Transformation of Political Islam in Turkey

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Causes and Effects

By

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of writing this book is to offer a theoretical, empirical and historical analysis of the transformation that Turkish political Islam underwent in the importance assigned to religion in its dealings with various issues and in the manifestation of its general ideological line. The period of time that Turkish political Islam is taken under scrutiny for the purpose extends from the late 1960s to the middle of 2012. It is necessary to state here that the events and the developments of the time after 2012 are not covered in the analysis of the book and it could be likely that an additional work that extends to 2017 would end up with some different theses.

It is argued in this book that, in the period of time under investigation, Turkish political Islam changed from a conservative religious political movement which had the major goal to establish an Islamic polity and which reached to campaigns for the establishment of an Islamic state in its extreme cases, to a relatively moderate one trying to introduce rights and freedoms for the conservative segments of society within the limits provided by the democratic political system (Cizre and Çınar, 2003 322-328; Dağı, 2004: 136-143; Öniş, 2006: 123-125; Toprak, 2005: 170). An analysis is offered for the causes of this change with focus on two of them that were thought to be more influential than the others, i.e.(1) the state elites and (2) globalization. The state elites are argued to be influential in the process with the rigidity of secularism they supported and the mechanisms of tutelary powers they forged for themselves during the successive military interventions they conducted in previous decades (Özbudun, 1994: 189-205; Hale and Özbudun, 2009: 3-29; Dağı, 2005: 26-27; Heper, June 2005: 216-220; Kuru, 2009: 161-235). Secondly, globalization is argued to be influential in the process with the embracement of the Turkish political Islam of such global political norms, principles and institutions as democracy, human rights and rule of law; and the emergence of a stability-seeking middle class in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres.

The concept of Turkish political Islam investigated in this book refers to the policies, goals, advocacies, and other types of manifestations and

activities of the parties of the National View movement led by Necmettin Erbakan and his close associates from the 1970s through to today, and the breakaway Justice and Development Party established in 2001. Chapters of the book will be assigned to explore the Ottoman sources of Turkish secularism (Chapter I), the Republican sources of Turkish secularism (Chapter II), state elites and their influence on the transformation of Turkish political Islam with a particular analysis of the 28th February Process (Chapter III), globalization and the ways it played into the transformation of Turkish political Islam (Chapter IV), analysis of the change of Turkish political Islam on issues of religion and politics in general (Chapter V), and analysis of the change of Turkish political Islam in foreign policy (Chapter VI).

Theoretical studies of party change proliferate over the causes that produce party change. Different theorists trace the causes of party change to the changes in one or some of three variables, which are, the party leadership, the dominant party coalition and the party environment (Harmel et. al., 1995: 4-7; Harmel and Janda, 1994: 266-268; Wilson, 1994: 275; Panebianco, 1988: 240-241). In an attempt to explore the influence of the changes in the party environment on the party change among others, which are of particular importance for the purposes of the theses of this book, Harmel and Janda (1982: 27-34) assert that the appearance of extreme ideological leanings in political parties, is closely associated with changes in certain variables which include the degree of regime opposition, the type of electoral system, the type of party system, the likelihood of a coalition government, and the level and the distribution of income. The variable of the degree of regime opposition is employed in this book to explain the role of secularist state elites in the transformation of Turkish political Islam. Harmel and Janda theorize that in democratic systems where there is a powerful coalition of regime defenders, political parties tend to shirk ideological extremism. And this becomes more pronounced if the regime defenders enjoy extensive tutelary powers and influential public posts. Again Harmel and Janda maintain that the achievement of economic growth and greater income distribution produce a moderating effect on political parties. The factors of economic development and income distribution are used in this book in the operationalization of the factors of globalization.

The first chapter of the book is devoted to the exploration of the gradual development of secularism in the Ottoman Empire with an analysis of the relationship between religion and state in the Ottoman Empire since its

establishment in the 13th century to search for the historical roots of Turkish secularism. It is argued in the chapter that the emergence of state elites in Turkey with their strong advocacy of secularism owes a lot to the introduction of a secular bureaucracy in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century alongside religious bureaucracy. The Ottoman secular bureaucracy was to dominate the military and the civilian bureaucracy with time and it was indeed the major force that led to the Turkish War of Independence, the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and the ensuing political reforms.

The type of secularism adopted by the Turkish state elites, left without much opposition after the liquidation of many of the supporters of the monarchical-theocratic political traditions, bore a strong resemblance to the French model of laicism, which was characterized with a dislike of the appearance of religion in social and public life, the subject of chapters two and three. Led by the army, the judiciary, the Republican Peoples Party, and some media and civil society organizations, the secularist state elites have traditionally been the most powerful agent determining the limits and space of action of political Islam in Turkey. The secularist state elites have opposed attempts to establish an Islamic regime, jihadism, and the introduction of Islamic norms and institutions in public life particularly. In this context, a number of parties from the tradition of Turkish political Islam met with various sanctions from various members of the state elites such as party closure, imprisonment, political bans, budgetary cuts, expropriations and so on and so forth (Mardin, 1983: 139-149; Cizre, 1996: 232-247; Kuru, 2009: 202-231). Such reactions by the Turkish state elites were very influential in changing the ideological orientation of Turkish political Islam.

