

## Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic



# Islamist Thinkers in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic

*By*

Ahmet Şeyhun



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover illustration: Night view of the illuminated Dolmabahçe mosque and palace. (Istanbul, Turkey).  
© iStock.com / Tramont\_ana.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Şeyhun, Ahmet, 1958-

Islamist thinkers in the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic / by Ahmet Şeyhun.  
pages cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-90-04-28090-8 (hardback : alk. paper) -- ISBN 978-90-04-28240-7 (e-book) 1. Intellectuals--Turkey--Biography. 2. Turkey--Intellectual life--19th century. 3. Turkey--Intellectual life--20th century. I. Title.

DR568.S49 2014

320.55'7092256--dc23

2014030459

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual 'Brill' typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see [brill.com/brill-typeface](http://brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISBN 978-90-04-28090-8 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-28240-7 (e-book)

Copyright 2015 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Global Oriental and Hotei Publishing.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.

Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

*This book is dedicated to the memory of  
my dear late father Mehmet Kemal Şeyhun  
who always encouraged me in my studies  
and to my dear mother Sevin Orhon-Şeyhun  
who always sustained me with her prayers*





# Contents

Acknowledgments VIII

Introduction 1

- 1 Mehmed Akif Ersoy (1873–1936) 19
- 2 Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım (1858–1920) 27
- 3 İskilipli Mehmed Atıf (1876–1926) 36
- 4 Mustafa Sabri (1869–1954) 44
- 5 Said-i Nursi (1876–1960) 53
- 6 Ahmed Naim Baban (1872–1934) 59
- 7 Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay (1883–1961) 65
- 8 İzmirli İsmail Hakkı (1868–1946) 84
- 9 Mehmed Ali Ayni (1868–1945) 95
- 10 Mehmed Seyyid Çelebizâde (1873–1925) 137
- 11 Said Halim Pasha (1865–1921) 147
- 12 Şehbenderzâde Ahmed Hilmi (1865–1914) 165
- 13 Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır (1878–1942) 172

Bibliography 185

Index 187

## Acknowledgments

My sabbatical during the academic year of 2013-2014 was a great opportunity for me to finish my book project on the Islamist thinkers in late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic. Here I would like to express my gratitude to the University of Winnipeg and special thanks to the History Department for granting me a year of research leave. I express my deepest and most sincere thanks to my colleagues Professors Eliakim Sibanda and Royden Loewen for encouraging me in my project. I would like to extend my thanks to my colleague and friend Professor Hakan Yavuz for his encouragement and support.

A special thanks to my family, in particular to my dear mother Sevin Orhon-Şeyhun whose prayers sustained me so far. I also would like to thank my dear sister Yesim Çorluhan, my brother in law Aysan Çorluhan and my dear nephew Ömer Çorluhan.

Here I also would like to give thanks to Angela Schippers, the Administrative Assistant in our Department of History who was always willing to help when I needed her assistance. I also thank Holly Roberta Clark for spending time and effort to edit my work.

I would specially like to thank Kate Ferguson who carefully and painstakingly edited my manuscript. I also thank Cynthia Col for preparing a well detailed index for my book.

Finally I thank Nicolette van der Hoek, Nienke Brienens-Moolenaar and Thalien Colenbrander for their valuable assistance during the printing process of my book.

# Introduction

After the collapse of the Hamidian autocracy, various political ideologies that had been banned under the previous regime and confined to a clandestine existence came to the surface. In the weeks following the declaration of the Constitution on 23 July 1908 many newspapers and journals were founded like mushrooms sprouting after the rain. Many of these papers were established as the mouthpiece of different ideological movements that were now competing to dominate the political arena. Islamism was probably the most prominent of these ideologies; others included Ottomanism, Turkism and Westernism. Although a backward looking ideology that sought to return society to the glorious days of the early Islam, Islamism was in fact a modern political thought. It was, in fact, the politicization of the Islamic faith that, despite its aim of reviving the idealist system of the pristine Islam of the early Islam during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his immediate successors the Rashidun Caliphs (632–661), was definitely not a traditionalist understanding of politics but a modern ideology.

The roots of today's political Islam are found in the internal crises of Muslim societies at the end of the eighteenth century, along with the decline of central Muslim empires and their subsequent subjugation by European colonial powers led to the emergence in Arabia and India of several protest movements. The leaders of these mainly revivalist movements believed that the source of this crisis lay in moral decay and the deviation from pristine Islamic principles. They sought the restoration of the power of Islam by purifying the religion of external elements and by following the *sunnah* (acts and deeds) of the Prophet. These revivalist movements are in fact represented by the various grass-root groups of folk Islam, which were developed as a reaction to the internal decay of Muslim societies and to the external imperialist threat to them. As skillfully demonstrated by Kemal Karpat in his important work on the politicization of Islam, these groups “mobilized and politicized the Muslim masses by bringing the *nâs* (people) into the political arena, and turned them into a force not only opposed to the European powers but also to their own governments, elites, and ulema”.<sup>1</sup> They were popular movements that sought to reform the state and society according to Islamic social and political values. According to Karpat this was a “revolution from below” by the popular classes that became politi-

---

1 Kemal Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 20 (hereafter cited as Karpat, *Politicization*)

cally organized and carried their worldviews to the upper strata of the decision-making mechanism.

The most important of these movements emerged in the mid-eighteenth century in central Arabia, and was called the Wahhabiyya, taking its name from its founder, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792). In 1744 Ibn al-Wahhab established an alliance with Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saud, a local ruler who adopted his doctrine and agreed to provide him with the financial, political and military support necessary to enable Ibn Abd al-Wahhab to spread his ideas throughout Arabia. Although the Wahhabi movement first emerged as a reaction to the local religious practices of popular Islam in Najd (Central Arabia), when it was later adopted by the Saudi rulers as their official creed it started to pose a serious threat to the Ottoman rule in the region. In the meantime the Ottoman government had already undertaken a series of military and administrative reforms aiming to modernize traditional state institutions. While the Ottomans used European institutions as their model, the Wahhabis advocated a return to the early period of Islam, which they idealized as a golden age. Wahhabiyya ideology was based on the doctrine of Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780–855), the founder of the Hanbali School, and the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328). Considered one of the most important thinkers in Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah, a Hanbali jurist and theologian, became the principal inspiration for Muslim revivalists in the eighteenth century and for modernists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah was born in Harran (in present-day south-eastern Turkey). After studying at the Sukkariyya Madrasa in Damascus, he started to teach at the Hanbaliyya Madrasa in the same city on 17 Shaban 695 AH (20 June 1296). In his works, Ibn Taymiyyah fiercely criticized what he called “*Mushrikin*” (Polytheists). His main objectives were to “purify” Islam of any corrupting elements and to enhance the role of the *sharia* by restoring it to its central position in Muslim life. Although Ibn Taymiyyah’s ideas originated from Hanbali doctrine, their originality lies in the combination of various arguments defended by dogmatic theologians, traditionalists, and Sufi thinkers. These, in turn, are based on *kalam* (theological argumentation), *hadith* (transmitted sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) and *irada* in order to create a new doctrine of mediation. Ibn Taymiyya condemned the practices of popular or folk Islam and considered them as a deviation from the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

---

2 The most detailed and critical study of the doctrine of Ibn Taymiyyah remains the voluminous work of Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Tak-id-din Ahmad b. Taimiya*, Cairo: Imprimerie de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1939.

3 Ahmet Şeyhun, *Said Halim Pasha (Ottoman Statesman and Islamist Thinker, 1865–1921)*, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2003, p. 10 (hereafter cited as Şeyhun, *Said Halim*).

The aim of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was to purify Islam from the influence of the *Jahiliyya* period and to re-Islamize the tribes of Arabia by teaching them the tenets of pristine Islam.

The ideas of Said Halim Pasha (1865–1921) on the decline of Muslim societies are to a large extent reminiscent of those of Ibn Taymiyyah and Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Said Halim Pasha was the grandson of Muhammad Ali Pasha (r. 1805–1848), the founder of Modern Egypt. Educated in Europe, Said Halim joined the Young Turk movement and was later appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, then grand vizier in the cabinets of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). Besides being a prominent statesman, Said Halim Pasha also wrote profusely on political and social issues. In his writings between 1910 and 1921, Said Halim Pasha advocated a thorough and radical Islamization of the Muslim world in order to halt its decline and to ensure its progress. Said Halim Pasha rigorously defended his ideas against Turkist and Westernist writers. The Turkists based their ideology on ethnicity and advocated an ethnic nationalism. Turkist thinkers such as Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924) and Yusuf Akçura (1875–1935) encouraged the rise of ethnic consciousness among Turks and emphasized the Turkish identity of the Ottoman state. The works of European scholars on the ancient history of the pre-Islamic Turks had a crucial impact on the rise of Turkism as a cultural and then political movement. One of the earliest examples of this literature was a book entitled *Histoire générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mogols et des autres Tartares occidentaux*, written by French orientalist Joseph de Guignes and published in Paris between 1756 and 1758. During the nineteenth century, many other scholars studied ancient Turkish history. Among these were A. de Sacy, Radloff, and V. Thomsen. Thomsen rendered an invaluable service to Turcology by deciphering the runic inscriptions of Orhon in 1893. Ziya Gökalp, who was a prominent Turkist and probably the main theorician of Turkish nationalism, summarized his ideology with the maxim of *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak* (Turkification, Islamization and Modernization).<sup>4</sup> These concepts did not contradict but complemented each other. Gökalp explained his theory by saying, “we are of Turkish nationality (*millet*), we belong to the Islamic religious community (*ümmet*) and to the Western sphere of civilization (*medeniyet*).” For Gökalp these three elements of the Turkish nation were both complementary and distinct from each other: complementary because each constituted an aspect of Turkish society, and distinct because they were not necessarily related.

4 Ziya Gökalp, “Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak” in *Türk Yurdu*, vol. 3, Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası 1329, pp. 336–337. Later published in Latin script, Ziya Gökalp, *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak*, Ankara: Yeni Matbaa, 1960, pp. 10–11.

Adhering to the Islamic faith did not mean that Turks belonged to the sphere of Islamic civilization that Gökalp called oriental civilization. Gökalp perceived Islam as a religion (*din*), not as a civilization (*medeniyet*), which he considered to be a combination of the Sasanian and Byzantine civilizations. According to Gökalp, over time the Turks moved from an East Asian (Chinese) to an Islamic (oriental) civilization through their conversion to Islam, but in doing so they did not change their national culture. Thus, he asserted, Turks could adopt European civilization and still preserve their religion and national culture, just as the Japanese had. Gökalp divides the material and intellectual development of societies into two: a) *medeniyet* (civilization); and b) *hars* (national culture). *Medeniyet* is international but *hars* is national. Western or Islamic civilizations have been embraced by many different nations, each with its own national culture.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike Gökalp who considered *hars* to be an element of strength and enrichment for Muslim Turks, Said Halim Pasha considered it an undermining effect that would hinder the progress of the Muslim Turks. According to Said Halim, the major cause of the Muslim decline lay in the misunderstanding of the true meaning of the Prophet's message and its subsequent distortion by later developments in Islamic history. Said Halim explains the decline of Muslim societies with reference to their failure to renounce their pre-Islamic heritage. He argues that since the nations that adopted Islam were heirs to old and distinct civilizations, it was inevitable that their respective ancient heritage would still exert a strong influence over them. He believed that this phenomenon prevented Muslim nations from fully understanding and implementing the religious tenets of their faith, thus depriving them of the blessings of Islam. This situation, continues Said Halim, had led to a paralysis, which left Muslim societies inert between their pre-Islamic legacy and pristine Islamic doctrine, constituting a continuous hindrance to their development. For Said Halim the only way to achieve progress was for Muslims to swing the pendulum in favor of a pristine interpretation of Islam.<sup>6</sup>

The third ideological current was Westernism (*Batıcılık*). Unlike their reformist predecessors of the *Tanzimat* era, partisans of Westernism during the

---

5 For more on Gökalp's social and political views, see Uriel Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp*, London: Luzac, 1950 (hereafter cited as Heyd, *Foundations*), and Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985. Some of Gökalp's works have been translated into English by Niyazi Berkes under the title *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization (selected essays of Ziya Gökalp)*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1959.

6 Ibid. Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 142

Second Constitutional Period were not content with modernizing the military and bureaucracy; nor did they limit the range of their reforms to commercial and criminal law. Instead, they attacked the very core of Muslim life: the family and the role of women in society. To Westernist thinkers, the main reason for the decay of Muslim civilization was the degraded status of women in Islam. One of the most prominent spokesmen of Westernism, Dr. Abdullah Cevdet (1869–1932), wrote in his journal *İçtihad* that, “Women should have exactly the same rights as men concerning family affairs, inheritance, and other matters.”<sup>7</sup> He also advocated the unveiling of Muslim Ottoman women. Abdullah Cevdet also felt that the decline was due to decaying institutions, backward traditions, and an Asiatic mentality. He believed that if Muslims stubbornly clung to their old ways and did not adopt European manners, they would soon be wiped from the face of the earth. Writing in 1912, after the defeat of the Ottoman armies during the Balkan Wars, he explained that the recent Turkish defeats were caused by the military’s aversion to anything Western and by its resistance to espousing European civilization.<sup>8</sup>

Islamic modernism was born in the Ottoman Empire. The first Islamic modernists were the Young Ottoman thinkers who expounded their ideas in the 1860s and 1870s. They were highly discontent with the Westernizing reforms of the *Tanzimat* era that were introduced by reform minded sultans and their bureaucrats. The Young Ottoman movement began in protest against the inability of statesmen to restore the empire’s political and economic position, and in opposition to their compliance with the European Powers whose chancelleries were dominating the *Porte*. Those Islamic modernist intellectuals, unlike their revivalist precursors, directly adopted European ideas, concepts and institutions and tried to adapt them to the realities of Muslim societies. They expressed European social and political ideas in an Islamic discourse and in Islamic disguise. The most prominent of the Young Ottoman thinkers were Namık Kemal (1840–1888), Ziya Pasha (1825–1880) and Ali Suavi (1839–1878).

Namık Kemal, who had an important influence over the Islamist thinkers of the Second Constitutional Period, adopted European liberal ideas and expressed them in an Islamic discourse. He introduced two new concepts in Islamic political thought by attributing to the words *vatan* and *hürriyet* the Western connotations of fatherland and liberty. Namık Kemal firmly believed that Ottoman Empire could only be regenerated through a Constitutional regime. According to Kemal the early reforms of *Tanzimat* (1839) and *Islahat*

---

7 Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981, p. 309 (hereafter cited as Hanioğlu, *Abdullah Cevdet*).

8 Hanioğlu, *Abdullah Cevdet*, p. 357.

(1856) were not sufficient for a civilized state like the Ottoman Empire. In his opinion, a constitutional regime was not only necessary to assure a fair administration for Ottoman subjects but also to prevent Russia from intervening in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire, especially by using the pretext of protecting the sultan's Orthodox Christian subjects. It would also prove to Europe the fairness of the Ottoman administration. Kemal's patriotism was manifested in Pan-Ottomanism and his loyalty to Islamic heritage. For him, the concept of homeland was not confined to the Ottoman Empire but embraced all Islamic lands, which were united by the memory of a common and glorious past. Namık Kemal's vision of homeland is imbued with nostalgia and steeped in romanticism. He describes it as: "not composed of the vague lines traced by the sword of a conqueror or the pen of a scribe. It is a sacred idea resulting from combination of various noble concepts and principles such as the people, liberty, brotherhood, interest, sovereignty, respect for one's ancestors, love of family and childhood memories."<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, despite his strong emphasis on Islam as the basis of his patriotism, Namık Kemal did not exclude non-Muslim elements of the empire from his definition of homeland. He was strongly committed to the practicality of a Pan-Ottoman union that would embrace the empire's non-Muslim communities. In Kemal's opinion the different religions, languages and races that existed in the Ottoman Empire did not form an obstacle to the formation of an Ottoman nation. He believed that a proper education would be the key to reducing cultural differences among the diverse elements of the empire. This policy would include a uniform syllabus, which would inculcate patriotism in the minds of the new generation.

The above summary shows how Namık Kemal's ideas on Ottoman nationalism were of an ambivalent nature. While asserting the equality of all Ottomans regardless of their ethnicity or religion and upholding the idea of Ottoman citizenship as a secular concept, he nevertheless considered Islam to be the glue that would hold together the empire and its diverse ethnicities. Namık Kemal was the first Muslim thinker in Islamic history to advocate a parliamentary regime. Although his political liberalism was inspired by the liberal ideas of European thinkers such as Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau, it was nevertheless presented in an Islamic discourse. He believed that the concept of representative government had already found its expression in the Quran and its application in early Islamic history. The same observation could also be made for the political system of the Ottoman Empire before the centralizing reforms

---

9 Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Namık Kemal Antolojisi* (İstanbul: Muallim Ahmet Halit Kitap Evi, 1942), p. 61.

of Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839).<sup>10</sup> Namık Kemal considered the classical Ottoman political system as a harbinger of the modern democratic regime. The separation of powers that Montesquieu expounded in his *Spirit of the Laws* was already in practice in traditional Ottoman politics. Indeed, it was based on a system of checks and balances with, for example, the sultan's authority being bound by the *ulema* and the Janissaries.<sup>11</sup>

Another Young Ottoman-Islamist thinker who influenced our thinkers of the late Ottoman Empire was Ziya Pasha. Like Namık Kemal, he started his administrative career in the Translation Bureau, where he became familiar with the ideas of the Enlightenment. Although a product of the same intellectual milieu, Ziya Pasha's ideas diverged from those of Namık Kemal in many aspects. Unlike Kemal, who spent most of his life in exile, Ziya Pasha occupied important positions during his long administrative career. He was also closely connected with the palace and identified himself with the imperial bureaucracy. These characteristics had a strong impact on his political thought, which was conservative in nature in comparison to Kemal's ideology. Unlike Kemal, Ziya Pasha approached the concept of liberty (*hürriyet*) with caution. Notwithstanding the fact that Ziya Pasha was convinced of the necessity of establishing a constitutional government in the Ottoman Empire, he defended the imperial prerogatives of the sultan. In his opinion, the causes of Ottoman decline had, to a large extent, been generated by the curtailment of the sultan's power *vis-à-vis* the grand vizierate.<sup>12</sup> Another important thinker of the Young Ottoman group was Ali Suavi (1839–1878). Suavi was born in Istanbul and after graduating from the *Rüşdiye* (Ottoman secondary school) he pursued his education in religious sciences and became quite knowledgeable in this field. Unlike Namık Kemal (1840–1888) who advocated a representative regime based on popular sovereignty, for Ali Suavi the only sovereignty was a divine one, the sovereignty of God. He believed that it would be ridiculous to replace God's sovereignty by that of the people. Like Kemal, Ali Suavi subscribed to the political ideas of the French thinker Montesquieu. According to Suavi, the political regime of Islam perfectly represented the monarchy described by Montesquieu in his *De l'esprit des lois*, rather than despotism. He argued that in Islam the sultan or caliph rules according to and is bound by the sacred *sharia* law and that they are not above the Law. Although he accepted the notion of

10 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 27.

11 Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of the Young Ottoman Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962, p.333. (hereafter cited as Mardin, *Genesis*) See also Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, pp. 27–29.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

the separation of powers, he believed that this separation already existed in the classical Ottoman system, giving the example of the *vali* (governor) and *qadi* (judge). Unlike Kemal, Suavi rejected the system of checks and balances. By basing his arguments on Kinalızade's theory, Suavi stated that "The counteraction of the different powers such as the judiciary and administrative" would not benefit the state since it is against the notion of the "unity of the imamate".<sup>13</sup> In one sense, Suavi's ideas are reminiscent of those of Said Halim Pasha, since both thinkers stated that sovereignty belonged only to God.

The ideas of the Young Ottoman thinkers found favorable reception with the statesmen of the Porte and the military commanders who decided to depose Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861–1876). The *coup d'état*, which took place on 30 May 1876, came as a reaction to the political and economic crises that had affected the empire for the previous five years. On the same day the kingmakers within the Porte bureaucracy, namely Midhat, Hüseyin Avni, Süleyman and Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pashas, placed Murad V (r. 30 May – 31 August 1876) on the throne in order to achieve their plan of establishing a constitutional regime.

Sultan Abdülaziz's policy of Pan-Islamism was expanded in a more systematic way by his successor Abdülhamid II. Much ink has been spilled about his Pan-Islamist policy, with numerous books, articles and pamphlets having been published on this subject by Muslim and Western scholars since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, the Pan-Islamist policy of Abdülhamid has remained controversial. There exist different views on this issue: some historians like Orhan Koloğlu and Caesar Farah do not accept the fact that Sultan Abdülhamid II had a well-defined pan-Islamic policy. This last view was defended by Jacob Landau, who argued that Pan-Islamism was the "Imperial Ideology" of the Hamidian Regime. Landau based his view on the vast body of literature by European writers, particularly French historians, who, during the reign of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) and shortly after his deposition in 1909, presented the Ottoman sultan and his government as the principal organizers of Pan-Islamic activities.<sup>14</sup> In their minds they saw their colonial lands and territories being invaded by a wave of Muslim crusades or, more accurately, "crescentades", whose objective was to incite Muslims to revolt against European rule and to destroy colonial empires. This view has been refuted by Engin Akarlı who argued, "Abdulhamid was realistic enough to know that the task of

<sup>13</sup> Mardin, *Genesis*, p. 368.

<sup>14</sup> A myriad of European writers, mostly French and British, produced this vast literature about Pan-Islamism. One of the best-known examples was Gabriel Charmes's *L'avenir de la Turquie – Le Panislamisme*, Paris: Calman-Levy, 1883.

protecting all Muslims was beyond the capacities of the Ottoman State. He hoped that at least Muslims living within Ottoman borders could be rallied around the common cause of self-protection.<sup>15</sup> According to Akarlı, if Abdülhamid “pretended to the leadership of all Muslims, that was only to foil foreign pressures on the Ottoman government by gaining leverage over European powers who had Muslim dominions.”<sup>16</sup> Reflecting Akarlı’s view, Caesar Farah also wrote in his article entitled “Reassessing Sultan Abdülhamid II’s Islamic policy” that “Abdülhamid preferred to use the sword of Islam like the sword of Damocles to frighten and intimidate his enemies, more specifically to scare off the vultures of imperial Christendom, rather than to combat them when his military power was far from adequate for the task.”<sup>17</sup> Farah also severely criticizes Jacob Landau for relying “predominantly on the assertions of Western writers”, whom he calls “Catholic religious fanatics and government officials who served largely as propagandists. In his seminal work *The Politicization of Islam*, Kemal Karpat thoroughly studied and explained the Islamist policy of Sultan Abdülhamid II. According to Karpat: “Sultan Abdulhamid developed and implemented his Islamism with two key purposes in his mind. His first goal was to achieve unity among Ottoman Muslims and thus prevent the fragmentation of his country into national territorial states.” His second purpose, added Karpat, was “to maintain peace at all costs.”<sup>18</sup> Again according to Karpat, “the Islamist policy of Abdülhamid speeded up, redirected and gave new content to Ottomanism.”<sup>19</sup>

After the reestablishment of the Constitution of 1876 in July 1908, the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bulgarian declaration of independence in October 1908 were considered at home as important failures that undermined the popularity of the constitutional government. Some conservative/popular Islamist, monarchist and anti-Unionist groups took advantage of this situation and tried to create political instability by organizing riots against the regime. On 6 and 7 October 1908, a conservative Muslim preacher gave sermons against the government and openly voiced the return of Hamidian absolutism. His name was Kör (blind) Ali. He marched to Yıldız Palace at the head of a crowd composed mainly of unemployed workers and asked to see

15 Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Problems of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics under Abdülhamid II (1876–1909): Origins and Solutions*, PhD diss., Princeton University, 1976, p. 60.

16 Ibid., p. 61.

17 Caesar Farah, “Reassessing Sultan Abdülhamid II’s Islamic Policy,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 14 (1995/1996), p. 192.

18 Karpat, *Politicization*, p. 308.

19 Ibid., p. 320.

the sultan. When Sultan Abdülhamid II appeared in the window, Kör Ali told him, “The nation wants a shepherd. There would be no flock without a shepherd, my sultan, and you should again lead the nation.”<sup>20</sup> He also demanded the closure of taverns, bars and theatres, the restoration of the *sharia* (Islamic law), the prohibition of photography and the forbidding of women to go out. He told the sultan not to worry, “Because,” he said, “angels and saints are acting in your favor.”<sup>21</sup> The sultan tried to appease the demonstrators by promising the restoration of the *sharia* and appealing to them to remain calm. On 8 October 1908 Kör Ali was arrested, put on trial and executed. The same day a pro-war meeting was organized in Beyazid Mosque. The real purpose of that meeting was to cause people to rally around the sultan and cause the postponement of elections, not to undermine national unity. The next step would be the suspension of the Constitution and the closure of Parliament, as happened in 1877 during the Russian War. Again on 8 October further demonstrations were organized by the Conservative Islamists, which turned into riots. The rioters attacked and destroyed the movie houses and places where *Karagöz* (traditional Turkish shadow theatre) was shown. The government reacted swiftly and severely, arresting the organizers of these demonstrations. This kind of political opposition by pro-Hamidian Islamist groups became a real concern for the Young Turks. An even more important political event was the insurrection against the CUP of the First Army of the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul. The main instigators were the Liberal Union led by Prince Sabahaddin (1877–1948) and an Islamist party called *İttihad-i Muhammadi* (Muhammadan Union) established by a Cypriot dervish, Vahdeti. Nevertheless, we should be careful not to label Vahdeti as an absolute monarchist, since he advocated constitutional Islamism in his writings. Vahdeti (1869–1909) was the chief editor of the *Volkan* newspaper, which was the mouthpiece of the Muhammadan Union. The First Army rebellion was immediately quashed by the Third Ottoman Army, which marched from Selanik (Thessaloniki) to the capital and re-established the CUP government on 24 April. Three days later Sultan Abdülhamid II was deposed.

Islamism was the most important political movement of the Second Constitutional Period and it was represented in the intellectual debate by several thinkers who wrote profusely in many Islamist journals on numerous subjects, from family law and foreign policy, to women’s rights and education. These

20 Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, Istanbul: İmge Yayınları, 1993 pp. 153–154. Also see Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991 vol. 1 part 2, p. 126

21 Ibid, p. 154.

Islamist thinkers expressed their concern about the gradual Westernization and secularization of the Ottoman society. To these writers this Westernization was actually more dangerous and threatening to Ottoman Muslims than a military invasion of the empire. In their writings, Islamist thinkers analyzed the social, economic and political issues of the empire and offered solutions. Although representing different viewpoints within Islamist ideology, they all agreed that Islamization was the only solution to the problems that existed in Ottoman society.

