mirror and reflect the "Iran's past history and culture leading to an understanding, and possibly a resolution, of contemporary problems" of Iranian nationhood and their national sense of belonging (Bashiri, 1984). The book is considered by many researchers such as Ajoudani, D. Ashouri and Daryabandari as the most important modern novel, or even the first one, in the history of Persian literature. The novel has already been analysed philosophically,³¹ socially,³² as well as psychologically³³; however, I will evaluate it as a literary source for the purpose of finding the notions which imply the formation and construction of various aspects of national identity. The chapter will also study those notions and examples by which the selected literary texts questioned and criticized the role of some aspects in the foundation of national characteristic or identity. In the meanwhile, it should be mentioned that the mysterious, amphibolic context of *The Blind Owl* has made it suitable for a variety of different forms of analysis and evaluations.

In *The Blind Owl*, Hedayat picture the conditions of Pre-Islamic versus Post-Islamic Iran and judged its history and culture. Mashallah Ajoudani (2006) in his *Hedayat, The Blind Owl and Nationalism* suggest that Sadegh Hedayat separate the story of *The Blind Owl* into two independent but related parts. In doing so, as Ajoudani continued, he obviously divide the Persian identity into two categories of original, ancient Iranian and the Islamicized Iranian personality. Supporting Mashallah Ajoudani's idea, other researchers and critics such as Bahram Meghdadi (2008) and Hosein Kariman (1975) claimed that the character of the ethereal girl in

³¹ *Boof'e Kour*; Atashe Sokhan Goftan Az Dard-haye Ensani (The Blind Owl; The Narration Of Human Pains). Ehsan Tabari (1981), Morvarid Publications.

³² Naghdi Ejtemaayi Bar *Boof'e Kour*'e Sadegh Hedayat (A Sociological Study of Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*). Bahman Saghayy (2007), Nasour Persian Articles Centre.

³³ A psychoanalysis Criticism of Hedayat's Works. M. Ali Katouziyan (2008), Nasour Persian Articles Centre.

The Blind Owl is, in fact, the post-Islamic image of Iran. This character became the post-Islamic ‘whore’ in the second part of *The Blind Owl*. In this view, by doing this, Hedayat’s story attempted to project how the true, original, noble and pure identity of the Iranian nation had been denigrated after the replacement of ancestral inheritance with the imposed alien ones.

Hedayat carried a romantic and nostalgic view towards pre-Islamic Iran, especially the Persian Empire when it was ruled by Cyrus the great (Ca. 590 – 529 BC). Hence, he hoped that by acquainting Iranians with their roots and national history, it might be possible to direct them toward the precepts of their ancestors, and away from Islam. On the other hand, *Between the Acts* focuses on the unique situation of Britain in the early years of the Second World War and portrays the impact of coming changes on the social, political and cultural life of the residents. In a similar vein to Hedayat’s metaphorical critique in *The Blind Owl*, Virginia Woolf’s *Between the Acts* also reflects its writer’s ambiguous approach or attempts to reforming the British national identity whilst reminding the nation-members of the importance of the land and their cultural or historical inheritance. *Between the Acts* also manifests Woolf’s preoccupation with providing a more updated meaning for the British identity while drawing a detailed picture of the homeland. In spite of being regarded as an anti-imperialist writer by critics such as Marlowe A. Miller (1998) and Peter Lowe (2007), Virginia Woolf expresses a sense of patriotism in the time around 1939-40. This was a time when the existence of British nation was in danger - as Britain faced possible invasion in 194, and Woolf’s initial intention by her nationalistic attitude was to reframe the nation, reminding them of their commonalities and unify them as opposed to the approaching threat. Following Marlowe Miller and Peter Lowe’s arguments, Virginia Woolf had to implement literary, historical as well as geographical structures implying the imperialist and colonialist legacy of the nation to redefine Englishness and Britishness.

The central theme of *The Blind Owl* is the resolution of the narrator’s dualistic experiences of the real versus unreal, the sensual against the spiritual and death as opposed to life (Price, M., 2003). The novel consists of two seemingly separated parts which somehow, through similes and resemblances, become relevant. The first part of the novel is told by the narrator who is living in a cottage somewhere



outside the city of Rai. It begins with the narrator confabulating about some inner deep agonies while he is painting on a clay vase; “There are sores in life which slowly erode the mind in solitude like a kind of canker (Hedayat, 1937; p.3)”. Mysteriously, he always draws the same picture on the pen-case covers or clay vases, which consists of a girl in a black dress who is handing a lotus flower to the old Indian yogi squatted under a cedar tree.

The story begins on a day when the narrator of the story is looking for some drinks in the house to treat his uncle, who has come to visit him. In doing so, he looks up in the built-in niche below the roof and recalls the ancient wine-flask that he has inherited. In order to reach the niche, he puts a stool under his feet, but as soon as he reaches the wine-flask, the scene outside catches his sight through the air-inlet in the niche. In the field behind his room, he sees a “bent, stooped old man, sitting at the foot of a cypress tree with a young girl - no! an angel from heaven - standing in front of him”, bending to give him a black lily with her right hand (Hedayat, 1937; p.8).

On another day, the narrator decides to go up the niche to replace back the wine-flask and has a look through the air-inlet to see the ethereal girl again. But when he pushes the curtains in front of the niche, he finds no hole or inlet on the wall, at all. Further, in another setting, the raconteur sees the ethereal girl again, but this time she has already come into his house. After a while the ethereal girl dies in the narrator’s bed, but he decides to draw her eyes in a painting to make them immortal. Then, he slices up the corpse of the ethereal girl, puts the pieces into a suitcase and carries it to the cemetery. On the way, the narrator is met by an old man who digs the ground in the cemetery and makes coffins. In the grave-yard, when the old-man starts digging, they find a ‘glazed, raq vase’ or jar and, surprisingly, there is a portrait of the same ethereal girl on it similar to the painting that narrator has painted of her before her death. Being shocked by this scene, he smokes some opium, and a little later, in ecstasy, he finds himself getting back to hundreds of years ago, while he is astonished after being acquainted with the surrounding.

This ambiguity and multi-dimensionality of characters continues in the second part of the story by the appearing of the old man, for instance, in different shapes and places. In the second part, the storyteller relates his memories to his shadow which he describes as owl-shaped. There,

the narrator is a young but unhealthy and sick man whose wife – called by the narrator a ‘whore or witch’ – does not obey him and never sleeps with him. Instead she has many paramours. From now on, the narrator refers to his challenges and contrasts with the statesmen and, obviously, shows his hatred and abhorrence of them. He believes that the outer world belongs to the ignorant rabble and corrupted statesmen. For him, “they were all like one big mouth leading to a wad of guts, terminating in a sexual organ”. They are in pursuit of money and “one is enough to represent the rest” (Hedayat, 1937).

In front of the narrator’s house, there is always a mysterious old man, an “odds-and-ends seller”, who recites Arabic verses and frightens him. The teller supposes that he is one of his ‘whore’ wife’s lovers for he has seen the traces of the old man’s decayed teeth on his wife’s cheeks. Eventually, the narrator decides to murder his wife. So he disguises himself as the “odds-and-ends” salesman, enters her room and thrusts the knife, which he has bought from that salesman, into the eye of the ‘witch’ and kills her. When he leaves the room, he looks at the mirror and, being filled with terror, he saw that he himself has become like the ‘odds-and-ends’ salesman.

The plot of *The Blind Owl* conveys Hedayat’s zest towards, as well as his dismay about, the renovation or restoration of national identity. In spite of what is evident in Hedayat’s previous works, there are no apparent anti-Arab statements or any anti-Semitic declaration. In other words, the text does not say anything blatantly but the reader is obliged to deliberate about what is hidden between the lines or behind the enigmatic figures of the book to solve the mystery of the novel. Although, there is no vivid complement or glorification of the past, according to Bahram Meghdadi (2008) in *The Blind Owl: the Narration of Vanishing Ancient Iran*, the text includes numerous references and indications, in the forms of literary metaphors and ambiguities, to the national history. Those indications, as Meghdadi claims, can be considered as exaltations and glorifications of the past.

On the other hand, *Between the Act’s* setting is in a country house somewhere in the England just before the outbreak of the Second World War and on a day when the annual pageant is going to be performed. The pageant, which is attended by almost the whole rural

community, is meant to celebrate English history. Bartholemew Oliver, who is a retired army officer as well as the owner of the house, together with the strange but innocuous Lucy, his sister, and restless and unsatisfied Giles, his son, are among the main characters of Woolf's story. Isa who is Giles's wife has already lost her feelings towards him and has been attracted to Haines, a local farmer. The pageant is written by the spinster character called Miss La Trobe who has a peculiar and tyrannical personality. Various incidents happen in the day prior to the beginning of the pageantry. While Lucy is making all the arrangements and decorations, Oliver is playing with their grandson and frightening him. Eventually, the pageant, which consists of three main parts, starts in the evening. The romantic prologue commences with a child dialogue and leads to the second part of the pageantry which is a restoration comedy. The third act is about a prospect of Victorian conquest, narrated by a Policeman who is guiding the traffic in Hyde Park. The pageant is finalized by a scene called 'Ourselves' in which Miss La Trobe's shocking action is performed and mirrors are turned on the audience to allude to the meaning of the title.

Condemning public ignorance and taking individuals as responsible for the lack of historical knowledge is one of the concerns which is visible in the writing of both authors. This fear of the disparity and heterogeneity of their nations emanating from that unawareness is conveyed through both texts' passages. While *The Blind Owl* pictures the circumstances of life in the Islamized nation-state and highlights the shortcomings of Islamic authority and clergies, *Between the Acts* concentrates on the public's ignorance and their recklessness towards their homeland and their national history. Hedayat favours reminiscence of the ancient, pre-Islamic times and abhors anything that is transfigured or influenced by the compulsive religion of the intruder Arabs. According to what Joya Blondel Saad (1996) in *The Image of Arabs in Modern Persian Literature* suggests, Hedayat, as one of the nationalist writers in Iran, had to redefine and formulate the Iranian nation. Therefore, as she points out, Hedayat employs the Iranian self and identity against an opposed Arabic identity and its components such as culture, language, religion etc as the 'others'. That is the basis on which Hedayat's text implies that Arabic culture, religion and language do not fit with the Iranian identity or personality.

Likewise, in terms of the formation of British national identity, Woolf applied concepts and notions that indicate the historical past of the nation and infuse covert nationalistic values. Marlowe A. Miller argues, “Woolf suggests a parallel between the nationalist themes and overt symbolism of British spectacle” (1998; p.134). In other words, by decorating a link between British cultural traditions and its history, Virginia Woolf presaged Marlowe Miller’s argument about the construction of national identity in her readers. *Between the Acts* uses the common past and history to imply commonality and invoke a sense of belonging. Moreover, in a similar way to Hedayat’s *The Blind Owl* in terms of condemning public ignorance, Woolf’s *Between the Acts*, too, blames individuals for their lack of historical knowledge. Woolf’s text harshly criticizes thoughts and “instincts fostered and cherished by education and tradition” (1986, stated in Miller, Marlowe). Hermione Lee (1997) states that Woolf’s book reveals her plans for standing against the threat of the invading fascists by experimenting with a genre which is rooted in British cultural traditions and history. *Between the Acts* blames the Church and State for their autocracy and negligence and considers them as playing the same role as the invading Nazis (Lee, 1997).

Studying the similarities and differences between the Iranian and European nationalist authors and their attitudes of stimulating the sense of nationhood among their readers through the vehicle of literature, this chapter will explore ethno-symbolic notions within their writings.

4.2 LOOKING FOR THE GLORIOUS PAST OF A THE NATION

As an outstanding intellectual figure in the history of Iranian modern literature, Sadegh Hedayat owns a unique critical approach towards the role of history in the formation of a nation’s characteristics. Praising and glorifying Iran’s pre-Islamic era in a surrealist way, he pictured the underdeveloped nation-state and its underprivileged members while criticising his time’s current circumstances. He belonged to the period of ‘Mashroote’³⁴ or the constitutional era when the majority of Iranian nationalists used to praise the Pre-Islamic time of Iran - especially the Sassanid and the Achaemenid reigns. Therefore, he inherited this mentality and

³⁴ It was the time between 1905 and 1911 which ended with a revolution. The constitutional revolution led to the establishment of a parliament in Persia (Iran). It was the first event of its kind in the Middle East which opened the way for cataclysmic change in Persia.

followed ‘archaism’ after his predecessor nationalist intellectuals of the time such as Mirza Fath-ali Akhundzadeh³⁵, Jalal-aldin Mirza Qajar³⁶, Mirza Agha-Khan Kermani³⁷, Mirza Molkom Khaan³⁸ and Abdolrahim Talebof Tabrizi³⁹. Having emerged in the late Qajar era, archaism was an attitude of nationalist writing in literature which sought to recreate the past time and space to evoke new ideologies. Some critics such as Reza Bigdalou (2001) and M.A. Akbari (1996) considered archaism as one of the necessities in the process of modernizing Iran. They believed that archaism was to bring the renewal and revitalization of old and ancient traditions and beliefs in order to reproduce new social, political and cultural thinking and establish the modern sociocultural infrastructure based on the foundation of ancient traditions. Akhundzadeh, as the founder of archaic nationalist writing in Iran, praised the ancient Iran in his *Name-haye Kamal-oldoleh* (The Letters of Kamal-oldoleh) and blamed Islam for causing all the miseries of the nation. In other words, using history and the past of the nation was one of his main methods to construct particular national identities. Jalal-aldin Mirza Qajar was the inheritor of archaic nationalism, after Akhundzadeh, who also promoted the idea of the purification of the Persian language. In his *Nameye Khosrowan* (The Stories of the Kings), he praised Sassanid kings in as much as he presented them at the same level as the prophets. The third nationalist using an ethno-symbolic approach towards the historical past of the nation was Mirza Agha-Khaan Kermani. Influenced by his former peers - in *Ayineye Eskandari* (Alexanderian Mirror) - Agha-Khaan Kermani tried to invoke the nationalistic sentiments of the Iranians by ascribing all Iran’s problems and shortcomings to the invasion of Arabs and recounted that the Iranian national identity is rooted in Zoroastrianism and the Aryan race (Amanat, Abbas, 1999).

³⁵ Mirza Fath Ali Akhundzadeh (1812-1878) was an Iranian playwright with liberal views who lived in Qajar’s era. He is considered as one of the pioneers in Iranian nationalism and the founders of Mashrooteh Movement. His writings, views and thoughts widely influenced many Iranian scholars including Mirza Aga Khan Kirmani, Mirza Malcolm Khan, Talebof.

³⁶ Jalal-Aldin Mirza’e Qajar (1819-1872) was an Iranian linguist, poet and writer. He helped Mirza Malcolm Khan to form the Freemasonry community. He is known for his linguistic nationalism as he insisted that Iranians should speak and write in pure Persian and the language should be purified off Arabic terms. His most famous book is called “Tarikh-Nameye Khosrovan (The History of the Kings)”.

³⁷ Mirza Agha-Khaan Kermani (1853-1896) was a writer, literary critic, politician and one of the important figures in the Constitutional Movement. Together with Akhundzadeh, they are known as the founders of modern Iranian nationalism.