Chapter four analyzes the transformative forces of globalization. Conceptualizing globalization in general terms as liberalization, internationalization and universalization in various domains, an attempt is made to detect how globalization could take the countries under its influence by various means like accommodation, adaptation and imposition etc. or how it could be rejected depending on the reactions it meets. The chapter continues with an analysis of issues of concern that globalization was associated with in Turkey in the period covered in the book, which include economic liberalization, the emergence of a powerful middle class, the moderate political tendencies that it generated to steer the policy orientation of Turkish political Islam from the far right toward the center of the ideological spectrum. Globalization was very influential in

the socialization of Turkish political Islam into global political norms and institutions like liberal democracy, human rights and rule of law. Observation of the advantages that globalization offers would also make Turkish political Islam more conciliatory.

Chapter five starts with an examination of the perspective of the National View movement on the proper interaction between religion and politics, which displayed itself in the defense of a very liberal conception of secularism, distinguished by its support for freedom of religion, belief and conscience rather than freedom from religion. Secularism was necessary to protect the religious and the moral from potential oppressions that could originate from the side of the state, society and individuals (NOP Program, Article 6; Erbakan, 1975: 49-56; WP Party Program, Article 4). Further to that, however, the National View parties had a goal to bring a country into existence shaped by the religion from the single units of the society to the larger state. While the idea of founding an Islamic society based on morals was a very common theme of the program of its successive parties, a political language was also developed for the introduction to an Islamic political life. For the National View, religion was not just a matter of belief, but also a kind of political program and an indispensable retreat from the goal of economic and industrial development (Erbakan, 1975: 92-93, 109-111, 149-157; Karakaş, 2007: 24-26; Mecham, 2004: 343-347; Öniş, 2001: 286-288). The JDP resembled the Welfare Party in its view of secularism, understanding it as an institution that takes religious freedoms under guarantee, but contrary to the National View, the idea of transition to an Islamic statehood and society was not so powerful in the JDP. In this framework, the JDP's activism in the area of religious politics was limited to attempts to open the public space to the conservative segments of society who want to practice the necessities of their beliefs in public within liberal democratic limits. And it was highly successful in addressing the calls from its grassroots for the removal of the headscarf ban in schools and universities, the barrier to graduates of Imam-Hatip schools entering universities, and the limitations against the Quran courses. (Hale and Özbudun, 2009: 20-21; Kuru, 2009: 176-187; Dağı, 2006: 89; Çınar and Duran, 2008: 33).

Chapter six of the book examines the change in the foreign policy orientation of Turkish political Islam. It is argued that Turkish political Islam has undergone a major change from a highly religio-cultural to a remarkably rational and pragmatist movement. The National View parties were of the opinion that it was in Turkey's best interest to strengthen the

ties with the Muslim countries of the Middle East and to minimize those with the West. The union and cooperation among the western states were perceived to be based on their membership to Judeo-Christian traditions and that was deemed to be antithetical to Muslim societies in many cases. Turkey thus had to turn to the Middle East for union and partnership, and that was the right road for Turkey's development and glory. The links with the West would be maintained in the areas of technology and science, but Turkey had to unite with the Middle East in political, economic and social terms (Erbakan, 1975: 229-270; NSP Party Program, 41-43; WP Party Program, Article 28).

For the JDP, however, the idea that the locus of unity among countries in the West was Judeo-Christian traditions and that such unity was inimical to Muslim countries was an exaggeration. Turkey was supposed to improve its relations with the Muslim world, but it had to do so more with the West for various reasons. Turkey had to play a greater role in the UN, NATO and other organizations led by the western states and it had to wage a great effort to join the European Union for service to the political, diplomatic, economic, industrial and other goals of the country. The JDP did not feel that Turkey's developing relations with the West would jeopardize those with the Middle East. Turkey was supposed to play a more active and much different role in its neighborhood and its greater environment with some new missions like peacebuilding, peacekeeping, arbitration etc. like a bridge between the western and the Middle East countries (Davutoğlu, 2009: 501; Davutoğlu, 2004; Usul, 2006: 205-215; Hale and Özbudun, 2009: 139-141).