The Islamist intellectuals of the period can be divided into two groups: conservative-traditionalists and modernists. The first group was composed mainly of members of the *ulema* who had in the past enjoyed connections with the Hamidian regime. After the proclamation of the Constitution they organized themselves into a society called *Cemiyet-i İlmîye-i İslamiye* (Society of Islamic Scholars). This society was founded in September 1908 and started to disseminate their version of Islamist ideas through a monthly periodical entitled *Beyan-ül Hak* (The Statement of Truth). The reformist Islamist group was represented by their periodical *Sırat-ı Müstakim*. That journal served as the mouthpiece for the Modernist-Islamist intellectuals of the empire. Writers and thinkers such as Mehmed Şemseddin (Günaltay) (1883–1961) expounded their views there. Compared to other conservative Islamist thinkers, Günaltay appeared to be perhaps the most progressive Islamist intellectual of this period.

According to the Islamist thinkers of the Second Constitutional Period, the rulers and statesmen wrongly believed that the adoption of European laws and institutions would stop the decline of the Ottoman Empire and ensure its welfare and progress. On the contrary, these thinkers believed that the adopted laws are designed for nations that are socially and culturally very different from the Ottomans, therefore far from benefiting the Ottoman society, they will harm it. These ideas were first voiced by Young Ottoman thinkers like Namık Kemal (1840–1888), Ziya Pasha (1825–1880) and Ali Suavi (1839–1878) who severely criticized the *Tanzimat* reforms. This view reflected the ideas of the French thinker Montesquieu, who wrote in his famous *Spirit of the Laws* that “the successful laws and institutions are the ones created according to the social and cultural conditions of the societies which they are going to apply.”<sup>22</sup> Without doubt the Islamist writers of the Second Constitutional Period, like their Young Ottoman predecessors, were familiar with the ideas of the French enlightenment thinkers. After stating that the Westernizing reforms of the *Tanzimat* Period (1839–1876) completely undermined the traditional Ottoman

---

22 Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, baron de, *De l'esprit des lois*, Paris: Garnier, 1973, pp. 8–9.

system and in fact accelerated the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the Islamist thinkers instead advocated a thorough and complete Islamization of the Ottoman state and society. According to these writers that would be the only way to empower the state and cure society's ills. To them Islamization meant constructing the Ottoman state according to the pristine and genuine principles of Islam and applying these rules to society.

According to the Islamist thinkers, Islam is a rational religion; the precepts of the Quran are rational and have to be interpreted in light of science. For them the principles enshrined in the Quran are not immutable but ought to be interpreted according to the needs of modern society. They stated that there was no place in Islam for superstitions. Islam, they said, is also revolutionary; it is against the oppression of the people by despotic rulers. An Islamic regime does not accept caste or class structure. Islamic society is not divided into hereditary social classes like Western society. Every individual has equal rights before the law.<sup>23</sup> That is why in the Islamic world people did not have the bloody social revolutions that shaped European history. Islamic regime is based on equality, fraternity and liberty. These principles were adopted in the West more than one thousand year after Islam and at the cost of devastating and murderous civil wars and revolutions. The principles of the French Revolution of 1789 were already preached by Islam when Europe was living in the Dark Ages.

According to the Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period, Islam is also a social religion. It not only preaches religious precepts but also lays down social principles to construct a just, equal, prosperous and peaceful society. In Islam, religion is inseparable from politics. There is no division between the spiritual and the temporal like in the West. *Meşveret* (consultation in a council or assembly) was central to the Islamic political conditions of the Ottoman Empire (theory) and was therefore considered crucial by Islamist intellectuals. Nevertheless, most of the Islamist thinkers were opposed to the Constitution of 1876, which they considered a bad copy of European constitutions and unsuitable for the Ottoman Empire. Said Halim Pasha also criticized political parties and the Constitution of 1876.

According to Said Halim, "this constitution was designed by the dignitaries of the *Porte* as a means to check the power of the sultan and to curb his absolutism."<sup>24</sup> He also acknowledged that the Ottoman constitution of 1876

23 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*. p. 149–150, 156, 182.

24 Said Halim Pasha, *Buhranlarımız*, İstanbul: Şems Matbaası, 1335–1338, p. 1 (hereafter cited as Said Halim Pasha, *Buhranlarımız*). See also the most recent edition of the same work, *Buhranlarımız ve Son Eserleri*, edited by Ertuğrul Düzdağ, İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1993,

“provides to the people of the Ottoman Empire, which stretches out to the deserts of Arabia and the majority of whose population lives a primitive life under the absolute authority of a religious or tribal chief, such extensive rights that even the most advanced nations of our time do not possess.”<sup>25</sup> This argument has little validity since there is a quasi-complete consensus among scholars that the Constitution of 1876 was far from being a liberal one. In reality, many of the provisions of this constitution conferred large powers on the sultan and left parliament with only limited rights, which were also subject to sanction by the monarch. On this issue Mehmed Akif (1873–1936) agreed with Said Halim Pasha, stating that the Constitution of 1876 as well as the political parties did not suit the realities of the Ottoman Empire. In Said Halim’s view, the role of political parties in Islamic societies was bound to be different from that played by political parties in the Western world. He argued that in the West parties served the interests of different social classes and had as their goal the establishment of the domination of one social class over another, thereby subverting the existing social order whereas in Islamic societies, their function was to preserve the social institutions created by Islam. Thus, he asserted, political parties in Muslim countries do not play a significant role in political life like their counterparts in Western countries. To him, this characteristic of the Muslim regime constituted a clear indication of its superiority over its Western counterpart, for with no need to challenge or alter established social principles, the role of political parties would consequently be minimal. In Said Halim’s opinion, political institutions should be in harmony with the social and ethical principles that prevailed in a society. Therefore, Said Halim reflected that whereas Islam advocated egalitarianism, solidarity and social justice, concepts that he believed represented a true democracy, Western political principles advocated the defense of personal and group interests, concerns that Said Halim believed to be less mature. Said Halim therefore concluded that in an ideal Islamic society political parties would have to be different from their counterparts in the West if they wanted to be successful.

Traditional Islamists of the Second Constitutional Period (1908–1920) were mainly members of the ulema who had in the past had connections with the Abdülhamid’s regime. In the aftermath of the Revolution they formed a society called *Cemiyet-i İlmîye-i İslamiye* (Society of Islamic Scholars). The Islamist thinkers of the Second Constitutional period do not present a united or mono-

---

pp. 5–6 (hereafter cited as Said Halim Paşa, *Buhranlarımız ve Son Eserleri*). See also, Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 21.

25 Said Halim Pasha, *Buhranlarımız*, pp. 14–15. Said Halim Pasha *Buhranlarımız ve Son eserleri*. pp. 18–19. See also, Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 21

lithic bloc; they had different approaches to the problems of the late Ottoman society. These thinkers expounded their views in various newspapers and journals. The traditionalist Islamist thinkers who rallied around *Beyan-ül Hak* defended a more conservative view of Islam. One leading writer of that journal, Mustafa Sabri (1869–1954), presents ambiguous opinions on the interpretation of Islam; while openly declaring that women are not equal to men in Islam he welcomes the Constitutional regime and wrote in favor of a parliamentary system in Islam, saying that the real Islamic regime could only be parliamentary.

Another prominent Islamist thinker, Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım (1858–1920) also expresses ambivalent opinions; Kazım wrote that women should receive a formal education, but nevertheless limited this to high-school, believing that higher education was not necessary for women whose main concern should be to prepare themselves to be a good mother.<sup>26</sup> Musa Kazım also defends the wearing of the veil (*tesettür*) in order for Muslim women to shield themselves from the aggressiveness of men. Equally he asserts the importance of polygamy for preventing men from engaging in illicit and extra-marital sexual relations. Nevertheless he also accepts that polygamy must be bound to some conditions.<sup>27</sup> Despite his conservative opinions on family and gender issues, Musa Kazım seems more liberal than his colleague Mustafa Sabri (1869–1954). Regarding the political system Musa Kazım, like Mustafa Sabri, supports a parliamentary regime. Moreover, like Mustafa Sabri, Musa Kazım asserted that the yardstick to measure a civilization should not be based merely on material progress but also on moral and religious achievement. Musa Kazım wrote and published extensively, and in these writings he advocated the reform of the traditional *madrassa* education by adopting Western sciences and including them in the curriculum and in particular he pointed out the importance of the study of European philosophy. The multi-faceted character of Musa Kazım's thought is demonstrated by his adherence to seemingly conflicting ideologies. He was a member of both the freemason lodge and the Naqshbandi religious Sufi order. Like Ahmed Naim (Baban) (1872–1934), Musa Kazım vehemently condemned ethnic nationalism among the Muslim peoples and he asserted that the only nation for Muslims was the *ummah* that was based on Muslim brotherhood. Although Musa Kazım asserted that the Quran was the only Constitution for any Islamic state, he nevertheless endorsed the re-establishment of the 1876 Ottoman Constitution since, he argued, it contained the basic principles enshrined in the Quran. Ahmed Naim Baban (1872–1934) was an

26 Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi, *Külliyat, Dini Ve İctimai Makaleler*, edited by Ferhat Koca, Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2002 p. 321 (hereafter cited as Kazım, *Makaleler*).

27 Kazım, *Makaleler*, pp. 325–328.

Ottoman intellectual of Kurdish descent. In his writings Naim fiercely criticized ethnic nationalism, whether Turkish, Kurdish, Albanian or Arab. He considered ethnic nationalism a deadly disease which can destroy the Muslim unity, therefore extremely dangerous for the Islamic world. He wrote a well-known treatise entitled *İslamda-Dava-yı Kavmiye* (Ethnic Nationalism in Islam) to defend Islamic unity against ethnic nationalism.<sup>28</sup>

The place of Said-i Nursi (1876–1960) in the Islamist current of the Second Constitutional Period is critically important. Unlike most of the Islamist intellectuals of the late Ottoman Empire, Said-i Nursi was born and raised in the remote eastern Anatolian provinces (Kurdistan) of the Ottoman Empire; and again unlike his contemporary colleagues his first language is was not Turkish but Kurdish. He was not a product of the modernized and Western-modeled Ottoman *Tanzimat* educational system or of the Istanbul medreses but of the Kurdish medreses of the east. His contribution to the Ottoman political-ideological debate remained very important and quite different from the majority of the Islamist thinkers of his time. In his homeland of eastern Anatolia, Said-i Nursi stood against the powerful local sheikhs and criticized their understanding of Islam, which according to him undermined the unity of the *umma* by imposing different interpretations of the religion on those who lived under their authority. He urged Kurds in eastern Anatolia to liberate their minds from the influence of local folk Islam. During the summer months of 1910, Said travelled through eastern Anatolia to educate the local people with his ideas.

Like Musa Kazım, Bediüzzaman Said-i Nursi considered unlimited and undisciplined freedom as chaos, and like Namık Kemal he asserted that everyone in society had the right to advance, prosper and free themselves from the shackles of ignorance and servitude and to be protected in freedom (in a parliamentary regime). Said-i Nursi believed strongly that it was only in freedom (in a democratic regime) that Islam could flourish and Muslim societies could progress. Another important figure of the late Ottoman and early Republican eras was İskilipli Mehmed Atif (1876–1926) who, unlike his Unionist colleague Musa Kazım, became an active opponent of the CUP regime. Atif became a prominent Islamist writer as his articles appeared in both traditionalist *Beyan-ul Haq* and modernist *Sirat-i Mustakim*. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 Mehmed Atif became a fierce opponent of the Kemalist regime and started to criticize the secularizing reforms. The leaders of the young republic did not tolerate this

---

28 For Ahmed Naim Baban's life see İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 363–364. See also Ahmet Şeyhun, "Ahmet Naim's Criticism of the Turkists (İslamda-Dava-yı Kavmiye)," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 25, 92008: 245–253.

opposition and considered him politically dangerous. Mehmed Atif was accused of anti-reformist activities and executed in February 1926 after a brief trial. İzmirli İsmail Hakkı (1868–1946) was also an important figure of the Islamist intellectuals of the Second Constitutional Period. Unlike Ahmed Naim and Mehmed Atif he adopted a modernist approach in social and political issues adapted himself to the new intellectual milieu of the secularist Republican regime without much compromising his ideas. Likewise was Mehmed Ali Ayni who also continued his intellectual life under the republican regime. Like Günaltay, Mehmed Ali Ayni (1868–1945) belonged to the Turkish nationalist wing of the Islamists. Unlike many other Islamist intellectuals who became marginalized during the early republican era Ayni became a prominent figure. One of his most important contributions was his participation to the creation of the Turkish Historical Thesis which became one of the intellectual foundation stone of the new Kemalist Republican regime. Another important figure of the late Ottoman and early Republican eras was Mehmed Seyyid Çelebizâde (1873–1925) who distinguished from other Islamist intellectuals of that period by being a prominent jurist. An expert of Islamic law Çelebizâde taught that subject in many educational institutions. In 1923, following the proclamation of the republic he was elected to the Parliament. Later he was appointed as the Minister of Justice. His speech in the Parliament against the necessity of the Caliphate in the new regime helped the government to overcome the Islamist opposition and eventually abolish the Caliphate. Mehmed Seyyid Çelebizâde later participated to the preparation of the first Constitution of the Republic of Turkey in 1924. All these activities rose his star in the early years of the Republic. Nevertheless later he advocated that the new Turkish Civil Code should be based on the reformed sharia. This proposal was met by strong opposition by his colleagues in the government. Mehmed Seyyid was forced to resign. Şehbenderzade Ahmed Hilmi (1865–1914) was another interesting figure of the Second Constitutional Period. An Islamist intellectual with Sufi inclinations he was a prolific writer and a prominent publisher Hilmi although joined the Young Turk Movement during Hamidian regime became later a fierce opponent of the CUP and its increasingly authoritarian policy until his sudden death in 1914. A member of the *ulema* Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi (1878–1942) was elected to the Ottoman Parliament after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. He had already a brilliant career of teaching as medrese instructor. He served also as *qadi* in various courts. After the end of the First World War, Hamdi again entered politics. This time he served as the Minister of Pious Foundations (*Evkaf Nazırı*) in the cabinets of the collaborationist Damad Ferid Pasha. After the War of liberation (1919–1922) he was put to trial for high treason, but he was acquitted. Later the Turkish National Assembly commissioned from him an ex-

tensive work of Quranic exegesis. Today Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır is recognized as one of the greatest experts in Islamic sciences in particular Quranic exegesis.

One of the most interesting thinkers of the late Ottoman and early Republican eras was Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay. Muslims, declared Mehmed Şemseddin, should liberate themselves from superstitious belief and practices in order to reach the genuine Islam as preached by Prophet Muhammad.<sup>29</sup> Mehmed Şemseddin identified Islamic religion with reason and science. Like Said Halim Pasha, Musa Kazım saw the cause of the decline of the Islamic world as the adoption of many non-Islamic values and practices throughout the ages and the corruption of the pristine Islam by these cultural imports. He also accused the ignorant *ulema* of distorting the true religion. Mehmed Şemseddin was categorized as Turkist-Islamist by Hilmi Ziya Ülken.<sup>30</sup> In fact it was only after 1922 that Mehmed Şemseddin began to adopt the Turkist discourse and shift his political ideas from Islamism to Turkism, when it became clear that this would become the dominant ideology of the new Turkish Republic.

Ottoman Islamist intellectuals were mostly modernist. They wanted to adopt only the material aspects of Western civilization and leave the cultural aspects. The Islamist thinkers of the Second Constitutional Period were certainly influenced and inspired by the ideas of their precursors, the Young Ottoman thinkers of the 1860s and 1870s, but they were also influenced by non-Ottoman Islamist modernist thinkers such as Jamal ad Din al-Afghani (1839–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Rashid Rida (1865–1935). Al-Afghani visited the Ottoman Empire twice, and in fact died in Istanbul while being hosted by Sultan Abdülhamid II. A renowned Pan-Islamist who urged Muslims to unite against Western Imperialism, al-Afghani also encouraged Muslims to study the modern exact sciences and to reform their education system. His friend and pupil Muhammad Abduh continued the legacy of his master by focusing on education. Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), one of the most prominent and influential Muslim modernist thinkers of that era, had first embarked on his intellectual and political career as a disciple and collaborator of Jamal-ad-Din al-Afghani. In Paris in 1884, together they published *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa* (The Firm Bond), a short lived but famous Pan-Islamist journal that played a crucial role in the awakening of Muslim consciousness and the spread of Pan-Islamist ideas in Muslim lands. While they shared the same goals and ideals, Abduh proposed different methods of emancipation from his mentor. Instead

29 See the works of Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay, *Zulmetten Nura*, stanbul: Evkaf-ı İslamiye Matbaası, 1341 AH, and *Hurafetten Hakikate* İstanbul: Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, 1332 AH.

30 Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiyede Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, Konya: Selçuk Yayınları, 1966.

of al-Afghani's revolutionary activism, Abduh advocated gradual reform in order to heal the ills of Muslim societies and reverse their inner decay. According to Abduh, Islam is a rational religion; indeed, the Quran urges man to investigate Allah's creation by using his intellect. For Abduh, the real Muslim is one who thinks and acts according to reason. In his view, Muslims had generally accepted that in case of disagreement between rational and traditional explanations of a given matter, precedence would be given to the one based on reason. Abduh wrote that Islamic teaching had for centuries been kept under restraint by the ulema, who relied heavily on *taqlid* (following the established practice). In his *Risala*, writing on the commentary on Chapter II, Verse 243 of the Quran, Abduh accused "those who believe in *taqlid*" of being very far "from the guidance of the *Kur'an*" and reproached the ulema for "infecting the hearts of the masses with *taklid*."<sup>31</sup> Abduh refuted the reasoning of the vindicators of the *taqlid*, who argued that only members of the *Salaf* or early generation of Muslims were able to understand the true meaning of Quranic principles correctly and that later generations should therefore follow them without question. This argument, asserted Abduh, contradicted the real message of Islam, which "turned aside the hearts of men from exclusive attachment to customs and practices of the fathers, which had been handed down from father to son."<sup>32</sup> Abduh stated that, "Islam attributed folly and levity to those who accept blindly the words of their predecessors."<sup>33</sup>

The writings of these Islamist intellectuals are not only crucial for students of Ottoman and Middle Eastern history but also to political scientists studying the current politics of Modern Turkey, since the ideas expounded by these intellectuals constitute the blueprint for the Islamist-oriented political movements and parties that have been present in the Turkish political life since the 1950s. The Islamic-oriented conservative political movements and parties in modern Turkey are directly inspired by the ideas of these writers, and consider Islamization as a viable social and political alternative to the secular regime that dominated Turkish politics after 1925.

This reader constitutes an important contribution to the study of late Ottoman intellectual history and to the field of Islamic studies in particular, since it makes available important primary sources to scholars and students who are unable to read the Ottoman and Turkish languages. All translations are provided by the author.

---

31 Charles Adams. *Islam and Modernism in Egypt. A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad Abduh*, New York: Russel and Russel, 1933, pp. 130–131 (hereafter cited as Adams, *Modernism*).

32 Adams, *Modernism*, p.132.

33 *Ibid.*, p.132

## Mehmed Akif Ersoy (1873–1936)

### Life

Mehmed Akif was born in Istanbul in 1873. His father, Mehmed Tahir Efendi, was an Albanian émigré who became an instructor at the Fatih *Medrese*; his mother was from a Bukharan family. At the age of four, the young Akif began his education at the neighboring school of Emir Bukhari. He later studied at the Fatih *Rüşdiye* (Ottoman junior high school) and at the high school division of the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (School of Political Sciences). Following his father's death and the loss of the family house in a fire, he was unable to pursue his higher education in the advanced division of the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*. Instead, he registered at the veterinary boarding school, which offered free tuition, from which he graduated in 1893 with distinction. That same year, he began his career as a veterinary inspector and served in Anatolia, Macedonia and Hejaz, after which he taught at the Halkalı School of Agriculture in 1906 and at the School of Farming Machinery in 1907. In 1908, Akif was appointed as professor of literature at the *Darülfünûn* (university). Following the reinstatement of the Turkish Constitution that same year, Akif joined the editorial board of the famous Islamist journal *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, and began publishing his writings there. After the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913, Akif resigned from his position in the Ministry of Agriculture, and again travelled to Hejaz and also to Egypt. After the outbreak of the First World War, he was invited by the German government to assess the condition of Muslim prisoners of war in Germany. In the interim, he was employed by the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (the Ottoman secret service) and sent to Shammar on a diplomatic mission. After the end of the First World War and at the beginning of the Greek occupation of Western Anatolia in 1919, he joined the nationalist resistance. In the town of Balıkesir, in north-western Anatolia, he began his sermons calling upon the public to resist the enemy. On 9 May 1920, he travelled to Ankara to participate in the national liberation movement. Later that year, on 25 December, the collaborationist Ottoman government dismissed him from his teaching position in *Dar-ul Hikmet* (Islamic University) in Istanbul. During the war of national liberation he served in Parliament in Ankara as a deputy of the Burdur province. In that same period, he also went on a mission to Konya to call upon the rebels not to revolt against the Ankara government but instead to join the nationalist cause. He also gave many sermons in the Nasrullah Mosque, in the northern Anatolian

town of Kastamonu, in support of the nationalist resistance. After his return to Ankara, he lived in the *Taceddin Dergahı* (sufi lodge), where he penned the words that were to officially become the Turkish national anthem on 12 March 1921. In 1922, Mehmed Akif was appointed to the Council of Islamic Studies and Publications. He returned to Istanbul in 1923 following the victory of the national liberation movement. Nevertheless, disappointed and disheartened by the Westernizing reforms undertaken by the Kemalist regime, he decided to leave Turkey for Egypt upon the invitation of Abbas Halim Pasha, brother of Said Halim Pasha. Akif returned to Istanbul every summer until 1926, but as the secularizing reforms of the Ankara government continued at full speed, he then decided to remain in Egypt. He was a fierce opponent and well-known critic of the Westernization and secularization of the state and society, the path now followed by the new Turkish regime. In Egypt, Mehmed Akif taught Turkish literature at the Egyptian University in Cairo and worked on a translation of the Quran. In 1935, he became seriously ill; afraid of dying far from his homeland, he returned to Turkey in the early summer of 1936. He died on 27 December 1936 in Istanbul, and was buried next to his beloved friend Ahmed Naim Baban.<sup>1</sup>

## Ideas

The following writings are taken from an article written by Mehmed Akif that appeared in the Islamist periodical *Sırat-ı Müstakim*, I. The article was also published in Latin transcription by İsmail Kara in *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi* (Islamist Thought in Turkey) vol. 1. pp. 405–410.

### *The Importance of Work in Islam*

In this world, only those nations that have liberated themselves from apathy and are made up of industrious and resourceful citizens will progress quickly and leave other nations behind. Therefore, it is only by embracing hard work and an industrious lifestyle that a society can attain modern levels of civilization. Some social and political writers argue that religion prevents people from adopting such a productive lifestyle, causing languor and indolence among people. Here, I am going to argue just the opposite. Islam, far from being the cause of laziness among its followers, encourages and in fact orders them to work hard in this world. The prophet of Islam says, “You have to work for the

---

1 İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, Istanbul: Kitabevi, pp. 401–403 (hereafter cited as Kara, *Türkiyede*).

affairs of this world as if you will live forever and work for the affairs of the Hereafter as if you will die tomorrow.”

We must recognize that the world is a place of struggle. Here, the active individual will defeat the passive and will dominate him. Therefore, we should not neglect this world. As a religion, Islam contains many rules and principles that order Muslims to adopt a very productive life. The Prophet of Islam says that those who toil to earn their livelihood are like those who fight for the sake of God [*sebilullah*].<sup>2</sup> Islam condemns those who refuse to work as being those who reject their religion. Do you know the importance of wealth in Islam? In fact, one of the main pillars of a Muslim’s life is prosperity and progress. Again, the Prophet Muhammad said, “My community [*ummah*] will witness such a time that in order to practice their religion as well as providing for their livelihood, they will need money.” Yes, today we live in such a period that, in order to live according to our religion, we need to be prosperous. There is no doubt that if the Prophet of Islam had despised and rejected material wealth and prosperity, no rich man would have been found among his companions.

**This following piece on nationalism is taken from Mehmed Akif’s sermon *Beyazit Kürsüsünden Vaaz* (Sermon from the Beyazit Pulpit). It was published in İsmail Kara’s *Türkiye’de İslamcılık Düşüncesi* vol. 1 pp. 486–492**

### *Nationalism*

O Muslims, O those who believe in the religion of Allah: God and his Prophet have many commands for you. If you follow these commandments properly, you will be happy and prosperous in this world and the next. In all of these commandments there is life for you. In the Quran, the mighty God says, “All of you, seize the rope of Allah, His religion.” Never stray from the principles of the Quran and never become divided. If you become divided or separated from each other, if you turn against each other, you will be destroyed. In the Ottoman Empire, there are many Muslim ethnic groups: Albanian, Kurdish, Circassian, Bosnian, Arab, Turkish and Laz. And what is the common tie that unites all these different ethnicities? It is Islam. Until today, we lived together as brothers and sisters for centuries. The Turk did not even know what Turkishness was, and the Arab never mentioned his or her Arabness, because nationalism has no place in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad said, “Those who pursue a nationalist cause are not one of us; those who fight for nationalism and who

2 Mehmed Akif (Sadi), “Say ve Amelin Nazar-ı İslamdaki Yeri,” *Sirat-ı Müstakim* I: 170–172. Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 405–410.

die for nationalism are not one of us.”<sup>3</sup> Others, namely Christian nations, can adopt nationalism and can live with it, but we cannot. If we lose Islam, we lose everything. The main cause of our catastrophe today is our separation from each other because of nationalism. In the last four years, we have suffered greatly because of nationalism. Our divisiveness serves only the interest of our enemies, who are plotting to divide us in order to occupy our country. In our heyday, the Ottoman army had reconnaissance scout units, called *akincis* [raiders], that penetrated the enemy territory, first to collect information and then to sabotage enemy positions in order to facilitate the invasion of that country by the main armed forces. Today, Westerners use the same tactic but in a different way. By establishing foreign schools and other missionary institutions, they undermine the unity of the Muslim *ummah* because these foreign schools and institutions spread divisive nationalist ideas among Muslims. The European imperialist powers used that tactic and policy first in *Al-Andalus* [Muslim Spain] and later in India and Algeria, and now in Iran. It was exactly the same policy of divide and rule. O Muslim community, you must awake. If you do not, the last Islamic state will also collapse.