³⁸ Mirza Molkom Khaan (1833-1908) was an intellectual writer, journalist and politician and one of the well-known Freemasons in Qajar time.

³⁹ Talebof Tabrizi (1834-1910) was one of the intellectual authors and Politicians in the Constitutional Period.

In a similar line with his fellow nationalist authors of the time, Hedayat posited the root of all disparities, obscurantism and backwardness of the nation in the intrusion of alien traditions, customs, religion and language on the Iranians (Hey'at, Javad; 2010). With a reference to what Javad Hey'at states in *The History of Archaic Nationalism in Iran*, by taking the Arab invasion of the Empire of Persia in 632-651C.E as a turning point in Iranian history, Hedayat formed representations and related them to that incursion. Indeed, highlighting some forgotten aspects in the history of the Iranian nation, Hedayat's writings aimed to provoke his nation and prompt them to be aware of the conspiracy done under the religious cover and pretension. According to Javad Hey'at, Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* intended to invoke the nation to stand and claim their original identity and solidarity. There, the quality of forceful and brutal imposition of alien's culture and creed are expressed and they, all, imply to the epoch of the commencement of destruction and devastation of the nation's native cultures, traditions and religion.

It would be worthwhile to briefly mention what makes Hedayat's writing and approaches different from his predecessors. Akhundzadeh's writing aimed to provoke people to stand united against the old habits and outdated beliefs. They were often clear and vivid and he rarely used any metaphors to express his ideas;

Persian kings were well-known all around the world and the Persians were the most selected nation.

(Akhundzadeh, 1985 stated in Hey'at, 2010)

Pity you, Iran....Where's your splendor? Where's your glory? Where's your felicity? Bedouin and rapacious Arabs have demolished you for one thousands, two hundred and eighty years.

(Akhundzadeh, 1985 stated in Hey'at, 2010)

The similar approach is visible in the writings of Agha-Khaan Kermani, Molkom Khan and Talebof. They always avoided attributed the miseries of the state to the invading Arabs and their culture and traditions in a very subtle way. It is because of their unique ways of writings, which was prevalent in that time, that their works have been sometimes criticized for being

racist.⁴⁰ However, the ambiguous, metaphorical and surreal style led Hedayat to be regarded as a modern nationalist author differentiating his *The Blind Owl* from previous nationalistic texts.

Literary critics and other experts in this field are quite aware that symbols and figures - of any kind - carry distinctive meanings in every culture and geographical territory. So, every symbol or representation in literary texts is interpreted as a reference to particular cultural, social or historical event. The usage of the “owl” in the title of the story is the best example to attest to that. Having a specific section in Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrians, the owl is known as the ‘Bahman Morgh’ (good mannered bird). It is a symbol of benevolence and kindness. In old Persian culture, the owl was praised for being a goodwill bird with a human-like face which haunted the baneful creatures. Also, in Iranian mythology, the owl was regarded as a bird that lives in the ruins and guards or protects the place from demons and bogies (Soltani, Sima, 2010). As opposed to the owl’s stand in Persian tradition, literature and culture, it is regarded as an ominous, unfavourable bird in Arabic culture. Its sound is considered as an inauspicious dirge - as well as the messenger of death and darkness. Based on what Borazjani (2011) suggests in his *The Symbols and The Myths* that Hedayat purposefully used the contradictory references to the owl in Persian and Arabic culture to connote to the Arab invasion and the deformations made in Persian beliefs, culture and traditions. He then adds that Hedayat’s use of the owl might refer to the post-Islamic era that has dragged the state into the plight and predicament. From his argument, it can be interpreted that Hedayat portrayed the owl as the guard, living in the ruins of Iran after the Arab invasion, trying to protect it from further destructions. It is suggested that the application of the owl, as an allegorical reference to the desolated state of Iran after the invasion of Arabs, emanated from the passionate nationalistic zest and inclination of the writer.

It can, then, be interpreted that right from the beginning, Hedayat’s *The Blind Owl* intended to highlight what had happened to Iran and what situation it was in at the time when the novel was written. Using frequent metaphorical indications to noteworthy ancient events, the text’s objective was to reintroduce Iranian nationals to the original culture and history of ancient

⁴⁰ Hey’at, Javad (2010) *the History of Archaic Nationalism in Iran*. Ketabnaak Publications [Online]. Available At: <http://www.achiq.org/pitikler/heyetbastan.htm> [Accessed 24th May 2012] and Majid Nafisi (2003) *Anti-Semitism and Racial Superiority in the Works Nationalist Authors* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.iranian.com/main/2011/apr-5> [Accessed 28th May 2012].

Iran and make them conscious of their legacy. Doing so, *The Blind Owl* stimulated the readers' sense of loyalty and commitment whilst encouraging them to seek for their ancestral roots and native identity. Some Iranian literary critics such as M. Falaki (2006), M. Ajoudani (2006) and M. Sarshaar (2008) believe that the concurrent modernity had an undeniable influence on Sadegh Hedayat's point of view as he observed the new, modern and advanced Western world and, comparing it with his own ruined and desolated motherland, felt disgust and aversion.

Far from Hedayat's country in terms of distance but in almost the same time span, Virginia Woolf applied similar methods in *Between the Acts*. Woolf wrote *Between the Acts* in the final months of her life while she was struggling with her unstable feelings and sentiments which influenced her judgment. It should also be noted that, as Peter Lowe stated, she was writing *Between the Acts* under the influence of the prevalent uncertainty of the 1930s and the darkness of the Second World War (2007, p.3). Virginia Woolf was, then, seeking in the field of literature "to locate and preserve the essence of an imperilled England via visions of its cultural heritage" (Lowe, 2007; p.3). That is the main reason why *Between the Acts* has been considered by literary critics - such as Gillian Beer - as a work which portrays the author's involvement with the problems in social and national level and reflects her "position in society and in England's history" (Beer, 1990; p.282). That is how Woolf's book, focusing on specific aspects in the historical background of England, strives to relocate a sense of harmony and recreate a historical continuity when the nation-state is most threatened (Ackroyd, 1984).

In an analogous way to Hedayat, who was agonized by the Arab invasion and suffered from the imposition of their culture, traditions, religion and language, Virginia Woolf was distressed by the pre-war, wartime and the aftermath destruction. Critics such as Joshua D. Esty (2002), Herbert Marder (2000) and Kathy J. Philips (1994) have written many articles about Woolf's pageant theme in *Between the Acts*. While Joshua Esty calls "Woolf's rapprochement with national heritage" and argues that Virginia Woolf remembered past glories in the form of a reduced modern iconic work as pageant, others have discussed the ways Woolf's text has illuminated her concerns about the past, the present of the nation-state and its unclear future. They also argue that the literary work of Virginia Woolf attempts to provide social cohesion, strength and national survival in the form of a literary art.

As the situation in Europe declined on the verge of the Second World War, Woolf became aware of the nature of the threat her country was facing (Lowe, 2007; p. 5). She was aware that soon Europe would be “bristling with the guns” and “poised with planes” and “at any moment guns would rake that land into furrows” (Virginia Woolf, 1941, p. 28). There might be a time “when the entire continent...was all one”, but shortly they will all stand against each other in the conflict; when the day came, the only thing which would save the entire nation would be their harmony and unity (Lowe, 2007, p. 5). Having been preoccupied with “the concept of unity when so much else seemed uncertain”, Virginia Woolf realized that the preface for all of her unifying ideologies lies in the reconstruction of nation-state (Lowe, 2007; p. 5).

Undoubtedly, *Between the Acts* carries its author’s reactions to the disunity of nation as a result of war and shows how Woolf mixed literature, history, traditions and culture to redefine the nation’s identity. In order to do so and invoke national consciousness, the author had to inspire her nationalistic ideas through the creation of imaginative narrations that can convey particular concepts. This began with portraying a concept of the nation-state and continued to form the sense of nationhood. The setting, where the story takes place in Pointz Hall with literary exposure and pleasantly detailed decorations, infused the image of the homeland very efficiently:

Pointz Hall was seen in the light of an early summer morning to be a middle-sized house. It did not rank among the houses that are mentioned in the guide books. It was too homely but this whitish house with the grey roof, and the wings thrown out at right angles, lying unfortunately low on the meadow with a fringe of trees on the bank above it so that smoke curled up to the nests of the rooks...

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p. 4)

There you could walk up and down, up and down, under the shade of the trees. Two or three grew close together; then there were gaps. Their roots broke the turf, and among those bones were green waterfalls and cushions of grass in which violets grew in spring or in summer the wild purple orchis.

(ibid, p. 6)

From the description of the setting of the story, which was embellished to make the nation-state look irresistibly pleasant, one can easily understand that the text plans to raise the sense of nationhood among citizens through making them conscious of the most shared valuable concept. According to the argument by Lyndall Gordon, the setting of the story and its literary description reveals how Virginia Woolf - who feared the imminent calamity - promoted “continuity” (1984; p. 163). The description of the house is a clear allusion to the state of Britain mostly because it was widely populated by white race people at that time - with its often cloudy and grey sky as the roof. It is depicted as unique and different from any other country. The depiction of the landscape which is “plainly marked...by the Britons; by the Romans; by the Elizabethan manor house” illustrates the old historical Britain with its inhabitants who have been there since “only something over a hundred and twenty years” and the whole surrounding has witnessed to a long thread of events in the history such as “the Napoleonic wars” (Virginia Woolf, 1941, p. 4-5). The nation-state with all of its features and inhabitants has been there and it will continue to be there as “it’ll be there...when we’re not” (ibid, p. 28). The illustration not only introduces the reader to the exquisiteness and distinctiveness of the place but also allows them to appreciate its historical background.

Commentators on nationalism such as Eli Kedourie (1971), Hobsbawm (1990) and Benedict Anderson (1991) suggests that the sense of nationhood is either formed through political enforcement applied by the state or is inspired via various vehicles and is gained by members deliberately. In order to perform the second method, a variety of propensities are required to be inspired. These propensities or virtues, as Ross Poole (2004) suggests, must methodically connect the citizens and the state through notions of a decent life and brilliant future etcetera. so that they feel they belong to that land (Stated in Seymour. Michael, 2004). To constitute those virtues and lead them to nationhood which inspires loyalty in individuals towards their state, *Between the Acts* crafts as much beauty and sense of well-being as it can. With the nation-state facing the destruction of the forthcoming war as well as the nation fronting the aftermath dispersion, *Between the Acts* has no choice but to resort to the formation of an imaginary nation-state and link it to the continuity of English history, as Peter Lowe (2007)

suggests. “The Barn”, which again exemplifies the nation-state, “had been built over seven hundred years ago and reminded some people of a Greek temple, others the middle ages, most people of an age before their own, scarcely anybody of the present moment”. It has all the grandeur and glamour in its history but has now turned into the lair of mice and insects now:

Mice slid in and out of holes or stood upright, nibbling. Swallows were busy with straws in pockets of earth in the rafters. Countless beetles and insects of various sorts burrowed in the dry wood.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p. 52)

According to Lowe’s argument, Woolf created the theatrical image, within her story, as a useful vehicle to inspire the sense of historical continuity as well as to acknowledge her sense of insecurity and anxiety caused by the disparity that the approaching fluctuations might bring. Conferring to what is proposed by a group of the theorists such as Miller (1995), Canovan (1996), Poole (1999) and Tamir (1995), nationhood or national identity is mostly formed culturally. Accordingly, writers, literati, historians and artists played a significant role by establishing this ground. Putting their theory into consideration, one can understand that Virginia Woolf’s intentional application of literary methods to garnish the nation-state was to remind the audiences and her reader of the lovely, pleasant and glorious homeland and, therewith, to make them to adore it. With frequent lovely images of the home and neighbourhood, described in detail, *Between the Acts* inspired the reader that this adorable land is so invaluable and must always be protected. Binding the welfare of the state with the well-being of the nation-members, the text aimed to increase the citizen’s loyalty and sense of commitment. In other words, implementing art and literature, Woolf’s story represented Pointz Hall as an image of a comfortable home so that it serves as a microcosm and metaphor for the nation-state.

When Woolf was writing *Between the Acts* during the late 1930s, it was the era in which Modernism began to feel outdated and authors started to incline towards communal forms rather than working on the interest of individuals. As Peter Lowe (2007) explains it in his article, ‘Cultural Continuity in the Time of War’, the reason for such preference might be to withstand

the hazard of the social disintegration emanating from the mass destruction of the Second World War. As a result, and following that trend, Virginia Woolf, who was aware of the troubled international relations between European countries, chose the image of Pointz Hall and its rural community as a stable and alternative place where higher degrees of solidarity and unity could be discovered and achieved. Thereby, an appealing platform was created to facilitate people to raise their communal and national consciousness which, itself, contributed to the formation of national identity.

The use of local or national historical events in the form of theatrical pageant, which was popular at the time when Woolf was writing this book,⁴¹ is another theme which provides an illustration of how the author has tried to create the cultural continuity. Using important historical events that were based on the verbal or printed evidence and frequently referring to them, Virginia Woolf offered a glimpse of the national heritage including the achievement, victories, tragedies and glories of the nation. Therewith, she reminded her readers of their common past and shared history whilst creating “the sense of belonging to a historical community” (Poole, 2004; cited in Seymour, 2004, p.93). Also, she inspired sameness, harmony and affiliation, regardless of the differences, diversity and disintegration between them.

From an airplane, he said, you could still see, plainly marked, the scars made by the Britons; by the Romans; by the Elizabeth manor house; and by the plough, when they ploughed the hill to grow wheat in the Napoleonic wars.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.3)

The Faerie Queens and Kinglake’s Crimea; Keats and the Kreutzer Sonata. There they were, reflecting. What? What remedy was there for her at her age - the age of the century, thirty-nine - in books? Book-shy she was like the rest of her generation...

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.11)

⁴¹ Further Information is available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/history/newsrecords/2012-13/redress.aspx>

According to Brenda Silver, the historical references, particularly to the earliest English plays and important literary or historical figures, served to connect the present generation with the previous one and forms a ‘common belief’ which brings them together (Silver, 1979; pp. 356-441). As is evident in the example above, Virginia Woolf’s objective in using references to the important literary figures or texts was not always concealed between the lines.

According to John Koch “The Britons were the Celtic people who inhabited and ruled Great Britain from the Iron Age through the Early Middle Ages” (Koch, 1997, pp.291-292). The historical background of this invaluable inheritance was, therefore, underlined. Reminding the audiences of their ancestors through the narrative and the dialogue by characters within the story, *Between the Acts* aimed to draw the reader’s attention to where they have come from and also that they all have a common background. It should be considered that “in most of nations, members are related through territorial birth and residency” (Smith, 2000 stated in Leifer, p.16). Historical images and experiences embody citizens’ original culture, too. They affect the understanding of the nation-members’ of their homeland and increase the chances of inclusion and subsequent solidarity. Thus through inclusive citizenship and belonging to a common political territory, nation-members are unified and integrated. Also, other various factors such as language, religion, customs and traditions together with a native history create national solidarity.