CHAPTER I

SECULARIZATION IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

1. Introduction

This chapter investigates the development of secularism in the Ottoman Empire. An in-depth historical analysis is offered for this purpose covering the examination of the trends of secularization in the Ottoman education, law, economy, bureaucracy, society, culture and intellectual life. The research reveals that while the Ottoman Empire was a classic example of a theocratic state in its establishment, it was introduced to a process of westernization in its later centuries due to a process of decline experienced against the West in the military, economic and technological domains that led to the adoption of secular ways, practices and institutions. Comprehensive reform programs were undertaken with the late 16th century purporting to change the traditional institutions, practices and norms with the European, scientific and rational ones originating from the West. During the institutional implementation of the reforms, a prevalent view of the reformists was that the religion was not able to respond to the challenges of the time adequately and in some cases it was indeed standing as an obstacle to recovery and progress with its organizational and doctrinal presence. The idea that the benign effect of religion in various domains of the Ottoman public life had to be minimized was being voiced more and more vociferously from various intellectual and political chambers of the Ottoman society.

2. The Classical Period (Early 14th to Late 16th Century)

According to Shaw (1982: 33), one of the most important factors contributing to the emergence of the Ottoman Empire was the goal to serve the religion. The idea of spreading the religion and expanding the borders of the Islamic world provided the Ottomans with an immense source of motivation and spiritual power in their expeditions to the West. Religion and the state were two major components of the legitimacy of the Ottoman statecraft. They were often used in unison as *din-u devleti*

Osmani in official documents issued by the authorities (Mardin, 1983: 139; Davison, 2002: 223-224).The founders of the Ottoman Empire including Ertuğrul Gâzi, Osman Bey and Orhan Bey were often honored with titles of *Gâzi* (veteran of holy war), *iftiharul mujahidîn* (the pride of mujahedeen), *şereful guzzât* (the honor of veterans), *al-muazzamul mujâhid* (great mujahed), *sultânul guzzât* (the Sultan of the Veterans) etc. to demonstrate their involvement in the holy war – Jihad – as the head of the state (Dursun, 1989: 110-111).

In addition to the religious character of the state and the Sultans, the Ottomans were supported by many notables of religious origin in their military campaigns and administrative and legal issues. The leader of the Âhi order in Ankara, Sheikh Edebali (who is claimed to be the father-in-law of Osman Bey), his son Şeyh Mahmut, Âhi Şemsettin and many other religious dignitaries and dervishes had taken part in expeditions and conquests (holy wars) and they were assigned various administrative, political and legal duties in the statecraft. The sheikhs and other members of the religious society were often gifted villages and towns by the Ottoman Beys to contribute to the Islamic life and practice in the country. The religious elites enjoyed a policy of protection, proximity and tolerance from the Ottoman rulers. Some of them were appointed as muftis, as supreme offices of fatwa, toward whom the rulers and the subjects were equally accountable. Their views pertaining to the religious aspects of the matters were highly respected (Gündüz, 1989: 14-20; Köprülü, 1959: 89-93; Ocak, 1999: 241-243). The influence of the Âhis and the other religious orders was very noticeable in their powers to select the Beys too in consultation with the viziers and provincial governors (Beylerbeyi). Orhan Bey and Murat II were selected as Beys after the decision of the Âhis, for instance. The seizure of Ankara from the Âhis was an important event which shows how powerful the Âhis had grown during the establishment of the state (Uzunçarşılı, 1984: 496).

2.1. Religion in Educational Life: Medreses

During the establishment years of the state in the early 14th century, administrative cadres were occupied by the imams, bureaucrats of preceding states, members of various sufi orders, Islamic knights, and dervishes who were educated in medreses of Iran, Egypt and Crimea. One of the first things adopted by the Ottoman rulers after the conquest of a land was the establishment of medreses with the aim to contribute to the religious, social, cultural and scientific awareness of the public as well as

to educate the special work force to be employed in the administrative posts. The first Ottoman medrese was established in Iznik in 1331 to proliferate in numbers in a short time. After a successful education in medreses, the students were able to be judge, mufti and teacher (Akgündüz, 1997: 247-300; Baltacı, 1976: 56-58). The leading members of the Ottoman Imperial Court including the grand vizier, some other viziers, the army judge (kadıasker), court calligrapher (nişancı) as well as the Şeyhulislam were all appointed from among the medrese graduates. Until the seizure of Istanbul by Mehmet II., the religious bureaucracy enjoyed a great influence on the government. Yet after the conquest they encountered a serious challenge from the slave bureaucracy. The Çandarlı Family of ulema origin, which had occupied the office of the Grand Vizier since the establishment of the state, was eliminated soon after the conquest of İstanbul and the office was transferred to the slave bureaucracy (Dursun, 1989: 122-123).