### *European Civilization*

You must certainly know that if our brethren in Russia or those who live in India and elsewhere under British and French rule today can still preserve their religion and not be forced to convert to Christianity, it is thanks to the existence of this last Islamic empire, which, despite its weak and precarious condition, still manages to exist. If this Islamic sultanate and caliphate were to disintegrate or cease to exist, the whole of Islam would disappear.<sup>4</sup>

O Muslims, until now I have always thought we should be more gentle and kind toward foreigners [European Christians]. What was the origin of this sympathetic feeling toward them? Well, is it not true that from childhood, we have grown up constantly hearing about European civilization, European science, European justice and European public opinion? We also hear frequently about their excellent ethics and social qualities. Those of us who know foreign languages read and learn directly from their literature and from their works in the fields of social and natural sciences, while others read these same works in translation. We have also judged Europeans' morality and humanity on the basis of their scientific and scholarly works. That was a great mistake, because there existed an immense gap between those works and the character of these people. From seeing and admiring their civilization, I also mistakenly believed

3 Mehmed Akif, “Beyazid Kürsüsünden Vaaz,” *Sebil ul Reşad* 1x: 230. Kara, *Türkiyede*, p. 488.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 490.

in the moral superiority of Europeans. But when I travelled in Asia and Africa, I witnessed the behavior of European colonialists toward the native peoples in their colonies. Europeans rule these peoples with insults and cruelty; the native peoples suffer under the worst kinds of slavery and oppression. One day, I remember the venerable Egyptian Prince Abbas Halim Pasha reporting to me his conversation with the famous Islamic scholar, Hoca Kadri Efendi of Herzegovina. When the Pasha asked Kadri Efendi his impression of Europeans, since the latter had lived many years in France, Kadri Efendi replied: “O Pasha, these people have many good things, indeed they have a very many good, useful, and beneficial things; but nevertheless we should also know that all of these good things exist only in their books.”<sup>5</sup>

Yes, indeed, as expressed by Hoca Kadri Efendi, no one can deny the progress of Europeans in civilization, science, and industry. But one should never measure the humanity of these people by the level of their civilization. Yes, we should adopt their science and scholarship, but we should not believe in them completely. Europeans nurture an ancestral enmity toward Muslims; an enmity so deep and hostile that there is no way of soothing it.

As you know, the nation that profited the most from our entry into the World War is Germany. I am not going to discuss here whether or not it was a mistake to enter into that war; that is beyond my knowledge and authority. The fact is we entered the war on the side of the Germans; we offered hundreds of thousands of victims, or martyrs [*şehid*], to the cause; millions of liras were spent. Given that, how should the Germans have comported themselves toward us? One would expect them to embrace us as their loyal former ally, and that all German writers and journalists would support us in their publications and sympathize with us. Alas, nothing of the sort. I visited Germany during the first year of the war. One German government official told me: “You should write articles explaining the enlightened and progressive aspects of the Islamic religion, which we would translate into German and publish in our newspapers, in order to inform the public. Because,” he said, “the Catholic members of our parliament are severely critical of our government’s alliance with you, since they consider you nothing but a savage and barbarian people.” That official was correct because, according to German public opinion, Islam was savagery and Muslims were savages. Their journalists, novelists, and especially the so-called Orientalists – those who claim to know oriental languages, oriental scholarship and literature, oriental customs and habits – had, for centuries, poisoned European public opinion against us, so that no mutual sympathy between them and us was possible.

---

5 Ibid., p. 498.

When our enemies [the British Army] won Jerusalem from us toward the end of the First World War, it had a powerful effect on the course of the war. Since the Germans and Austrians were our allies during the war, we naturally expected that they also would be afflicted by the loss of Jerusalem to the British. On the contrary, however, in the Austrian capital of Vienna, townspeople rejoiced at the event, celebrating it by decorating and illuminating their city. The Austrian government had a very difficult time banning and putting an end to the celebrations of the Viennese.<sup>6</sup>

We generally consider Europeans and Americans to be irreligious people. Let me tell you the truth: if there is a country of the world that is the least religious, it is our country. Look! Although today is Friday, very few people are found here, in one of the most popular mosques in the city of Kastamonu. In Berlin, which is today one of the most modern and advanced cities of the world, churches are completely full. And do not think that churchgoers in Berlin are only from the lower classes; on the contrary, they are mostly from the upper classes, bourgeoisie and intellectuals. In England, if you do not obtain your food and provisions on Saturday, you will not be able to find a single store that is open on Sunday from which to buy food on Sunday. Westerners are very religious, unlike us.<sup>7</sup>

Europeans raise their children by inculcating in them nationalist and religious ideas from childhood. Their education is tainted with xenophobic ideas. Children in the West are taught to show respect and love only toward people of their own ethnicity, color and religion. Therefore, it would be impossible to expect from them any sympathetic feelings toward Orientals, in particular toward Muslims. Now you see how we are raised and how they are raised. Nevertheless, this understanding of Europeans should never prevent us from studying and learning the scholarship and sciences developed in the West. Otherwise, we would unwisely allow ourselves to remain backward and underdeveloped, thus rendering our survival as an independent nation almost impossible.

In Central Asia, Islam has completely degenerated under the corrupt influence of local customs and lost its pristine qualities. The lands of Bukhara and Samarkand, which, in the past, gave birth to men such as Ibn Sina, and where the best observatory in the world was built, has sunk to the most infamous degradation where only ignorance and immorality rules. The person responsible for this situation is the local *ulema*, who opposes every beneficial action as *bidat* [impious innovation]. Muslims must emulate the Japanese in order to

---

6 Kara, *Türkiyede*, p. 500.

7 Ibid.

achieve a “modern civilization.” Indeed the Japanese have been able to apply Islamic principles more effectively than Muslims because they have cultivated high virtues, such as righteousness, courage and diligence. In fact, Islam has prevailed in Japan under the guise of Buddhism. Muslims must stay united in the face of European imperialist aggression and not adopt ethnic nationalism, which for Islamdom is potentially as destructive as an earthquake. The nationalist trends among Albanians, Arabs and Turks are divisive for Muslim unity.

Wake up O Muslims! Wake up and unite, renounce your ethnic separatism; at least take a lesson from the fates of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, all lost for Islam. They [the Western powers] are also dividing Iran now! Otherwise your destiny will be the same: you will lose your independence and your country, the last of Islam will be overrun by the enemy.

The afflictions of the Muslim world were caused by the disparity between the intellectuals and the masses. The Muslim world could not develop by following the European path of progress. Every nation has a different path to follow in the course of human evolution.

I do not understand how, instead of being firmly united by Islam, the idea of the separatism entered into your mind? Is it the devil that put the idea of nationalism in your mind? Nationalism is nothing but an earthquake that would undermine and destroy the Islamic unity which has kept together so many ethnicities and nations so different from each other. To forget this reality is an eternal mistake. This Ottoman nation cannot progress with Albanian nationalism or Arabism. The most recent policy, Turkism is also condemned to failure. The creator [God] made all of you members of a single family. If you continue with this mentality and nurture ethnic nationalism you will lose your country to foreigners. Our ancestors have always said that a fortress can only be conquered from the inside. Alas our nation is incapable of understanding this. Not only one but many Muslim countries were conquered. The enemy cannot enter a country before dissension enters it. Even if you only look at the recently-occupied Muslim countries, let alone the former Muslim states, we see Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria: they are all gone. Moreover they are now partitioning Iran. In fact this is completely normal as it is the law of the survival of the fittest. Only the most developed and advanced nations will survive. This is a divine law. A civilized Europe would swallow in three pieces a people divided by party politics. O Muslims wake up, for the sake of God; otherwise you will wake to the strong sound of church bells ringing. When Iran was collapsing none of you showed any reaction. At least you should be embarrassed in front of your prophet. The Prophet Muhammad cared for every single Muslim. O People wake up. I am afraid that the night of penitence will soon come. Neither the steamboats and trains of the West as symbols of the progress nor the sound

of guns were enough to wake you up. Who is going to wake you up; will it be the blowing of Israfil's horn? Please pay attention; the situation of the country is becoming bleak. O Muslims please rise; the times are critical. Only God knows, but I fear that the near future will be bloody. You are the last hope for Islam and you should therefore resist the aggression of the Imperialist West. If peace still prevails it is thanks to the strength of your army and the efforts of the government; but this situation cannot last long. Since the army is formed by recruited citizens, it can not stay immune to the chaotic situation of the nation. If the situation of the country does not improve the military barracks will become houses and the army will be divided like the nation. After that the enemy would easily invade this holy land by taking advantage of that civil strife. This land is the homeland of the *Enbiya* [Prophets], it is the fortress of the martyrs; God protects even the single ruined tomb [*türbe*] here. This land is full of martyrs, and blood will come out if you squeeze the plants. If this miserable generation loses this homeland it will be forever disgraced in both worlds. Because if this land is lost there will be no other homeland for you. The one who squanders his inheritance will be chased from every door. Your ancestors founded this state while they were nomadic. Do you want them to see you as a vagrant and wanderer? If this empire collapses your situation will be disastrous and very ugly. To understand and appreciate the value of your independence, just look to the gloomy situation of the *izmihlal* [decline, collapse]. It would be as though the land were devastated by an earthquake, with entire families destitute, hungry and homeless, exposed to the abuse and depredations of the hordes of base invaders who would seek to exploit your weakness and despoil your honor. You would in vain search for a mosque in which to pray. Your places of worship would be made into opera and other entertainment places, or at best into churches. The minarets would be bell towers and crosses would be placed on top of the buildings. The new owners of your land will sully your mosques with their dirty feet and disrespect the sanctity of the places of worship with their obscenity. When you lose your country you will be reduced to begging for your survival. Your situation is reminiscent of what happened to the Muslims of Al-Andalus in today's Spain. After losing his kingdom [to the Catholic Spaniards] the last sultan of Al-Andalus started to cry; then his mother said to him: You did not know how to defend your country like a man, therefore now you should cry like a women. Weeping and crying will not help the situation. Instead of shedding tears you should work hard and sweat. You should at least try to defend your last remaining free land. In order to remain independent you should be an advanced country. You should take the West as a model and emulate it for your progress and material advancement. You should follow Europe's path to civilization.

## Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım (1858–1920)

### Life

Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi was born in 1858 in Tortum, Erzurum, where he received his earliest education. Later, the young Musa went to his grandfather's hometown of Balıkesir, where he studied under famous Islamic scholars such as Salahaddin Ali Es Shuuri. Musa Kazım pursued his higher education in Istanbul, continuing his studies under well-established authorities in Islamic law such as Kadı-Asker Eşref Efendi and Hoca Şakir Efendi. In 1888–89, he earned his degree in *Ulum-u Aliyye* (Islamic studies), and in that same year, after successfully passing the professional exam of *Ruus* (teaching qualification exam), he was awarded the title of *müderris* (professor) and was appointed to Fatih Mosque as an instructor. During his academic career, he taught several courses on Islamic law and Quranic exegesis, and his students included many well-known intellectuals of the time, including Muallim Naci and Ahmed Mithat Efendi. In 1896, Musa Kazım was promoted to the rank of *Ruus-u Humayun* (a high academic title in theological studies) of Istanbul. In 1900–01, he was appointed to the professorship of *Mejelle* law (Islamic law codified by Ahmed Cevdet Pasha). Later, he also taught at several other institutions, including *Mekteb-i Sultani*, *Darülfünûn*, *Dar-ul Muallimin*, and *Mekteb-i Hukuk* (law school). Meanwhile, Musa Kazım was further promoted, obtaining the academic title of *Mahrec*. On 14 February 1907, he was bestowed with the title of *Haleb Mevleviyeti* (a rank in Ottoman religious administration). That same year, Musa Kazım became the general secretary of the Editorial Board for Religious Affairs (*Bab-i Meşihat Tedkik-i Müellifat Heyeti Başkanlığı*).

In 1908, after the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution, Musa Kazım was elected to the *Meclis-i Ayan* (Senate). On 12 July 1910, he was appointed as *Şeyhülislam* to the cabinet of İbrahim Hakkı Pasha (1863–1918). Kazım's first tenure as a *Şeyhülislam* lasted for one year, two months and eighteen days, ending on 29 September 1911, when İbrahim Hakkı Pasha's cabinet tendered its resignation. On 30 September 1911, Musa Kazım was again nominated to the office of Chief *Mufti*, this time in the cabinet of Said Pasha. His second term lasted until 30 December 1911, ending with the resignation of Said Pasha's cabinet. On 8 May 1916, Musa Kazım was appointed as *Şeyhülislam* for a third term, this time in the cabinet of Said Halim Pasha. This third term ended on 3 February 1917, with Said Halim Pasha's resignation from the Grand Vizierate. Never-

theless, one day later, on 4 February, Musa Kazım was again appointed to the *Şeyhülislamate* in the newly formed cabinet of Talat Pasha. This was the fourth and final tenure of Musa Kazım as *Şeyhülislam*, ending on 8 October 1918, when Talat Pasha tendered his resignation.

In March 1919, the government of Damad Ferid Pasha established a court-martial in order to bring to trial former Ottoman officials who had served in the Unionist governments. On 10 March 1919, Musa Kazım Efendi was arrested by the collaborationist government and incarcerated in the Bekir Ağa Bölüğü Prison along with other Unionist politicians. On 13 July 1919, the court condemned the former *Şeyhülislam* to fifteen years of hard labor. Without doubt this unjustifiably severe punishment was given to Musa Kazım because the regime was anxious to demonstrate its subservience to the Occupation authorities. Later, Sultan Mehmed VI (Vahideddin) (r. 1918–1922) commuted the heavy sentence to three years of exile. Musa Kazım Efendi was exiled to the city of Edirne, where he died on 10 January 1920.<sup>1</sup>

## Ideas

The following writings are taken from Musa Kazım's work entitled *Külliyat*, published in Istanbul in 1336 AH. It was also published in Latin transcription by Ferhat Koca in *Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi: Külliyat Dini ve İctimai Makaleler*, Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2002.

### *The Consultative System and Liberty in Islam*

The divine commandments revealed by the Prophet Muhammad to humankind are divided into two sections: principal [*ahkam-i asliye*] and secondary [*ahkam-i feriyeye*]. These two sections are further divided into those that pertain to the afterworld [*uhreviye*] and those that deal with worldly affairs [*dünyeviye*]. The principal commandments concern the afterworld; the secondary ones are about faith. The principal commandments on worldly matters are concerned with general public law; the secondary ones are concerned with specific legal fields such as criminal and commercial laws.

To apply the secondary commandments without considering the principal ones would be useless. For example, for someone who does not believe in the

1 Abdülkadir Altınsu, *Osmanlı Şeyhülislamları*, Ankara: Ay Yıldız Matbaası, 1972, pp. 233–237 (hereafter cited as Altınsu, *Osmanlı*). See also Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi, *Külliyat, Dini ve İctimai Makaleler*, edited by Ferhat Koca, Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2002, pp. 13–15 (hereafter cited as Kazım, *Külliyat*).

oneness of God, prayer and worship would be futile; the same would be true if we applied the criminal clauses of the *sharia* without taking into consideration the main principles of justice and equity enshrined in divine law.<sup>2</sup>

Two of the main principles of the commandments pertaining to worldly matters are that we should be just and equitable when dealing with other people, and consult with members of the *ummah* [Muslim community] and ask for their advice on every important issue. In the Quran, we find precepts such as “consult with them” [the *ummah*] (*Al-i Imran* 3/159).<sup>3</sup> There are also many *ahadith* on this issue.<sup>4</sup>

In the first verse, God commands His messenger to consult with his *ummah*. As explained in the science of *usul al fiqh* [legal theory for juristic interpretation], a [divine] commandment on a particular issue would naturally imply the prohibition of its opposite; non-consultation with the community would, therefore, constitute a violation of that Quranic precept. In the second verse, it is clearly stated that Muslims have an obligation to consult with each other on important issues. The third, fourth, and fifth verses are about justice and equity. Our Prophet himself always used consultation [*mushawara*] before making a decision on important public matters.

The Quranic precepts and the maxims of our Prophet formed the basis of an ideal government, hitherto never seen in human history. Moreover, thanks to the righteous and virtuous leadership of the early caliphs, who were also the companions of our Prophet, the light of justice was brought to the four corners of the world. This nascent Islamic government was, in fact, the incarnation of justice and equity. Everyone, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, found justice, equity, liberty and prosperity under its banner.

Consultation in social and political matters, along with three other main principles – liberty, equality and justice – are thus the essential characteristics of the Islamic socio-political system. These fundamental rights are God-given and inalienable. Unfortunately, however, after the era of the Rashidun caliphs [632–661], the Muslim leaders who succeeded them unlawfully appropriated these fundamental rights of Muslims. These Islamic rulers completely corrupted and distorted a pristine Islam and set up a false precedent for the future. Liberty is one of the undeniable rights of Muslims that is enshrined in Islamic political theory. Liberty is also one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by our Constitution of 1876. The Constitution has been restored, thanks to the

---

2 Musa Kazım, *Dini ve İctimai Makaleler*, İstanbul: Evkaf-ı İslamiye Matbaası, [1334] 1919, pp. 240–242 (hereafter cited as Kazım, *Dini*).

3 Ibid., p. 243.

4 Ibid., p. 343.

heroic actions of our glorious army, which put an end to the despotic Hamidian regime.

First of all, let us consider the meaning of “liberty”: it can be defined as “being free,” but this freedom is not without restrictions and limitations, because unlimited freedom does not exist in any part of the world, or even in the whole cosmos.<sup>5</sup>

### *Rules That Limit and Regulate Liberty*

Without the existence of an established order, the cosmic equilibrium would not exist and chaos would reign. Each species in the world is subjected to an evolutionary pattern, and its life is regulated by certain natural rules. Without this, these species would never be able to survive. We can clearly see, therefore, that even in the animal and plant kingdoms, a complete and unrestricted form of freedom does not exist. Even more than other species, humankind is bound by rules and regulations. Without these rules, the survival of humankind would be impossible. Consequently, our freedom is not unrestricted and limitless, but regulated by laws. These laws are the legislations enacted by the government and religious rules emanating from the Quran. One of the important legal restrictions for Muslim countries is the covering and veiling of women [*tesettür-u nisvan*]. Unfortunately, since the proclamation of the Constitution [in July 1908], many Muslim women have become increasingly negligent in the observance of this very important restriction. This means not only a disregard of one of the important rules of Islam, but also an act against the Constitution. According to the fourth and eleventh articles of our Constitution, the official religion of the Ottoman State is Islam, and the Sultan, as caliph, is the protector of the Islamic religion. It is therefore the duty of every Muslim to respect the religious rules of Islam. It is the responsibility of the Ottoman government to enforce these laws when they are not being observed. One of the fundamental principles of Islam is to perform all religious obligations and, equally, to refrain from all things prohibited by Islam [*al-amr bil Maruf wal nahy an al Munkar*]. One of the primary obligations in Islam, again, is the covering of the women. Nevertheless, a woman does not lose any of her rights by covering herself. Women have the same rights as men. For example, like men, women exercise full right of ownership over their property. Again like men, women have social, educational and professional rights. They can attend conferences, attend school and receive education, and engage in many professional fields. Nevertheless, since the two sexes have different vocations in society, women do not

---

5 Kazım, *Dini*. pp. 313–314.

necessarily have to study the same subjects or acquire the same level of education as men.<sup>6</sup>

### *Polygamy*

Another important issue in Islam – or more precisely, in Islamic family law – is polygamy: the marriage of a man with more than one woman. The institution of marriage has two main purposes: one is to procreate; the other is to preserve morality. Polygamy, or the marriage of a man to several women, helps to ensure these two conditions by encouraging and, at the same time, regulating a man's sexual activity within moral boundaries. It gives him a further chance to have children by allowing him to procreate with another wife. Polygamy also prevents a man from having illicit sexual relations. Nevertheless, Islam does not accept polygamy as an absolute right given to men, but has subjected it to many restrictions. The most important condition is the duty of the husband to treat his wives equally on every matter concerning the marriage. Otherwise, the husband will be denied the right to have more than one spouse, and will be obliged to observe monogamy. *Talaq*, or the repudiation of the wife by the husband, is also one of the most critical questions in Islam. As a principle, such repudiation is considered reprehensible in Islam. The Quran and the Prophet condemned it. Nevertheless, if the relation between spouses has become untenable, *talaq* is allowed as a last resort, to free the couple from the sufferings of an unhappy union. According to Islamic law, the right of repudiation belongs to the husband. The wife does not hold the reciprocal right. The reason for this should be sought in the temperamental character of the woman, who would resort to divorce immediately after each quarrel with her husband. Moreover, giving such a right to women would undermine the leadership of the husband in the family. That would be unfair to men, since they are the purveyors to their families and bear the task of supporting them. The Quran also sanctions the role of the husband in the family as a protector and provider [*An-Nisa* 4/34].<sup>7</sup>

One of the essential limitations on the liberty that we obtained with the proclamation of our Constitution is our “national customs.” In every country, there are established customs that are accepted and adopted by its citizens. In many parts of the world, these customs have the same power as laws and regulations. Today, in fact, the majority of the laws of a country are issued in conformity with that country's national mores and customs. In Islamic law, the importance of custom was accepted by the prophetic *hadith* that declares

6 Kazım, *Külliyat*, pp. 321–322.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 330.

“what is considered beautiful by Muslims is also beautiful.”<sup>8</sup> Human societies advance and progress by acquiring knowledge and by the guidance and instruction of teachers [*mürşit*]. The reason that primitive societies, like those who inhabited North America, remained backward and undeveloped was the lack of such *mürşits* to educate them and to deliver them from their primitive conditions.<sup>9</sup> Religion is the basis and the main pillar of civil life. The only force that can maintain justice and order among humans and prevent chaos and savagery is religion and the fear of God, not the love of humanity or a fear of a political force. Without the support of religion, civil life would collapse. To ensure the existence and continuity of a civil life, individuals ought to help each other, respect each other’s rights and obey the rule of law. Otherwise, people would violate each other’s rights and humanity would be transformed into savagery.

Civilization means living together in a city, town or village as a society. This is in accordance with human nature, because the needs of humans in terms of livelihood and subsistence are not simple like those of animals. Human beings depend upon each other for the things that they cannot produce or provide by themselves. Therefore, since the creation of the world, humans have lived together in society by helping each other. That is the meaning of being civilized. As humans are innately civilized, civilizations have emerged in many places throughout history. Nevertheless, only a few societies succeeded in creating a genuine and mature civilization [*medeniyet-i kamile*]. Does “mature civilization” mean the advancement of a society in the natural and mathematical sciences, its invention of technologies, its establishment of fast and efficient transportation by manufacturing steamboats or trains, or its building of large cities, construction of highways, or high-rise buildings? If civilization means only these things, many societies in the past and the present have achieved that level of progress and benefited from the fruits of that material civilization. A real civilization is not only these things but it also, and much more importantly, establishes a just, prosperous and healthy society. Today, in many places on earth a mature civilization does not exist, even among the nations that have attained a higher degree of material civilization. Most of the inhabitants of these countries live in poverty, struggling to make a decent living. Therefore, a genuine civilization is one that provides humanity with all the means of happiness and prosperity. A genuine civilization cannot be realized without the rightful religion [*Hak-Dini, Diyanat-i Hakka*].<sup>10</sup> The rightful religion forms the

---

8 Ibid., p. 335.

9 Ibid., p. 166.

10 Ibid., p. 67.

basis of genuine civilization. Due to their natural disposition, humans can easily become corrupt and follow their animal instincts. If the soul is not tamed and inculcated with virtuous higher values, people often become victims of their base desires and ambitions. The only force that will prevent people from deviating from correct behavior is the rightful religion. Without religion, a society will go astray and lose its morality. Irreligiosity will sap the moral foundations of a nation and cause its ultimate demise. It has been argued that the old religions could be replaced by a new quasi-religion, “humanism.” According to the advocates of this new ideology, religions belong to the past and are outdated. What is needed for the modern world is a new, non-religious, secular morality: humanism. For me, such a thing is simply not possible. A non-religious ideology cannot replace the rightful divine religions because it would lack the sacred higher values found in those religions, such as kindness, benevolence, justice and fairness. Humans possess some animal characteristics and forces, bestowed upon them by God to satisfy their basic desires for survival. These desires are licit as long as the means used to obtain them are legitimate and permissible.<sup>11</sup>

I mentioned above that a mature and genuine civilization is possible only with the rightful religion, but did not explain sufficiently what that rightful religion is. According to Islamic law, religion is a set of divine commandments admonishing and directing people toward good acts and deeds. Clearly, God has decreed this divine legislation not for His benefit but for the benefit of humankind, because God is above and beyond earthly lives. Nevertheless, since He is the creator of all earths and heavens and the most merciful of the most merciful, and since the main reason for His creation of this cosmos was the creation and protection of humankind, such a divine legislation was decreed and communicated by God to humankind through the prophets [*enbiya*]. The Quran explains that people originally formed one religious community, but then fell into disagreement among themselves on various issues. To bring them back to the right path, God sent them prophets [*Al-Baqarah* 2/213].<sup>12</sup> This first religion was the “rational religion,” and it was not revealed by any prophet but discovered by humans through their intellect. The later revelations by the prophets not only confirmed these first principles based on reason, but expanded and elaborated on them.

Now, let us briefly discuss the New Testament. Previously, we stated that the teachings revealed by a prophet to any group of people must be pertinent to the social, political and social situation of those people. We must consider the

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 67–70.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

precepts of the New Testament from that point of view. After the death of Solomon, the Jews sunk into a situation of despair; but the Jews did not understand these new ideas and they strove to eliminate him [Jesus] and eradicate his ideas. However, even though they murdered him, they were ultimately unable to prevent the dissemination of his ideas, which eventually gave rise to a new religion. Subsequently, in the following centuries, Christianity grew and thrived, while Judaism declined and shrank.