The use of several references to the most important invasions in the history of Britain, from the Roman invasion of Britain and the threat of invasion in the Napoleonic is another key point which draws the attention. It should be considered that by the time the author was writing the story, her country was under the threat of Nazi invasion and, according to Christie Purifoy (2010), the glorious identity of Great Britain seemed to be vanishing away. The similar reference to the Elizabethan age is made, later on, in the text through the pageant depiction to remind the readers of the famous resistance of the English against the Spanish invasion.⁴² At the same time, this scene highlights the origin of the nation-state as a sovereign force. By doing so, Woolf and

⁴² The Spanish war (1585 - 1603) took place between England under the reign of Elizabeth I and Spaniards due to a variety of reasons such as wealth, power and a religious crusade. The war lasted nineteen years.

her novel experiment the bonds of attachment that may bind the citizens to some form of national identity and form an optimistic patriotism.

Supporting Purifoy's argument, Judith L. Johnston (1997) argues that those references can be considered as the author's responses to the contemporary crisis in Europe and the impending catastrophe of Nazi invasion. Virginia Woolf puts herself in a battle against Hitler by writing against him and making the citizens aware of the approaching threat to make them united against it (Hermionie Lee, 1997). *Between the Acts* builds and sustains connections with the past through the creation of an ambivalent sense of loss and sorrow (Purifoy, 2010; p.25). Those references, from the Roman occupation to the reign of Elizabeth I, all, imply that the trope of invasion is immensely important to the sense of nationhood created in the novel as they imagine a sense of loss and sorrow which leads to the connection of the reader with the past. As Joseph Hardwick suggests, military invasions and warfare grant "ordinary men and women the opportunity to play a central role in the life of the nation" (Hardwick, 2011).

Further, with regards to the notion of the national glorious past, in another line, Woolf wrote:

Her brother said, "Obviously to escape from nature. Weren't four horses needed to drag the family coach through the mud?" Then he told her the famous story of the great 18th century.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.5)

Undoubtedly, the 18th century has a prominent place not only in the history of Britain but also in human history. It was the time of the culmination of the Enlightenment which led to the development of science and philosophy. It was also in that century that Great Britain became a super power in the world after defeating France in the Seven Year's War.⁴³ The outcome of the war made Great Britain the dominant world power and is considered as a major national development. Later during 1750s, Britain pioneered the industrial revolution in Europe. According to Linda Colley (2005) in her survey, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*,

⁴³ The Seven Year's War between France and Great Britain occurred in North America and lasted from 1754 to 1763. It is also known as the War of Conquest in Europe.

Britain's national identity was formed in the eighteenth century and the integration of British nations took place in the same era.

To rationalize Colley's idea, it should be remembered that the early eighteenth century was the time when the Act of Union was passed by the parliaments of England and Scotland and therewith, the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland joined together and formed a single United Kingdom called Great Britain. Ireland, though, was not included in the union until 1801 when the union with Ireland occurred. Evidently, to encompass different countries - England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland - into one nation-state affected and changed the nature of British national identity forever. According to Linda Colley's argument, British national identity then was forged after the act of union in 1707 and the concept of Britishness was superimposed at a particular point in the eighteenth century (2005). Based on Benedict Anderson's theory - which suggests that nations are culturally, politically, historically or intellectually 'imagined' - the act of union made people imagine and believe that they are part of a wider community (1981). In other words, the Act of Union brought different countries - that were located in short geographical distance - together and created a compound of Britishness made out of the interaction of their various cultures (Robbins. K, 1995; p. 249).

With an indication to that particular century, Woolf's *Between the Acts* drew the reader's attention to the 18th century as one of the outstanding periods for the British nation. It was during that period when the English and Scottish united and therewith, "Britain was given a political life" (Dickinson, 2002, p.369). As Colley (2005) states, the various wars such as the Anglo-French conflicts as well as the economic improvements and cultural enlightenment in the 18th century increased the integration and participation of the citizens and therewith enabled the newly minted British state to inspire loyalty in its subjects. Woolf's text uses the aesthetic function of art as well as literature to form specific ideas such as to create a common belief and inspires those ideas afterwards (Lowe, 2007; p.9). By making the characters of the story talk about the great story of the eighteenth century, an aesthetic sense is created to make the readers look back at the splendid time of the nation when the unity and cohesiveness brought the nation glory, power, dominance and major improvements.

The glamorization of the irreplaceable past continues throughout the story; from when Mrs. Swithin “had stretched for her favourite reading, an outline of history, and had spent the hours between three and five thinking of rhododendron forests in Piccadilly” to when “she supposed, barking monsters; the iguandon, the mammoth, and the mastodon; from whom presumably, she thought, jerking the window open” all are the manifestation of the history that is gone but needs to be re-narrated and recalled (Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.5). All those events or manifestations are part of history now, though, the nation-state which has witnessed all those incidents continues to be there; it is where all those glories have achieved and, therefore, should be valued and protected. All these references can be considered as the ideal illustrations of old and Great Britain projected in historiographical accounts. Moreover, all those notions, implications, roots and their subsequent outcomes are meant to put a light on the historical achievements of the nation and, creating motives that make social cohesion possible, and form the British nationality while shaping the British nationals’ self-image by linking them to the common past.

In a similar vein as Woolf, Sadegh Hedayat was intensely interested in exploring the grandeur of pre-Islamic Iran. Nevertheless, Woolf and Hedayat had different approaches or attitudes toward the use of the trope of invasion in the past. Whilst Virginia Woolf and her novel saw the historical invasions to the nation-state as of paramount importance, which led to the unification of the citizens, and emphasized the historical continuity of English identity in the face of numerous invasions or threats, Sadegh Hedayat and his *The Blind Owl* evidently considered the idea of invasion as a moment of rupture in the Iranian national identity.

Hedayat projected his zeal towards, and sympathy about, the Iran’s national past in his *The Blind Owl*. Influenced by the ongoing Pan-Persian trend which attracted Iranian intellectuals after the First World War, he reckoned that the dominance of Islam had destroyed the valued culture of the Persians. Using his knowledge of Iran’s history, he tried to picture how evil invaded the kingdom of good. *The Blind Owl* assumed the roots of all those hypocrisies and superstitions in that loss of original culture of the nation by the alien Semitic one. Hedayat hoped that by exposing the pitfalls and the cruelty of the authorities, he might prevent nation-members

from losing their senses of belonging towards state and forgetting their precious values and costumes.

Similar to *Between the Acts*, historical hints are frequent and prevalent in almost all of Hedayat's works. In *The Blind Owl*, the narrator comes from a city named Ray;

I know every inch of this place. For instance, right today I went to dig a grave, and I uncovered this jar. Do you realize that? It is from the ancient city of Rey, huh? Let's assume it's a useless jar. I give it to you to keep as a souvenir from me, o.k.?

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

Hedayat, followed by other Iranian nationalist authors such as N. Naderpour, S. Chubak and M. Akhavan, divided the history of Iran into two separated parts. Idealizing the Pre-Islamic past of Iran as the golden age, Hedayat assumed the true Iranian national identity was destroyed by the invasion of Muslim Arabs “who replaced Iran's superior civilization with the brutal and bloodthirsty culture and religion of their own” (Blondel Saad, 1996; p.127-132). The pre-Islamic era, according to him, has bred the most illustrious cultures and has propagated one of the best ever humanistic civilizations. On the other hand, the post-Islamic age is the period of ruination and decay of that renowned culture and customs. This period started from the invasion of the Arabs and subsequent devastation of ‘expedient religion’. Then followed the domination of nomadic, truculent and lowbrow primitive Semitics and prevailed in forms of a religion, traditions and language (Blondel Saad, 1996; pp.127-132).

The repeated reference to the ancient city of Rey, either as a hometown of the protagonist in the book or as the city that was invaded by the Arabs, denotes the symbolical and historical infrastructure of the text. The city stands for the nation-state which is invaded and looped in both parts of *The Blind Owl*. The history of the city dates back to the Aryans⁴⁴ time and was built in

⁴⁴ Derived from Sanskrit language, Arya means a nobleman who does good deeds. The first Aryans lived in Southern Siberia in about 8000 years ago. Later, they migrated to the southern part of India and the Western plateau of Iran. They partially settled around Urumiyyeh Lake and the rest moved towards Europe. It is believed that the name of Iran is also derived from Aryan term.

4000 B.C by Houshang, one of the Iranian kings. In Avesta - the holy book of Zoroastrians – it is mentioned twice (Naderi & Hasanli, 2013). It was a Zoroastrian religious centre in the pre-Islamic era. Some Iranian historians also claimed that this is the birthplace of Zoroaster’s mother. Rey is one of the oldest cities in Iran which has the reminiscences of Iranian ancestral culture. Aside from the religious significance, its location by the Silk Road gave it commercial importance too (ibid, 2013). After the invasion of Arabs and the defeat of the Persian army, the central government broke up and the city of Rey was totally destroyed by one of the Arab commanders called Nayim Ibn Mogharran (ibid, 2013). According to M. Ajoudani (2006) in *Hedayat, The Blind Owl and Nationalism*, the use of Rey to represent the nation-state was a purposeful symbolical indication by Sadeqh Hedayat. It represented the author’s looking back through time and space to find the grandeur and splendour of his nation and state in a particular era (Naderi & Hasanli, 2013).

Using the image of Rey to symbolize the nation-state, *The Blind Owl* investigates and addresses the date which all those miseries and agonies of the nation commenced by the Arab invasion - as Ray was one of the most prosperous cities of the Empire which was surrendered and pillaged by the intruders. Ethno-symbolically, it projected the searching perspective of the author in the history of the nation to find the beginning of the dispersal and diffusion of nation-members. As Joya Blondel Saad argues, texts like *The Blind Owl* sought for the reasons behind the Iranians’ alienation and found the result in the history when “the Arab Muslims destroyed a great Iranian civilization and could not replace it” (1996; p.127-132). The use of Rey to remember the nation-state implied that the author of *The Blind Owl* was aware of the fact that “state deploys the cultural resources necessary to secure the active support of its citizens” (Seymour, M., 2004, p.95). Mehrdad Kia (1998) suggests that Iranian nationalist writers found it inevitable to challenge the hegemony of Islam and the dominance of Arabic culture and traditions in order to retain their territory as well as their national identity bound to it. In order to do so, as Kia states, they “emphasized Iran’s pre-Islamic history and culture and its rich literary heritage” and transfigured history, culture, tradition as well as literature “into ideological tools for building a homogenized national identity which was Persian rather than Islamic, secular rather than religious” (Kia. M, 1998; pp.9-36). It was congruent to that argument that Hedayat tried to establish a sense of the grandeur of the Persian state in that era whilst reminding the

reader of the original Persian identity and culture that were raided and nullified. In a nutshell, with the help of metaphors and symbols, Hedayat's novel referred to the crucial events in the history of the nation to allow them to remember their collective memories and therewith, transfer the concept of the nation-state to motherland by raising the nation-members' affection.

When *The Blind Owl*'s character claimed he knew every inch of the soil he was in, it implied the point that the author has treated history as a heritage and had intended to build the Iranian identity on the basis of 'nationalness'. That is the main reason he started creating an image of the nation-state as a foundation of his objective. Hobsbawm (1983) and Anderson (1989) argue that nationhood is predominantly formed by traditions which are invented, articulated and crafted by intellectuals' and literatis' collective imagination. As a result, national feeling is considered embedded in subjective beliefs and is a sense which is manufactured and not inherited. The conceptual nation-state is one of the very essential factors that forge a sense of national cohesiveness among the citizens and leads to the foundation of those subjective beliefs. As Hastings and Wilson (1992) suggest, the nation-state shapes all social and political identities and allows them to realize how many structural, cultural, historical and functional features they share. Knowing all these, Hedayat's character in *The Blind Owl* knows every inches of the soil and is conscious that his ancestral roots are buried in that soil like everyone else living in that state. By bringing it up and emphasizing it, *The Blind Owl* - through its character - aimed to generate commonality of owning and sharing the same land which is known to us and should be taken care of and protected.

4.3 THE USE OF NATIONAL MEMORIES

Although *The Blind Owl* and *Between the Acts* are to be analysed in terms of the use of memories and this section is separated from the earlier one, it should be noted that sometimes there is no clear line or difference between those two aspects - looking for the past of the nation and memories. Following what is already illuminated earlier, the concept of the united community as nation is imaginary. This imaginary impression originates from different arenas such as books, movies, paintings, articles, essays, theatre, commercial advertising, radio etcetera. through a variety of symbols, figures and metaphors. These literary figures, words or phrases

often carry memories or refer to recollections that have distinguished places in the history of that community or nation. These narratives help people to remember their past and act upon making their future. Soren Kierkegaard proposes that those narratives of memories or recollections function as movement back in time to specific situations that are filled with feelings and meanings and help the reader to relive that occasion (1988; pp.9-12). It is after the recollection of that specific moment that the reader imagines himself/herself to be the remnant of the past or the descendant of the last generation. This experience of 'feeling of belonging' leads to the inclusion of individual citizens and the communal/national cohesion. To achieve this goal, those literary authors who want to inspire unity and homogeneity might narrate some particular memories to remind the readers of the historical past and therewith, to either reveal their involvement with looking for the glorious past of their nations or to evoke participation and increase the unity of people.

The use of common historical/ancestral background is one of the dominant factors that can be found in most of the writings with "nationalistic impulses", such as in Woolf's *Between the Acts* as well as in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* (Bell, 2003; p.64). This element is mainly employed by the authors to stress and build collective memories. Hobsbawm and Anderson argue that the concept of collective memory is one of the important dynamics of national identity from which nationalism acquires its power. Supporting their opinion, Duncan S.A. Bell in 'Mythsapes: Memory, Mythology and National Identity' suggests the term of 'social agency' instead of 'collective memory' and states that myths and memories of nations are "forged, used, transmitted, negotiated and reconstructed" - in texts with nationalist themes - to let the reader or citizens "relate memory of each other" (2003; p. 63). The perception emanating from this experience, as it can be interpreted from his article, leads to the formation of a sense of belonging, cohesiveness and solidarity. However, some critics such as Tzvetan Todorov opposed this idea, saying that "the sacralization of the past is not the best way of making it live in the present" and the unification of people, nowadays, requires something more than "pious images" (2001; p.21).

Nevertheless, *Between the Acts* attempts to create an atmosphere in which the audience, in the novel, as well as the reader can trace their genealogies back to the specified generation and feel belonging to the circle of the nation for example:

The flower blazed between the angles of the roots. Membrane after membrane was torn.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.7)

Only something over a hundred and twenty years the Olivers had been there.

(ibid, p.4)

For me Shakespeare sang - (a cow mooed. A bird twittered)
The throstle, the mavis (she continued)
In the green wood, the wild wood,
Carolled and sang, praising England, the Queen,
Then there was heard too
On granite and cobble
From Windsor to Oxford
Loud laughter, low laughter
Of warrior and lover,
The fighter, the singer.
The ashen haired babe
(she stretched out her swarthy, muscular arm)
Stretched his arm in contentment
As home from the Isles came
The sea faring men...