The number and the qualifications of medreses increased by time as part of the necessities but also because of the personal support of the ruling elite. While in the beginning they gave education at a basic level, starting with the reign of Mehmet II., medreses were established with the names *Sahnı Seman*, *Darul Hadis*, *Süleymaniye*, *Müsille-i Süleymaniye* among others specializing in the areas of the sayings of the Prophet (Hadis), Quranic Exegesis and Jurisprudence. In addition to these, the educational curriculum in the medreses included such secular sciences as mathematics, geometry, astronomy, medicine, logic and literature too (Uzunçarşılı, 1988: 20-23; Baltacı, 1976: 16-37; İnalcik, 2003: 174-179).

2.2. Religion in Ottoman Law

The legal system in the Ottoman Empire was based on the sharia in essence. The Ottoman Sultan was required to obey the Islamic law much as the rest of the people. It was one of the duties of the Sultan to apply the sharia and oversee its implementation. Apart from that, however, there had developed a domain of law called the customary law (örfi hukuk) over time. It had been inherited from earlier Arab and Turkish Muslim states. The customary law was not a rival legal system to the Islamic law. It had rather emerged to fill in the gaps of the Islamic law, to regulate those areas that were not covered by the Islamic law and to give prompt responses to practical problems arising. As the head of the state, the Ottoman Sultan enjoyed the authority to introduce laws about the political order and organization in service to the public good and in the context of following

good traditions. The customary law originating from the Sultan was incorporated in the legal documents issued by the Sultan known with the names Kanunname, Adaletname and ferman (İnalcık, 2000: 27-36; Aydın, 1994: 375-391).

2.3. Religious Bureaucracy in Central Government and Their Duties

The Ottoman state structure incorporated plenty of bureaucrats from the ulema who enjoyed sizable power sources and authority. During the foundation of the state, the judge of Bursa (Bursa kadısı) was the leading member of the religious bureaucracy. He was the highest legal authority in the country with his duties to administer the judges and teachers, and to resolve the cases brought by the residents of Bursa and the army. Due to the increasing workload of the judge of Bursa with the growth of the state, another legal office was introduced by Murat I. named as the office of Kadıasker (judge of the army) in 1363 (İpşirli, 1994: 267-269).

Kadıasker was responsible for administering educational and legal organizations, seeing to the legal needs and disputes of the army and the ruling elite in time of war and peace. Kadıasker was a founding member of the Divan-ı Hümayun (The Imperial Court). He was granted the authority to issue judgments on behalf of the Sultan in a Kanunname issued by Mehmet II., as one of three offices having such authority. The duties of Kadiasker in Divan-ı Humayun included delivering opinions in the area of Islamic law when needed, undertaking various responsibilities in the statecraft, and judging on matters within his area of jurisdiction. Kadiasker was the representative of the ulema in the Divan-ı Humayun and he was coming after the grand vizier in terms of protocol (Uzunçarşılı, 1988: 151-157; Uzunçarşılı, v. 2, 1995: 589).

Another leading member of the ulema that played an important role in Ottoman state structure was the Şeyhulislam. The office of Şeyhulislam was established during the reign of Murat II in 1425 as an office of fatwa; Molla Şemseddin Fenari was appointed as the first Şeyhulislam. The office remained a supreme religious authority until 1922. While the office of Şeyhulislam was a modest office in the beginning, it was nominated as the head of the ulema and was promoted over the Kadiasker in religious hierarchy during the reign of Mehmet II, to acquire a remarkable significance and respect during the tenure of Zenbilli Ali Efendi, Ibn Kemal and Ebussuud Efendi in the 16th century. The Şeyhulislam was responsible for the appointment and the promotion of the judges, muftis

and medrese teachers, but more importantly, he was the supreme office of fatwa. The range of issues covered by the fatwas included the declaration of war and peace, taxation, deposition and execution of the Sultan or those issues of lesser political importance such as prayers, interactions (muamelat) and innovations such as coffee and tobacco (Uzunçarşılı, 1988: 173-214; İpşirli, 1991: 269-271; Uzunçarşılı, v.3, 1995: 449-450). The ruling elite and the bureaucracy were stuck when they were not granted the fatwas they needed for various purposes. Şeyhulislam Mevlana Zeynel Arabi's rejection of the call for fatwa by Bayezid II. to organize an expedition to Memluks for their sanctuary to Cem Sultan was one such instance. And the names of the Sultans deposed or executed by fatwa included Sultan Ibrahim, Mustafa IV, Abdul-Aziz, Murat V and Abdulhamid II (Dursun, 1989: 243-247).