The issue of *nesih* occupied the minds of Jewish and Christian scholars and became an important subject of debate and controversy. Whereas the etymological meaning of *nesih* is “to negate, change or replace,” theologians understood it as annulling or nullifying the legal and religious effect of a divine precept with a new divine precept. In fact there are two types of *nesih*: the first is the replacement of an older divine precept of a prophet with a new divine rule; the second kind is the replacement of the sacred legislation of a prophet with the divine precepts of another, usually a later, prophet. Both *nesih* are permissible and lawful. Many parts of the Old Testament were later supplanted by newer commandments that altered or changed the previous ones.<sup>13</sup> For example, according to the legislation of the Patriarch Abraham, marrying an agnate sister [of the same father but of a different mother] was allowed; later Mosaic [Jewish] legislation prohibited this and imposed a death penalty for the practice.

In the book of Genesis in the Old Testament, Jacob married both daughters of his maternal uncle at the same time. Again, Mosaic Law prohibited that practice. In Jewish law, a man can divorce or repudiate his wife under any condition. Canonical (Christian) law strictly forbade divorce. In Noah's legislation, all plants and animals were allowed as food. Mosaic Law changed this rule, and eating pork and the meat of some other animals was prohibited. Again, the Jews expected the coming of a savior who would eventually liberate them from their oppressors and restore to them their former glory and power. Jesus emerged during a time when the expectations for the appearance of such a savior had become very strong. He was sent to his people with a book called the New Testament, in which God again revealed His orders. The precepts of this new book were the best answer to the social and political problems of the Jewish community living in Palestine at that time.<sup>14</sup>

Our intention here is not to prove the *kuhn* of God, since this subject lies beyond human comprehension. Our intention is to prove the existence of the Creator and His creation, which is the universe and everything in it. The

---

<sup>13</sup> Kazım, *Külliyat*, pp. 86–88.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

universe was created some time in the most distant past. In all worlds within this universe, everything is subject to transformation; for example, sperm transforms itself into blood and blood into flesh. There is also a transformation in the planetary systems, which are formed of the elements of soil, air, water and fire. These transformations could occur only if there existed a creative force behind them, and this creative force is Almighty God. Without His work, everything would be purely chaotic. Today, the naturalists who are the followers of the *Maddiyun* [materialists] school object to and oppose the existence of a God who is the creator of everything. According to them the whole universe was created by the movements of material substance and force that, they argue, has existed since time immemorial. In their opinion, at the beginning of time material substance was formed by tiny particles like dust, and force was the result of their movement in space. Then, they declare, these tiny particles came together as a result of gravity, and eventually created stars, each of which is a sun. In the next stage, these suns had begun rotating on their axes. Then, they say, with the force of rotation, some parts became detached from these suns, but nevertheless remained and began to rotate within the orbit of each sun. Thus, the planetary systems were formed. Our world, which is one of these planets within the orbit of our sun, was naturally a body of fire, since it broke off from the sun. Since the temperature in space was extremely cold – around minus 142 degrees Celsius – this sphere of fire eventually cooled down and its surface became a crust. This crust then became the earth. After that, first minerals, then plants and animals, and finally humans came into being on the earth. In summary, declare the naturalists, the creation of the planets was solely due to the interaction of material substance and the element of force. Beyond this, they say, we cannot accept any creative force like God. This is the creation theory of the naturalists who deny the existence of God.<sup>15</sup>

---

15 Kazım, *Külliyyat*, pp. 189–190.

## İskilipli Mehmed Atıf (1876–1926)

### Life

Mehmed Atıf (İskilipli) was born in the village of Tophane in İskilip, a district in the northern Anatolian province of Çorum. His father was Mehmed Ağa and his mother was Nazlı Hanım, the granddaughter of a Meccan notable who had emigrated to İskilip. After receiving his first education in his village, Mehmed Atıf studied with Hoca Abdullah Efendi (c. 1891). Despite opposition from his family, the young Atıf went to Istanbul to pursue his higher education. In 1902, he completed his *Medrese* education and entered the Divinity School at *Darülfünûn* (University). In 1905, he graduated from university and found a teaching position as the instructor in Arabic at Kabataş *Lise* (high school). In the same year, he began to lecture at the Fatih Mosque as *ders-i am* (religious instructors teaching in the mosques). During the following years, young Mehmed was exiled to Bodrum by the *Şeyhülislamate* (Office of the Religious Establishment). Mehmed Atıf managed to flee from Bodrum to Crimea, and later went to Warsaw in Poland. After the re-establishment of the Constitutional Regime in July 1908, Mehmed Atıf returned to Istanbul and began to publish his articles in the modernist Islamist journal *Sırat-ı Müstakim* and the traditionalist Islamist journal *Beyan-ul Haq*. He was exiled after the suppression of the 31 March rebellion. Later, in 1912, during the elections, he presented his candidacy to represent his home province in Parliament but did not win. He was suspected of being involved in the assassination of Mahmud Şevket Pasha and was exiled once more, first to Sinop and then to Boğazlıyan. Following the First World War, in January 1919 he was appointed as dean of the *İbtidai Dahil Medresesi*, a theological school attached to the university of *Dar-ul Hilafet-ul Aliye*. At the same time, he also taught at *Medreset-ül Kuzat* (religious law school for judges). In 1920, Mehmed Atıf, together with many other Islamic scholars such as Mustafa Sabri and Said-i Nursi, participated in the foundation of the *Cemiyet-i Müderissin* (Society of Islamic Scholars). At the same time, he also became the president of the *Teali-i İslam Cemiyeti* (Society for the Elevation of Islam).

After the establishment of the secular Republic of Turkey in 1923, Mehmed Atıf was recognized as one of the fiercest opponents of the Kemalist regime and a harsh critic of the secularizing reforms. In late 1925, he was arrested and put on trial for an article he wrote in which he criticized Westernization and, in particular, the wearing of the hat as a symbol of this process, even though he

had written this article one and a half years before the enactment of the new hat law, which forbade the wearing of fez.<sup>1</sup> He was found guilty of anti-reform activity, and was executed on 4 February 1926 by the secular Kemalist regime.

## Ideas

The following passage is taken from Mehmed Atif's work entitled *Medeniyet-i Şeriye ve Terakkiyat-ı Diniye*, (The Civilization of the Sharia and the Religious Progress) published in Istanbul in 1920 and later republished by Sadık Albayrak as *Şeriyat Medeniyeti*, Istanbul: Şamil Yayınevi, 1976.

### *The Civilization of the Şeriat/Sharia*

Humans are born civil and are social creatures. Nobody can live alone because every person needs food, clothing, shelter and weapons in order to survive and defend himself against the forces of nature, including wild beasts. Because a single person cannot be self-sufficient, it would be beyond his power to produce all the things he needs in this world. A single person is unable to produce a loaf of bread without the help of others. To make bread, it is necessary for a person to learn the skills of farming and animal husbandry, as well as carpentry and metalwork to make the agricultural tools. Since a single person could not perform all these tasks, a division of labor was established among people. The necessities of life forced people to organize themselves in societies. Human civilization, therefore, came into being as a natural result of human cooperation.

Human beings possess three natural forces: the force of intellect; the force of aggressiveness; and, finally, the force of sexuality or lust.<sup>2</sup> Intelligence, which is derived from intellect, always drives people to acquire learning for maturity and salvation. On the other hand, sexuality and aggressiveness assist with our survival instincts, but also can be the cause of hostility, conflict, jealousy, cruelty and murder. The force of intellect always moderates and restrains man's sensuality and aggressiveness. To protect human beings from the harmful and dangerous actions of their kind, and to prevent the occurrence of wrongdoings and wickedness among people, a supreme law is needed to establish order and

1 İskilipli Mehmed Atif, *Şeriyat Medeniyeti*, edited by Sadık Albayrak, Istanbul: Şamil Yayınevi, 1976, pp. 7–10 (hereafter cited as İskilipli, *Şeriat*). See also Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 323–324.

2 İskilipli, *Şeriye ve Terakkiyat-ı Diniye* Istanbul, 1920. See also İskilipli Mehmed Atif, *Şeriat Medeniyeti*. Edited by Sadık Albayrak Istanbul: Şamil Yayınevi, 1976, p. 12. Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 354–355.

peace in society. This supreme law must explain to the people the principles of science and learning, liberty, justice, equality and fraternity. It must also set the rules of legal transactions. To create such a perfect law would be beyond human capacity. Therefore, that law could be imposed and bestowed upon humanity only by God. Hence, God the almighty, solely because of His mercy and benevolence, communicated to humankind a series of laws through the intermediacy of the prophets. These laws are based on justice and fairness, and contain all the directions required to achieve temporal and spiritual happiness and satisfaction. The first of these sets of laws was sent by the Prophet Adam, and the final laws, which also embrace all the previous ones, were revealed by our lord the Prophet Muhammad. That final law is the Holy Quran, which is the Book of God. The Quran assures the material/temporal and mundane happiness of the people by establishing norms and principles on many subjects, such as science, education, justice, equality, art, trade and agriculture, but also on criminal law and the representative political system.<sup>3</sup> Equally, it ensures the unearthly, heavenly happiness of mankind by explaining the hereafter and eternal life to believers. The Quran prepares people for the afterworld by showing them the right path, and by recommending good behavior and urging them to adopt a virtuous and moral life. The Quran also commands the unity, solidarity and mutual assistance among believers. It strictly forbids enmity, animosity, dissension, conflict and laziness among Muslims.

### *The Necessity of Government*

As explained above, a society formed by individuals in order to satisfy their civil needs is like a single person, and every individual who forms that society can be considered a part of that person's body. In order to organize and defend the society, a strong and just government is needed.

By their nature, governments can be classified into four categories:

- In absolute monarchies, political authority belongs to a hereditary ruler whose power is not checked or limited.
- In constitutional monarchies, authority is represented by a hereditary ruler whose rule is exercised within the boundaries of established laws, and the ruler's acts are controlled by a representative assembly who is formed by wise and learned notables.
- In republics, authority is invested for a determined period in a citizen elected by the nation. In republics, unlike in the aforementioned forms of

---

<sup>3</sup> İskilipli, *Şeriat*, p. 14.

government, political power belongs exclusively to the nation. Only the elected president can govern.

- In an ideal caliphate, authority is invested in a member of the *umma* [Muslim community] who is elected by the nation. The elected caliph's power is bound by the rules of the *sharia* [Islamic law].<sup>4</sup>

If the election of the *Hulefa-yi Rashidun* [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] (632–661) is examined, it will become clear that their regime was quite similar to a republican system, since these early caliphs who succeeded the Prophet Muhammad were elected directly by the *umma*. Every action of the Rashidun Caliphs had to be in conformity with the laws of the *sharia*. On the other hand, since the caliph possessed extended powers to govern, it could be said that his authority resembled an absolute monarchy. Nonetheless, his obligation was to act within the boundaries of the sacred law of the *sharia* and the control imposed on him by the electors, making his office more closely resemble a representative government.

Governments could also be categorized according to their ideological basis:

- Political governments are organized and function according to rational principles, and their jurisdiction covers only temporal and secular matters.
- Religious (*sharia*) governments are formed according to the laws given by God and revealed and communicated to the people by the prophets. Governments of this kind rule over temporal as well as spiritual matters.
- Natural governments rule according to neither rational nor religious principles, but only by sheer violence and brute force. This is in accordance with human nature, because the needs of humans in terms of livelihood and subsistence are not simple like those of animals.

### *The Caliphate*

It is necessary for Muslims to elect a caliph. This necessity is derived from rational and religious [*shari*] reasons. The religious reason is based on the *ijma* [legal consensus] of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. It is a well-known and widely accepted report that on the day of the passing of the Prophet Muhammad, before his burial/interment took place, a group of his companions gathered at a place called Sakifa-i Beni Saïda and agreed to elect the Prophet's close companion Hz. Siddika [Abu Bakr] (r. 632–634) to the caliphate. There are two sets of preconditions for being elected to the office of

---

4 Ibid., p. 20.

the caliphate: 1) the conditions of validity or soundness; and 2) the conditions of merit.<sup>5</sup>

The conditions of validity are that the caliph must be a Muslim, male, adult, of sound mind, intelligent and able. The conditions of merit are that the caliph must be a *mujtehid* [i.e. he must have sufficient religious and legal knowledge to interpret the Quran and the Sunna in order to legislate and enact *sharia* laws], he must be pious and ethical, and finally he must be a member of the Quraysh tribe.

Since the real function of the caliphate is to govern the *ummah* and administer their affairs by applying the *sharia*, this ruling authority must be backed by a strong power. In early Islamic times the Quraysh tribe possessed great power and influence in Arabia and occupied a paramount and dominant position over other tribes. Therefore, it is only because the tribe of Quraysh was the strongest tribe in Arabia that the Prophet Muhammad chose to leave the caliphate to members of that tribe. Nevertheless, this decision should not be interpreted as the caliphate being bequeathed forever and exclusively to the Quraysh tribe.

When our Prophet Muhammad passed away, the *muhajirun* [Muslim emigres from Mecca] from Quraysh, and the *Ansar* [helpers; people of Yathrib or Medina who accepted Muslim émigrés from Mecca] of Medina assembled to elect a successor [*khalifa*] or caliph to the Prophet. The *Ansar* had proposed the election of one leader [*amir*] from among themselves and of another leader from the Quraysh. However, mentioning the *hadith* of the Prophet, who had stated that “the imams are from Quraysh,” Abu Bakr and his supporters succeeded in imposing their view on the *Ansar*, and consequently Abu Bakr was appointed as the caliph. From the caliphate of Abu Bakr to that of the Abbassids, the leadership in the Islamic world remained with the Quraysh tribe. Later, when Abbasid caliphs began to neglect their religious and administrative duties and ceased acquiring the proper learning necessary to rule Muslim lands, other groups, such as the Persian Daylamite and Turkish Seljuk tribes, emerged as powerful polities, gaining authority and control over the Islamic caliphate.

The following passages are taken from İskilipli Mehmed Atıf’s booklet, *Frenk Mukallitliği ve Şapka* (Imitating the West and the Hat), published in Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Kader (1340) 1924. It was republished in Istanbul: Yıpar Yayınları, Zafer Matbaası, 1993. Also published by Nizam Yayınları, 1994.

---

5 Ibid., p. 24.

### *Imitating Europeans and the Hat Reform*

The imitator is the one who adopts the beliefs, words, actions, clothing and appearances of other persons by being convinced of the rightfulness of the others' ideas and world views. Imitation is generally not permitted in Islam. The only exception is to imitate the Prophet Muhammad, whose words and actions were supported by miracles. The imitation of some practices of belief is also allowed when they are explained by strong evidence. Moreover, it is also lawful for the people to follow the *ijtihad* [process of legal reasoning] of the *mujtehid*s [Islamic legal scholars who performed *ijtihad*]. Nevertheless, as stated in a *hadith*, “do not obey a creature against his creator,” Following the words and acts of any political or religious leader [*amirs* and *sheikhs*], philosopher or religious scholar [*ulema*] for matters legislated by God would not be allowed. In summary, it is not permitted to imitate the novelties or innovations and the manners and mores of civilizations that contradict the *sharia*. It is most certainly unlawful to adopt the customs and usages of non-Muslim nations. Therefore, it is forbidden by the sacred law of the *sharia* for a Muslim to dress like a non-Muslim in order to appear like one of them. Our Prophet stated, “those who try to adopt the mores of a people [who try to be like them] is actually one of them” [related by Imam Ahmad and Abu Davud].<sup>6</sup>

*Teşşebüh* is acting and behaving like others by adopting their values. As the *hadith* says: “those who want to be like a member of another nation, and share the values of that nation are considered one of them” This *hadith* forbids Muslims to resemble *ehl-i kufr* [unbelievers] and *ehl-i fisk* [immoral people], encouraging them to imitate those who followed the right path of Islam. In the years following the *Hijra* [migration to Medina], the Jews and Muslims wore similar dress and had similar customs and usages. By saying nothing on this issue, our Prophet tacitly approved that situation; but this rule later changed and Muslims were required to be different from non-Muslims in custom and usage. The reason for that change could be explained by the increasing power of the Muslims. In the early period of Islam, when Muslims were weak, confrontation with non-Muslims was considered unwise and risky. Later, when Muslims gained power and had started to vanquish other communities and foreign states, new rules were introduced to distinguish Muslims from others.<sup>7</sup>

6 İskilipli Mehmed Atif, *Frenk Mukallidliği ve Şapka*, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Kadir, 1340 AH, p. 5 (hereafter cited as İskilipli, *Frenk*). See also İskilipli (Mehmed) Atif, *Frenk Mukallidliği ve Şapka*, edited by Ömer Faruk, İstanbul: Nizam Yayınları, 1994, p. 12 (hereafter cited as Atif, *Frenk*).

7 İskilipli, *Frenk*, pp. 5–6.

Therefore, in this century Muslims should not adopt the mores and customs of non-Muslim nations and become similar to them in their lifestyle unless obliged to do so. According to a *hadith*: “if somebody innovates something which is not found in our religion, then that thing is rejected.” Nevertheless, this *hadith* must not be understood as rejecting the adoption of every innovation. Useful innovations, such as modern agricultural tools and machinery, new kitchen utensils, industrial equipment and devices, modern weapons, arms and instruments of war are welcomed and even encouraged in Islam.<sup>8</sup>

### *Licit and Illicit Aspects of Western Civilization*

Materially and spiritually, the Western civilization has two aspects, one of which is useful and one of which is harmful to humanity. The *hadiths* of our Prophet clearly allow and encourage the adoption of useful innovations of Western civilization by Muslims: “If one person invents something beautiful and this invention becomes useful to the people, this inventor would be blessed by God until the Day of Judgment,” and, “You (people) know better the worldly matters.” These *hadiths* clearly show that the Islamic religion does not forbid good and utilitarian inventions that will benefit the Muslim community and ensure its progress. The use of all tools and skills – from the sewing needle to railroads, artillery, iron-clad warships and dreadnoughts, airplanes, and instruments of communication, land and sea trade, various arts and crafts, factories, agricultural tools and any other useful invention – is condoned and recommended in Islam.<sup>9</sup> To prepare the ground for these inventions, Islam in fact orders the education of every individual, male or female. As understood from the works of European sociologist Gustave Le Bon, industry, like other aspects of civilization, was first instituted six or seven thousand years ago in Asia by the Assyrians, later moving to Egypt. The development of early Greek art is due to the influence of the civilizations of the Tigris and the Nile. Thanks to this favorable attitude towards science and scholarship, Muslims adopted the scientific discoveries of the earlier civilizations of Egypt and Greece, and later surpassed these civilizations by excelling in the arts and sciences.<sup>10</sup>

As a consequence of crusades to Muslim countries, [European] Crusaders brought Islamic arts to Europe. This prepared the ground for the rise and blossoming of European art. Europeans marveled at the radiant splendor of the Andalusian civilization in Iberia [Spain and Portugal]. In these ages [early Middle Ages], western Europeans had languished in a miserable condition,

8 Ibid., pp. 6–7.

9 Ibid., pp. 7–8.

10 Ibid., p. 9.

living in savagery, ignorance, and darkness. The origins of Western civilization are, therefore, found in Eastern civilization.

Despite this, Islam inaugurated a new era for the development of the useful aspects of progress and created a wonderful civilization. One could wonder why today's Muslims are deprived of these high values. We believe that the most obvious answer is because they neglected one of the important requirements of the Muslim religion: to work in order to earn. Muslims could benefit from their religion only by living their life, conducting their business and acting according to the high principles of Islam and applying them faithfully. If Muslims keep these principles only in books and other documents and do not actually apply them to their daily life, they cannot benefit from them. The Prophet Muhammad said: "some knowledge is like ignorance." Knowledge that is not put into practice is no different from the lack of knowledge. The learned person who does not use his knowledge cannot distance himself from the common people.<sup>11</sup> It is clear that the Islamic religion allows and encourages the good and beneficial aspects of Western civilization, and forbids the decadent, immoral, vice-prone and ugly side of it (such as unbelief [atheism], oppression, prostitution, gambling, drinking alcohol, or dancing). Islam prohibits the immoral aspects of Western civilization, such as bars, theaters, brothels and gambling dens. Therefore, it is strictly forbidden in Islam to imitate the Western lifestyle and live like non-Muslims. In fact, Western civilization is far from being a model civilization for humanity to adopt, since it does not take an interest in the moral aspects and spiritual happiness of humanity, but focuses only on material gains and encourages mankind's animal instincts.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.12.

## Mustafa Sabri (1869–1954)

### Life

Mustafa Sabri was born in Tokat in 1869. His father was Ahmed Efendi. Sabri began his education in his hometown, during which time he very quickly memorized the Quran. He pursued his education in Kayseri and Istanbul, where he studied under Ahmed Asim Efendi and received his certificate of proficiency (*icazetname*). He married the daughter of his master Asım Efendi. He passed the *Ruus* examination (teaching qualification exam) and became an instructor (*müderris*) at Fatih Mosque.

From 1898 until 1914, Mustafa Sabri attended *Huzur* lessons (lectures and discussion given by the *ulema* in the presence of the Sultan). Between 1900 and 1904, he was the librarian (*hafız-i kutub*) of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909). After the re-establishment of the Constitution on July 1908, he entered Parliament as the representative of Tokat. He also became chief editor of *Beyan-ul Hak*, an intellectual journal published by the *Cemiyet-i İlmîye* (Religious Scholars' Association). Although he thanked the CUP and the army in an article in the first issue of *Beyan ul Hak* for ending the Hamidian regime, shortly afterwards he joined the opposition to the party. Sabri became the founding member of the *Ahali* (People) party in 1910 and the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf* (Liberal Entente) party in 1911. In 1912, he participated in the foundation of another political organization, the *Cemiyet-i İttihad-i İslamiye* (Islamic Union Association). In January 1913, after the *Bab-i Ali* coup, he fled the country, going first to Egypt and then to Romania, where he made his living teaching Turkish. After the occupation of Romania by Ottoman troops during the First World War, he was arrested and sent to Turkey, where he was imprisoned in Bilecik. After the end of the war, Sabri again entered politics and joined *Dar-ul Hikmet-i İslamiye* (Islamic University). In 1919, he was appointed as *Şeyhülislam* in the cabinet of Damad Ferid Pasha. Sabri served as the acting Grand Vizier during the absence of Damad Ferid Pasha while he was attending the Paris Peace Conference, and he was nominated to the senate after the fall of Ferid Pasha's cabinet. He became the first president of the *Cemiyet-i Müderrisin* (Society of Islamic Scholars), which later became the *Teali-i İslam Cemiyeti* (Society for the Elevation of Islam). In 1920, Mustafa Sabri was again appointed as *Şeyhülislam* to the second cabinet of Damad Ferid. In 1922, he fled Turkey once more to escape arrest by the nationalists when his name appeared on a list of 150 political dissidents.

Sabri first went to Romania and then to Greece, where he published an anti-Kemalist newspaper in which he violently attacked the new Turkish regime and its founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938). He later went to Hejaz, before settling in Egypt, where he continued his intellectual activities. Mustafa Sabri died in Egypt on 12 March 1954.

In his writings, Mustafa Sabri expounded a very conservative view of Islam. According to Sabri, the technological superiority and material welfare of the West should not impress Muslims, since these worldly achievements are of little value when compared to God's omnipotence. Any material progress that contradicts Islamic principles, he argued, would bring harm rather than good to Muslims. Sabri unequivocally asserted that he was not against Muslims benefitting from the technological innovations of the era, but that he would prefer poverty if the condition for such benefit was to curse or abandon Islam. Sabri defended the constitutional regime in his articles published in *Beyan ul Hak*, and argued that a true Islamic regime could be only on a representational basis.<sup>1</sup>

### Ideas

The following passages are taken from Mustafa Sabri's work *Yeni İslam Müçtehdilerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi* (The Value of the New Islamic Scholars), published in Istanbul in 1919. It was republished in Latin transcription by Sibel Dericioğlu in *Bedir Yayınları*, 1998.

The material progress of European civilization surpassed that of the Islamic one, therefore putting the Muslim world in a weak and disadvantaged position while undermining the confidence of Muslim thinkers about their civilization and causing great damage to their beliefs and their value system. Although an eminent scholar, Musa Carullah Bigief was unfortunately unable to remain immune to this disease that afflicted Islamic intellectuals. The existing material advancement in European civilization impressed him so much that he forgot the might and power of God. Hence, he attributed the success of the West to the rightness of their religion. Here again, we witness another unfortunate and erroneous statement by a Muslim thinker who judged his religion by the wretchedness and misery of its adherents. O ungrateful and bewildered people, because you are unable to reform the Muslim society or to improve and

1 For Mustafa Sabri's biography see İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, Istanbul: Kitabevi, pp. 383–385. See also Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Hilafetin İlgasının Arka Planı*, Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2007 (hereafter cited as Sabri, *Hilafet*)

ameliorate the situation of its members, you impute your failure and incapability to the religion of Islam by laying blame on it. The hypocritical Muslims or those whose hearts are diseased [by Western ideologies] argued that it was excessive zeal or piety that caused Muslims to progress and keep up with European civilization. I can reassure these people that today, the neglect of Muslims to properly observe their religion is far greater than their negligence in keeping up with modern [European] developments. You must therefore explain the decline and backwardness of the Muslims by their failure to properly implement the tenets of their religion, which is the most perfect and best of religions. You must try to reform the Muslim world and improve their situation without undermining or lessening their religiosity and corrupting Islam. You must also distinguish Islam from Muslims, and direct your criticism not at the religion of Islam itself but at Muslims. You must also understand that the material civilization created by man remains insignificant when compared to those created by God. When considering the engines, automobiles or planes he has constructed, man must not be proud of his achievements. It is more difficult to create a small fish than to build a dreadnought. The Quranic verse says, "Even if all those you worship came together they could not create a fly." We must always remember that, in the cosmos, even the most powerful government or mighty ruler would not appear even as the smallest organism, a microbe, and would be less significant than a cell. In his short life, man cannot enjoy this world for even twenty-four hours, because he has to separate himself from his wealth, his works, his science and his power, and surrender himself to another world, which is called "sleep." So we need to reflect on this extremely temporary existence of man in the world. Muslims must therefore not be impressed by the bright and attractive material world of the Europeans, and should not sacrifice their faith and piety to it. The holy Quran warns us against these kinds of temptations by which man's weak side could easily be seduced. The Quran says: "Be not deceived by the [uninhibited] movement of the disbelievers throughout the land. [It is but] a small enjoyment; then their [final] refuge is Hell, and wretched is the resting place" (*Ali Imran* 3:196–197). God says in the Quran, "We will give this world's life to whomever wishes it, but in the hereafter there is only fire for them in hell." In the *hadith* reported by Tirmizi from Sehl Ibn Saad, it was said that, "If God had valued this world, He would not allow the infidels to drink even a drop of water from it." The idea of our religious reformers' is, "Since we are not able to build our world, we must at least destroy our afterworld." I can only say I am not one of those people who deny the material and moral decline of the Muslims, and I do not want to prevent their awakening nor the methods of reform that could improve the situation of the Muslim world. But if the progress and advancement of the Muslim world were

to be obtained at the expense of their religion, by destroying Islam as a religion, I would rather Muslims stay in that miserable and wretched condition than to benefit from material advancement.<sup>2</sup>

The following passages are taken from Mustafa Sabri's writings published in Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Hilafetin İlgasının Arka Planı*, edited by Oktay Yılmaz, Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2007.