(ibid, p.44)

The indication of “over a hundred and twenty years ago” or the referrals to “Windsor” and “Oxford” are other examples of the literary articulated references to the national memories and recollections, which are rampant in *Between the Acts*, reflecting the writer’s attempt and her

contribution to fashion a sense of collective hope and memory. At the same time, they represent the individual's sense of belonging and the fear of losing something valuable. Whilst the first instance reminds the reader of the history and antiquity of his/her motherland, in a way very similar to Sadeq Hedayat's use of Rey to represent Iran's state, "Windsor" mainly refers to the Castle of Windsor which was built in the medieval era and alludes to the Anglo-British monarchy, in which national sovereignty lies. Raymond South's *The Book of Windsor* explains that the town owes its fame to the navigable river and strategically placed hill which suggest the likelihood of continual human settlement from early times (1977). Apart from the geographical position of the town which resonates with the British state, as an archipelago surrounded by the North and Celtic sea with its predominant hills and mountains in the Western and Northern areas, the remains from the Roman era and Anglo Saxon settlement in Windsor also rationalize the reason behind why it has been used to embody Britain's monarchy. The same applies to Oxford as it was the very first city where Saxons settled at around 900 AD (Fletcher, 1926; Ch. 2). As a result of the Norman invasion, the city was destroyed. However, the governor who was assigned by the Normans was "ordered to renovate the Oxford Castle to endorse Norman dominion over the region" (Andrews & Huelin, 1999).

Probably, the best way to explain and clarify the relevance of the mentioned examples to the subject of this section would be to refer to David McCrone (1998) and his argument. He argues that clarification and establishment of the concept of the nation are the most essential dynamics of nationalism and the study of national identity, in particular. On the other hand, the creation of a powerful sense of belonging and the formation of us and others "define the topography of nationalist sentiment and rhetoric" (Bell, 2003; p.64). To fashion this sense or mentality, it should be framed through the formative narratives that bring the individuals' memories "of particular events of the past" together and let them share those memories (ibid; p.65). As a result, the externalized memories through acts of remembrance and social interaction become nationalized (ibid, p.65). "Windsor" and "Oxford" are only two of many other examples within the story of *Between the Acts* that have been indicated to conceptualize particular events in the past or to represent the nation-state with a location that has notable place in the history of the nation.

Mrs. Manresa was humming:

My home is at Windsor, close to the Inn.
Royal George is the name of the pub.
And boys you'll believe me,
I don't want no asking...
She was afloat on the stream

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.41)

Even the indication to Shakespeare, as one of the foremost national figures in the history of English literature, and his songs is congruent to the above mentioned discussion. All those literary articulated figures, places and images or the references to the national glamorous recollections, that are prevalent in the story of *Between the Acts*, play formative roles to reconstruct the history of the nation and build the shared collective memory emanating from a common historical background. The use of important figures such as Shakespeare, who has a prestigious place in the history of the nation, makes the audience in the story as well as the reader proud of their past, history, culture and traditions. This sense of pride brings the common sense of belonging. Indeed, this example, along with many other similar ones, reflects the writer's attempt and her contribution to fashion a sense of collective hope and memory. Based on Max Weber's statement in his *Essays In Sociology* (1946), objective elements such as language, culture and homeland. may fail to include all layers of the community or nation. Nevertheless, as he continues, subjective features such as the emphasis on feelings, memories and imaginations stimulate more sense of belonging and consolidate more members.

It should be noted that *Between the Acts* neither vividly promoted nor endorsed jingoism⁴⁵. In other words, Woolf's text never promotes any aggressive action of force against other threatening nations. The story even parodies jingoistic representations of national figureheads. Likewise, through the depiction of forgetful audiences in the pageant - those who forgot or were ignorant of their national history and culture - Virginia Woolf's story satirized

⁴⁵ The term was coined as a British radical politician called George Holyoake in a letter to the Daily News on 13 March 1878 (Ceadel, Martin, 2000).

indiscreet nationalism. Nevertheless, the hints of ‘nationalist story-telling’, from what Duncan Bell (2003) has termed, are visible in Virginia Woolf’s *Between the Acts* as the text projects that forging a common identity as national is an important thing to try to articulate. Probably the best example to prove the story’s effort to fictionalize or fabricate that nationality would be to refer to how the story tentatively chooses, crafts and uses the specific imaginary narratives that highlight common memories for the purpose of shaping national identity. This agrees with Montserrat Guibernau’s observation, “nationalism derives its strength from the creation of a sense of national identity” and there is a direct relationship between them (1996; p.142). Nationalism is founded on the construction of nationality and whenever a literary work, such as *Between the Acts*, provides enough evidence to support a national sense of togetherness, it can be considered as a nationalist writing.

Although it was raised before, it is worthwhile to indicate the typology provided by Anthony Smith (1999) again here. Based on what he suggests, there are four distinct theoretical approaches towards nationalism as primordialism, perennialism, modernism and ethno-symbolic. However, they all have a common and fundamental point in their schemes of explanation which is the historical representations or narrations. As David Miller (1997) states, shared memories, especially if they are historical - form a mutual commitment and integrate the citizens with each other and link them with their motherland. Supporting Miller’s idea, Anthony D. Smith (2001) also points out that those common ancestral myths, shared historical memories and common cultural elements, together with the correlation between the elites and intellectuals, are the essential factors which associate nationals with the state and create a nation.

Following this, the way in which the collective memory was invoked by the articulation of various literary objects and covert nationalist narratives in *Between the Acts* encourages the audiences in the plot and the reader to feel proud of who they are or about where they live. The evocative narration of the story linked the past with the future to construct the present (Bell, 2003). Therewith, the story notified the readers of the value of the territory and the historical/cultural legacy they have inherited. Woolf’s text presented historical knowledge to serve the ideological construction of national identity among the nation-members. In other words, it invoked the past to manufacture national consciousness (Boroujerdi, 1998, p.44). One

of the most appropriate examples, from the context of the story, is the indication to the Roman conquest of Britain to introduce it as memory which, itself, has a significant place in the history of British nation. It also refers to the continuity and the relationship between the homeland and the nation-members:

From an airplane, he said, you could still see, plainly marked, the scars made by the Britons; by the Romans.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.3)

The objective of the pageant in Woolf's *Between the Acts* is to allude to the social cohesion which the occasion of the pageant provided (Esty, J, 2002; p.261). It is the pageant which has brought the villagers together and made them "passing in and out between the trees" and "singing...Now weak and small...A child as all may see" (Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.40). The pageant is where "they grouped themselves together" and sang (ibid, p.42). The pageant's imagery increases the historical awareness and helps to "preserve the past in the midst of the present", as Lowe concedes (2007; p.9). Considering that, one can perceive the choice of the Roman conquest as a historical turning point was to highlight the fact that the British nation-state has survived such massive invasions as well as the colonization. The Roman conquest was a long and gradual process which started at 43 AD and lasted until 410 AD. It made a major impact and influence on Britain's politics, economics, traditions and even language. However, Britain⁴⁶ survived the long takeover and came out of the dark shadows off the conquest to become one of the major powers of the world later on. Re-narrating England's⁴⁷ achievements, victories and survivals in the past, in the time when the nation-state's future is uncertain and at stake, the text reminded the grandeur of the previous generation and inspired that the same glory should be protected and attained by unity and cohesion. This was the same England, as personified by the character of Phyllis Jones in the prologue of the pageant, where people stayed together and found their way to the bright days of glory in the future:

⁴⁶ The concept of Britain, here, is used as the nation-state to refer to the motherland for the soil and rock survived the Romans, rather than the people on the time.

⁴⁷ This might cause a confusion about was it England or Great Britain as this confusion often runs through pageants and seems to do so in Woolf too.

Cutting the roads... up to the hill top ... we climbed. Down in the valley...sow, wild boar, hog, rhinoceros, reindeer... Dug ourselves in to the hill top...Ground roots between stones... Ground corn... till we too ... lay underg—
r—o—u—n—d...

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.41)

They laid their roots in the soil of that state and together built it up all over again. They were all:

Armed against fate...The valiant Rhoderick...Armed and valiant
Bold and blatant...Firm elatant...See the warriors—here they come...

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.41)

This is how Virginia Woolf's book glorifies the past generation and history of the motherland to make the reader proud of their ancestors and the state they live in. Connecting the present generation with the past and history, it strives to create and shape a sense of continuity. Following the indicated principles in nationalism, the formation of imaginary nations requires creating a sense of nationhood. This sense of nationhood is impossible to create without constructing a sense of continuity between the past and the present. Mangol Bayat-Philipp stated, "History is mobilized by most protagonist nationalists for a definite goal which is to guarantee a sense of continuity" (1978, p.203). To make this sense of continuity, *Between the Acts* tries to make the reader recognize the value and antiquity of the inherited capital - which is the nation-state here. The formation of this sense of belonging and continuity is also fashioned by the way the story portrayed Pointz Hall and the village:

Digging and delving (they sang), hedging and ditching, we pass... .
Summer and winter, autumn and spring return... All passes but we, all
changes...but we remain forever the same... (the breeze blew gaps between their
words.)

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.71)

...Said Mrs. Swithin stuffing the cushion behind her back. Then she leant forward. "That's England in the time of Chaucer, I take it. She's been maying, nutting. She has flowers in her hair...But those passing behind her" She pointed. "The Canterbury pilgrims? Look!"

(ibid, p. 42)

Whilst Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts* personified England in the old glorious days with "flowers in her hair", the life of the present people living in the same nation-state is presented as:

They were singing; but only a word or two was audible "... wore ruts in the grass... built the house in the lane... "The wind blew away the connecting words of their chant, and then, as they reached the tree at the end they sang: "To the shrine of the Saint ... to the tomb ... lovers... believers... we come ... "

(ibid, p. 42)

Putting those two images together, the story depicts and emphasizes how the natural routine life goes on after all those events, glories, losses and triumphs. Anthony D. Smith (2001) argues that the sense of continuity and attachment to the holy land, ancestral homeland is one of the typical qualities which form, strengthen and improve nationhood and makes precise boundaries between the nation-members and the outsiders. Smith continues that this sense of continuity and attachment can never be achieved without invented traditions, ancestral memories, and national heroes and, of course, intellectual scholars who sanctify national ceremonies, shrines and monuments (p.184-188). Smith's points are evident in the chosen examples of *Between the Acts*. Trying to glorify and bless the motherland through literary analogies, the writer implied that the time goes on/will go on, and tribes, dynasties and empires will pass. But we, the nation as well the state, will continue.

The landscape has endured many wars, events and changes whilst the residents have been there for over a century. They have their ancestral roots buried in the soil of homeland. Having been used to conceptualize the image of the nation-state, Pointz Hall and its surrounding have

been through dreadful wars, such as the Napoleonic wars that lasted more than 11 years and have had a long thread of history. However, they have been recovered from all those burdens and strains and they will last and continue as Woolf narrates through Mrs. Swithin;

"That's what makes a view so sad," said Mrs. Swithin, lowering herself into the deck-chair which Giles had brought her. "And so beautiful. It'll be there," she nodded at the strip of gauze laid upon the distant fields, "when we're not."

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.28)

With the country in the verge of the Second World War, Woolf foresaw the threat of another mass destruction to the homeland (ibid, p.28). Like everyone in that time, she was concerned for her country, her nation and lives of many citizens. Some critics such as Lisa Weihman (2007) argue that the growing national self-interest in the form of fascism in Europe made Woolf detest classic nationalism. Weihman (2007) also suggests that Woolf saw nationalism, in classical definition of it in particular, as a legal or social masculine domination over the world and women. However, looking at her writings, especially at *Between the Acts*, reveals that Woolf's intention was to condemn the patriarchal traditions of the society. Moreover, it is exposed that wherever Woolf saw nationalism as a motive for militarism or as vehicle for imperial propagation, she despised it. Therefore, she laid multiple hidden meanings and allusions to address the oncoming threat; therewith, she highlighted the fact that not only her nation-state, which has survived of several hazardous battles throughout history, is under threat but also the whole Europe as a big human community is at stake and needs to be protected. Woolf's opposition against the form of nationalism which spreads patriarchal aggressions is more visible in her other writings such as in *Three Guineas*, where the female protagonist leaves her English family as an opposition to the imperialist British nationalism and joins the Irish nationalist movement. It is, indeed, through the events of the story that Woolf criticizes the unfairness in women's lack of access to the political power of the nation-states, rejects women's submissiveness by conforming to the aggressive nationalism and seeks new forms of nationalism which are equal, positive and unaggressive.

Using “common myth of descent, shared historical memories and other elements of common culture”, as Anthony Smith (2000) recounted, Woolf’s story linked the reader with an historic territory to mobilize them (stated in Leifer. M, 2000, p.12). Thus, *Between the Acts* resorted to literary narrations to articulate specific settings to reproduce certain connotations on which people base their sense of belonging. Moreover, the text uses satirical or ironic implications to denote specific points and inspire nationalistic fervours. When “the scenes from English history” are explained and Mrs. Manresa loudly cheers “Merry England” or when the words are all lost in the blowing wind and the gramophone gets stuck, they all aim to ironically point out that England, indeed, is “about the un-Merry period in its history” (Aims. K, 1954 stated in Lowe, 2007; p.10). It not only satirizes those who are forgetful and ignorant of the history but also attempts to highlight the important era the nation-state is facing.

In terms of utilizing the historical past or indicating the significant events in the national history, the style of *The Blind Owl* is somehow different from *Between the Acts*:

Sometimes my nanny talked to me about the miracles of the prophets. She thought that by so doing she would console me, while in reality I was merely envious of her low level of thinking and of her foolishness.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

The character of nanny’s function in the story is to remind the reader of the invasion of Arabs and the religion of Islam which dominated the state. These two factors, as Mashallah Ajoudani stated in Hedayat, *The Blind Owl and Nationalism* (2006), were the main incidents that, Hedayat thought, downgraded the national identity of the Iranians. Hedayat, as it can be observed in his other writings, for example in *The Advantages of Vegetarianism*, as well as in *The Pearl Cannon*, was fond of Zoroastrianism as the ancient religion of Iranians and saw the Iranian national identity is bound to it. It seems that whatever reminded him of Islam, and the subsequent intrusion of Arabs and the collapse of Persian Empire was abhorred by the author of *The Blind Owl*.

Several days ago she brought me a prayer book with a layer of dust on top of it. But neither the rabbles' prayers nor any of their books, writings or thoughts was useful for me. What use did I have for their nonsense and their lies?

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

With the allusion to the Arab invasion and their forceful imposition of religion as the substantial historical event, the narrating character of *The Blind Owl* condemned the incursion and endorsed that religion has neither had any use nor consolation for the Iranian nationals (Ajoudani, 2006).

Wasn't I myself the result of many succeeding generations, and weren't their hereditary sufferings inherent in me?...Never has any of these - the mosque, the call to prayer, the ablutions, the noisy spitting, the bowing and prostration in front of the almighty or absolute Creator with whom one could converse only in Arabic-- none of these has ever had any effect upon me.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

Whilst the ancient past is glorified and the value of the historical inheritance is emphasised, the inadequacy of the imposed traditions and religious customs are counted. Comparing these two in a paragraph, the novel draws the attention of the reader to the nobility of Iranian national identity. As Ajoudani (2006) argued, Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* left out the ancient Iranian religion and respective traditions and customs of the ineffective Islamic ones. In doing so, it has tried to revive the constructive and fundamental elements of national identity and replace the imposed and impracticable ones with the genuine and original factors to restore the Iranian nationhood (Ajoudani, 2006). It is very notable that the preoccupation with the Iranian original culture and traditions has sometimes gone too far as the story considers them as overriding, magnificent and preferable and counts the rest as useless and ineffectual. Nevertheless, it should be regarded that the Anti-Arabism, Pan-Iranianism and endless appraisal of the golden age of the era of Persian Empire together with reprimanding Islamic or Arabic traditions and practices was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the emerging modernist nationalism in Iran at the time when *The Blind Owl* was being written.