2.4. Religious Bureaucracy in *Kaza* and *Sanjak* Administrations: Judges (*Kadıs* and *Mevleviyets*)

Starting with the establishment of the state, the Ottomans appointed a judge to each and every unit of the land conquered with the purpose of maintaining law and order. The conquest of a land was considered complete with the appointment of judges and subaşıs (military governor). The judge of a *Kaza* was the highest legal, political and municipal authority in the *Kaza* administration. He was appointed directly by the central authority and he was not subject to the *sanjak* or provincial administrations. His main duty was to solve disagreements among the public according to the laws of the sharia and the traditions. He was also the head of administrative, financial, military and municipal matters in the *Kaza*. The judge of a *sanjak*, *mevleviyet*, was the highest legal authority in his unit, but was supposed to work in cooperation with the *Sanjak Beyi* and *Beylerbeyi* in political and municipal matters. Thus, it can be said that the members of the religious bureaucracy were granted extensive powers and authority in the Ottoman peripheral government to observe the application of the law and order in their domain of government (Akdağ, 1974: 400-406; İpşirli, 1994: 263-267).

3. The Period of Decline (Late 17th Century Onwards): Innovations and Reforms

The Ottoman Empire was introduced to an accelerating process of reforms in its domestic structures starting with the late 17th century due to a period of decline highlighted by the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in front of

Vienna in 1683. The defeat and the ensuing period of decline is often attributed to the shift of the balance of power between the Ottomans and the West against the Ottomans in military, economic and technological domains. With the help of technological and scientific advancements achieved, European powers had opened out to the New World and had found new routes to the East to collect huge gold reserves in their treasures. Such technology and science were also used to build more powerful armies with more effective weapons and command. Due to the decline suffered, the Ottomans were unable to deal with their traditional rivals, and subsequent defeats in the wars against Austria and Russia added further to the economic deterioration, as the wars involved many costs, particularly when they were not won. The process was further exacerbated with the capitulations (trade concessions) granted to some European states leading to the obstruction of Ottoman economic and industrial development on progressively greater scales (Berkes, 1998: 23-25; Karpat, 1959: 3-8; Zürcher, 2007: 15-19; Ahmad, 2002: 34-43).

3.1. The Tulip Era and Secularizing Trends

The defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the War of 1714-1717 against Austria and the signing of the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 remained a critical date in the history of Ottoman secularization. The defeat was interpreted by the Ottomans as meaning that it would no longer be possible to defeat the European powers with traditional military means and technology and that the Ottomans had to turn to Europe for inspiration and innovations. Furthermore, the perception of a growing threat from Russia and Austria was compelling the Ottomans to look for allies, France being the most notable candidate as it was also in trouble with the same countries in this period. With the Treaty of Passarowitz, the Ottomans were thus introduced to a process of close relations with Europe. They had a chance to observe European technological and scientific developments for the purposes of employing them in the building of a better domestic military power in the first place, and leading to a rise of interest in French civilization and culture as a byproduct (Karagöz, 1995: 173-182; Ergil, 1987: 8). This particular period in Ottoman History, lasting until the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730, is named the Tulip Era and it had underlying effects in the process of innovations and reforms adopted in following years generating substantial secularizing tendencies.

Envoys such as Mehmet Çelebi, were sent to various European countries for education and to make observations on European civilization (Lewis,

2003: 45-46). Mehmet Çelebi had noted the effective usage of technology and science in the military domain during his observations in France. He had delivered a report to the incumbents for the removal of the traditional military system, and the adoption of more effective technology and methods, and the invitation of foreign officers and technicians (Berkes, 1998: 33-36). The invitation of a foreign officer corps and attempts to build European style military structures had some implications for secularist politics because the transfer of the elements of material culture involved the importation of various non-material cultures too, attached to them in various ways. The employment of non-Muslim officer corps in the army was opposed by the ulema for they deemed, firstly, the transfer of Muslims under the authority of non-Muslims as against the religion. Secondly, there were issues and practices prescribed by religion in the education and application of very rigid areas of knowledge such as mathematics, geometry, medicine and geography that had to be heeded.

The Tulip Era was also important in Ottoman secularization also because of the spirit of worldliness that it generated. It was a period of time characterized with a decline in moral and religious concerns and a rise of interest in the material world exemplified with the cherishing of elements of western civilization, culture, literature, architecture and arts. The traditional rich segments of the Ottoman society had liked spending money on the construction of mosques and various religious endowments in the past, but the Tulip Era saw the construction of palaces, manors, pools, parks, gardens and fountains. It saw the emergence and proliferation of operas, taverns, parties and coffee houses (Berkes, 1998: 26-30).

Ibrahim Müteferrika appears as the most leading reformist intellectual of the Tulip Era. He opened the first official Ottoman printing press; at the beginning only non-religious items could be printed. Ibrahim was concerned with innovation and awakening in Islam. He defended the importance of introducing new methods and ideas from the West. In the book that he wrote on the causes of Ottoman decline – *Usûlül Hikem fî Nizâmil Umem* – he argued that the Ottomans were declining both because of their weaknesses in following Europe in technological developments and because of the failure to devise wise political methods, laws, procedures and principles to establish viable political regimes Ibrahim made a distinction among three types of government as monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and maintained that democracy was the best for it promoted popular representation and parliamentarianism. According to Ibrahim, one of the most important reasons for the European states

becoming more powerful than the Ottomans was their toleration of democratic ideas and movements. While adopting the latest military technology and methods from the West, the Muslims had to grow interest in modern political institutions for more viable political and administrative methods (Altuntek, 1993: 196-197).