### *The Secular Government*

In my previous articles, published in the Egyptian newspapers *al-Maktam* and *al-Ahram*, I wrote that the intention of the new Turkish government to separate the caliphate from the government was derived from its abandonment of religion [Islam]. My statement was soon confirmed by the Turkish representative at the Lausanne Conference. The Ankara regime excludes the institution of the caliphate from the government and openly declares that, "So far we [Turkey] have not benefited from that institution; we will therefore continue our journey without it." My reaction to this decision is not based on anger. Here, we must know that the decision of the new regime in Turkey – to separate the caliphate from the government – was not motivated by a desire to reform and improve the administration of the country. Ironically, after deposing and exiling Sultan Vahideddin [Mehmed VI] (r. 1918–1922), the Kemalists appointed Abdulmecid Efendi as the new caliph and paid homage [*bay'ah*] to him. A year later, the same Kemalists, without any provocation from the new caliph, began to criticize and mock him, unleashing a campaign of humiliation against him. All this happened before the eyes of the Muslim world. Here, the Kemalists had two objectives: a) to take the government from the House of Osman [Ottoman dynasty] and give it to Mustafa Kemal; and b) to gradually abolish the institution of the caliphate, thus disestablishing the Islamic regime and replacing it with a secular one. Every action and decision taken by a rational individual or society aims to bring about a temporal and spiritual communal benefit. It is not clear to us what common benefit the Kemalists have gained by advocating the separation of religion from politics. They may have obtained an irreligious benefit from that separation, but temporal common welfare is not an irreligious common welfare.<sup>3</sup>

2 Mustafa Sabri, *Yeni İslâm Müctehidlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi*, Istanbul, 1919. See also Mustafa Sabri, *Dini Mücedditler Yahud Türkiye için Necad ve İttıla Yollarında bir Rehber*, Istanbul: Evkafl Matbaası, 1340/1922.

3 Mustafa Sabri, *Hilafet*. pp. 85–88.

### *My View on the Caliphate*

In my opinion, the institution of the caliphate should not be considered an honorific title of an Islamic government but as a power of representation given to any Muslim government to implement the *sharia* of Islam on behalf of the Prophet Muhammad. The caliphate has two pillars: a) temporal government or political authority; and b) spiritual representation. Without these two components, the caliphate would not exist. In the present situation, the Ankara regime must be considered a temporal government without any legitimacy, and Caliph Abdülmecid as a source of legitimacy without any political authority. As I mentioned previously, the essence of the caliphate is formed by the combination of political and religious powers. Therefore, all Muslim governments have the authority and obligation to represent the caliphate. One could argue that if every Muslim government represented the caliphate, there would be many caliphates in the Islamic world. According to this argument, that could not be acceptable from an Islamic point of view. I would reply to these criticisms by saying that the plurality of caliphates, like the plurality of governments, would be perfectly legal and acceptable by the *sharia*. The only valid objection would be that the existence of several caliphates could cause rivalry and division among Muslims. This could weaken the *ummah* and undermine the unity and strength of the Islamic world. In my opinion, this inconvenience could be prevented by establishing a hierarchy among the caliphs in each Muslim state. By accepting the supreme authority of one high caliph, the minor caliphs would preserve the unity of the *ummah*.

The Egyptian *ulema*, who glorified and lauded Mustafa Kemal's separation of the caliphate from the government, actually demonstrated their incompetence in these matters. They were not even close to understanding the core issue of this problem. They consider this issue an opportunity to exhibit their knowledge of Islamic history and Islamic constitutional law, especially of the imamate and the caliphate.

These Egyptian *ulema* try to blend Islam with the ideas and reforms of the Kemalists. At first they tried to adapt Kemalist reforms to Islam, and when they failed they tried to adjust Islam to the Kemalist ideology by compromising the religion.

Look at what the famous Egyptian *alim* [scholar] Sheikh Yusuf al-Decevi says: "Either we oppose the enemies of these *mujahideen* who fight for our religion and homeland [*din ve vatan için savaşılan*], and confront and defy those traitors and thieves by supporting our heroes, and thus become a progressive and prosperous society, or we abandon this religion, which holds us back."

Here, the heroes and the brave *mujahideen* are Mustafa Kemal and his friends, while the traitors and thieves are Sultan Vahideddin [Mehmed VI] (r.

1918–1922) and us. Hence, this Egyptian scholar has more faith in Mustafa Kemal than in his religion. He has doubts about his religion but not about Mustafa Kemal. Nevertheless, the truth is different. According to the Quran (Al-Mu'minun 23:71): “But if the Truth had followed their inclinations, the heavens and the earth and whoever is in them would have been ruined.”

We are deeply saddened by the senseless and foolish ideas of these Egyptian *ulema* who proved unable to penetrate to the core of the issue and grasp its real meaning.

Here, I would like to discuss a statement made by Mustafa Kemal on the institution of the caliphate. Mustafa Kemal said to French journalist Maurice Bournaux, “Turks had their happiest period in history when their sultans had not yet assumed the caliphate.” The Prophet, said Mustafa Kemal, had never asked his followers to establish a political rule over the people; he wanted them only to spread the message of Islam to others and to invite them to accept his new religion. According to Mustafa Kemal, the caliphate is a sort of government; it is a political system. How would the caliph administer or rule over the different Muslim nations? The idea of the caliphate as a political power does not derive from genuine Islam but from books [written by later Muslim thinkers]. In the past, Iranians or Afghans or Muslim Africans never accepted the rule or authority of the caliphs of Istanbul [Ottoman caliphs]. We preserved the institution of the caliphate because of our ancient traditions. We provided for the needs and the sustenance of the caliphs and their families. The Turkish nation is the sole nation in the Islamic world who did this. Now, other nations must also contribute to the sustenance and support of the caliphate. To Mustafa Kemal, the authority of the caliph over all the Muslims of the world is an absurd and unrealistic concept. Despite claiming political power, Kemal says, the caliphate today has no political authority whatsoever over the Muslim nations inhabiting the globe. To us, these views are unacceptable because without a caliph and the caliphate a Muslim government has no legitimacy.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Grey Wolf*

In today's Egyptian newspaper *Siyaset*, I read the article written by the former governor of Lazkiye, who praised the Kemalists and defended their cause by supporting them in the “grey wolf” issue. The Kemalists put the grey wolf picture on the stamp. Moreover, according to information we received, this wolf was declared sacred and was worshiped. The author wrote that the grey wolf was not a deity for the Turks, but played an important role in the pre-Islamic Turkic mythology, particularly in the Ergenekon legend. Whatever the authen-

---

4 Mustafa Sabri, *Hilafet*, pp. 107–125

ticity of that myth, we all know that the ancient Turks were not Muslim and were in fact pagan or polytheistic. Therefore, they worshipped not Allah but other deities, if not a wolf. If the Turkists knew any deity other than the wolf, they would, without any doubt, have deified it and declared it sacred. We do not know whether the ancient Turks worshiped the wolf, but throughout history every nation has history worshiped an object or an animal and justified it by a myth. I am absolutely confident that the Muslim Turkish nation would not worship the wolf. I am equally certain that even the overtly Turkist thinkers, such as Yusuf Akçura (1876–1935), Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924), Ağaoğlu Ahmed (1869–1939), Celal Nuri and Hamdullah Suphi, and secret Turkists such as Mustafa Kemal, would never worship the wolf. The Kemalists used the symbol of the wolf to revive the beliefs and traditions of the ancient Turks. Therefore, they wanted to replace Islamic values and traditions with these pagan ones. Recently, a Turkist newspaper lamented that, for centuries, Turks had used Arabic names such as Osman, Muhammad, Ömer, Ayşe and Fatma, instead of Turkish names, such as Timur, Cengiz, Alp and İlhan. Although I was born in Turkey in the city of Tokat in central Anatolia to Turkish parents and have only Turkish ancestors, I have never heard or seen this wolf symbol in my entire life. This wolf legend has not made any mark on the historical memory and culture of the Muslim Turkish nation. Every summer, wealthy Egyptian families spend a couple of months in Istanbul for vacation and then return to their country. Have they ever witnessed the Turkish inhabitants of this city worshipping the wolf?

This city [Istanbul], which is the seat of the caliphate, is full of mosques, and these mosques are full of believers worshipping Allah. The devotion of the Turkish people to their religion and to their *sharia* causes a great gap between the Turkish nation and their present government. Today's governing elite in Turkey, inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution, wanted to impose secularism on the country and wanted to sever the ties between the mosque [religion] and the government [politics].<sup>5</sup>

#### *The Ethno-Nationalist View*

Do you not find these views, penned by an Egyptian journalist in *El-Ahram* newspaper on 8 December 1923, alarming? Some men in Ankara are set to propagate an ethnicity-based nationalism never before seen in the Islamic world. Yusuf Akçura is one of the most prominent of these writers. He began to expound and disseminate his Turkist views on behalf of the Young Turks in order to undermine the pan-Islamic union. His principal objective is to destroy

---

5 Mustafa Sabri, *Hilafet*, pp. 153–162

the pan-Islamic union and replace it with a pan-Turanian union. Turanism aims to unite different ethnic groups that speak various Turkic and Turanian languages and dialects, such as the Magyar [Hungarians], Finns and Bulgars. The ultimate goal of Turanism is the establishment of a pan-Turanian union. The Turkists and pan-Turanians prefer this union, based on race, to the Islamic union. The Turkists consider Islam an Arabian cultural domination over the Turks. According to them, Islam is nothing but an outcome or a product of the Arabian culture. They believe that Arabs imposed their cultural hegemony over the Turks and dominated the national culture. Therefore, Turkists say, we have to free ourselves from this cultural hegemony. Turkists and Turanists argued that *abdest*, or the practice of ablution before prayer, originated from the culture of peoples and nations living in hot climates and are not suited to those living in cold climates. These views constitute a severe blow to the Islamic fraternity, and do not represent the feelings and lifestyle of Anatolian Turks, who are closely attached to their Islamic values. Unfortunately, the Muslim Turkish people of Anatolia today have no voice in government. Their total rejection of the Turkist ideology falls on deaf ears in Ankara, where Mustafa Kemal and his friends rule the country single-handedly without taking into consideration the will and preferences of the nation.<sup>6</sup>

#### *The Abolition of the Sharia [Islamic] Courts*

Again, do you not find what Ahmed Agayef, one of the most prominent figures in Ankara, wrote in the *Akşam* newspaper alarming? Agayef openly criticizes Islam and its legal system, declaring that it is no longer possible in the twentieth century, in 1924, to apply the provisions of the *sharia*. An article in the Egyptian newspaper *el-Rey el am* stated on this occasion that it is astonishing and shocking that this piece by Agayef was written by an intellectual who, until very recently, taught Islamic philosophy in one of the most important universities in Istanbul. Despite what this newspaper *el-Rey el am* says, it is quite well known that although he did not dare to attack Islam openly as he does today, Ahmed Agayef was already expounding secular ideas during the Young Turk period. That is why, today, Mustafa Kemal has appointed this man, whom he already knew and with whose ideas he sympathized, to an important position in his government. The abolition of the *sharia* courts is the most manifest evidence of the Kemalists' rejection and repudiation of Islam. What more do you need to see before you understand their opposition to the religion? They have already openly declared the irreligious nature of their government in Lausanne. The abolition of the *sharia* courts was decided upon by the Ankara

<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Sabri, pp. 129–132.

government after the abolition of the caliphate and the separation of politics from religion. All these measures were adopted to de-Islamize the state, because an Islamic state can have only *sharia* courts as its justice system. In Ottoman times, justice was administered by the *sharia* courts. Today in Ankara, the Kemalists are disestablishing Islam.<sup>7</sup>

---

7 Mustafa Sabri, *Hilafet*, pp. 133–140.

## Said-i Nursi (1876–1960)

### Life

Said-i Nursi was born in the village of Nurs, in the province of Bitlis in 1876 (Rumi 1293). His father, Mirza Efendi, was a village *molla*, and his mother's name was Nuriye Hanım. The young Said began his education at the local *medrese*. Among his first teachers was a locally renowned *alim*, Sheikh Abdurrahman Tagi. Said attended the *medreses* of the neighboring districts of Pirmiş and Hizan, but was soon obliged to leave the province when he challenged the intellectual authority of the local *ulema*. In 1888, Said went to Bayazid (Doğu Beyazıt), where he studied under the famous *alim* Sheikh Mehmed Celali. He obtained his certificate of proficiency (*icazet*) in a record time of three months. He remained in the region to continue his education in the *medreses* of Bitlis and Siirt under different *alims*. Later, he travelled in southeastern Anatolia and visited many towns (among them, Cizre and Mardin) and nomadic tribes (*aşiret*). In 1892, he was employed by the *vali* (governor) of Bitlis as an instructor and also as a tutor for his children. Said remained in the *vali's* service for two years, during which he thoroughly studied the Islamic classics. Later, he went to Van and entered into the service of Süleyman Bahri Pasha, then Ahmed Nazım Pasha, governors of Van. In Van, Said explored the *vali's* rich library and became acquainted with modern subjects such as history, geography, geology, chemistry, physics and astronomy. After leaving Van, Said travelled to Erzincan, and later to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. In the imperial capital, Said lived in the mansion of an important palace official, Kuşçubaşı Mustafa Pasha, and was introduced to the Sultan. Around 1897, he returned to Van, but we have little information on that period of his life. In 1907, Said returned to Istanbul and managed to obtain an audience with Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909), to whom he presented his project for the foundation of a university (*Medrese-tül-Zehra*) on the shores of Lake Van, where Kurdish would be used as a local language alongside Turkish and Arabic. His proposal aroused the Sultan's suspicion and Said was arrested. His detention lasted only briefly, and he left for Selanik (Thessaloniki) after his release, where he met prominent Unionists. Said was in Selanik during the declaration of the Constitution, on 23–24 July 1908; he welcomed the re-establishment of the constitutional regime in a fiery speech, in which he praised the representative government and condemned absolutism.

On 5 March 1909, Said-i Nursi became one of the founding members of *İttihad-i Muhammedi Fırkası* (Muhammedan Union). He also began to write articles in the journal *Volkan*, which was published by another prominent member of the Muhammedan Union. In his articles, Said supported his party, explained his political views and defended the constitutional regime.

In one article he wrote, "Because it originated in immemorial times, the sacred *sharia* will last until eternity. We can find salvation and liberate ourselves from ignominious absolutism only through Islam. We can only benefit from the rightful liberty by having a strong faith. He who properly serves the creator should not debase himself by submitting to the people. Since everybody is a commander in his own world, every person has the duty to carry out the greater *jihad* within this world."

During the rebellion in Istanbul on 13 April 1909, known as the '31 March Incident', Said-i Nursi gave a speech to the rebel troops, in which he condemned their mutiny and invited them to end their action and submit to their officers: "O soldiers of religion, the honor and dignity, the happiness and independence [*bayrak-ı tevhid*] of 30 million Ottomans and 300 million Muslims depend on you. Even if your officers commit a sin by doing an injustice, you with your actions are harming 300 million Muslims. Because of this insubordination, you jeopardize Islamic solidarity. You must know that the army is like a great factory. If a small engine part fails to function, it would throw the whole factory into confusion [thereby affecting production]. Soldiers should not interfere with politics. Janissaries are a good example of what could happen otherwise. You are asking for *sharia*, but at the same time your action is against *sharia*. You are violating it [by your mutiny]. It is established that it is a religious obligation to obey the righteous and pious commander by the sacred law of *sharia*, by the Quran, by the *hadith*, and by wisdom and experience. Your commanders are your officers. Obey your officers, long live the soldiers, long live the constitutional regime."

After the suppression of the 31 March insurrection, Said was arrested and put on trial in Istanbul by court martial. Although many of his colleagues were condemned to death and executed, Said was acquitted and freed. Following his liberation, he went to Van in 1910 and then to Damascus in 1911, where he gave a religious lecture at the Umayyad Mosque. That same year, he joined Sultan Mehmed V (r. 1909–1918) on his visit to the European provinces of the empire (Rumeli), and found the opportunity to approach the Sultan and explain to him his project of the eastern Anatolian university in Van, obtaining a promise of financial help. When the First World War began in late July 1914, Said-i Nursi joined the army. During the war, he served as a member of the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (Special Organizations) and fought against the Russian army on the

Eastern Front in 1916. He was captured by the Russians and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Tatarstan. In 1918, he escaped from the camp and managed to return to Istanbul. That same year, on the army's recommendation, he was appointed to the *Dar-ul Hikmet-ul İslamiye* (Islamic University). Said also became one of the founding members of the *Cemiyet-i Müderrisin* (which later became the *Teali-i İslam Cemiyeti*, the Society for the Elevation of Islam) and *Kürd Neşr-i Marif Cemiyeti* (Kurdish Educational Publication Society). Nevertheless, Said condemned the idea of an independent Kurdistan. After the occupation of Istanbul by the British in March 1920, Said published a pamphlet entitled *Hutuvat-ı Sitte* to denounce the occupation. Around the same time, he became one of the Islamic scholars who publicly criticized and opposed the *şeyhülislam's fatwa* condemning the *Kuva-yi Milliye* (Nationalist Resistance Forces). Shortly after, he went to Ankara upon the invitation of Mustafa Kemal Pasha (Atatürk). In 1922, Said was given an official welcome ceremony in the National Assembly. In response, he congratulated the heroes (*gazi*) of the nationalist resistance, and prayed for their success before the last great offensive (*Büyük Taaruz*) of the Turkish army against the Greeks in western Anatolia. After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, Said-i Nursi went to Van and lived a secluded life in his *medrese* on Mount Ereğ with a few of his students. In 1925, after the suppression of the Sheikh Said rebellion, Said-i Nursi was taken away from his mountain retreat and brought to Istanbul. In 1926, he was confined to Barla, a small town in interior southern Anatolia, hence beginning a new period in Said-i Nursi's life. This period of his life, which lasted from 1926 to 1950, was marked with trials, banishments, and incarcerations; in sum, all kind of deprivations and difficulties.

During this period, Said was a prolific writer, and produced his famous work *Risale-i Nur* (an important part of the *Risale*, including *Sözler*, [Words], *Lemalar* and *Mektubat* [Correspondence], was written between 1926 and 1932). After the elections of 1950, the long rule of the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (CHP – Republican People's Party) came to an end and a new phase began in the life of Said-i Nursi, one that was this time much happier and more comfortable. The new government, unlike the previous one, decided to ease the pressure on Islam in the country, and different kinds of Islamic social, educational and cultural activities were permitted on a much larger scale. The new Democratic Party government subsidized the publication of *Risale-i Nur* between 1957 and 1959. In acknowledgement of that support, Said-i Nursi politically backed the Democratic Party in the elections. In 1960, Said-i Nursi became ill and went to Urfa, where he died on 23 March that same year. After the *coup d'état* of 27 May

1960, his remains were taken from his tomb and secretly reburied in an unknown location in Isparta.<sup>1</sup>

### Ideas

The following passages are taken from Said-i Nursi's writings quoted in İsmail Kara's *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, vol. 2. Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1997.

I belong to Islam, to the Islamic education, to the *ulema*, to the student body, to Ottomanism, to the caliphate and Muhammedan Union and to Kurdishness. I support the Constitutional Regime, which embodies justice and constitutionalism and originates from the divine law. Although the *sharia* encompasses an ocean of legal cases for referrals, the preference of appeal to Europe for adopting their laws, as done by many of our intellectuals, constitutes a criminal act committed against Islam. In the Constitutional Regime, the dominant force is law; therefore, this law must clothe itself with the garb of national Islam [*bu kanun libas-i milliye-yi İslamiyeyi giymeli*]. Since the *sharia* rules in the Constitutional Regime, the divine law will uproot the three infernal aspects of the family tree [*şecere-i zakkum*], which are irreligiousness, dissent and factionalism, and foreign intrigues, and plant the three trees of life [*şecere-i tuba*], which are the communal union by spiritual awakening, the progress guided by the *sharia*, and the purification of the religion. I declare with all my force that there is no progress and work of civilization that Islam does not support or endorse explicitly or implicitly in this world. The Constitutional Regime is the servant of the *sharia*, and cannot be taken away from it. We should pay attention to the fact that the former terrible, despotic regime had no relation whatsoever with the *sharia* law. In order to deceive the nation and prolong its life, it wrongfully presented itself as the representative of the *sharia*.

The students of modern schools and those of *medreses* and convents form the separate units of the army of Islamic education and they must cooperate and work together like the workers in a factory. The educational system of the country also had to adapt to the Constitutional Regime by supporting the co-existence of different schools of thought. The *ulema* must respect the divergence of opinion; if they do not there will be absolutism in academia. In government, power must reside within the law; in scholarship, it must stay

<sup>1</sup> İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 458–462. For his life see also *Risale-i Nur Külliyyatından Tarihçe-yi Hayat: Bedüzzaman Said-i Nursinin Hayati*, Istanbul: Şah Damar Yayınları, 2011 (hereafter cited as Nursi, Tarihçe).

with justice and righteousness. The government and the people must work for the advancement of Ottomanism. Since the main foundation of the Ottoman state is Islam, we should seek every opportunity to elevate the might of Islam. In our age, the elevation and advancement of a civilization is possible only through material progress. The most terrible foes of progress are ignorance and poverty. Ottomans must therefore declare a *jihad* against these two evils, and fight them with all our force. We will battle ignorance and poverty in the name of our religion. In this struggle, the *sharia* will be our guide. I had a conversation with Sultan Abdülhamid II, and urged him to turn his palace into a university by surrounding himself with scholars instead of harmful, sycophantic courtiers who did nothing but suck the blood of the nation during the ancient regime. In the new Constitutional Regime, he said, the principal task of the Sultan, as *imam* of the Muslims, is to cure the nation's most dreadful disease: ignorance.

In order to connect the Kurds to the empire, the Ottoman government must educate them in a way that increases their feeling of national union [*ittihad-i milli* – Ottomanism]. This is possible only by introducing modern education to Kurdistan. Modern schools, combined with the reformed *medreses*, will be the efficient instruments of this policy.<sup>2</sup>

### *On Representative Government*

Due to the demand for it, and given the Constitutional Regime, this liberty was born at the right time, and our former Sultan [Abdülhamid II] had to accord it. The new regime is established on certain foundations. Firstly, there is strength in numbers, thus the rule of the nation is better than the rule of one person [the sultan]. Secondly, in the past, might and power was the master of the world. Today, the world is ruled by science and knowledge. Thirdly, in the past, limited education meant that people were not able to govern themselves. Therefore one person, the Sultan, ruled over them. Until now, our lord the Sultan carried this burden on his shoulders, empowered by the wisdom of Plato and the force of Alexander. Today, the level of education has increased, and people desire a representative government; they want to govern themselves. Today, people rule through the National Assembly [*Meclis-i Mebusan*], which has become the heart of the nation. Islamic parliamentarianism represents the nation's ideas. This administration is limited by the freedom of the people.<sup>3</sup>

O Islamic liberty, your call sounds so formidable but it is also equally beautiful and auspicious. Thus it awoke even a vagrant like me from a profound sleep

<sup>2</sup> İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 463–468.

<sup>3</sup> İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 469–471.

buried under a pile of unconsciousness. Without you, I and the entire nation would remain in the dungeon of slavery. I welcome you with eternal life. I promise that if you make [your] source of life the fountain of the *sharia* and if you flourish in that paradise, this oppressed nation will advance and prosper much more than before. I hope that the nation will take you as a guide and not corrupt and distort your [principles] for their personal interests.

Because it originated in immemorial times, the sacred *sharia* will last until eternity. We can find salvation and liberate ourselves from ignominious absolutism only through Islam. We can only benefit from the rightful liberty by having a strong faith. He who properly serves the creator should not debase himself by submitting to the people. Since everybody is a commander in his own world, every person has the duty to carry out the greater *jihad* within this world. Moreover, every person has the obligation to follow the moral example of the Prophet Muhammad and to emulate his lifestyle. Oh saints of this world, if you wish the concordance, you should act in accordance with the divine rules. It is a divine sign that all kinds of known sciences derive from the Muslim countries and the Ottoman Empire. The driving force behind the development of this country's people is religion. The fields of Asia and Africa and the flowers in the gardens of Rumeli will blossom with the light of Islam. It is not acceptable to sacrifice religion for this world. The disease of the nation is the weakness of religion, and irreligiousness. The nation can regain its health only by curing this illness by strengthening religion. Our motto is 'friendship to friendship and hostility to hostility;' in other words, supporting Islamic fraternity and fighting against enemy forces."<sup>4</sup>

---

4 Nursi, *Tarihçe*, p. 43.

## Ahmed Naim Baban (1872–1934)

### Life

Ahmed Naim (Baban) was born in Baghdad in 1872. His father was Mustafa Zihni Pasha, a high Ottoman official in Iraq, serving as the chief secretary (*Mektupçu*) of the Baghdad province. After completing his studies in the *Rüşdiye* (high school) of his native city, the young Ahmed Naim went to Istanbul to pursue his higher education. In 1891, he entered *Galatasaray Mekteb-i Sultanisi* (Imperial High School of Galatasaray), and graduated from the *Mülkiye* (School of Civil Administration) in 1894. That same year, he was employed at the translation office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after which he pursued a bureaucratic career in the Ministry of Education, where he was appointed director of the curriculum department from 1911 to 1912. From 1912 to 1914, Ahmed Naim became a lecturer in Arabic at his alma mater, *Galatasaray Mekteb-i Sultanisi*. In 1914, he was appointed as a member of the Ministry of Education's translation committee and participated in the activities of the educational reform committee. A prolific scholar, Ahmed Naim made a great contribution to the philosophical and artistic compendia prepared and published by this committee.