Regarding the use of the historical past, it should be referred to Peter Lowe's argument in *Cultural Continuity in a Time of War* in Virginia Woolf's book. As it is vivid in the story, in spite of the approaching threat of the invasion by Nazis to Britain, some characters are totally neglectful of the matter and are busy with their routine life. Accordingly, the character of Miss La Trobe and her pageant tried to remind the oblivious audience of the importance of the situation, which will threaten the entity of the whole nation, and make them realize that only their affinity will save the England. Her creative attempt seemed to be unsuccessful every now and then for having been interrupted by the blowing wind or ticking machine. Nevertheless, her intention is undeniably to draw everyone's attention and engage them to see the significance of the time and realize the inevitability of cohesion.

"He had a dog. The dog was famous. The dog has his place in history" (ibid, p.25). This is another clear example of how Woolf's novel that can be read as a satire. The ancestor has been referred to; nonetheless, it has not been the ancestor who is the most famous figure. In fact, it is the dog that has his place in the history, not the man. This is very similar to Woolf's earlier work called *Flush* which she wrote in 1933. Reflecting Virginia Woolf's creative contemplation of English history, the text is widely known as a modernist writing which narrates the real life of and the relationship between Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning through the eyes of a dog, which is the central figure in the story.

In the chosen example, the claim of a place in history is due not to the deeds of a dead man but the reputation of his dog. In a similar vein, when an old man remembers his mother as "very stout", he surely means how determined, courageous and powerful his mother was. However, in terms of the texts being considered as a satire, the word 'stout' can also be a euphemism for the word 'fat' which implies very opposite qualities. This is another example of where the novel can be read both as endorsement and as a satire in the very same words. Reminding the reader of their relation with the historical past and ancestral background, the story line blames those who have forgotten the bravery and heroism of the ones who sacrificed their lives to protect the motherland and, instead, give value and credit to marginal matters of the routine life.

To know a nation's origin and roots is the key to explore the source of its national culture and history. Also, it should not be neglected that national culture might shape perceptions of origins and roots. As Eric Hobsbawm (1992) states, "what makes a nation is the past, what justifies one nation against others is the past" and that is what Virginia Woolf's writing implies (Stated in Boroujerdi, 1998, p.44). Retelling the reader about that common origin crafts the collective memory which brings affinity, unity and sense of belonging. Using social, cultural and historical factors and making the nation proud of them is a significant point which distinguishes nationalism from racism (Schaefer. R, 2008). Without degrading any other races or nations, *Between the Acts* denoted the origins of the British national identity to use that fact as a common point to bring everyone together and construct unity regardless of apparent disparities and differences.

She looked what she was: Sir Richard's daughter; and niece of the two old ladies at Wimbledon who were so proud, being O'Neils, of their descent from the Kings of Ireland.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.9)

... the unknown guest had been looking when Giles came in. "That," he indicated the man with a horse, "was my ancestor".

(ibid, p.25)

Historical heritage and inheritance are often accredited by the intellectual elites and literati through the narration of old stories and legacy. When the story's characters proudly talk about their ancestors, historical background and heritage, it signifies the importance of the national heritage. There is no doubt that such heritage is one of the elements which distinguishes each nation from other nations, as Walker Connor (1994) has suggested. According to him, a nation is formed when a group of people believe they are related to each other through their ancestors and share that belief. Whether this shared belief is based on real biological ancestry or on just a myth of common lineage, as he continues, what matters is the feeling of it rather than the reality of its existence. It is, in fact, the meaning, value and recognition that are bestowed on

the past through the way in which the characters of *Between the Acts* proudly address their ancestors, after all the re-narration of the noteworthy events and exaggerating the glory and splendour. These individual subjectivities and self-determinations strengthen the national identity.

Some suggest that if the nation-members residing in the state do not have enough knowledge about past generations, they will not have much of a common history and culture (Condor, S. 2010). Nationalists believe that it is very crucial for the community to be aware of the past time and generation and preserve it in the present time. According to Liah Greenfeld (1992) nation-states are constructed on the basis of national consciousness and this sense is created by nationalism. In order to create this sense of continuity, imaginary common belief and also to raise the self-determination and social cohesion, Woolf's novel contained multiple indications that provided a basis for the emergence and persistence of the nation.

When Isa, one of the characters within *Between the Acts*, remembers the old time of her mother, she then immediately recalls that she was determined, courageous and powerful. This is an ethno-symbolic nationalist approach that Woolf employs. She uses important popular family connections such as kinship to make a sense of belonging. Based on Smith (2000) arguments, ethno-symbolic nationalism suggests "the importance of historical clusters, or heritage, of myths, memories, values and symbols for cultural community formation" (stated in Leifer. M, 2000; p.12). Accordingly, symbols and myths standing for historical origins play a central role in arousing the self-definition and persistence of a nation.

A similar trend is evident in *The Blind Owl* where the kinship and ancestral family background operates as a progressive force to enthuse that sense of common national belonging:

Nanny told me that my father and uncle were twins; both of them had the same face, the same physiognomy and the same disposition; even the quality of their voices was similar, so much so that they could not easily be distinguished from each other.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

In order to build a nation and inspire the sense of nationhood, as Hugh Seton-Watson (1977) stated, a significant number of people should consider themselves as a whole as if they are one. When a large group within the community holds this belief, they possess common 'national consciousness' (Seton-Watson, 1977, p.42). Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* used the twin character of father and uncle as another hint to remind the readers of the special incidents and events of national history. The twin characters represent both Aryans in India and Iran. They are from the same race and they have faith in a common religion of Zoroastrian. After the Arab invasion of the land of Persia, the group of Zoroastrian Arians, who did not want to convert from their ancestral religion to an imposed one, migrated to India. These twin characters can be seen as the notion of disparity in Persian nation whilst referencing to a historical event which caused that turmoil.

The twin characters have been separated from each other a very long time ago, but they are from the same race. They have been disunited but they still share the same backgrounds, creed and identity. The artistic personification of their characters in *The Blind Owl* can be considered as an ethno-symbolic method of the writer in using icons and personalities or events to refer to the national past. Nationalism, from its early stages, has been accompanied by archaism. The writers and poets of the renaissance era also believed that the Christian era and the sovereignty of the churches during that time was a dark period of ignorance. Thus, they used to praise the Greek and Roman eras as one of the most brilliant times in human history. Hence, from the fourteenth century onwards, this restoration school has been prevalent in literature, art and philosophy. Witnessing new Western civilization and subsequent social improvements and comparing them with the concurrent backwardness, Iranian nationalist intellectuals developed a passive-reactive approach in which they associated the retrogression and decline of the Iranian nation with the Arab invasion and the fall of the Sassanid Empire. Since then, they began to restore that historic period and attempted to return the nation to it.

One of the common and notable points in the writings of Virginia Woolf and Sadegh Hedayat was that they were both concerned about how the citizens were ignorant and forgetful of their own history and past. The ignorance did not undermine national feelings but the sense of

national unity should be revived in certain times particularly when the existence or the solidarity of the nation is in jeopardy. The best example in *Between the Acts* is perhaps when the character of England forgets her line:

"England am I," she piped again; and stopped.
She had forgotten her lines.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.40)

Or:

She pushed her way through the chairs to a seat beside her brother. "What's it all about? I've missed the prologue. England? That little girl? Now she's gone ... "

(ibid, p.40)

She said, popping the berry into her mouth, "What did it mean?" and added: "The peasants; the kings; the fool and" (she swallowed) "ourselves?"

(ibid, p.107)

Based on the earlier discussions, one of the main attempts of both chosen texts was to review the formative elements of the national identity and remind the people of them. The national history or the past of the nation is undeniably one of the constructive factors in building a sense of nationhood. It is very clear that both *Between the Acts* and *The Blind Owl* tried to re-narrate the remote and partly forgotten history and blamed those who had forgotten it. Adopting Ruth Benedict's (1983) ideas, Patricia Cramer (1993) claims that Woolf was aware of the influential impact of history, tradition and culture in raising the national emotions. Therefore, as Cramer concludes, Woolf "focused on the unspoken loyalties" and pallid historical events to construct or sustain the national affinity (Cramer, 1993; p.166). Taking the ignorance or forgetfulness of the nation-members toward their own history and past as the destructive norm of nationhood, *Between the Acts* - as well as *The Blind Owl* - challenge it to reinstate and reshape the spiritual values of the national unity (Cramer, 1993).

All the above mentioned instances reveal how the *Between the Acts* blamed the nationals for forgetting the national history of the land and not knowing their background and roots. The expression of the hatred from people's ignorance of their history and past is more revealed when Mrs. Giles Oliver says; "Where we know not, where we go not, neither know nor care,".... Flying, rushing through the ambient, incandescent, summer silent..." (ibid, p.8). One may think of such an interpretation and analysis as one-sided and argue that Woolf, or even Hedayat, might not be judging people or regarding them as ignorant just because they were not aware of their history or did not know the right interpretation of it. According to Ernest Gellner (1983) arguments, the emotional sentiments such as nationhood and the sense of belonging to a national community are dependent on the ethnic awakening. It is with regard to Gellner's claim that the writer, trying to stimulate the sense of national cohesiveness, could not stand the ignorance of citizens and lack of their recognition.

A similar trend is visible in Hedayat's writings, too. Sadegh Hedayat was one of the rare Iranian modern writers who, relying on the original Persian culture and history, emphasized Persian wisdom and determinedly tried to extricate their milieu from the foreign culture, especially the Arabs and Islamic traditions. Mansour Koushan (2011) states that Hedayat's writing, from the stylistic point of view, was focused on the exposition of the elements such as superstitious traditions and religious practices which caused individual misbehaviours like deceit, flattery, corruption and hypocrisy and led to the mass disunity and disparity. In doing so, as Koushan explains, Hedayat never shun from uncovering or blaming the potential agencies such as the religion, the clerics and even people and their lack of knowledge and wisdom:

I escaped from the affliction that had enmeshed me. Without any predetermined destination, I passed through many streets and distraughtly walked by the vulgar people who, with greedy faces, were in pursuit of money and lust. In fact, I did not need to see them to know them; one was enough to represent the rest. They were all like one big mouth leading to a wad of guts, terminating in a sexual organ.

(Hedayata, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

As scholars such as Majid Nafisi (2011), Shadab Vajdi (2011) and Dr. Bahram Meghdadi (2008) suggest, Sadegh Hedayat believed that nation-members with their sheer ignorance facilitate the situation that causes disunity and dispersion of the nation. As they suggested, Hedayat linked the obscurantism and evil nature of religious officials' governance with the ignorance of people to describe the grounds of all 'in-nation' troubles. For him, the nation-citizen's souls were enslaved and petrified by ignorance and the audacity of a small clique. Showing how the state-members seek their goals and resort to superstitious theories and beliefs, he abhors the primacy of religion in Iran and therefore considers that because of public ignorance, the dominant backwarded religious ideologies and mismanagement of the incompetent ruling authorities, the nation had been decomposed. Hedayat intended to make the nation recognize the tragedy which has befallen their nation under the pretence of progress, liberty, and under the guise of a scared administration and directs them the way in which they could get rid of the evil dressed in religious cloak.

4.4 MYTHS, FIGURES, SYMBOLS AND METAPHORS

One of the main characteristics of nationalism is to produce myths, symbols, and notions and then utilize them for nationalistic and political purposes in society (Hobsbawm, 1983). Unlike the other elements such as land, race or religion, those factors were intentionally invented by the cultural engineers to unify the mass who are dispersed as a result of the industrialization and modernism.

Literature serves as a vehicle to recreate those myths and symbols through the re-narration of particular national history and the reproduction of popular myths. For that reason, leaders, warriors and national heroes play a significant role in myth-making and the construction of national identity. Literary writers dress up those national figures and promote them through their writings to stimulate the nation's sense of pride. It is through the representation of those national and mythical heroes, who have devoted their lives for the sake of the nation, that the text makes the reader recall them and feel responsible to do something in return or thankful to those figures.

There are many examples as such in *Between the Acts* as the story carries multiple references to the past and the golden age of the nation while implementing symbols and figures which indicate the same era and follow the same purposes. "...kept her tea-caddy locked; yet had given him in that very room a copy of Byron" (Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.4). The wave of Romantic nationalism,⁴⁸ which started with the ideas of Rousseau in 1784 and became widespread in Europe, promoting the idea that the nation-state acquires its legitimacy as a consequence of particular factors such as language, religion, race, culture and traditions (Melzer, A, 2000). There is no doubt that most of the writers of Woolf's generation - known as modernists - were suspicious of, and hostile towards, their romantic predecessors (Kermode, Frank, 1957). Later on, Ethno-symbolic nationalists updated the theory of nationalism in many ways. They emphasized that particular times in the history or the golden age in the past of a nation plays a determining role in unifying the nation-members. Lord Byron is a good example of the figures used in the story; George G. Byron, widely known as Lord Byron, was a leading poet in the Romantic Nationalist tradition. Being regarded as one of the most influential British poets, he travelled to fight the Ottoman Empire in the Greek War of Independence which made him revered as a national hero (Plomer, 1970). His participation in the Greek's war for the sake of that nation's prosperity, dignity and independence, the burden and risks he took for this long trip and the extent of his bravery and sacrifice made him appear as a selfless and courageous national figure of whom the British nation could be proud. Therefore, the use of Byron in the context of *Between the Acts* reveals the writer's involvement with the re-description of formative elements of national identity and using national heroes to make the reader be proud of their national character. In doing so, the story aimed to inspire the feeling of unity and collectiveness with other nation-members by sharing common historical heroes.

The same method of using figures and symbols is also prevalent in *The Blind Owl*. In the first part of the novella, the protagonist paints the eyes of an ethereal girl on the 'raq vase'. The ethereal girl is the symbol of the pre-Islamic era of the state which the artist tries to keep forever and preserve:

⁴⁸ Romantic nationalism was a different school than romanticism in literature which began toward the end of the 18th century.