Ironically, a class of conservatives, which opposed a total campaign of westernization was developing in the same period. “It was wrong to rely on the Christian states for military and political alliance. Cultural and social westernization would mean a denial of traditional Islamic heritage, which was never acceptable. The betrayal of France in 1807 was a proof of this. French was indeed motivated to expand over the Ottoman lands.” They argued that if the harmony of traditional institutions was being broken, it would not be possible to unite them again (Dursun, 1998: 251-257).

3.2. Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca

The Period of Ottoman decline, starting with the defeat of the Ottoman Army in Turco-Russian War of 1768-1774 and the signing of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, generated a greater search for innovations and reforms. The domestic campaign for the War was launched with a discourse of Jihad, but the defeat meant that it would not be possible to deal with Russia merely with religious zeal and traditional military methods. It was not enough for the Ottomans to adopt some new military technology and methods. There was a need to change the traditional social and cultural structures that accompanied the introduction and the use of such innovations. The problem for the reformists was that the Turkish people were not adaptive to new methods and technology (Shaw, 1971: 167).

There were conservative oppositions to such thinking by the reformists, however. These were from an alliance of the ulema and the military. The conservatives stressed the importance of religious differences between Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Their methods were sometimes unacceptable, as seen in the denial of the European experts of the authority of the God on earth. They believed that wars would be won with military means only. And also because of the history of wars between the members of two religions, the conservatives never wanted to tolerate cooperation with Christian states. For them, the reformers were more like traitors. The modern methods and the ideas of the West were a new stratagem to enslave the Muslims. Such disagreement by the reformists and the

conservatives turned violent at times, and the conservatives were organized in various assaults against the reformists: They ruled fatwas, agitated the army and preached for the repudiation of certain reforms and the punishment of those who introduced them (Zürcher, 2007: 24; Ahmad, 2002: 34-43; Ahmad, 2007: 25-26).

The Sultan of the time, Selim III, was a prominent supporter of the reforms. He supported the idea of a comprehensive reform that would cover all aspects of life and launched a reform program called New Order (Nizamı Cedid) to implement the desired reforms. A remarkable reform that had important implications for secularist concerns was the opening of the Military Engineering School (Mühendishâne-i Berri Humâyun) in 1795 by the side of the Naval Engineering School (Mühendishâne-i Bahri Humâyun) established by Mustafa III previously. These schools were intended to replace the Janissary army, which was the most threatening member of the conservatives. The curricula of the schools did not include the traditional Islamic areas of knowledge covered in medreses except the Arabic language but were instead filled with modern sciences and areas of knowledge. Many of the teachers working in these schools were French officers and specialists. In addition to these, many other foreign cartographers, astronomers, geographers, and even poets and painters were invited and recruited to raise the qualifications of the Ottoman Army. Many of the students who graduated from these schools would be the intellectual fathers of Ottoman modernization. An important influence of these officer corps on Ottoman secularization was their development of some western manners, tastes and ways of life (Lewis, 2003: 57-60; Berkes, 1985: 111-112).

There was a notable debate against the religion during the period of the New Order. Some reformists sought the causes of the Ottoman decline in religious fanaticism and superstitions. Selim III was in agreement with them and he was motivated to crash the ulema and the Janissaries as well as the authority of the Şeyhulislam for a more effective reform process but only to bring these conservative blocs closer together. For them, Selim was not a defender of Islam anymore and he was more like a Frenchman rather than an Ottoman (Berkes, 1998: 82-85; Ergil, 1987: 12).

3.3. Mahmut II

Mahmut II, the forerunner of the Tanzimat period, was an intimate devotee of western civilization. For him, the recovery of the Ottoman Empire

required the application of a comprehensive reform process covering the military, political, administrative, legal and social domains. To do this, he knew that he had to break the powers of the Janissaries and the ulema as they had aborted many reform attempts in the past.

The Janissary army was abolished successfully in 1826 and a list of reforms was adopted in its aftermath. Mahmut II maintained the tradition of inviting foreign officer corps to modernize the army. A growing practice in the military domain, which was learned from the Governor of Egypt Mehmet Ali, was the transfer of military students to various countries of Europe for education. Two more military schools were opened by Mahmut II for the modernization of the army in European style in addition to previously established military and naval engineering schools, which included the Imperial Music School (*Mızıkayı Humayun Mektebi*) in 1831 and the School of Military Sciences (*Mektebi Ulumi Harbiye*) in 1834. The first school was established by an Italian instructor Donizetti Paşa, to replace *Mehterhaneyi Humayun* to educate drummers and trumpeters for the army. The second was opened as an example of the French School of Military Sciences with the medium of education being French and the curriculum being imported from its French model (Lewis, 2003: 80-84; Metin, 2010).