He wrote several works on ethics, philosophy, and religion. Naim also began to translate the *hadith* collection of al-Bukhari (d. 870). He was later appointed as a professor in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Istanbul (*Darülfünûn*), where he taught philosophy, psychology, ethics, logic and metaphysics, also publishing the majority of his class notes. For a short time he was also appointed rector of the university. In 1933, as a result of a government purge of academia, he was forced to accept retirement and died a year later, on 13 August 1934, in Istanbul.<sup>1</sup>

1 Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 363–364. On Ahmed Naim Baban's life and ideas, see also Ahmet Şeyhun, "Ahmet Naim's Criticism of the Turkists (İslamda-Dava-yı Kavmiye)," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 25, 92008: 245–253.

## Ideas

The following passages are taken from Ahmed Naim's work *İslam'da Dava-yı Kavmiyet* (Ethnicity in Islam), published by Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, Istanbul, 1332 AH.

One of the pillars of Islam is the Muslim brotherhood. This has been clearly established by the Quranic verse, which declares that all Muslims are brothers [and sisters]. After emphasizing this important principle, Islam also imposes social and religious values and duties to ensure that this principle endures. These are: paying due alms to the needy; giving mutual assistance; and forbidding and preventing animosity, discord, and strife among Muslims. A nation can survive only if it protects itself from discord and strife. Otherwise, these social evils undermine the brotherhood and destroy the unity of the nation. Thus, the reasons for the strict prohibition of racism and ethnic nationalism must be explicated.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of ethnic nationalism and racism penetrated the Muslim world only very recently. It was only after the revolution of 1908 that ethnic nationalism and racism began to spread among Muslims. Prior to this time, although [this idea] was put forward by intellectuals, it remained isolated. Ethnic nationalism is a harmful and alien ideology to Muslim culture and it poses a dangerous threat to the unity of Islam. Ethnic nationalism is like a deadly contagious disease that could cause the demise of Islam. Ethnic nationalism is an evil ideology whose roots extend to the period of *Jahiliyyah*, the age of darkness and ignorance that existed before the advent of Islam in Arabia. Identifying themselves as Turk, Arab, Kurd, and Circassian would be madness for Muslims, especially at such a perilous time, when the foot of the enemy has penetrated our sacred homeland. We must take a lesson from the fate of Albania, a Muslim land that is now lost for Islam.<sup>3</sup>

Turkists come in two categories: the "pure Turkists" and the "Turkist-Islamists." The "pure Turkists" aspire to forge a completely new ideology by using old [pre-Islamic Turkic] myths and legends. Their objective is to build a new nation with a new faith.

Turkists argue that what caused them to adopt the ethnic nationalist cause was the plight of the Turks. They state that Turks are the main ethnic group within the Ottoman Empire who have, for many years, carried the heaviest

2 Ahmed Naim (Baban), *İslamda Dava-yı Kavmiyet*, Istanbul: Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, 1332, pp. 3–4 (hereafter cited as Naim, *Kavmiyet*).

3 Naim, *Kavmiyet*, pp. 4–6.

burden by defending the State with their blood and sweat. As a result of this, they are now in a situation of complete exhaustion. Their commerce, industry and even their agriculture have been totally ruined. On the other hand, none of the other Muslim or non-Muslim ethnic groups really acknowledge the value of the sacrifices made by the Turks in defending the Ottoman state. Now, the time has arrived for Turks to recover from centuries of exhaustion and impoverishment. Thus, Turks have to reduce the amount of sacrifice they make for other ethnic groups of the empire, and devote more energy and resources to their own welfare and edification. This could be possible only under the guidance of a new idea, and this new idea is Turkism. The Turkists also argue that religiosity among the masses is weakened, and that religion has lost its former importance as a social force. Nationalism is the new rising ideology in Europe, and if Turks want to be a part of Europe and keep up with its progress, they have to adopt nationalist ideals and abandon the old theocratic system. It is common knowledge that it is almost impossible to regain the territory occupied by the European powers. On the other hand, the Muslim populations of the empire are gradually losing their attachment to Islam as a political ideal. Therefore, say Turkist intellectuals, Turkism must be used to unite the various Turkic groups, consisting of eighty million people, which stretch from the Bosphorus to the Pacific Ocean.<sup>4</sup>

We consider this utopia to be a completely absurd dream. Muslim Turks of Anatolia would never take up arms for their heathen brethren of the same race living in faraway Kamchatka, just as they would not shed their blood for the Christian-Shamanistic Turkic Yakuts living in the ice- and snow-covered plains of Siberia.<sup>5</sup>

According to Turkist-Islamist intellectuals, Islam can be entirely compatible with ethnic nationalism – in their case, Turkism. This cannot be true. In a *hadith* reported by Abu Hureyra God says to the believers, “I created you in tribes and in different peoples only to facilitate your recognition of each other; otherwise you are one people.”

I agree with the Turkist-Islamist intellectuals that Turkish groups within the Ottoman Empire need to recover after being overburdened with such a difficult task of sacrifice. However, it is the duty of all Muslims to participate in the rejuvenation of the Turks, because all Muslims, regardless of their ethnic origin, must assist each other. Since the Turks are an inseparable part of the Muslim *ummah*, the economic and cultural revival of Turks, and the development of their industry, agriculture, and education can only be to the benefit of other

---

4 Ibid., pp. 7–8.

5 Ibid., pp. 8–9.

Muslims, by contributing to the strength and welfare of the Islamic world. Therefore, Turkish development and success should be seen as Muslim development and success, not a separate ethnic one. Turkish identity can have significance only within the broader Muslim identity. Turkish history cannot be written independently from Islamic history. Therefore, one should not be called a “Turk” but a “Muslim.”<sup>6</sup>

The Turkish-speaking peoples of Anatolia and *Rumeli* [European lands of the Ottoman Empire] should not be labelled “Turks” since their adoption of the Turkish language does not necessarily make them Turkish. Language is an instrument of communication; it does not confer ethnicity upon its users.

Since the Turkist-Islamists’ vision is not the same as that of the pure Turkists, this causes confusion for people who cannot clearly understand the political and social ideas of the former. To consider Turkic and Mongol mythical and historical figures, such as Kara Khan, Bozkurt Khan, Oghuz Khan, Genghis Khan, and Hülegü Khan, as the ancestors of today’s Ottoman Muslims would be extremely erroneous, and would confuse people still further. The Turkish-speaking Muslims of the Ottoman Empire long ago lost their racial purity by mixing with numerous other ethnic groups.<sup>7</sup>

The Turkists recently began to celebrate a new holiday called Erganekon Liberation Day. Such innovations, which aim to revive mythologies that are thousands of years old, will not arouse any feeling in the hearts of the Turkish Muslim people. It is therefore a useless endeavor. Even the Easter celebrations are much more meaningful to us, since we are familiar with them from our Christian neighbors.<sup>8</sup> Turkist-Islamist intellectuals should not associate themselves with pure Turkists, who are advocating shamanism and paganism. Furthermore, they must not try to impose double ideals on the people. The double ideal is that Turkist-Islamists cannot be understood by Muslim Turkish people. This will confuse them. Muslims should never give up Islamic ideals for any other ideals, be they Turkic or anything else, because Islamic ideals are the only ideals that can ensure their salvation. Turkist-Islamists should not try to invent a new Mecca, namely Turan, for the Turkish people. For more than a thousand years, the Muslim Turkish nation turned toward the holiest shrine of Islam, the *Kaaba* in Mecca. Therefore, how can one expect them to abandon the *Kaaba* for Turan, or revere both at the same time?<sup>9</sup> It is futile to try to reconcile Islam with notions it radically rejects. Islam radically rejects ethnic

---

6 Ibid., pp. 10–11.

7 Ibid., p. 12.

8 Ibid., pp. 13–14.

9 Ibid., pp. 15–16.

nationalism and tribalism; Muslims should therefore not take pride in their ethnicity but in their religion, which provides them with their only identity. Being Muslim means forgetting one's pre-Islamic past and pagan heritage. Islam cannot be fused or blended with these pagan identities and cultures, because the fundamental teachings of Islam make this fusion impossible. We must try to enhance and exalt Islam, and not promote ideologies such as Turkism. Muslims do not need to know the Law of Genghis or the history of the Golden Horde, or to glorify the exploits of the Ilkhans, but they do need to know Islamic history and to take pride in the acts and deeds of Muslim heroes.<sup>10</sup>

We should pay our respects to the Arab nationalists who refused to take pride in their pre-Islamic history, and did not celebrate their pre-Islamic holidays. Tribalism had a long-standing history among Arabs. In Medina, there was a deep animosity and fierce fighting between the Arab tribes of Aws and Khazraj in the *Jahiliyyah* times. These two rival tribes finally decided to conclude a peace agreement after suffering significant losses at an extremely bloody battle at Buath. This peace was concluded at Aqaba under the auspices of the Prophet Muhammad, just before his migration to Medina.<sup>11</sup>

According to an anecdote from the time of the Prophet Muhammad, a fight was provoked between the *Ansar* and *Muhajirun* over the watering of camels. The Prophet admonished both parties and ordered them to reconcile immediately. Regionalism and tribalism have no place in Islam. One of the earliest examples in which Islamic solidarity prevailed over Arab tribalism was the Battle of Badr, where members of the same tribes, clans and even families fought against each other. At Badr, the Muslim army was formed of different tribes. Nevertheless, they were united as one nation, the *ummah* or Muslim nation, to fight their pagan kin.<sup>12</sup>

According to a *hadith* related by Jabir ibn Abdallah, the Prophet said during his farewell sermon: "O people, your God is one and your forefather is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab and a non-Arab is not better than an Arab, and a white person is not better than a black person and a black person is not better than a white person." According to another *hadith*, the Prophet also said, "Anyone who adheres to tribalism by ascribing importance to his lineage cannot be considered Muslim." The Quran states: "We have created you male and female and have divided you into nations and tribes that you recognize each other; otherwise you are one people. God judges you only by your piety [*takwa*]."

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

It is also stated in the Quran that all Muslims are brothers and sisters; they form a single unity. The unity of Muslims is essential in Islam. Therefore, said Ahmed Naim, "Muslims' only loyalty should be to the Islamic community [*um-mah*] and that loyalty should supersede their loyalty to their family and kin."

In Islam, unlike in pre-Islamic Arab culture, *neseb* [lignagne] does not have any importance. Early Muslim *sahaba* [companions of the Prophet] condemned pride and vanity based on one's lineage or ancestry. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 855) related another *hadith*, which stated that anyone who prides himself on his (pagan) ancestry deserves to go to hell.

The Turkists should not discriminate against non-Turkish Muslims. They should not forget that during the last disastrous wars, Ottomans received much help from Muslims all over the world, from Morocco to India. Therefore, it would be unjust to the millions of Muslims who supported the Ottomans during the Balkan wars to present these military setbacks as a calamity for the Turkish world. These setbacks were most certainly a calamity, and one that fell upon the entire Islamic world. The majority of the Ottoman ruling class were not Turkish in race but were non-Turkish *devshirme* [converts]. However, their loyalty was to Islam and the House of Osman, which was founded by a Turkish clan. Nevertheless, none of those pashas or viziers considered themselves Turkish; they identified themselves as Muslims. Islam gives no importance to ethnicity. Imam Malik b. Anas (d. 795) wrote in his famous work, *Muwatta*, that the Prophet Muhammad once declared: "O people, Arabness is nothing but a language."

Nationalism could be possible in the West, but not in the Muslim world. In the West, the church and state evolved as separate entities; whereas in Islam, from the hour of its birth, religion and politics became inseparable due to the fact that Islam was born as a political power as well as a religion.

## Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay (1883–1961)

### Life

Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay was born in Eğin in 1883 (today Kemaliye), in eastern Anatolia. His father was İbrahim Efendi, who was an instructor (*müder-ris*) in a *medrese*; his mother was Saliha Hanım. The young Şemseddin studied at the school of *Ravza-yi Terakki* in Üsküdar, a district on the Asian side of Istanbul, and later graduated from the *Vefa İdadî* (high school), after which he studied sciences at the Faculty of Education (*Dar ul Muallimin-i Aliye*). He then pursued his education abroad, first in France and then in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he studied physics. After returning from Europe, he taught at the *İdadîs* of Cyprus and Midilli (Mytilini, Lesbos), and then was appointed the director of Gelenbevi High School in Izmir. While teaching in Midilli, his articles began to appear in the journal *Sırat-i Müstakim*. His first writings were on philosophy but he later began to write on social issues. In 1911, he lectured on history at the newly established *Türk Ocağı*. After the publication of *İslam Mecmuası*, he joined a group called the Islamist-Turkists. In 1914, he was appointed professor of Turkish and Islamic history. At the *medrese* of Süleymaniye, he taught the history of religions and Islamic philosophy. He also lectured in the Faculty of Divinity of the *Darülfünûn* (university) in Istanbul, where he would later become dean. In 1915, he was elected to Parliament as a member of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), representing the province of Bilecik. While still pursuing his academic career, he remained a member of Parliament until its dissolution in 1920. In 1918, he presided over the CUP congress, and in that same year he also became a member of the *Teceddüd* (Renovation) Party. After the end of the First World War, he was nominated as a member of the court-martial that was established to punish the leaders of the CUP. After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, Günaltay entered Parliament as the representative of the province of Sivas. He was later elected the representative of the province of Erzincan, an office he held until 1954. Günaltay was also a founding member of the Turkish Historical Society, established in 1930, served as president from 1941 until his death in 1961. He also played a crucial role in the development of the new Turkish Historical Thesis in the 1930s. Günaltay also taught history at the universities of Istanbul and Ankara. On 15 January 1949, Şemseddin Günaltay was appointed prime minister of Turkey and held office until 22 May 1950, when the Republican People's Party

(*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP*) lost the elections to the Democrat Party in what is considered a turning point in the history of the Turkish Republic. In 1958–59, he served as the head of the Istanbul branch of the CHP. After the military coup of 27 May 1960, he was appointed a member of the Representatives' Assembly (*Temsilciler Meclisi*). In the 1961 elections, Günaltay was nominated as a senator. He died on 19 October of that same year.<sup>1</sup>

## Ideas

The following passages are taken from *Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay's work Zulmetten Nura (From Darkness to Light)*, published by Evkaf-ı İslâmiye Matbaası, Istanbul, 1341 AH.

Islam is a rational religion and supports the progress of science by encouraging education. The decline of Islam came about because Muslim nations neglected the study of science.

Muslims are not properly implementing the requirements of their religion. The core of Islam is a divine law, the main purpose of which is to lead believers to a happy, virtuous, and prosperous existence.<sup>2</sup>

According to that definition of Islam, Muslims are supposed to be among the most fortunate, wealthy and civilized nations on earth, and their countries among the most powerful and advanced in the world. Is this the case? Unfortunately, it is not. Today, Muslims are among the poorest people on earth, and their countries are underdeveloped and backward. In no other parts of the world do we see societies so ferociously opposed to each other, divided, poor, and very much lagging behind in science, technology, industry and trade. Nevertheless, despite the fact that leading their societies to progress and to development is the responsibility of every Muslim government, none of them seems to fulfill that duty that is incumbent on them by the sacred law of Islam.

Since religion means happiness and prosperity, it is obvious that Islam is incompatible with the current wretched and miserable situation of the Muslim world. The true religion of Islam leads its followers towards a material and intellectual development. Muslims made progress as long as they understood

1 Kara, *Türkiyede*. pp.563–565.

2 Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay, *Zulmetten Nura*, Istanbul: Evkaf-ı İslâmiye Matbaası, 1341 AH, pp. 60–64 (hereafter cited as Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*). Şemseddin Günaltay, *Zulmetten Nura*, edited by Musa Alak, Istanbul: Furkan Yayınları, 1996, pp. 81–85 (hereafter cited as Günaltay [b], *Zulmetten*).

and practiced their religion from that viewpoint. The decline of the Islamic world began when Muslims forgot the true meaning of their religion. The progress of science, the development of industry and trade, and the acquisition of wealth are all necessary for the preservation of the faith. Unfortunately Muslims were told exactly the opposite for centuries. Today, Muslim towns and villages are desolate and half-ruined, and their inhabitants live a dismal and miserable life. They have the appearance of cemeteries rather than real towns.<sup>3</sup>

Islam is the true friend and protector of the arts and sciences. There is no point at which Islam is not compatible with science. The religion of Islam does not contradict any scientific facts. Islam is not only based on reason, it is reason itself. Therefore, the declarations of those people who are in religious garb but completely ignorant of religious knowledge should not be taken seriously. *Ijtihad* [juristic analogy] is essential in Islam, and every Muslim has the obligation to understand his or her religion from a rational viewpoint. Since Islam gives so much importance to reason and intellect, it declares science as paramount. Islam considers the study of science as a religious duty incumbent upon all Muslims, both men and women.<sup>4</sup>

Women, who carry the main responsibility for the upbringing of future generations, are ordered by Islam to educate themselves and acquire knowledge of science and arts. Until today, the education of our women has been neglected. This constitutes a grave sin and error. Those who consider that women are not required to receive education are gravely mistaken. Our religion demands that both men and women should seek knowledge equally. Science is the lost property of the Muslims. They must claim it wherever they find it. Therefore, Muslims who are unsatisfied by the education they receive in their countries must travel to other countries, even outside Islamic lands, to seek knowledge.<sup>5</sup> Today, the majority of the sciences are much more developed in the West. European countries are much further ahead of the Islamic world in science and arts. The only salvation for Muslims is to bridge that gap and attain the level of the Western nations in science. Muslims have been told by their prophet in a *hadith* that they must go even as far as China to seek knowledge. From this command, we can deduce that going to Europe and the Americas is also encouraged.

When looking at history, those who read that, in the past, a clash between Christianity and science existed in Europe would normally assume that this same clash exists between Islam and science. A brief study of Islamic history

---

3 Şemseddin, *Zulmetten*, pp. 49–50.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 60–61.

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 61–62.

would easily correct these false assumptions, as Islam values each individual according to his or her knowledge. A learned person is considered superior to an unlearned one. Islam always encourages the acquisition of knowledge. Despite this, Muslims are today among the least-educated people on earth. A thick cloud of ignorance is covering the Islamic world, and all Muslims have fallen into a deep sleep. Even the sounds of the bells ringing from the minarets of our mosques or the thundering of the enemy artillery are not enough to awaken us from this slumber. If we examine the universe, we will immediately notice the existence of a struggle between living creatures everywhere at every level. Life is nothing but a daily struggle. To survive, one must struggle. The same truth is valid for societies and nations. Those societies that strive for progress and liberate themselves from backwardness reap the rewards of their toil by occupying an honorable place among the nations of the earth. Those societies that remain inert and sluggish are eventually destined to the abyss of destruction. Nations that do not fight to survive in the international arena will be taken over, conquered by more aggressive and stronger nations, and will lose their independence to the latter.

According to the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims must give equal importance to the world we live in as we give to worlds hereafter. One *hadith* says, "In this world they must work and study as though they would never die; but also do their prayers and charities and religious duties as though they would die tomorrow." Islam prepares its followers for both worlds. Again, in another *hadith*, the Prophet says: "Those who strive to make a living by legitimate means are like those who wage *jihad* for the sake of God [*Sebillullah*]." Far from condemning material wealth and legitimate efforts to acquire it, Islam actually encourages Muslims to become rich through hard work.

The Prophet of Islam encourages Muslims to engage in commercial activities, and to travel for that purpose. He himself travelled to Palestine and Syria for trade. His companions also travelled and traded in distant lands. It was thanks to the teachings of the Quran that the early Muslims were able to build a mighty empire and create a prosperous society in the space of eighty years. It took 800 years for the Romans to create an empire of a similar size. What happened to make such a brilliant civilization disappear? The decline of the Islamic civilization is due to the harmful teachings of ignorant *ulema* [Islamic scholars].<sup>6</sup> Today, some ignorant religious clerics try to promote the idea that Islam is opposed to material wealth, and that Muslims must live a passive and inactive life, accept a meagre existence and devote themselves completely to the act of worship. Nothing could be more at odds with the essence of Islam

---

6 Ibid., pp. 132–137.

than this. What these clerics are in fact doing is committing a serious crime against Muslims by distorting the genuine Islam and teaching erroneous ideas. These people are primarily responsible for the backward and miserable state of the Muslim world today.

Is our religion the main obstacle to our progress? When we look at the miserable condition of the Muslims living in different parts of the world, this assertion seems difficult to refute. It is an undeniable fact that today most Muslims in the world live in wretched conditions. Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to assume that the reason behind this is Islam. What caused the Islamic world to decline is not the genuine or pure Islam, but a distorted and falsified form of that religion, represented by spurious legends, superstitions and fabricated traditions. Since the real Islam is based on reason and scientific thought, these legends and superstitions bear no relation to it.

If Islam were really opposed to progress and science, none of the splendid monuments of art and science that we admire today in various parts of the Islamic world would exist as remnants and evidence or testimony of a brilliant civilization. These historical buildings and other works of art in Baghdad, Samarkand, Herat, Damascus, Jerusalem, Kairouan, Cairo and Istanbul attest clearly that the Islamic world was once at the forefront of human civilization. If Islam had really been opposed to science and reason, all the famous Muslim scientists, such as Farabi, al-Kindi (801–873), Ibn Sina [Avicenna] (980–1037), Ghazali (1058–1111), Ibn Rushd [Averroes] (1126–1198), Ibn Kemal and Uluğ Beg (1394–1449), could not have existed.<sup>7</sup>

Are not all these works on mathematics, natural sciences, law and philosophy, literature, sociology, and many other sciences that fill the libraries of the West the best indication of the genius of Islam? If the religion of Islam were opposed to science and progress, all these books on the achievements of Muslim scientists in Baghdad, Cordoba, Cairo, Samarkand, Istanbul, Damascus, India and Iran would never have been written. The underlying reason behind the backwardness and misery of the Muslim peoples should be sought not in their religion, but in the oppressive administration of their despotic rulers and in the distorted version of Islam invented and taught to the masses by ignorant *ulema*.

In the Middle Ages, Muslims were the teachers of the world.<sup>8</sup> Libraries full of books written in this age are the testimony of the erudition of Muslim scholars. Jabir, one of the most important scientists of his time, invented many new processes that revolutionized the science of chemistry. He designed new

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 78–86.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 84–85.

techniques in glass making, and also invented the process to obtain azote, a process used even today in the West.

During the Middle Ages, the Muslim world was far more advanced in science and technology than the rest of the world. In the ninth century, when the West was in the Dark Ages, Muslim lands were luminous, enlightened by a brilliant civilization. Mehmed (Muhammad), Ahmed and Hasan Musa, three geographer brothers, were commissioned by Caliph al-Mamun (r. 813–833) to determine whether the earth was round or flat. After much research and calculations, they declared that the earth was round. Their discovery came at a time when Europeans still believed the earth was flat.<sup>9</sup>

After the end of the Alexandrian School, the science of astronomy entered into a period of stagnation and then decline. Not only in the West, but also in Byzantium, there was very little knowledge on astronomy and geography. The scientific achievement of Muslim scientists greatly surpassed the achievements of their Greek forerunners. By building their achievements on the discoveries of ancient Greek scientists, Muslim scientists considerably expanded the limits of these sciences. Muslim scientists also invented the astrolabe, an indispensable instrument for measuring the coordinates of the earth, parallels and longitudes.

Muslim rulers were able to provide their subjects the order and security necessary for the development of all kinds of intellectual activities. They also supported scholarship by donating and endowing significant sums of money to institutions of learning. The Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur (r. 754–774) established *medreses* [universities] in Baghdad; one for the study of law, another for medicine. His grandson Harun al-Rashid (r. 786–809) decreed that each mosque must also have a *medrese* attached to it. In medicine it was Muslim doctors that first introduced the experimental method. *Ulema* also contributed decisively to the development of the science of surgery by inventing new surgical and other medical instruments.

One of the greatest successes of Muslim mathematicians is the application of algebra to geometry. European historians wrongly attributed this discovery to Descartes. Also, the works of al-Baghdadi on the topography and the measurement of the distances on earth constituted a breakthrough in that field, and amazed Western scientists. Another important discovery of Muslim scientists was in the field of optics. Ancient Greek scientists explained vision as the rectilinear rays emanating from the eye [extramission theory]. Muslim scientists refuted this theory and correctly proved that the act of vision was, in fact,

---

9 Ibid., pp. 86–87.

a refraction of the rays reflected from the object back to the eye [intromission theory]. Today's scientists explain vision in the same way.

Muslim engineers built many irrigation canals in Mesopotamia and introduced cotton cultivation there. During the Middle Ages, Muslims were far more advanced in agricultural sciences than western Europeans. In botany and zoology, their contribution was significant. The theory of evolution that today forms the basis of Western science was first construed and expounded by Muslim scientists.<sup>10</sup> Other Muslim scholars applied the theory of evolution to social sciences and explained the evolution of societies.

During the fourth century, Muslims continued to progress in science. Many famous scholars of the period, such as al-Razi, al-Farabi (d. 950), Ali bin Abbas and Abu al-Kasim, enlightened the world with their works. In this century, the scientific and intellectual activities in the Islamic world extended from central Asia to the Atlantic Ocean. Although the Abbasid caliphate lost its former power and splendor in the fourth century, caliphs such as al-Muktefi Billah continued to patronize scientific and cultural activities. The caliph's son, Jafar, was a scholar and an important authority in astronomy. The heritage of the Abbasids was perpetuated by the new dynasties that succeeded them. The Fatimid dynasty, which succeeded the Tulunids (868–905) after a brief interval – Abbasid (905–935) and Ikshidid (935–969) – continued the tradition of its predecessors in patronizing science and scholarship in Egypt after their conquest of that country in 969. The Fatimid caliphs built and endowed the famous Al-Azhar University, which became one of the most important cultural and scientific centers of the medieval world.

The pilgrimage in Islam is a great social institution. Muslims who met each other in Mecca while performing their religious duty, the *hajj*, exchanged ideas and returned to their countries to spread these ideas there. On the other hand, in the Iberian Peninsula [al-Andalus], the Muslim Arabs developed a marvelous civilization. The rays of that civilization reached northern European countries and dazzled the eyes of the barbarian Europeans. From every corner of Europe, young people came to al-Andalus to study under famous professors at the famous universities. The studies of medicine, astronomy, mathematics, geography and history were extremely advanced in al-Andalus.