I took some paper along with my working tools and went to the side of her bed. This was her bed now. I wanted to copy this form, which was condemned to a slow and very gradual disintegration, this form which seemed to be devoid of motion and expression, without being disturbed. I wanted to record its fundamental lines on paper. I wanted to choose from this face those lines which would affect me.....I wanted to look at her face once, close my eyes, and then draw on the paper those lines of her face that I would choose. In this way, perhaps, using my own intellect, I could find a respite for my tortured soul. In short, I took refuge in the world of lines and shapes.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

Then, later in the second part of the story, he murders the same girl who has become a whore. The image of the whore is also used in the story to represent the post-Islamic conditions of the country. She is the same ethereal girl who is leading her mean and inferior life whilst there is no sign of precious days of former beauty and glamour. Ethno-symbolically, they were both, the painting and imagining, portrayed in *The Blind Owl* to show the ending of the glorious past of the country and imply how the same grand past was killed and disappeared. In *The Blind Owl: The Narration of Vanishing Ancient Iran*, Bahram Meghdadi (2008) indicates that Hedayat used the same method in his other works such as in *Parvin, Sassan's Daughter* where the female character of Parvin symbolized the ancient and Pre-Islamic Iran. That story, as Meghdadi continues, happens in the midst of the war between the Persians and the Arabs around the city of Rey. Parvin, the young beautiful girl, all dressed in white silk, loses her father and her fiancé in the battle. In order to avoid being captured and raped by the Arab invaders, she commits suicide at the end of the play.

Representing the ancient and pre-Islamic era to remind readers of the original Persian culture and identity, the character of the ethereal girl, who is similar to the Parvin in *Parvin, Sassan's Daughter*, turned out to be a whore in *The Blind Owl*. This incident conveys how the original culture, heritage and identity of the nation has been deteriorated by the alien's presence. After the assassination of the whore, the narrator of the story is also changed to the character of 'the odds-and-ends' man. This 'odds-and-ends man' was someone who "wore a scarf and cloak

and was carrying a long-bladed knife in his hand” (Hedayat, 1937). He had “red eyes, the lids of which seemed to have been cut” (ibid, 1937). This character, himself, is a symbol which stands for the Islamic authorities and the way the Islamic clerics dress. Depicting all those symbols and figures, Hedayat’s story attempted to show how the glorious past and the time of grandeur have been changed or ruined. *The Blind Owl* also aimed to demonstrate how the nation and its members were responsible for the permutation of their native inherited culture and values. The story created an atmosphere to show how the intrusion of the alien and Arabic culture, tradition and religion had distorted the true identity of the nation-members. Using the literary images and metaphors, Hedayat’s book expressed sorrow for missing the original customs. According to Natividad Gutierrez (1999), nationalist writers use symbols to “facilitate collective goals, and provide certain cultural attributes such as uniqueness and the pursuit of authenticity” (p.19). Using insights from Gutierrez’s description, one can see how Hedayat collected, shaped, combined, idealized and organized the above mentioned symbols to stimulate his reader to be conscious of his/her historical antiquity as well as to invoke them to seek for what Hedayat believed to be their authentic and original identity.

Similar to *The Bind Owl*, the amplification of a nation’s historicity and the renewal of their historical memory through myths, symbols and figures, can also be seen in *Between the Acts*. Perhaps, the best instance is when the story tries to connect the audiences, through Miss La Trobe’s pageant, with the past by representing the villager actors appearing as historical figures on the stage;

So it was the play then. Or was it the prologue?

Come hither for our festival (she continued)

This is a pageant, all may see

Drawn from our island history.

England am I

"She's England," they whispered. "It's begun." "The prologue," they added, looking down at the programme.

"England am I," she piped again; and stopped.

She had forgotten her lines.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.40)

The pageant on which the story is based starts with a character's prologue that is called England and clearly stands for England. She is supposed to narrate the story of England's state but she forgets the lines. This figurative incident through the peculiar character of England presages that Woolf's story is going to be about the history of the nation and the state. In other words, this scene foreshadows "the centrality of nationalist story-telling" as it carries the evocative narrative which connects the past, the present and the future, as Duncan Bell highlighted (2003; p.66).

Mrs. Swithin's character is another figure within the story who is worthwhile to study:

Tempted by the sight to continue her imaginative reconstruction of the past, Mrs. Swithin paused; she was given to increasing the bounds of the moment by flights into past or future; or sidelong down corridors and alleys; but she remembered her mother—her mother in that very room rebuking her.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.6)

Her apparent function within *Between the Acts*, as it is clearly declared, is to reconstruct the past. She lives in the historic past of England in her imagination. Her character has been created to excavate through the history of the nation and re-narrate the significant parts of the old times to remind them of their roots and recollect the collective memory of the nation. Based on what is indicated by Peter Lowe (2007), both Mrs. Swithin and Miss La Trobe act as engineers to set the connection between culture, history, territory and people. With the use of the indigenous past, Miss La Trobe employs national figures, heroes and symbols to teach the citizens their ancient history and make them integrated that way. The character of Elizabeth is one of the examples, employed by Miss La Trobe in the story to symbolize the Queen Elizabeth I.

From behind the bushes issued Queen Elizabeth – Eliza Clark, licensed to sell tobacco..... She looked the age in person. And when she mounted the soap box in the centre, representing perhaps a rock in the ocean, her size made her appear

gigantic. She could reach a flitch of bacon or haul a tub of oil with one sweep of her arm in the shop. For a moment she stood there, eminent, dominant, on the soap box with the blue and sailing clouds behind her. The breeze had risen. The Queen of this great land...those were the first words that could be heard above the roar of laughter and applause.

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.43)

Queen Elizabeth I reigned in her own right from 1553 to 1603. Her reign was a flourishing period for English literature and drama. Moreover, it was in the Elizabethan era that England gained its might and superiority in seafaring. Elizabeth I was also the first one who imported tobacco from one of England's colonies in North America and this is one of the reasons why Woolf used the character of Eliza Clark who had the right to sell tobacco and, through her shared name, Virginia Woolf made a connection between Elizabeth I and Eliza Clark. Thereby, she intended to make a vivid reference to Queen Elizabeth and her reign.

Tobacco was not the only reason which made Elizabeth I a legend by the time she died:

Mistress of ships and bearded men (she bawled)
Hawkins, Frobisher, Drake,
Tumbling their oranges, ingots of silver,
Cargoes of diamonds, ducats of gold,
Down on the jetty, there in the west land,—
(she pointed her fist at the blazing blue sky)
Mistress of pinnacles, spires and palaces—
(her arm swept towards the house)
For me Shakespeare sang—
(a cow mooed. A bird twittered)
The throstle, the mavis (she continued)
In the green wood, the wild wood,
Carolled and sang, praising England, the Queen,

Then there was heard too
On granite and cobble
From Windsor to Oxford
Loud laughter, low laughter
Of warrior and lover,
The fighter, the singer.
The ashen haired babe
(she stretched out her swarthy, muscular arm)
Stretched his arm in contentment
As home from the Isles came
The sea faring men... .

(Virginia Woolf, 1941, p.43-44)

The most noteworthy event during her sovereignty happened in 1588 when Spain, one of the main superpowers of the time, attempted to invade England to conquer it. Surely, it was by Elizabeth's forethought especially in foreign affairs that England defeated the Spanish navy. Having been considered as one of the greatest victories in English history, this triumph brought stability and solidarity for the kingdom and helped forge a sense of national identity (Starkey, 2003). Consequently, the appearance of the figure of Elizabeth I or the use of her myth in the story of *Between the Acts*, exposes the author's intention in utilizing national myths and heroes to rebuild the ethnic and ancient national identity by introducing the reader with the splendid time of the nation as well as with those who made those grandeur. The way in which the myth of 'Elizabeth I' was elegantly decorated and represented implies that her ancient and splendid time was going to be recalled. By looking for the same grandeur and glory, the text tried to inspire that it would be possible to achieve if the nation became united.

A similar point applies to *The Blind Owl* and its writer. The agonies and suffering of the writer for the loss of splendid history is so evident and palpable when the narrator becomes someone like the 'odds-and-ends' man at the end of the story. It is through the transmission of an

ordinary man to the symbolical character of the ‘odds-and-ends badger’ that Hedayat illustrated his concern as well as his sorrow of missing glorious days of the nation:

While digging, he (the odds-and-ends badger) found something resembling a glazed jar. He wrapped the jar in a dirty handkerchief then he got up and said: And here is the ditch. It is exactly the size of the suitcase, not a hair off!

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

I came to a butcher shop. There I saw the odds-and-ends man who sits in front of our house. He wore a scarf and was carrying a long-bladed dagger in his hand; he stared at me with red eyes, the lids of which seemed to have been cut.

(ibid, 1937)

Upon closing my eyes, I found myself in the Muhammadiyeh Square. There a high gallows was set up and the odds-and-ends man who sits in front of my room had been strung up.

(ibid, 1937)

The character of ‘the odds-and-ends’ seller man is multi-dimensional. He may stand for diverse myths depending on the plot of the novel. In one hand, according to Mashallah Ajoudani (2006), he stands for the myth of Jam - the God of the dead in Iranian old traditional stories. The God refused the offer of eternity and passed the Vale of Decease to overcome the fright of death. He became the God of the dead when he changed the eternity and perpetuity with mortality and transience. On the other hand, as B. Meghdadi (2008) and Sh. Vajdi (2011) pointed out, this ragamuffin old man becomes the representation of the dominance of Arabs and Islam over the nation-state. Following this argument, Hedayat subtly personified him as an Arab character, wearing a scarf-like turban on his head and carrying a dagger which was traditionally common among Arabs on those days. His character enjoys chopping lamb, murmurs Quranic verses and digs graves. When this vendor finds the Raq jar, he wraps it in a dirty handkerchief. As Masoud Loghman (2003) identified in his prologue to *The Blind Owl*, using this symbol, the ethno-symbolist author insinuated to the invasion of Arabs to the Iranian state. With the scene in which

the ‘odds-and-ends’ seller man digs the grave and buries the corpse of the ethereal girl - the symbol of Persia’s legacy - and gets the raq jar for his wage, the text alludes to the tragedy of the occupation of culture, tradition, values, beliefs and the identity of the Persian nation by the tattered old-man who stands for the alien invaders. He denounced the compulsory conversion of original national values of Iranian nation by the intruder culture. In the image of wrapping “the Raq jar in a dirty handkerchief”, Hedayat took the readers back to the history of his country and intended to make them aware of their original culture, identity and heritage which had been looted by aggressors and changed with other fake copies (M. Ajoudani, 2006).

Moreover, the old “odds-and-ends seller” man who has an inconspicuous and nugatory role in the beginning, becomes the prominent character who goes everywhere and transfigures to different shapes and personalities. Both B. Meghdadi (2008) and Sh. Vajdi (2011) suggest that by the application of his figure, Hedayat highlighted the impending intrigue of clergies and fundamental Islamists who played multiple roles and controlled the society and nation. In the same way that Virginia Woolf condemned the imperialist/capitalist authorities for the disparity of the nation, Hedayat, identified Islamic sympathizers as responsible for Iran’s plunge into obscurantism and fanaticism. He blamed the Safavids⁴⁹ dynasty the most and regretted to see how the history of the nation was plundered and destroyed by another culture and religion. His ‘odds-and-ends old man’ is characterized and described as the looter and marauder of the original civilization of the state.

Hedayat's research into ancient Iranian history is usually attributed to a ‘one-sided’ sense of nationalism with a little regard for the culture (Katouziyan. M, 1993). Being an Iranian, Hedayat was curious to assess the extent of the influence of Arabic culture in Iranian life. He felt that there should have been a balance between the Islamic culture of Iran and the nationalistic view of Iranian pre-Arabic heritage (Vajdi. Sh, 2011). Failing to find such a balance, Hedayat emphasized religion as one of the main reasons for the Iranian loss of belonging, nationhood, and self-esteem. In fact, he assumed that centuries of oppression by Arabs, Turks, and Mongols, had broken the Iranian spirit and made the nation submissive and diffused.

⁴⁹ The Safavids were Iranian Shia dynasty which ruled Persia from 1501 to 1722. They established the greatest Iranian empire since the Islamic conquest of Persia, and founded the Twelver-Shiism (Ithna-ashari) school of Islam as the official religion of their empire.

After I discovered that she had all sorts of lovers, and thinking that she did not like me because a mullah, reciting a couple of Arabic verses, had taken away her freedom.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

As it is perceived from the above mentioned example, Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* portrayed the process of 'Islamicization' of the Iranian state and opposed the harsh soul of the action which, Hedayat believed, had torn apart the Iranian identity and separated them from their own original customs and ancestral traditions as well as inherited religion. Hedayat's book condemned the old, timeworn principles and rituals of the newly imposed religion as he assumed that the religion did not suit and fit to the needs of the Iranian nation. Looking for the roots of the nation and opposing every alien aspect, it also contested the application of Arabic language either in routine speeches or in prayers. As pointed out by Meghdadi (2008), Sadegh Hedayat identified the Arabic language as a foreign and alien language which does not belong to the Persian nation. He preferred the use of original language that can facilitate the nation-members for a better communication and unity.

From Sadegh Hedayat's point of view, the Iranian state – which is supposed to belong to members of the Iranian nation – is in the hands of a mullah who recites the Quran and detracts from her freedom. This mullah is the character who represents the Islamic authorities who have ruled the country since the Sassanid dynasty. Using his character, Hedayat's story projects how, through attractive and populist words, the religious propagandists penetrated the soul of Iranians. *The Blind Owl* also displayed how the Islamic clerics toyed with the sincere sentiments of the kind-hearted people of the Persian nation and when the public learn of their vile intentions, every voice, and every whisper is silenced.

Hedayat metaphorically indicated the undesirable and unwelcome invasion of Arabs and their compulsory imposition of religion which was so similar to what the colonial forces and other invaders had done to the submissive regions of colonies in the period in which he was writing. Using the ethno-symbolic nationalist approach, Hedayat's writing insinuated how the

compulsive incursion into the nation-state has torn apart unity and harmony; this, itself, later led to further problematic of mass migration of those who did not convert and the dispersal of the nation. Furthermore, the disparity and disharmony of the members - in terms of religion - spoiled and defaced their feeling of nationhood for those who were excluded from the religious majority have lost their comradeship and feeling of 'statehood'.

The character of the ethereal girl or the narrator's beloved is probably the best example which has been used as a mythical symbol within the story. This lovely and mesmerizing character, within *The Blind Owl*, changes to a black-dressed whore;

Was she the gentle lady, the delicate, ethereal girl who wore a wrinkled white dress, who played hide-and-peek with me on the bank of the Suren River, the childish, transient and free girl whose provocative, sexy calves were visible through her skirt? Until now, whenever I looked at her, I was not aware that she was that same ethereal girl, but now, as if a curtain was removed from before my eyes, for some reason I was reminded of the meat in front of the butcher shop and she resembled a lump of lean meat. All the traces of her inherent attractiveness had totally abandoned her.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

I will not call her by name, because she, with that ethereal body, slim and misty, with those two large, wonder stricken, sparkling eyes behind which my life was gradually and painfully burning and melting away.

(ibid, 1937)

The tenderness of her limbs and the heedlessness of her ethereal movements bespoke her transient nature. Only a dancing girl at an Indian temple could have her harmonious gait.