In the realm of civilian education, a School of Medicine (*Mektebi Tıbbîye Şâhâne*) was established in 1827. *Dârul Ulûmu Hikemiye-i Osmanîye ve Mektebi Tibbiye Şâhâne* (Ottoman Imperial School of Physical and Medical Sciences) was established in 1838 as an improved form of the medical school. All the Ottomans were able to register in these schools. Afterwards *Mektebi Maârifî Adliye* and *Mektebi Ulûmi Edebiye* were established to educate government translators and to translate scientific books from European languages (Berkes, 1985: 111-112; Göktaş, 2009: 19-21; Metin, 2010). These schools were built as secular schools attached to the Ministry of Education outside of the jurisdiction of Şeyhulislam. Many of the intellectuals, reformists and leading statesmen of the 19th century were graduates of these schools (military and civilian) to be vanguards of the social, political, intellectual and educational modernization of the Ottoman Empire. They were the barracks of the emerging secular bureaucracy. While some of these schools gave education in French, some others required the knowledge of French and they had Muslim and non-Muslim teachers. (Karagöz, 193-194; Shaw, 1983: 78; Mardin, 1983: 139-143; Cizre and Çınar, 2003: 232-233;).

An important development in secularist politics during the reign of Mahmut II was the introduction of a central bureaucratic system and the transfer of the powers and authority of the ulema to various ministries and directorates. The ulema were highly independent in terms of their revenues, employees and establishments in the past. They held courts and issued rulings from their own residences. But Mahmut II opened an office and department of Chief Mufti and made it accountable to the palace. The Chief Mufti was directly appointed by the government. With the establishment of the Ministry of Justice afterwards, the powers of the ulema were further minimized because the appointment of teachers and judges, and the administration of the schools were then transferred to the Ministry of Justice. Another important development in terms of the weakening of the ulema was the establishment of the Directorate of Foundations. Religious Foundations (Evkaf) constituted a serious revenue gate for the conservative ulema. To break one of the major sources of the economic power of the ulema, Mahmut II established the Directorate of Foundations. The directorate took the foundations under a central authority by which the revenues were collected from one hand and distributed directly for religious purposes in constructing mosques, paying the salaries of religious staff and in other religious activities (Lewis, 2003: 92-94; Berkes, 1998: 98-99).

3.4. Tanzimat Period

The Tanzimat period was the real beginning of Ottoman modernization. The reforms that it brought were far more extensive than its previous examples penetrating to almost all domains of Ottoman life. It was an important milestone in the Ottoman secularization with various reforms introduced in the political, administrative, legal, social and educational realms. The period started with the declaration of the Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayun in 1839 soon after the death of Mahmut II and continued until the declaration of the first Ottoman Constitution in 1876.

One of the most significant achievements of the Tanzimat reforms was the introduction of a concept of Ottoman citizenship. This was important as the traditional Ottoman society was a Muslim-dominant society with their rights and privileges over the non-Muslim subjects of the state. This was the part of a thinking called Ottomanism to prevent nationalistic secessions from the Empire particularly in the Balkans. This issue was handled more seriously with the Reform Edict in 1856. As a part of this concept, the non-Muslim members of the society were allowed to enjoy many of the

rights and privileges granted to the Muslims. The notion of justice and equality was taken to the center of the legal, political and administrative processes (Karpat, 1959: 10-11).

3.4.1. Secular Reforms in the Legal Domain

In the legal domain, an important development was the introduction of a Penal Code in 1840 with parts of its articles and methods borrowed from the French Penal Code. Another Penal Code was prepared in 1858 with more borrowings from western sources. A Commercial Code was adopted in 1850 based on its French model by which the concepts of interest and bill of exchange were introduced to the Ottoman legal system for the first time. Statutory Courts (Nizamiye Mahkemeleri) were established in 1840 and operated according to secular principles to see to criminal and commercial cases. As a deviation from the traditional Islamic legal system, Statutory Courts embodied Muslim and non-Muslim judges at the same time and they accepted non-Muslim witnesses too in the courts. A Land Law was introduced in 1858 according to which ownership and inheritance were regulated according to secular principles of the equality of man and woman. A process of the codification of the sharia was sometimes in order with itself and sometimes in unity with the secular European laws. A Civil Code was prepared by Ahmet Cevdet Paşa according to the Hanefi school of Jurisprudence completed in 1876, but aspects of family and personal law were excluded from the codification as a deviation from the classical Islamic law. Codification of the Islamic law was important insofar as it opened the gate of ijtihad as a chance to introduce some changes in the Islamic law (Ortaylı, 1986: 165-167; Ergil, 1987: 24-27).