Muslims were far superior in science and in morality to the peoples of the lands they invaded. It was only by this superiority that they were able to impose their control over these countries and to dominate these conquered nations. One of the examples of this cultural superiority could be seen in Iberia where, just thirty years after the Muslim conquest, the local inhabitants of this

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

country had abandoned their native tongue to adopt the Arabic language. Muslim invaders found Iberia in complete darkness, and succeeded in educating the people of this country in a very short time, making it one of the cultural centers of its time. However, it was not until the tenth century AD that al-Andalus could begin to rival Baghdad in scientific and cultural achievement.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Deterioration of the Medreses*

Ottoman civilization was the product of progressive *medreses*. Since its origins, the *medrese* has played a crucial role in the social and political institutions of the Ottoman state. The *ulema* who were educated in these schools served in the administration as bureaucrats and jurists, and shaped the policy of the sultans by advising them on many issues. These learned men helped the sultans to govern their expanding empire by enacting laws [*kanun*] and regulations, and administering justice according to their interpretation of *sharia* law. Without the advice and guidance of these scholar-bureaucrats, Ottoman sultans would not have been able to create a world empire and maintain it for 600 years. Equally, the deterioration of the *medreses* played a fundamental role in the decline of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>12</sup> After the death of Süleyman I in 1566, the Ottoman Empire entered into a period of stagnation then decline. One of the fundamental causes of that situation was the degeneration of the *medrese* system. Since the foundation of the *medrese* system, these institutions of higher learning had, for centuries, produced the most brilliant minds of the Muslim world, whereas towards the end of the sixteenth century the *medreses* were dominated by *ulema* who were appointed to teaching positions not by merit but by nepotism and favoritism. These *ulema* were of a much lesser caliber than those appointed on the basis of merit. These mediocre men made the curriculum of the *medreses* inferior. Many important subjects, such as the sciences [astronomy, physics], were no longer taught. The teaching of philosophy became very conservative. The works of al-Farabi (d. 950), al-Kindi (d. 873), al-Gazali (d. 1111), Ibn Sina (d. 1037) and Ibn Rushd ceased to be studied and were replaced by the works of scholars of a much lower caliber, such as Birgivi and Abd-al Gafur. The *medrese* system should be completely updated and adjusted to the needs and realities of the present time. These schools must be reformed, because their importance is still vital for the revival of Muslim societies.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

### *The Role of the Sufi Orders*

Another important institution that played a similar role to that of the *medreses* in the rise and decline of Muslim societies were the Sufi orders. Like the *medreses*, when they were established and controlled by enlightened and knowledgeable religious leaders during the golden age of Islamic history, Sufi orders rendered important religious, social, economic and political services to Muslim communities all over the Islamic world. The best example of this is Rumi (d. 1273) [Mawlana Jalal ad-Din], whose contribution to Islamic civilization was enormous. Mevlevi dervishes all over the Ottoman Empire played a very important role in enriching the culture and illuminating the daily life of Muslims, becoming thus their beacon. In later centuries, these orders also fell into the hands of ill-intentioned, ambitious and unscrupulous religious leaders [sheikhs] who used their influence over their ignorant followers to obtain political power and create dynasties such as the Safavids in Iran.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Necessity of Ijtihad for Every Society*

*Ijtihad* is described by Islamic scholars as the maximum effort exerted by a jurist to find an applicable *sharia* law to a particular legal question. *Ijtihad* is an indispensable necessity for every age, and must be carried out according to the changing needs of society. As humanity advances along the path of civilization, the needs of the people and their relationships become more complex. The needs of the Bedouins in Arabia or the Africans who live around Lake Chad are quite different from those of the inhabitants of Lower Egypt or England. The laws, which regulate the lives of different societies, must be shaped according to the social and political conditions of these societies. If any legal system fails to keep pace with the evolution of a society that it regulates, this society will very soon experience a major social crisis and then decline. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of the *ijtihad* by saying that if a Muslim scholar commits an error in his *ijtihad*, he would make one good deed [*sevab*]; if he succeeds in his *ijtihad*, his action would count as ten good deeds. Again, according to a prophetic report, the following conversation took place between the Prophet Muhammad and his governor of Yemen, Muaz b. Jabal:

Prophet Muhammad: O Muaz, what kind of laws will you apply in Yemen?

Muaz: I will apply the law of God, which I will find in the Quran.

Prophet Muhammad: If you cannot find that particular issue in the Quran, what will you do?

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 151–155.

Muaz: Then I will rule according to the *sunnah* [practice or acts] of the Messenger of God.

Prophet Muhammad: If you cannot find that issue in the *Sunnah*?

Muaz: Then, I will rule according to my own personal discretion [*ray*], which I find sound and reasonable.

Prophet Muhammad was extremely satisfied with that answer.

**The following passages are taken from Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay's work *Hurafetten Hakikate* (From Superstition to Truth), published by Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, Istanbul, 1332 AH**

Muslims, who once were the most dominant and progressive people of the world, today live a wretched life and suffer under oppression and slavery. In earlier times the same Muslims, inspired and enlightened by their religion, dominated the world and built a magnificent civilization. By comparing the golden age of Islam with its age of decline, one can conclude that there exists a very important difference between these two Islams. In the past Muslims were worshipers of truth. Today's Muslims are the slaves of superstition. In the past their religion enlightened them with rays of science and knowledge. Today their religious creeds lead them towards the abyss of catastrophe. It is one of the fundamental principles of history that backward nations consider every aspect of advanced nations as good. Some Muslims, who marveled at the progress of the West, blame their religion for their backwardness. We hope that our book can correct this erroneous view, because Islam can never be a source of backwardness. The real cause for the decline of Muslim societies is not the real and genuine Islam, but an Islam that is polluted by superstition, as practiced by the majority of Muslims today.<sup>15</sup>

The Arabian Peninsula, which is the cradle of Islam, has an area three times the size of France. However, since the majority of this vast territory receives very little rainfall, it is almost devoid of lush vegetation. A few oases are scattered here and there like tropical islands in the Pacific Ocean. Other than these oases and the coastal areas, the peninsula is almost completely uninhabited. The western part of Arabia bordering the Red Sea, called Hejaz, has been populated since ancient times. Arabia has been the home of the Arabs since time immemorial. The Arabic language belongs to the Semitic language family, and its closest relative is Hebrew. Nomadic Arabs, called Bedouins, roam the deserts of Arabia, and are organized in tribes. These nomadic Arab tribes fought

---

<sup>15</sup> Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay, *Hurafetten Hakikate*, Istanbul: Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, 1332 AH, pp. 6–7 (hereafter cited as Şemseddin, *Hurafetten*).

continuously with each other. The Bedouin tribes became settled only in Yemen, the southwestern corner of the peninsula, and in some parts of Hejaz, thanks to the area's more moderate climate. Bedouins live in tents made of camel hair, and their frugal diet consists of camel milk and dates. Despite all the hardships they endure, Bedouins never consider leaving the simple nomadic lifestyle, and seem content with their situation. These nomadic Bedouin tribes gain riches through highway robbery. If they know that a merchant caravan or a rich tribe is passing close to their territory, they ambush the travelers, looting their merchandise or belongings. Even today, Bedouins have not renounced that old custom. They attack and rob pilgrimage caravans to Mecca.

Arabia was surrounded by Syria, which was a province of the Eastern Roman Empire until the Muslim conquest in the seventh century. In the east, the Euphrates River formed its boundary with Iraq, which was ruled by the Persian Sasanian dynasty in the east on its northern flank. On the west, beyond the Red Sea, lay Abyssinia, also called Ethiopia.<sup>16</sup>

The principles of Islam are not only noble but also simple enough to suit every mind. It has neither the complicated trinity of Christianity nor the superstitions of Judaism, where scandalous stories are attributed to the prophets. Islam promised humankind the light of justice. It destroys the oppressors and protects the oppressed, declaring personal faith as immune from any sort of threat. In history, Islam has shaken despotic regimes and provided justice to all. People of every social level could find satisfaction in their spiritual quests from the teachings of Islam. The reason that Islam, as a religion, spread with astonishing speed must be sought in the justice it provided to the masses, who were persecuted and oppressed for centuries. The messenger of Islam, in his last *hajj* [pilgrimage], gave a memorable speech to the *ummah* [Muslim community], reminding them of the most important principles of Islam: solidarity among Muslims; the importance of justice in Islam; family relations; and the mutual rights and duties of spouses in marriage, etc. The glory and grandeur of the era of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions derive from the fact that, during that period, Islam was understood and practiced correctly and genuinely by Muslims. The rise of Islam constitutes one of the most important events in human history.<sup>17</sup>

Islam orders consultation among Muslims before making an important decision. The Prophet Muhammad always consulted his companions in important matters. During the caliphate of Abu Bakr, a council of consultation was established, presided over by Umar. During the caliphate of Umar, Ali was

16 Şemseddin, *Hurafetten*, pp. 8–15.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.

appointed to the presidency of this council. In addition to the companions of the Prophet, prominent tribal leaders and notables of the city of Medina also participated in that council. The principle of equality was applied strictly to everybody, without any exception. Umar did not even hesitate to apply it to his own son. Muslims and non-Muslims were treated equally before the law. From the perspective of Islam rich, poor, officials and commoners were all on the same footing. After the passing of the Prophet, the caliphal authority that replaced his leadership was a representative government. In fact, it was the rule of the *ulema*. The caliph was entrusted to his office after the *ulema* sanctioned the investiture and paid allegiance [*biat*] to him. The town notables and tribal chiefs advised the caliph when requested. Every person had the right to petition the caliph if they had been subjected to an injustice.<sup>18</sup>

Before Islam, people in Mecca and Yathrib [ancient Medina] had lived in immorality and debauchery. These cities had become the centers of prostitution and gambling. The new religion cleansed them of vice. Muslims continued to live a virtuous life and respected the principles of their religion until the Umayyads usurped the Islamic government. The coming of Islam introduced a new life of science and civilization to Mecca and Medina. Led by Ali, the companions of the Prophet organized lectures and conferences to enlighten the public on various issues. Medina was more advanced than Mecca in scholarly activities and in the development of a new social life. This was understandable, since it was the capital of the caliphate. All Muslim intellectuals were gathered there. The true and genuine Islamic life was developing in this city. Muslims from everywhere flocked to Medina to listen to the lectures of their caliph. All Muslim religious and political leaders, led by the caliph himself, were making *ijtihad*; i.e. interpreting the Quran and *Sunnah* of the Prophet, to apply their legal interpretation of the sacred texts to every aspect of life. Everybody respected the legal opinions of the other.

Every Muslim's freedom of opinion was inviolable. The *ulema* legislated by basing their opinion on Islamic principles. No person was forced to adopt the opinion of another. Very often, *ulema* could disagree on diverse issues. The most accepted opinion became the basis for a *fatwa* [a non-binding legal opinion to be presented to the court]. The disagreement in *ijtihad* became a very common legal practice during the Rashidun period (632–661).

In addition to piety, Islam also values merit. The Prophet Muhammad appointed the young Usama to the head of a military expedition to Syria. Usama was much younger than his other companions, but he excelled in military mat-

---

18 Ibid., p. 30.

ters. Other prominent companions, who were much older than he was, were placed under his command.

The rapid success of Islam must be sought in the just and fair rule of the caliph and his commanders, especially in countries oppressed under the despotism of the Byzantine emperors and Iranian *shahanshahs* [king of kings]. Wherever Islam entered, justice and equity began to rule the land. People of these countries, who had been persecuted by previous governments for centuries, welcomed Islam as a savior. Unfortunately, this situation did not last long. After the accession to power of the Umayyads, the people of these conquered provinces, who had remained loyal under the Rashidun caliphs, began to revolt against the misrule of the Umayyad caliphs.<sup>19</sup>

During the early period of Islam, ignorant and hypocritical men did not yet control religion. Everybody acted according to the Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. The *ijtihad* was free, no one had the right to censor it, and no one had the right to intervene in the private life of other people in the name of religion. Men and women had equal rights. Women occupied an important place in early Muslim society. Any form of disrespect against women was considered a very serious offence. In education, women had exactly the same rights as men.<sup>20</sup> In the early period of Islam, women's social condition was not defined by slavery, ignorance, and humiliation, but with knowledge, respect and honor. Women could reach the highest position in the institutions of learning. Aisha, the Prophet's wife, was among them. Even the most authoritative *ulema* consulted her in important legal matters.<sup>21</sup>

In the sermon he delivered during his last *hajj*, the messenger of God emphasized for one final time the important place occupied by women in Muslim society and their rights in Islam. There was no other period of time in the entire history of Islam when the Islamic religion was implemented more correctly than in the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Women's rights were fully respected during this time. Women participated in military activities and took care of the wounded Muslim soldiers in the battlefields. Injustice, oppression and other social and political ills were seldom seen. Everybody knew that justice was the essence of Islam and acted accordingly. There was social solidarity among Muslims; every Muslim had the duty of helping those in need. Although people were encouraged to participate in social and political life, there were no political factions. Political factionalism in Islam did not begin until the reign of Caliph Uthman (r. 644–656). Factionalism caused considerable damage to Is-

19 Ibid., pp. 71–72.

20 Ibid., pp. 34–35.

21 Ibid., p. 35.

lam during his reign.<sup>22</sup> Corruption of the *ulema* was punished severely during the times of the Prophet Muhammad and his first two caliphs. The second caliph, Umar (r. 634–644), was extremely just, to the point of worshipping justice.

### *The First Blow Inflicted on the Ethos of Islam*

The Umayyads were the first to inflict a severe blow to the foundations of Islam. They are also equally responsible for the corruption of Islamic purity through the introduction of various superstitious beliefs. The purity and integrity of Islam reached the highest levels under Caliph Umar. He united the Muslims around him by his determined and tenacious policy. Umar strived to firmly establish the civic principles of the new religion among Muslims, and fought against the corrupting influences of Byzantium and Iran over Islam. His just and fair rule won the respect of non-Muslim people of the newly conquered provinces in the Middle East. Unfortunately, this situation changed after the accession of Uthman to the caliphate. The new caliph was under the influence of his clan, the Umayyads (661–750), who had lost their supremacy since the conquest of Mecca and were waiting to take revenge on al-Hashim [Prophet Muhammad's clan]. Uthman's preferential treatment of his kin provided them with a golden opportunity to realize their dreams. The Umayyad Marwan, who had been exiled from Medina by the Prophet, returned after the assassination of Umar, and became an influential member of the *ummah* by obtaining an important position in the administration. Each of the prominent Umayyads was appointed as governor of various provinces. The administration fell to the hands of greedy, power-hungry and immoral individuals. Oppression and persecution became widespread; the laws of the *sharia* were not correctly implemented. The Umayyads' policy alienated Muslims from the caliphate, preparing fertile ground for enemies of Islam to sow the seeds of discord among Muslims and divide the *ummah*.<sup>23</sup>

The Islamic conquest of the Middle East and North Africa was very rapid and still recent. The peoples of these lands still had fresh memories of their history. Although some of the inhabitants of these newly conquered provinces converted to Islam, they had not altogether forgotten their former religious beliefs and traditions. The inhabitants of Iran, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine had developed rich and complex religious traditions for centuries. The simplicity and rationality of Islam did not fully satisfy their souls. They still longed for the colorful and elaborate traditions of their former religions. Toward the end of the first century of the Muslim conquests, Islam lost its purity due to the

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 71–73.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 84–85.

cultural influence of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, Iran and India over the new religion. The new converts brought their cultural traditions with them, and these traditions diluted and corrupted the pure Islam.<sup>24</sup>

The most destructive blow to Islam was struck by the Iranian civilization.<sup>25</sup> The national religion of the Iranians before their conversion to Islam was Zoroastrianism. Zoroastrianism lost its former importance after the victory of the Muslim armies over the ruling Iranian dynasty of the Sasanians. However, it did not disappear altogether and continued to be practiced by a large number in Iran and in India. Ancient Iranians worshipped two principal gods: Ahriman and Hurmuz. The former represented virtue and goodness, the second vice and evil. The main spirit of Zoroastrianism was centered on the struggle between these two gods, representing the struggle between the forces of good and evil. A victorious general named Ardashir Babakan seized power in Iran, and established the Sasanian dynasty in 224 AD. The new dynasty adopted Zoroastrianism as the official religion. The ruling class, known as the *Mabedan*, included many Zoroastrian priests, and the head of the Zoroastrian clergy was called *Mabad-i Mabedan*. Iran used to dominate the Middle East as a great imperial power, and many Arab rulers were vassals and clients of the Iranian monarchs. When they invaded Iran, Muslim armies discovered a well-established political, social and religious system. The people of Iran had lived under their own regime for centuries. It was difficult for them to accept the rule of the Arabs, especially the Umayyads, whom they considered as usurpers of the caliphate. Iranians were therefore trying to regain their independence or, at least, to mold their new religion to their national mores wherever possible in order to satisfy their souls.<sup>26</sup>

Ali's son, Hasan, finally gave up his right to the caliphate after realizing he would not be able to triumph over the cunning Muawiyah (r. 661–680). Muawiyah's son and successor Yazid (r. 680–683) ordered the massacre of Ali's other son, Husayn, and his followers at Karbala. Many Muslims became estranged from the caliphate, which he represented. This aversion of the Muslims to the House of the Umayya was used by their political opponents to overthrow them. The rebellion against the Umayyads was organized by an Iranian named Abu Muslim Khurasani, who defeated the Umayyads and put an end to their rule.<sup>27</sup>

Abu Muslim's revolution exploded like a bomb and destroyed the Umayyad rule. He instituted the Abbasid dynasty, which was under the cultural influ-

---

24 Ibid., p. 79.

25 Ibid., pp. 79–80.

26 Ibid., pp. 81–82.

27 Ibid., pp. 82–83.

ence of Iran. Many prominent Iranians of that time not only supported the Abbasid revolution but also took part in it, sacrificing their lives and fortunes for the Abbasid cause. However, Iranians quickly became dissatisfied with the new regime because they did not acquire all the influence and power they expected from the Abbasids. The Iranians revolted against their former ally. However, very soon they realized they would not defeat the Abbasid caliphs, whose authority was strongly entrenched throughout Islamic lands. The Iranians then decided to conquer the Abbasid regime from the inside, by infiltrating and gaining power in the administration. Thanks to this new strategy, the Barmakids, the famous Iranian family from the city of Balkh in Afghanistan, worked their way into the bureaucracy by cooperating with the caliphs and gaining their favor. They became the top administrators and counselors for the caliphs. Abbasid caliphs nominated Barmakids as their chief viziers. The head of the family Halid was one of the commanders of Abu Muslim's army during the Abbasid revolution. He had been distinguished for his military successes against the Umayyads, and was rewarded after the victory. Although Halid converted to Islam after he entered into Abu Muslim's service, he never forgot his former religion, and yearned for the splendor of the ancient Iranian royalty. After Halid, the vizierate passed to his son Yahya and then to the latter's son Cafer. At this time, the Iranian nobility was in complete control of the Islamic empire. In addition to the Barmakids, other prominent Iranian families, such as the Vehib, Qahtaba, Sahl and Tahir, also dominated the administration, and essentially ruled the empire on behalf of the Abbasid caliphs. They became so proud and haughty that some of them even contemplated the revival of the former Sasanian dynasty. However, it was too late for that. Islam had struck root in every part of the empire and established its authority through its solid foundations; Foundations that it would not be easy to shake. However, Islam could be used as a garb to disseminate new ideas among people. This could eventually change the religious environment and pave their road to power.<sup>28</sup>

If we study history carefully, we can see that the aim of the Iranians was to regain their independence through religion. In order to achieve their goal, they seemed to favor Ahl-al Bayt under the Umayyads, and later revolted against the Abbasids in the name of Shiism. A Zoroastrian notable from Khurasan, Fazl ibn Sahl Serahsi, had not converted to Islam when he entered into the service of al-Mamun (r. 813–833). He later became Muslim in order to carry out his mission of re-establishing Iranian sovereignty. Fazl played a very active role in the Abbasid civil war by supporting the caliphate of al-Mamun. He organized an army and placed it under the command of Tahir ibn Husayn, another

---

28 Ibid., p. 85.

prominent Iranian, who, after capturing Baghdad, executed Caliph al-Amin (r. 809–813) and declared the caliphate of al-Mamun. The new Caliph al-Mamun (r. 813–833) paid his dues to the Shiite Iranians by abandoning the black flag of the Abbasid family and adopting the green flag of the Shia. The pro-Shia and pro-Iranian policy of al-Mamun, which might have resulted in the usurpation of the Abbasid caliphate by Shiite Iranians, was thwarted by the Turks during the reign of al-Mutasim (r. 833–842). Turks embraced Islam wholeheartedly without any coercion; they found the fundamental values of their national ethos in Islam. The new religion satisfied their centuries-long search for spiritual guidance. Their adoption of the genuine Islam and intervention on behalf of the Sunni caliphate saved Islam from succumbing to the national hegemony of the Iranians.<sup>29</sup> The succor given by the Turks to the caliphate continued in later centuries under the Sunni Turkish Seljuk dynasty. The Seljuk leader Tughril Beg (r.1038–1063) defeated the Buyids – Shia Iranian forces – and liberated Baghdad, the seat of the caliphate, from occupation. The Sunni Seljuk leader kissed the hands of the Abbasid caliph al-Qaim Billah (r.1031–1075) after entering Baghdad, and declared himself at the service of genuine Islam.

### *The Victory of the Iranian Geist to the Spirit of Islam*

From Mutasim onwards, Iranian officials were forced to abandon their positions to the Turks. Upon realizing they could not achieve their goals at the seat of the caliphate, the Iranian grandees withdrew to the distant provinces of the empire to declare their political independence.<sup>30</sup> The Tahirids in Khuran, Saffarids in Fars, Samanids in Transoxiana, Sajiye in Azerbaijan and Ziyarids in Jurjan were the emerging Iranian states. Nevertheless, these minor dynasties did not possess enough power to resist external pressures. Only the Buyids succeeded in firmly establishing their rule by claiming the heritage of old Persia. The Buyids had the misfortune of being opposed by the Turks. This became a struggle between Shiism and Sunnism, and between the old Iranian royalty and the Islamic caliphate. Nevertheless, the Iranians were in an advantageous position because they managed to spread their ancestral superstitious beliefs among the Turks. The Buyid dynasty was destroyed by the Turks, but the idea of re-establishing the old Persian kingship was still alive.<sup>31</sup> This idea was constantly manifested under religious and sectarian dogmas. The establishment of the Safavid dynasty in Iran constituted the final and crowning success of the old Iranian royalty. Although the Sunni Ottoman Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520)

29 Ibid., p. 86.

30 Ibid., p. 87.

31 Şemseddin, *Hurafetten*, pp. 87–88.

fought and defeated the Shiite Safavid ruler Shah Ismail at the crucial battle of Chaldiran (Çaldıran) in 1514, Shah Ismail's successors managed to revive Iran after that defeat. The restoration of the ancient Iranian kingship was achieved at the terrible cost of sectarian division, which destroyed Islamic unity forever. Zoroastrianism was the national religion of the Iranians; its founder Zoroaster was born in Iran. He preached a religion representing the culture and mores of the people of Iran. Zoroastrianism, with its elaborate, rich and ostentatious rituals, was in sharp contrast with the simplicity and purity of Islam. The Iranian soul quickly became dissatisfied and bored with the plainness of the new religion.<sup>32</sup>

The residue of any belief continues to exert some sort of influence over the minds and souls of people even though it has been officially abandoned. If this creed was a national ideology, the lasting impact is stronger and more difficult to eradicate. The national ideology represents the cultural and social aspects of a particular nation. After their conversion to Islam, Iranians always tried to adapt their new religion to their national culture.<sup>33</sup>

The gap created between Muslim communities derives from sectarianism. As time passed, the ignorance of the people widened that gap. Nevertheless, here I must clarify an important issue. Today, the dominant religious school in Iran is the Jafari branch of Shiism, which has no relation to the extremist Shia sects that undermined the strength of Islam throughout history. The Shiite-Jafari *mujtehids* of Iran equally reject the corrupt, wicked, and distorted ideas of the extremist Shia groups, particularly the Batinis.<sup>34</sup> The theological differences between Sunnism and Shiism are negligible, not enough to be the cause of this historical divide between these two denominations of Islam. Today, in order to eliminate the hostility between Shiites and Sunnis, the scholars of both sects must search for a common ground of mutual understanding by making peaceful and fraternal declarations to each other. This does not mean a union or merger of Sunnism and Shiism, which is unnecessary and could have harmful effects. Today, both Sunnis and Shiites must understand that while sharing the same holy book [the Quran], the same prophet [Muhammad], and same direction for prayer [*qibla*], they have no valid reason to hate each other unless their minds are poisoned by the obscure and narrow views of the Middle Ages. The Muslims of the world must unite their force against Western imperialism, which constitutes a mortal threat for their existence.

---

32 Ibid., pp. 90–91.

33 Ibid., 90–91.

34 Ibid., p. 115; pp. 234–238.

### *Fabricated Hadith*

According to Islamic scholars *hadith* are the sayings and orders of our Prophet. There are three sorts of *hadith*: a) oral; b) factual; and c) approved. Oral *hadith* are the maxims of the Prophet; his sayings. Factual *hadith* are the acts and practices of the Prophet. Approved *hadith* are the sayings and the practices of others that were accepted or approved by the Prophet. *Hadith* are also categorized according to their validity. The most reliable are called *sahih*. This category of *hadith* is considered genuine and is transmitted by an irrefutably documented chain of informers. The less reliable *hadith*, those transmitted by an imperfect chain of informers, are called *hasen hadith*. Finally, the unreliable ones are the *zayif* or weak *hadith*. Throughout Islamic history, *hadith* have often been misused by unscrupulous people for selfish or immoral motives.<sup>35</sup> Falsified and fabricated *hadith* caused great harm to Islam by serving as channels through which the superstitions and harmful beliefs of other civilizations were introduced to Islam. Because they were legitimized under the guise of the Prophet's acts and sayings, these foreign practices, which corrupted Islam and undermined its purity and strength, were easily accepted by Muslims.