(ibid, 1937)

Regarding the transformation of the charming ethereal girl to a villainous prostitute, most of the Iranian literary critics - such as Sattari. J (1998), Katouziyan. M (2005) and Ajoudani

(2006) suggest that her character is a symbol of the ancient Iranian culture, tradition and identity. She wears a long, white silky farthingale as Iranian women used to wear in pre-Islamic time. It would be appropriate to mention that the name of Iran is literally a feminine name which is still used for naming women. Based on the remaining historical portraits, pictures and records, Iranians traditionally used to dress up in white outfit. However, black is now known as Islam's or - rather to say - Arabs' favorite colour. Based on the article written by Davood Khosrawi (2011), Prophet Mohammed recommended and favored black for turbans, shoes and scapularies. As Khosrawi states, black was the official colour of the Abbasid⁵⁰ caliphs as they used to wear black pointed hats as well as black cloaks and that is why they were called 'the black dressers'. They were the first family in the history of Islam, as Khosrawi points out, who made their wives to cover themselves in the black Hijab, thinking that the black is the colour of evolution.

Accordingly, the selected metaphorical instances from *The Blind Owl* depict the white dress of Persians that has been changed to a completely opposite black colour. Thereby, Hedayat's story inferred to the historical replacement and superseding of Arabic culture, and its ultimate confliction with the peaceful souls and morality of the Iranian nation. The same allusion is made when the narrator who was sitting near Souren river saw the little girl, all dressed in black, appearing from behind the cedar tree. Then, the little cute girl ran into a desolated fort and disappeared after which the narrator remembered she was from the old city of Rey. The novel contains all those metaphors, allusions and symbolic indications to signify how pure and original Iranian costumes and background have been altered with unsuitable traditions and inappropriate identity. As a symbol of the Iranian nation-state, the virgin and chaste girl, has been raped and deflowered by the irreverence and violation of Arab invaders. It is through those symbolic figures that the virginity and originality of the nation is articulated and is later spoiled by the mandatory intrusion of alien's culture, tradition and creed. As Ajoudani explains (2006), the favourite Iranian state for Hedayat was bright, alive and fertile – like the ethereal girl – where the nation lived wisely and joyfully. In the course of time, and due to different attacks and invasions to its soil, it changed to a “whore” that is the precursor of destruction, depravity and decay.

⁵⁰ Abbasid was an Arab family descended from prophet Mohammad's uncle. They held the caliphate from 749 to 1258 (See Shaban, 1970).

Based on Mashallah Ajoudani's arguments, Hedayat portrayed the burden of the loss of the golden days for his entire lifetime and could never get rid of its nightmarish dreadful dream.

The character of the ethereal girl, who was employed to symbolize the nobility and virginity of ancient Iran also echoes the myth of Anahita⁵¹ – the Goddess of the streams and fertile wombs. She is used to represent the purity of the nation and the fecundity of the nation-state. Hedayat's story, nationalistically, instigates the reader to remember their old ancient heritages and myths which were rich and meaningful. Sadegh Hedayat believed that the reminiscence of those symbols and myths could provoke the nation to get back to their glorious time of unity, power and prosperity. (Sattary,1998 & Meghdadi, 2008), The mentioned images and symbols in *The Blind Owl* aimed to construct the image of fertility and abundance as opposed to the current 'cultural draught' or obscurantism.

The way the character of the ethereal girl is embroidered and presented in Hedayat's novel implies that the text attempted to depict the devotion and dedication of its author to the imagined ancient motherland in his symbolization. When the narrator of *The Blind Owl* states:

One glance was enough to bring about the change, because that heavenly angel, that ethereal girl, touched me more deeply than any human being would be able to comprehend.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

By saying that, he expressed his deep feeling of devotion towards the country and state. From the nationalistic point of view, he claimed that the love of the country had preceded the other senses and loves inside his soul. The narrator of the story, hereby, tried to inspire the reader to follow the same procedure and attain the same feelings. In the meanwhile, *The Blind Owl* played steadily with the characters and disguised one to another; the ethereal girl changes to a whore or 'the odd-and-ends' salesman turns to a butcher, and the same butcher becomes a coach driver and so on. By frequent alterations, Hedayat's novel envisioned the past and - when the narrator of *The Blind Owl* was replaced with the old badger at the end of the story - illustrated

⁵¹ It is the name of popular Zoroastrian and an ancient Iranian cosmological figure worshipped as the female guardian angel of waters (Aban), associated with fertility, healing and wisdom.

how the history in Iranian state is deteriorating and why people cannot attain their former harmony and cohesion anymore. Mashallah Ajoudani relates this to the “philosophical despair” which is reflected in Hedayat’s nationalistic writing (2006; p.56). Ajoudani believed that Hedayat’s artistic view and unique experience amalgamated with his nationalistic ideologies to give his writing a deeper sense. According to him, Hedayat’s affection towards Iran and Iranian-ness and his aversion of whatever that denigrated turned to a “painful artistic sentiment” which is echoed in most of his writings, especially in *The Blind Owl* (ibid; p.56). This despair originated in a variety of individual as well as social factors. Evidently, Hedayat’s distinctive nationalistic perspective was more of an archaic view and was focused on the glorious past and history of the Iranian nation. Based on Ajoudani’s argument, since Hedayat could no longer see the grandeur and magnificence of the Achaemenid and Sassanid eras and apprehended that they were all overshadowed by the hegemony of Arabic culture and Semitic traditions, he was disappointed about Iran’s future and despised its current situation.

Hedayat’s work intended to separate the national identity of Iranians from their imposed Islamic identity. In its division, whatever echoed the original culture and traditions was valuable and precious and whatever was somehow Islamic was considered by him as lurid, spoiled, hideous and fake. Moreover, *The Blind Owl* pictured the conflict and discordance of Iranian original identity and the imposed religion, culture and customs in the shape of characters. Assuming the intrusion of Islam, or rather to say the alien’s religion, as the prelude for the backwardness and petrification of the nation and state, Hedayat’s masterpiece enumerated religion as a destructive factor that demolished the eminent and rooted civilization of the Persians. Like Mirza Agha-Khan Kermani⁵² and the other Iranian nationalists, most of Hedayat’s writings insisted that every religion and creed should be relevant and respondent with the nature, temperament and their original language and culture. Dariush Ashouri (1997), in this regard, exemplifies that since medicine cannot be curative and effective to two different sorts of diseases, similarly a religion cannot be directive and efficient for different nations with various backgrounds, traditions, beliefs and especially different languages. As Ashouri states in *We and Modernity*, Hedayat presumed religion as a core of the problems and issues of a nation as he

⁵² Mirza Agha-Khan Kermani was a politician and one of the most influential characters in the constitutional movement in Iran. He and Fath Ali Khan have been considered as the funders of modern Iranian nationalism.

believed the religion should be concomitant with the issues and beliefs of that nation. Failing to do so, it will be not only ineffective, but also harmful and injurious. Grounded on Ashouri's conclusion, using the historical chronicles, the nationalist author of *The Blind Owl* argued that since the Iranian nation and the Arabs were two completely different populations with various and diverse cultures, traditions, backgrounds and language, the application of common religion to two dissimilar nations would be like the prescription of medicine to two different diseases (ibid).

Trying to revive the Iranian original identity and to separate it from the post-Islamic one, Hedayat's novel applies a variety of other symbols. Hedayat's hero is the narrator of the story who is neither looking for the revenge from 'the odds-and-seller man' nor to embrace his wife as the motherland. The narrator attempts to reach the 'raq jar'; the symbol of the amiable and precious heritage of the nation which is wrapped in dirty clothes. The frequent usage of the "Raq glazed jar" is another instance for the application of mythical symbol, implemented by the writer:

The old man uttered a ghastly laugh and said: Don't bother. Forget it. I know where you live. Besides--for my wages I found a jar. It is a Raq jar from the ancient city of Ray.

(Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937)

The raq jar is the symbol which stands for the culture and identity of Iranians. According to M. Ajoudani (2006) and M. Sarshar (2008), Hedayat uses the raq jar to represent the deep-rooted Iranian culture and identity. It has been dug and excavated from the ground and has the painting of the ethereal girl's eyes on it. It is rare and precious like the original inherited culture and traditions of the nation. In the second part of *The Blind Owl*, the raq jar is the first thing that the narrator of the story is after. He runs to get it when he does not find it before him. However, it has been taken by the same 'rag and bone man' who was driving a carriage away and had it wrapped in a dirty hand kerchief. It is the relic from the old city of Rey which is the patrimony of all Iranians; the same heritage that belongs to almost all the nation-members within the cultural/political borders of Iran. As it is mentioned earlier, the city of Rey, itself, is the symbol which stands for the image of ancient motherland and nation-state. As Shadab Vajdi (2011)

states, the raq jar embodies the elegance of pre-Islamic Persia under the Sassanid era and its civilization and culture which has been seized by the unequivocal authority of Muslims and Arabs. The narrator of the story, who has been living in Iran, a country with over 1400 years of history, is worried and concerned that the souvenir of Ray and the legacy of the ancient glory is in the hands of the abusive 'rag and bone man'.

There is no doubt that Sadegh Hedayat knew the culture and its myths well. Struggling to maintain those memories that recall the glorious era of the nation-state, the author of *The Blind Owl* considered the conservation of those myths and memories as national duties (Ajoudani 2006). One of the Hedayat's main concerns, which has been the common worry of many Iranian nationalists, was the disfigured nature of Iranian identity. Sadegh Hedayat lamented the imposition of Arab values on Iranian pure culture, traditions and values (Ajoudani 2006). By using different schemes and employing several meaningful symbols, myths, signs and legends, Sadegh Hedayat reminded the readers about the ancient original identity and heritage of Iranians. He knew that the genesis of a modern, united and harmonious nation laid in the exploration of that nation's ancient past. Through literature and using literary similes or comparisons, he tried to break away from past practices and to set up a new approach for discussing the Iranian nation's life, culture, traditions and values. However, he was not just a eulogist praising the nation's past all the time. Having been sarcastic every now and then, he questioned and criticized some parts of the national history. He felt that Iran's contemporary past had produced nothing but ignorance and that ignorance had multifariously enslaved the Iranians, keeping them away from recognizing the situation in which they live. Hedayat also believed that members of the nation - by their ignorance, unawareness and negligence - allowed autocratic authorities to abuse them. The research on the majority of Hedayat's writings reveals his preoccupation with religious pre-described values. Such studies describe his unhappiness with the traditionalism and religious obscurantism of the Iranian nation. He, inexhaustibly, tried to highlight the conflicts between traditional Islamic morality and new, Western-liberal attitudes.

With the emergence of modernity, most of the old and memorial symbols, myths and images started to fade away in the process of the nation's modernization. Concurrent to such historic-cultural tendencies, Hedayat wrote his masterpiece, *The Blind Owl*, in which he

recreated some of those old and forgotten myths and legends to use them as characters of the story. Therewith, he not only re-narrated and reminded some of those good-natured yet forgotten myths, but also annihilated those outdated and ‘no more useful’ legends and myths which prevented the national modernization. Also, he challenged the superstition and fallacies. According to Mansour Koushan (2011), Hedayat believed that nothing can debunk those superstitions and false notions better than the frequent use of them in literary texts. Consequently, he assumed that this might help to discredit and demystify some of the relevant myths, legends and beliefs of common people.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Hedayat is undoubtedly one of the brightest pioneers in the history of nationalistic writings in Iran. His writings are indisputable evidence that attest to this claim. Like the mirror, Hedayat’s work can reflect all the elegance, obscenities, beneficence and the specification of the Iranian nation. *The Blind Owl*, as his most recognized work, provided a good source for a variety of studies. Being a surreal story, Hedayat’s book has been a mystery from which critics and researchers have interpreted in different ways. *The Blind Owl* has been mostly approached through traditional nationalism and has been considered as a nationalist book. The book’s anti-Islamic attitude and its inimical depiction of Arabs have been criticized by researchers such as Javad Hey’at (2009) and the author’s preoccupation with the Persian race and pre-Islamic era has been questioned by critics such as Majid Nafisi (2011). However, the analysis of the novel by the use of the recent theory of ethno-symbolic nationalism sheds a new light and opens new ways of interpretations for the frequent images, symbols and myths which were used in the story.

Unlike Hedayat, Woolf is neither known as a nationalist writer nor has her *Between the Acts* been normally considered a nationalist text. John Mepham (1991) is one of the rare critics who saw the nationalist notions in *Between the Acts*. According to Mepham, the villagers in Woolf’s story are inspired with “a sense of themselves as a common tribe” (1991, p.203). She portrayed the disparity as a negative feature and condemned the plurality of nationals. Trying to unify the folkloric ritual ethos, Woolf aimed to change the ‘I’s to ‘we’s and invoke the nation-members to be alerted and prepared to resist the coming threat of invasion to their motherland. In

order to do so, she used the history and, trying to set up a communion between the audience and their past, she intended to connect them together via a shared past. Illustrating the disintegrations, commotions and disjunctions of the society, she sought to bring the nation together with the use of their common culture, rituals, traditions and history.

Although, Virginia Woolf sounded sarcastic and satiric towards jingoistic nationalism in *Between the Acts*, she was seriously critical of people's lack of awareness of their roots, history, background and culture. Her pageant, which contains different aspects of the nation's past in various epochs, is a reminder of all those factors. According to Jennifer Goodman, Woolf recruited a variety of symbols, myths and themes and combined them with visual elements, either literary or musical, to exhibit the history of the nation to the audience and fascinate them (1991; p.79). This method or tactic made the audience as well as the readers to be aware of the power, influence or "the virtue in belonging to a community" and aims to unite them as a result of this "shared recognition" (Miller. Marlow, 1998; p.138). Therefore, Woolf's nationalism is neither jingoistic nor prejudiced and discriminatory; from the ethno-symbolic point of view, her style of nationalism is only evoking affinity and unity and does not promote opposition or conflict against the others. Based on the description which was offered by Umberto Eco (1995), the nationalism of *Between the Acts* aims to offer a social or national identity to those who doubted or forgot it. This is not performed by the promotion of war and clash with any other nations or races but is achieved by the depiction of a threat from others and the stress on the common-ness and common sense of belonging.

Similar to Virginia Woolf, Hedayat's dedication to the nation's original culture, traditions and ancestral backgrounds has always been the reason why some critics and researchers such as A.R. Zaker Esfahani (1992) thought of him as a 'romantic nationalist with a retrospect view'. However, 'looking back at the history of his nation' and 'insisting on preserving the ancient culture and inherited values' were the main objectives that were visible in his writings. As M. Ajoudani (2005) states, Sadegh Hedayat reviewed the national history and recognized that the self-identity of nation-members in the Persian state had been changed by the intrusion of the new culture, traditions, values, backgrounds and importantly religion. He delved into the 'past days' of the nation-state to highlight how most of the nation's social, historical, cultural and traditional

inheritance as well as the native language had been trans-shaped by the imposition of the Arabic language. Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* excavated the old days of the nation to look for the roots; for the origins of different problems that had affected the sense of belonging of the nation to their state. The story attempted to resurrect the forgotten honourable values which had been buried into the history due to the alien infringement. Floating in the golden days of the past, Hedayat looked for the myths, symbols and legends to remind people and made them conscious about their ancestral past.