3.4.2. Secular Reforms in Education

There were remarkable secular reforms in the educational realm also. At the primary school level, priority was given to the opening of *Rüşdiyes* to educate students for government offices, military and medical schools. The traditional *sıbyan mekteps* and *medreses* run by the ulema were not able to educate students for newly established bureaucratic cadres and high schools, and instead of reforming the traditional religious schools, which would agitate the conservatives, a decision was made to establish new schools under the authority of the Ministry of Education. The curriculum of *Rüşdiyes* was filled with modern sciences including mathematics, geography, history, French language, painting in addition to a limited

number of courses on Arabic, Persian and religion. *Rüşdiyes* did not have the heavy load of religious courses taught in *medreses* and *sıbyan mekteps*. In 1845, idadis were established as the secondary school division of the Rüşdiyes to serve the same purpose. Another important development was the opening of *Darulmuallimin* in 1848 and *Darulmuallimat* in 1870 (Male and Female Teacher Schools) with the purpose of meeting teacher needs of the *Rüşdiyes* and *Idadis* based on secular thinking and modern educational curriculum (Berkes, 1998: 175-192; Ortaylı, 2005: 183-185; Metin, 2010).

In addition to the *Rüşdiyes* and *Idadis*, the Tanzimat period saw the opening of *Sultanis*, the first one being the *Galatasaray Sultanisi* established in 1868 with the intention to give high quality education for government offices and military schools. *Galatasaray Sultanisi* was characterized as a very highly secular school giving education in the French language. Many of the teachers were French and many of its students were non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. The school was under the authority of the French Ministry of Education. Appointments were made by the French ministry. Its curriculum included modern and ancient European languages, modern social and natural sciences, and the law (Lewis, 2003: 122; Davison, 1990: 173; Ortaylı, 2005: 184; Berkes, 1985: 116-117).

At the level of higher education, in 1859 *Mektebi Mulkiye* (School of Government) was established to educate students for non-military government offices. The graduates of *Mulkiye* would work in administrative, legal and municipal jobs. The students in this school were taught economy, law, international relations, statistics etc. with the addition of some other courses afterwards. *Mektebi Hukuk* (School of Law) was opened in 1860 to meet the personnel needs of the Statutory Courts like the judges and the others, offices formerly occupied by the graduates of higher medreses (Davison, 1990: 171).

Şinasi, who advocated and supported the necessity of westernization in the Ottoman Empire, appeared as a leading intellectual of the Tanzimat period. He is known as the father of the movement of constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire. In his writings, he elaborated on the ideas of the rights of citizenship, freedom of expression, public opinion, national consciousness, constitution and liberty. He introduced many literary works and forms from the West in the areas of theater, poetry and stories. He translated many books and literary pieces from European languages (Berkes, 1998: 197-198; Mardin, 2006: 296-306).

3.5. The Constitutionalist Period

The Ottoman Constitutionalist Period, starting with the declaration of the Ottoman Constitution and the opening of the parliament, and had many implications for secular politics. While Article 11 of the Constitution indicated that "the religion of the state is Islam," the removal of Muslim and non-Muslim differentiation, the institutionalization of the concept of Ottoman citizenship, and the introduction of various rights and liberties were important steps toward secularization. Articles 8-26 of the Constitution pertaining to the common rights of subjects incorporated provisions about the freedoms and rights of citizens including the rights of citizenship, personal freedom, personal safety, freedom of belief, freedom of press, right to petition, right to be a civil servant, inviolability of private property, prohibition of torture among many others (Shaw and Shaw, 2004: 222; Ortaylı, 1986: 167-168).

3.5.1. Influence of the Young Ottomans

It is argued that behind the declaration of the first Ottoman Constitution, there was the influence of intellectual currencies of thought propagated by the Young Ottomans (*Genç Osmanlılar*). The Young Ottomans were both intelligent and intellectual. They were aware of the potential of a conservative backlash against the reforms and thus they followed a road from within the Islamic doctrines. They often argued that Islam was not irreconcilable with reform, and many of the European political institutions and principles were readable within the text of Islam. What was needed was a careful interpretation (Davison, 1963: 219-233).

Namık Kemal was a leading member of the Young Ottomans. For him, the source of the Ottoman failure was political and economic, and the road to recovery was education and constitutionalism. He argued that Islam and liberal constitutionalism were not in contradiction. While there were significant differences between classical Islamic political doctrines and contemporary political ideas, Islam was open to renovation and change when it was warranted. The West had been superior to the Ottoman Empire due to the promotion of the ideas of liberty and progress. The Ottomans thus also had to adopt contemporary political and legal developments in the West by establishing a republican regime, a parliamentary government assigning sovereignty to the people, and taking the public will and consent as the source of political action (Davison, 1963: 223-231; Berkes, 1998: 209-213; Karpat, 1959: 12-13).