The innovative and diligent effort of both writers in the field of mythology and symbolism is a noticeable and worthwhile element to study. In a parallel way, both Hedayat and Woolf aimed to resurrect and revive the forgotten and pale symbols, myths and legends which played a main role in the history of nation-states; the same myths and symbols which have deep roots in the history of a nation and can help them to be patriotically invoked. Secondly, they both planned to reproach and scold those superstitious icons and emblems that kept the nation and state far beyond modernity, improvements and development; the fake, obscure and retrospective ethos which were brought and infused by power. According to the study of *Between the Acts* by Marlow Miller (1998), a series of recognizable symbols in the pageant demarcated the nationalistic ideology of the author. Those symbols that referred to a historical hero or significant national character connected the audience as well as the reader of the novel with specific social, historical, cultural, moral or religious virtues which the community esteemed. Probably the best examples are the use of the character of Elizabeth to represent 'Queen Elizabeth I', in *Between the Acts*, and the character of the ethereal girl to indicate Anahita, one of the Goddesses in Zoroastrianism, in *The Blind Owl*. Both characters symbolize the authors' motherlands, however, Hedayat's uses the ethereal girl who turns into a whore to refer to the invasion of Arabs and depict how Iran's state has been invaded and raped. On the other hand, Woolf's character of 'virgin Queen' stood for the motherland which has been assaulted many times but has never been conquered. The objective of the story from this reference must have been to the fact that this virgin motherland has never been captured - thanks to the nation's ancestors - and, therefore, it is the current generation's duty and burden to protect it from future assaults.

Obviously, *The Blind Owl*'s attempt to restore some of the valuable Zoroastrian myths and symbols, such as the Goddess of Anahita or the God of Jam, is to reinstate the brave, honourable legends, commanders and other icons. Their images are depicted within the story to make the readers recall their national heroes. The intention behind it is to provoke the nation to be aware of the antiquity of their historical background and feel proud of their state and nationhood. Hedayat's story also recounted some of the man-made or political-religious-made obsolete and extinct icons and images to let the readers compare and realize the nobility and originality of the old and original ones. Ehsan Tabary (1980) states that Hedayat's writing reflects how he was suffering to see how the nation - influenced by social, political and religious obscurant practices, was kept ignorant; and how they had resorted to obscurant, idiotic, fictional and conceptual beliefs and convictions.

Seemingly, for Woolf and Hedayat, nothing could be more effective - in purifying the national culture and original values - than publishing and re-stating the myths. Both texts sometimes challenged the obsolescent myths and legends and even criticize them to purify the public opinions. Superstitious thoughts which broke up and severed the homogeneity of the nation should be judged and compared; then the idleness and absurdity of them might be exposed to the public. With a mixture of mythology, archaeology, history and culture, both texts employed various myths and symbolic characters to take out their nations from the shadow of dark ignorance and reminded them of the elements which had affected their unity within their states. In *The Blind Owl*, the narrator or protagonist who represented Iranian nation-members individually struggled to unshackle the fetters that bound him to the authority of the Whore. He fought an unending war against ignorance and, by enlightening his fellow residents, attempted to tackle the perpetuating ignorance in his community.

Similarly, *Between the Acts* followed the same procedure to challenge the superstitious beliefs. Woolf's story insisted on finding the solutions for the state's disparity, and highlighted that the public intelligence and cognizance must be increased and elevated. Perhaps, the best example is the disorder in the audience during the pageant. Miss La Trobe's pageant, which started with a young girl as England chanting "Merry England", was undoubtedly foreshadowing a nationalistic theme. It presented an assortment of symbols with various national historical

references so that the audience and the reader could identify them and, remembering that event, contemplate about the meaning behind each of them. The pageant alluded to the historical, social and religious metamorphosis in the society of which the author, somehow, expressed her agony and sorrow. Whilst this nationalistic display is performed, multiple disturbances happened and the audience did not really concentrate on the play. The theme of disorder, therefore, indignantly scorned the ongoing nationalistic and identical issues of the nation. When the actors of the pageant forgot the lines and had to compete with the wind while keeping up with the malfunction of the gramophone, Woolf's *Between the Acts* struggled to point out how the dispersed nation could get over those interruption and disjunctions by simply getting united and avoiding to be drawn in their individual concerns and thought. It is through Mrs. La Trobe's pageant that Woolf's novel created a sense of community which was superseded by people's routine life. Therewith, she highlighted that the past and present of the nation could be joined if the citizens are attuned to their past and recognize its importance.

On the other hand, Hedayat - who was influenced by the prevailing European nationalism in 19th century - segregated the history of the state into two periods of Pre-Islamic and Post-Islamic times. While the pre-Islamic era was remarked as the time of 'noble Iranian-ness' and full of grandeur and true, pure creed of good deeds, good speech and good thoughts of Persians, the post-Islamic period was observed as the age when Semitics prevailed and evil ascended the rectitude. Along with Sadegh Hedayat, 'looking back into the history' and 'searching the true ethnic or national identity' – as directive elements to find the solutions for all the problems and questions – have been the perspectives and intentions of many other authors such as Mirza-Agha Khan and Akhoundzadeh. However, there is no doubt that Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* has a prominent place among them. It should not be neglected that because of the rigorous and limiting restrictions and censorships of the authority in that time, Hedayat and his peers could not write unreservedly and freely. In order to escape the dominant strict censorship, they had to hide their ideas behind special and subtle images, symbols and myths. Therefore, Hedayat – like other nationalist writers of the time - covertly designed the woes of Iran and ancient Persia behind myths and images. Therewith, the book metaphorically reviewed and questioned the history. Highlighting the grandeur past of the country and, comparing it with the miserable prevalent situation in his time, Hedayat's book explored what exactly had befallen to

Iranian nation and what had caused all the calamity and misfortunes in which the state had been plunged in.

The frequent use of myths and memories to indicate the glorious past of the country in *Between the Acts* and *The Blind Owl* are all to review and reveal the truths of the nation's history. The ethno-symbolic approach towards these texts exposes how they tried to introduce people with the legends and myths they had in the past; to inform them where they were, how great their antecedents and progenitors were; they insinuate the readers to compare them with the current position and condition of their nation and society. This is exactly what the Iranian nation currently has become. "Islam's caravan" with its alike "odds-and-ends old-man" propagandists - who "recite Quran through their rotten, wormy teeth" - have become the most dreadful nightmare and they have been like those "caustic wounds in life which gradually erode" which causes the nation's "soul to diminish in its solitude" (Hedayat, *The Blind Owl*, 1937).

CONCLUSION

This thesis has used an ethno-symbolic approach to nationalism to provide a better understanding of this theory through the analysis of symbolic, mythical and memorable elements. It stresses the importance of elements such as national signs, symbols, myths, national historical events, memories, language, religion, customs and even factors such as clothing or architecture in the formation of a durable national identity which serve to distinguish a nation from its neighbours. In other words, the ethno-symbolic approach to nationalism asserts that these mythical or symbolic elements of each nation, indeed, perform as real factors that form and reconstruct the common identity of that nation.

A. D. Smith in *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* indicates that regardless of general considerations, cultural factors such as symbols, national historical memories, myth, customs, rituals, values and traditions “have played, and continue to play a vital role in shaping social structures and cultures, defining and legitimating the relations of different sectors, groups and institutions within a community” (Smith, 2009; p.25). Those collective elements create a common sense of continuity in the nation-members with past generations of the nation-state and “sustain communal bonds and a sense of national identity” (ibid; p. 25). Therefore, “ethno-symbolists consider those elements to be crucial to an analysis of ethnicity, nations and nationalisms” (ibid; p.25). As we all know, there have been numerous cases of nationalist movements all around the world, such as in Ireland for instance; what is noteworthy is that those movements which emphasized the construction of identity based on cultural or ethnical elements were profounder, more durable and sufficient than the political or state-oriented nationalist activities.

Undoubtedly, in the process of the ethno-symbolic nationalism, nationalist literati, elites, authors and intellectuals are central as they delineate the original national identity by delineating and remembering those signs, polishing national memories and values as well as resuscitating the myths and symbols. They often act as “nation-builders”, mostly in imaginary form, by reviving the shared ethnic, national ties by highlighting the formative factors such as language, religion,

national history and traditions to regenerate or refresh the sense of solidarity in the nation-members.

This thesis studied the works of four different authors from Iranian, Irish and British literature who wrote in the early twentieth century. The application of an ethno-symbolic approach to the study of nationalism provided a useful tool for critically examining their literature. Through highlighting the nationalistic elements of each texts, ethno-symbolic approach also enabled this study to explore the covert but inspiring and evocative nationalistic aspects of those texts. Nevertheless, it should be underlined that the intention of this study has never been to suggest that those authors were nationalist writers.

This approach to nationalism is fairly recent and it is mostly used in political and social studies and still has not been widely applied in other fields such as in literature or the arts. With regards to that fact, analyzing those books - *The Blind Owl*, *Between the Acts*, *Once Upon A Time* and *Dubliners* - through the lenses of ethno-symbolic nationalism revealed that even some literary texts that have rarely been counted as nationalistic writings can, indeed, be considered as such. The study of these texts using an ethno-symbolic approach disclosed that myths and symbols can be extensively used by writers to develop ideas about the nation and the formation or revival of their respective nations' identities.

There is no doubt that, in spite of living in almost the same period, different authors from different countries were living in various circumstances and under dissimilar state authorities. Hence, they could not follow the same procedure(s) to prescribe or inspire their nationalistic ideas. Nevertheless, there are many similarities, as this study exposed and highlighted, between their literary texts. Focusing on the daily life and routine issues of Irish and Iranian middle-class citizens during the early 20th century, James Joyce in *Dubliners* and M. A. Jamalzadeh in *Once Upon A Time* concentrated on the elements of 'national history', 'religion', 'culture' and 'traditions' of their respective nations. It is worthwhile to refer to the various critics who have argued that authors such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf were not only not nationalistic writers but also were against nationalism. This study's main argument as opposed to those criticisms is to approach a text from an ethno-symbolic perspective. Based on what is explained

in earlier chapters, ethno-symbolic nationalism modified the former concept of nationalism particularly in the sense of encouraging nation-members to get together and fight against other nations or defend their nation-state. When a literary text employs symbols, myths, national memories, national history, cultural, religious or traditional values and customs, as ethno-symbolic nationalism suggests, it either attempts to remind people of the forgotten national elements or values or criticize those elements as inappropriately replaced by the original or ancient ones.

Joyce and Jamalzadeh's prevalent disapproval and challenging approach towards the language, religion, traditions and customs of their nation was another main reason that some critics highlighted Joyce and Jalamzadeh's repudiation of nationalism. This study discusses and disclosed how those authors' literary texts intended to clarify those rituals, customs or other constructive elements of national identity - which they were challenging - are uncoordinated and disharmonic to their respective nations' characteristics. In other words, by stressing and criticizing those basic elements of the national identity such as religion and language, their books helped to reveal that those present features do not link with the history and past generations. Religion, language, rituals and cultural customs in Joyce and Jamalzadeh's case - in particular - were depicted to expose the fact that they neither form a widespread sense of continuity among the respective nation-members nor "create and sustain communal bonds and sense of national identity" (Smith, 2009; p.25); In other words, since those elements were mainly forced by the colonizers or state authorities rather than being original, ancient and historical, Joyce and Jamalzadeh's books were more focused on challenging them for being inapposite and heterogeneous and, therewith, to question their validity in the process of nation-building. *Dubliners* and *Once Upon A Time* might not suggest any alternatives as replacement of those uncoordinated basics but equipped the readers with a deep knowledge and awareness about those elements; to let them comprehend where they have come from and what do they share with other nation-members in the state.

Irish literary Revivalists in Ireland and Constitutional Revolutionists in Iran emphasised the formation of a strong sense of nationhood and insisted on the reconstruction of native and folk culture in both ideological and artistic ways through the enhancement of people's awareness

about their common identity. This characteristic, as it is explained, is visible in both literary texts and places these two texts in accordance with the objectives of the nationalist writers of the time in both Ireland and Iran. As a result, even those who have classified Joyce and Jamalzadeh as not involved or supportive of the Revival movement or nationalist authors, would acknowledge that they both have contributed a lot to the renewal of the formative elements that constructed the national identity of the nations.

On the other hand, received criticism, literary analysis and approach have been slightly different in regard to Sadegh Hedayat and Virginia Woolf and their books. Having been mainly studied through the lenses of traditional nationalism, Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Woolf's *Between the Acts* have not widely been criticised for being anti-nationalist writings. Although, it is somewhat different in Woolf's case for she was occasionally categorised as an opposing character to the ideologies of traditional nationalism. In overall, with regards to the number of written articles about the relevance of nationalism and those texts, it can be claimed that both texts have been considered by a number of literati, researchers and critics as nationalist writings. Using the recent theory of ethno-symbolic nationalism, which brought new definitions and concepts to the field, this study provided the ground for different and updated interpretations of the images, symbols, myths and memorial definitions within those two books.

In a divergent way to Jamalzadeh and Joyce, Hedayat and Woolf portrayed and focused on the disparity in their nation-states, in symbolic, mythical or ironical ways, as a negative feature and condemned the plurality of nationals. *The Blind Owl* and *Between the Acts* aimed to unify the folkloric ritual ethos and, therewith, invoke the nation-members to be alerted and prepared to resist the coming threat of invasion to their motherland. In order to do so, both literary books employed history to set up a communion between the audience and their past; they, both, intended to connect their respective nation-members together through their shared past. Illustrating the disintegrations, commotions and disjunctions of the society, Hedayat and Woolf's stories sought to bring the nation together with the use of their common culture, rituals, traditions and history.

In an analogous way to *Once Upon A Time* and *Dubliners*, *The Blind Owl* and *Between the Acts* covertly criticized people's lack of awareness of their roots, history, background and culture. Moreover, both texts recruited an assortment of symbols, myths and historic themes and combined them with visual elements to present and remind their audiences and nation-members of the history of their nations. In an attempt to make the readers aware of the power, virtue and influence of belonging to a community, Hedayat and Woolf's books aimed to unite them as a result of this "shared recognition" (Miller. Marlow, 1998; p.138).

Hedayat and Woolf's nationalism was neither jingoistic nor prejudiced and discriminatory. Their texts never encourage the citizens to get together in order to oppose 'others' or cohere to stand or resist against any invading 'outsider' power and pressure. For that reason, they do not fit into the traditional nationalist criteria. Nevertheless, from the ethno-symbolic point of view, their writings carry new and recent interpretation of nationalism which only alert the readers about the risks of disunity and evoke affinity and unity. Also, through questioning some ongoing basic elements, they highlight discordances, and aim to reframe or rebuild those constructive elements that play vital roles in the formation of the national identity. This is not performed by the promotion of war and conflict with other nations or races but is achieved by the depiction of a threat from others - either from colonial powers of the time or the invading states - and the stress on the common-ness and a common sense of belonging.

In addition to what is described, it should be noted that all the chosen writers in this study were writing their books in different times, circumstances and under different state authorities. Thus, apart from implementing literary aesthetics, in order to avoid the ongoing suppression, control and probably censorship, those authors could not deal with all the aspects or elements of national identity at the same time. That is the main reason why Jamalzadeh and Joyce mainly dealt with religion and cultural traditions while Hedayat and Woolf concentrated on other factors such as history, memories and myths. It should also be mentioned that Joyce and Woolf's writing carried a sort of colonized and colonizer's perspectives as compared to Jamalzadeh and Hedayat who were writing in a country - Iran - which has never been officially colonized but were under the intense influence of Russians and British imperialism.

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