---

35 Ibid., pp. 246–250.

## İzmirli İsmail Hakkı (1868–1946)

### Life

İzmirli İsmail Hakkı was born in Izmir in 1868. His father, Hasan Efendi, was a captain in the Ottoman army, and his mother, Hafize Hanım, belonged to a Cretan family. The young İsmail received his early education in Izmir and graduated from the local *Rüşdiyye*, while also attending the *madrassa*, where he memorized the Quran. During this time he also became a member of the Shaziliyya Sufi order. He later taught the Persian language in his home town and studied Sufism from a master, Ahmed Asım Bey. After arriving in Izmir he entered the newly established *Dar-ul Muallimin-i Aliye* (Faculty of Education) and also attended the *hadith* courses of Şakir Efendi at the *madrassa* attached to the Yavuz Selim Mosque. In 1894 he graduated with distinction from the Faculty of Education. The Minister of Education, Rüşdü Pasha, kept İsmail Hakkı in Istanbul, not only appointing him to the *idadi* (high school) of Merca as professor of history, religion and ethics but also hiring him as a private tutor for his children. In 1895 İsmail Hakkı married Nuriye Hanım, the daughter of the *kadi* of Lüleburgaz and a *Naqshbandi* sheikh. In 1908, following the death of his wife, he married a second time, this time to Kadriye Hanım, the daughter of a prominent scholar, Mutevelli Aziz Efendi. The same year İzmirli İsmail Hakkı joined the Islamist journal *Sırat-i Müstakim* and began publishing his writings there. Hakkı also taught in many educational institutions; he became a professor of Islamic history, Arabic, the *Mecelle* civil code, and the methodology of Islamic law (*usul-al fiqh*) at the *Mülkiye* (School of Public Administration). He taught similar subjects in Islamic studies courses in various schools or *madrasas* in Istanbul.

As well as his academic career, Hakkı also worked as an administrator in many educational institutions, such as *Dar-ul Muallimin*, *Dar ul Şafaka*, the faculties of theology and literature, and the Institute of Islamic Studies, and in 1932 and 1937 he participated in the congresses of the Turkish Historical Society. In 1939 İsmail Hakkı retired, following which he devoted most of his time to writing articles and editing for the Turkish Islamic Encyclopedia (*İslam Türk Ansiklopedisi*). İzmirli İsmail Hakkı died on 31 January 1946.<sup>1</sup>

1 İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, vol. 2, Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1995, pp. 135–137 (hereafter cited as Kara, *Türkiyede*).

## Ideas

### *The Islamic Caliphate*

The Islamic caliphate is a religious leadership and a world political power, and it is the best form of civilized government. It was institutionalized by justice and piety and was equally bound by religious laws. The caliph governs within the boundary of the divine rules and laws in force. In times of war he is the ruler of the people and the commander in chief. The instauration of a caliph is incumbent upon the community by the consensus of the *ulema* [Islamic scholars]. Nevertheless some Kharijites and other Muslim sects argue that there would be no need to appoint a caliph if the Muslim community [*ummah*] complied with the Quran and the *sunnah* of the Prophet by themselves. Since the caliph has the sacred duties of enforcing the rules of the *sharia*, protecting the religion, taking the necessary measures to ensure the people's affairs and waging war against enemies, he must have the required qualifications, particularly in terms of knowledge and property. The ignorant would not be able to execute the statutes and provisions of the *sharia*; the weak and incapable cannot protect the religion. They are afraid of *jihad* [holy war], neglect the laws of the *sharia* and also abandon the affairs of the Muslim community. The ignorant and incapable, who are unable to execute the laws and regulations and to protect the religion, fear war even when it is required, and cause the suspension of the provisions of the *sharia* and the abandonment of the affairs of the people; they are not eligible to have spiritual happiness and worldly/temporal authority. Secondly, since the holy verse that says "Be just" (*Ma'idah* 5/8) is an obligation for every act and deed to conform to justice, it is essential that the caliphate be based on justice. An unjust person cannot be a caliph. The oppressor is cursed by the *sharia*. Almighty God would never help an unjust and oppressive government. Such a ruler or government would be punished by divine wrath. In general, Muslims agree on most of the requirements of eligibility for the caliphate, which are being knowledgeable in the sacred law of Islam [*sharia*], being just, being capable and having complete soundness of the senses. The only condition on which they disagree is the idea that the caliph should belong to the tribe of Quraysh.

At the beginning of Islam the Qurayshi condition was accepted in order to prevent discord and conflict. At that time the Quraysh had preeminence and prestige over other tribes and peoples. The Qurayshis were able to rule and maintain authority through their tribal solidarity [*asabiyyet*]. If the caliphate were to be assumed by another group, it was evident that this would never be accepted by the Quraysh. The Muslim community would therefore be divided, giving rise to political strife, which is contrary to the Quranic verse (*Shura*

42/13) and divine order: "Establish the religion and not be divided therein." The Quraysh later lost its tribal authority. Today it is not necessary to belong to the Quraysh to protect the *ummah*, therefore that condition is no longer important. After the passing of the Prophet three opinions arose among his companions.

According to the first opinion, the candidate who is the most capable in politics and of defending the religion should be elected. That opinion was supported by the majority of the *Ansar* [the Medinese helpers]; their candidate was Saad Ibn Ubada [*sic.*]. Later, the Kharijites and Mutazila also adopted that view. This idea was also corroborated by the prophetic *hadith*, "Hear and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed to rule over you."

According to the second opinion the candidate who already possesses the qualities required in the previous opinion [political capability] must also be complemented by being a member of the Quraysh tribe. This viewpoint was advocated by the *Muhajirun* [Meccan emigrants], whose candidate was Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. This opinion was supported by the prophetic *hadith*, "The imams are from Quraysh."

According to the third opinion, the right to the caliphate is determined by kinship. This view was advocated by the Banu Hashim clan, whose candidate was Ali abu Talib. This opinion was confirmed by the prophetic *hadith*, "O Ali would you accept to be as close to me as Aaron was to Moses."

Of these three candidates, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq obtained the support of the majority by a consensus of the Muslims [*icma-i millet*] and was appointed as caliph. Except Saad bin Ubada, the rest of the people took an oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr.

There are four different methods by which caliphs can be appointed by the *umma*. In the first, the caliph is appointed by the votes of members of a popular elective council [*shura-yi amme*] that represents the *umma* and that is generally formed to administer the affairs of the Muslim community. The caliphs Abu Bakr and Ali were appointed in this way. The council is formed of electors who have the authority to appoint and dismiss [*ahl-al hall wal aqd*]. This procedure was used during the deposition of Sultan Abdülhamid II. In this usage it is not necessary to obtain the totality of the electors' votes, a majority is sufficient. Even in the elections of Abu Bakr and Umar, unanimity was not obtained. Saad bin Ubada voted for neither Abu Bakr nor Umar.

In the second method, votes are cast by a special council [*shura-yi hassa*]. This council was exclusively formed by members appointed by the former caliph before his death. The caliph Uthman was elected in this way. Uthman and Ali obtained an equal number of votes to attain majority in the council appointed by Caliph Umar. According to the historian Ibn al Jawzi, a second

round of voting was necessary to nominate Caliph Uthman as the winning candidate.

In the third practice, the former caliph appoints his successor by nominating an eligible person to replace him in the seat of the caliphate. It was in this way that the caliph Abu Bakr appointed Umar to succeed him in the caliphate. In the past, the caliphate could only be invested using one of these three methods.

The fourth method is the method of using force, such as a *coup d'état*, in the event of a complete non-agreement by the electors. Historically, this method was used to prevent civil strife among Muslims. One of the candidates, who feels strong and capable enough, declares his caliphate and the people submit to him in order to avoid causing anarchy or political disorder.

During the period of the *Rashidun* [Rightly-Guided] caliphs, the caliphate was not hereditary. The caliph was appointed by the Muslim community after deliberations. The second caliph, Umar, specifically told the elective council of the companions not to appoint his son Abdullah. The fourth caliph, Ali, did a similar thing and left the issue of his succession open by leaving it to the Muslim community, saying, "Neither do I recommend him to you nor do I forbid; it is up to you to decide, you are wise people." The first caliph to institute the hereditary caliphate was Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (r. 661–680). Seeing the dissolution of Muslim unity that had been established by the covenant of the Prophet Muhammad, Muawiyah feared civil strife and dissension [*fitna*] among Muslims and wanted to secure the caliphate of his son Yazid (r. 680–683) as his successor. After the tragedy of Kerbela (680) and the siege of Kaaba, Muawiyah was proved right. Nevertheless, for a while the caliphate remained with the Banu Umayya (r. 661–750). Among the Umayyads it was only Umar II (r. 717–720) [Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz] who followed the policy of the *Rashidun* caliphs, and wanted to appoint as his successor the famous jurist [*faqih*] Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr as-Siddiq. However, faced with the opposition of the Umayyads he was unable to do so. After the death of Umar II, the Umayyads again reverted to the policy of Muawiyah, a policy that the Abbasids continued to follow. Later, Harun al-Rashid's son and successor Mamun tried to adopt the policy of Umar II by appointing Ali al-Reza ibn Musa al-Kazim as his successor. Nevertheless, other members of the Abbasid family did not accept this, and ceased to obey Caliph Mamun in Baghdad, shifting their allegiance to his uncle, Ibrahim ibn al-Mahdi. Mamun resided in Khurasan [eastern Iran]; upon hearing of the disobedience of the people of Baghdad he marched to the city. While Mamun was on his way to Baghdad Ali al-Reza suddenly died, and Mamun entered the city with no resistance. In Baghdad, Mamun abandoned the black dress of the Alids, returning to green, the color of the Abbasid family.

After Mamun, the Abbassid caliphs never again tried to appoint a successor outside the Abbassid family. The Ottomans also followed the example of the Abbasids and the institution of the caliphate therefore remained hereditary.

The Islamic caliphate was a combination of spiritual and temporal authorities. Later, the temporal power was separated and the caliphate remained exclusively a spiritual authority. During the times of the *Rashidun* caliphs, the caliphate covered both the spiritual and temporal authorities. Under the Umayyads there was again no separation between government and caliphate. It was only during the reign of Marwan I (r. 684–685) and during the beginning of the reign of his son, Abd al Malik (r. 685–705), that, due to sedition, these rulers were unable to assume the title of the caliph. In Mecca, Ibn al Zubayr rebelled against the Umayyad rule and was acknowledged as caliph by many Muslims, as he was considered preferable to the Umayyads. After the martyrdom of Ibn al Zubayr, Abd al Malik assumed the title of the caliph. In Iraq, the Abbasid state united under his authority, which was both caliphate and government. The political authority later passed to the Buyids and then to the Seljuks.

Following the end of the Seljuk rule in Baghdad, the Abbasid Dynasty once again regained political power. Finally in 656 AH (1258 AD), the Abbasid Caliphate was destroyed due to the conquest of Baghdad by the tyrant Hülagü, a descendent of Genghis Khan. For three years, the Islamic caliphate remained vacant. In 659 AH (1261 AD) the Abbasid Caliphate was reestablished in Egypt, but the Egyptian Abbasids did not have political power; the government was in the hands of the Circassian Mamluks. In 923 AH the Islamic caliphate passed from Ben-i Abbas [Abbasids] to Ben-i Osman [Ottomans]. The Ottomans united the caliphate and government at their hands. When the first caliph of the Ottoman dynasty assumed the title of Islamic caliph, no ruler [in the Muslim world] was strong enough to contest it. His wisdom and power was more than sufficient to protect the *ummah*.

Mutewakkil III, the last Abbassid caliph, acknowledged the capability of the sultan and bequeathed and transferred the caliphate to Selim I. The bequest and the surrender of the caliphate were approved by the council of electors [*ahl al hall-wa'l aqd*]. A general assembly formed by the scholars of Egypt [*Ulema-i Azhar*] and scholars of Anatolia [*Ulema-i Rum*] appointed Sultan Selim I as caliph and handed him the valuable sword [*seyf-i sehamet*]. The ceremony of the girding of the sword that follows the inauguration [*culus*] of the sultans originated from that event. Sultan Selim I protected the Two Holy Places of Islam [*Al-Haramain* – Mecca and Medina], which is the direction of prayer for Muslims. He also assumed the title “Servitor of the Holy Places” [*Hadim-ul Haramain*] to replace the title “Owner of the Holy Places” [*Malik-ul*

*Haramain*] used by Circassian rulers. Hence, the Holy Places were protected by the Ottoman sultans, the only exception being when they were occupied by the Zaidi imams in the tenth century and later by the Wahhabis, for seven years in each case. Sultan Selim I kept and preserved the sacred relics of Islam.<sup>2</sup>

### *Civil, Social and Political Duties and Obligations*

The almighty God orders you to leave the administration in the hands of the capable and learned ones. He also recommends that you consult with the people before taking any decision. God advised you well. Without doubt, the almighty God hears your ruling when you decide and rule with justice and also sees when you leave the administration in the hands of the capable ones. (*Nisaa* 4/58)

### *The Need for a State*

Mankind cannot live without a state. All life is based first on the survival of the individual and then on the survival of the species. Intelligence, self-defense and reproduction are necessary for the preservation of the species. Mankind is also in need of many things to ensure its survival. Human beings need food, drink, clothes and shelter. How can a single person provide all these needs? Is this possible? Does the formation of the family not increase these needs? The needs of individuals naturally create relations between people. The union of people who thus come together in order to satisfy their need for survival is called society. Human beings can only satisfy their needs through society. Man cannot live without society. The morality of a society depends on the intensity and strength of the ties and relations between the members of that society. The survival of a society is assured by the strong ties between the members of that society, and a society cannot survive when the ties between its members are broken. It is absolutely necessary to have an organized structure in order to administer the relations between the different members of that society, to solve problems and disputes among the people, and to maintain order and defend the land on which that society lives. In short, human beings need an organized structure to protect the public interest and to administer the law. This organized structure is called the state, and the people who live under the protection of that state as its citizens have civil obligations.

### *The Duties and Obligations of the State*

In order to carry out its function, the state needs three powers: legislative, executive and judiciary. The legislative powers organize the legal system; the

---

<sup>2</sup> Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 142–147.

executive powers execute and apply the laws promulgated by the legislative power; and the judiciary power administers justice by applying the laws enacted by the legislative power. Every obligation corresponds to a right. Any person who works and creates something owns the right to it. The father, who educates his children, also gains the right to give any orders and advice to them that he considers necessary. However, every right does not necessarily create an obligation. Rights are more extensive than obligations. Thus children [minors] or mentally handicapped people, who are not legally responsible, have the right to live and the right to inherit.

### *The Rights of the State*

The state has a fundamental right: the right to exist. This right is based on two other rights: the right of independence or freedom and the right to survive. Freedom is a condition for being responsible. Without responsibility a state cannot be a member of the international community. The rights of autonomy and independence originate from the right of freedom. This right of autonomy gives the state the authority and power to organize its political system and draft its constitution according to its wishes. The state promulgates and applies the laws on its territory. The only source of legislation is the state, which has complete authority to enforce these laws within the boundaries of its territory. The state remains free by its right of independence. It also becomes equal to and has the same rights as other states. Any violation of the state's dignity is considered an attack on its independence. The right of independence is inalienable. The state makes use of the totality of its legislation in order to preserve its material [territorial] and spiritual [cultural] integrity, but also its right to survival. The state has the right to eliminate all threats to its survival. The right to protect internal and external security, as well as the right of progress and development, derives from the right of survival. The state supports the right of progress and development by encouraging scholarship and science. The state also prepares the means [infrastructure] for the advancement and development of its citizens. The evolution and progress of civilization can be obtained only by science. The Quranic verse *Zumar* 39/9 beautifully emphasizes the importance of science, which is the basis of the evolution of civilization, by asking, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Another Quranic verse, *Mujadila* 58/11, says, "Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees."

In order to maintain internal security the state establishes tribunals and appoints policeman. How beautiful and eternal are the criminal law [*uqubat*] and law of obligations [*muamelat*] parts of the sacred *sharia* law in order to

preserve the internal security. Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*] has no equal among the legal systems in the world.

In order to protect external security, many means of defense should be prepared. Again it is stated in the Quran that to face your enemies you should “prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows” [*Anfal* 8/60]. The state has many laws other than those mentioned here. Alongside its essential laws [*hukuk-u asliye*], the state also has acquired laws [*hukuk-u muktesebe*], which were obtained by treaties and conventions. The state has an obligation to preserve all its legislation, its essential and its acquired laws. The prophetic *hadith* says, “All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. An Imam is a shepherd and he is responsible for those in his care” (reported in Bukhari and Muslim, related by Ahmad ibn Hanbal).<sup>3</sup>

### *The Components of the State*

In order to be recognized by international law, a state needs to have the four following components. Firstly, the state must represent a society that is formed around the common interests of its members. Society lives by unity and dies by disunity. Again the prophetic *hadiths* say: “The hand of God is over the community and those who depart from the community and go astray, take God’s collar off of his neck” (Tirmidhi). Also the Quranic verse orders, “Hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided” (*Ali Imran* 3/103).

Secondly, the state must occupy a specific and delimited territory. This territory is called the homeland [*vatan*]. To abandon an inch of this territory is like tearing a piece from the body. It would cause great pain.

Thirdly, the state must be administered by an organized and legitimate government. The legitimacy of a government can only be assured by the sacred laws of the *sharia*. An arbitrary and despotic government cannot be legitimate.

Fourthly, the state must be sovereign and completely independent. Foreign interventions would violate independence, which is an essential component of the state.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Government*

The government represents the state; it is a council formed by capable individuals, appointed to defend the rights of citizens and to assure the welfare and interests of the public. This council is remunerated with a salary. The

3 Kara, *Türkiyede*, pp. 155–158.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 158–159.

government is the trustee and depository of the state, not its owner. State officials are the servants of the nation and Islamic history has many examples to support this view: “One day Abu Muslim al-Havlani was accepted to an audience with the caliph Muawiyah; (r. 661–680). Abu Muslim greeted the caliph by calling him ‘o you the employee.’ Others present at the court were startled and told him to call the caliph a ruler, but he insisted on calling Muawiyah an employee”. The basis of the government is power. Nevertheless if a government did not represent the popular will and act according to justice, it would be illegal and illegitimate.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Nature of Governments*

There are three kinds of government: absolute, constitutional and republican.

In an absolute regime, the leadership of the government is hereditary. The ruler is not restricted by any regulations and administers by his sole opinion. The people submit to the ruler unconditionally.

In a constitutional regime, the leadership of the government is also transferred hereditarily. Nevertheless the government is bound by existing legislation.

In a republican regime, the leadership of the government is elected by the nation and the head of state is bound by law, as is the case in the constitutional regime.

Islam would never accept an absolute government. In Islam the ruler cannot govern as he pleases [arbitrarily]. He is bound by the sacred laws of the *sharia* to govern according to them. Islam lays down the fundamental principles of the government: justice, protecting the rights of the people, and assuring the public interest. The Quran states, “[Their] affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves” (*Shura* 42/38). “And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” (*Ali Imran* 3/104). “We have made you a just community” (*Al-Baqarah* 2/143). The government that executes its duties has two qualities: a) consultation b) responsibility. A nation that fulfills its legal obligations has four qualities: a) ordering the lawful b) prohibiting the unlawful c) invitation of the good d) conducting their affairs in a moderate way.

These principles are applied according to the needs and conditions of the time, and this is Islamic government. The constitutional regime takes its legitimacy, beauty and superiority from this quality.

An Islamic government cannot be blindly attached to tradition; yes it is bound by the principles of the Quran and the *sunnah* but an Islamic

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

government is also adaptable to the conditions and circumstances of its era. An Islamic government possesses all the beneficial and positive qualities of the current European governments, without the vices of those governments. We must also accept that, if we have thus far been unable to establish a constitutional regime, it is most certainly our own fault. Every nation deserves its government. This is affirmed by a *hadith*: “you would be governed according to your nature.”<sup>6</sup>

### *Social Rights and Obligations*

Social obligations are the obligations of individuals towards other human beings. It is a social duty to respect the rights of life, liberty and disposition and to honor every person. Equally, every person has the same rights. The natural law has three bases: the right of life [survival], the right of freedom, and the right of disposition; because every human being needs to live, to think and to dispose or act according to his will and interest.

Firstly, since every being wants to live, humans also want to live. In order to be able to live, mankind must provide itself with its basic needs. Therefore every person must have the right to be protected from any threat or aggression that may put his life in danger. Such protection can only be assured in society. It is only after feeling safe that a man can work and produce. Nobody whose life is in constant danger can be productive.

Besides life, the honor, chastity and virtue of every person must also be protected. Secondly, man needs to think and act according to his own opinion. Therefore human beings also need to be free to think and act freely. Nevertheless, a man’s actions must be bound by existing legislation and the sacred laws of the *sharia*. Thirdly, man needs to obtain his essential needs in order to survive. This can only be assured if a person can work and enjoy the fruits of his labor in peace and security.<sup>7</sup>

### *Obligations toward the State (Civic Obligations of the Citizen)*

The citizen has six obligations toward the state. The first is to obey the government and the ruler [*ulul emr*], in line with the Quranic verse: “Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” (*Nisaa* 4/59). This maxim was also substantiated by a *hadith*: “Hear and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed to rule over you” (*hadith* reported by Bukhari). Obedience to the sacred law of *sharia* and to the legislation issued by the government is not a burden but a condition for liberty. Violating the law can result in civil strife

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 159–161.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 161–165.

and the destruction of the country. The citizen can only disobey his ruler if ordered to act against God and His Law. A *hadith* confirms this principle: "A Muslim will not obey if ordered to rebel against God" (reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

The second obligation is to educate children. Education of children is not merely an obligation to the children themselves but also to the state. A father should educate not only his own children but also others if he can. This is also affirmed by a *hadith*: "Honor your children and improve and advance their education. Also, do not limit your child with your own education and knowledge because he is created for another time."

The third obligation is to pay taxes. Taxes are the soul of the state; the state cannot live without fiscal revenues. It is for our benefit that the state establishes schools and hospitals, builds roads and railways, constructs ports, forms armies and navies, makes guns and other weapons, and also organizes the court system. All these activities cost large amounts of money. We have to contribute a part of our income to these activities, and this is called tax.

The fourth obligation is to exercise the right of voting according to our own conscience.

The fifth is to carry out military service. Nations, like individuals, have a destiny, rights, duties and obligations, honor and responsibilities. Nevertheless, there is no international government that has a supra-national authority over nations to force them to respect law and justice. When the liberty and security of a nation is threatened and violated, that particular nation will defend its own rights. In order to do so, every nation has no choice other than to use its own military forces. The importance of military service emerges from that situation. Nations can only protect their sovereignty and defend their interests through a powerful army and a strong navy. Military service also is a form of tax; it is not a monetary tax but a blood tax. The soldier is the fortress of the people. The defense of the homeland is the cause of exaltation of the religion. To flee from military service is nothing but dishonor and unpatriotic behavior. We must always be prepared to respond to the call to enroll and join the defensive forces. A *hadith* reported by Bukhari says, "If you are called [by the Muslim ruler] to fight, go forth immediately."

The sixth obligation is to make a sacrifice for the homeland. The homeland is our sacred land. Every particle of our existence germinates and thrives from the soil of our homeland. We can only protect our life, property, honor, children and religion by defending our homeland.<sup>8</sup>

---

8 Ibid., pp. 165–167.

## Mehmed Ali Ayni (1868–1945)

### Life

Mehmed Ali Ayni was born on 25 February 1868 in Serfidze (Servia), Monastir in Macedonia, to a family originally from Konya. His father was Mehmed Necib Efendi and his mother Refika Hanım. The young Mehmed received his early education from his family before studying at the primary school (*sibyan mektebi*) in his hometown of Serfidze. At the age of eight Mehmed moved first to Selanik (Thessaloniki) and then to Istanbul. For a while he attended the *Rüşdiye* at Çiçek Pazarı, and then had to follow his father to Yemen due to his military career. In Yemen, Mehmed Ayni was registered in the Military High School (*Askeri Rüşdiye*) and spent some time studying French. After two years, he returned to Istanbul and entered the Military High School of Gülhane. He then studied at the *Mülkiye*, where his professor of literature was Recaizade Mahmud Ekrem, and his history professor was Mizancı Murad (1853–1912), graduating in 1888. In 1889, Mehmed Ayni began teaching and working as an administrator in many educational institutions, such as the Istanbul Law School and the *İdadi* of Edirne. He also served as an instructor and administrator in towns in the European and Asian provinces of the empire: Dedeagach (1890), Halep (1892) and Diyarbekir (1893). In Diyarbekir, Mehmed Ayni befriended Süleyman Nazif and taught Ziya Gökalp. Upon returning to Istanbul in 1895 he was appointed as chief inspector in the Ministry of Education Statistics Department. He later resigned and served as an administrator in Kosovo (1897) and Kastamonu (1899). In 1902 Mehmed Ayni became the deputy prefect (*Mutassarif Vekili*) of the *Sanjak* of Sinop. While serving in Kastamonu he established a provincial press there. Between 1903 and 1912 he again served as *mutassarif* in various towns: Taiz (Yemen), Amarah (Iraq), Karesi (Balıkesir) and Latakia (Syria). He was later appointed as governor to Elazığ, Janina in Albania and Trabzon. In 1913 he was forced into retirement by order of Talat Pasha. In 1914 Mehmed Ayni was appointed to the professorship of philosophy at the Faculty of Literature in *Darülfîninûn* (Istanbul University). The following year he was promoted and became a member of the University's Senate and also started publishing a new journal: The Journal of the Faculty of Literature. In 1918, after the end of World War I and during the allied occupation of Istanbul, Mehmed Ayni was fired from his teaching position in *Medrese-tul İrşad* by Şeyhülislam Mustafa Sabri for being a Unionist. In 1922 he was restored to his

position by the nationalist government and invited to Ankara to serve as a high official in the Ministry of Religious Law and Pious Endowments (*Şeriye ve Evkaf Vekaleti*). In 1924 he returned to Istanbul and again resumed his teaching in various institutions of learning. He taught mysticism in the Faculty of Theology, ethics in the Military College and history in the Military Academy. During this time Ayni also participated in various international congresses on philosophy to represent the new Turkey. Ayni was also one of the Turkish intellectuals who played an active role in writing the new “Turkish Historical Thesis”, the new historical theory of the new Turkey, an essential component of the official ideology of the Republican government of Ankara. In 1935 Mehmed Ayni was again retired and sent to Paris for medical treatment and upon his return from France he worked for Istanbul libraries. On 1 June 1943, a celebration of Ayni’s 75th birthday was organized by the government. Mehmed Ayni died on 30 November 1945 due to complications resulting from his surgery.<sup>1</sup>

## Ideas

The following passages are taken from Mehmed Ali Ayni’s work *Demokrasi Nedir* (What is Democracy), Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1961.

### *What is Democracy?*

#### Historical and Philosophical Background

In Antiquity, Greece was not united under a single rule but existed as a nation that was formed by a common language and by traditions and sentiments that derived from the same race. Every Greek town or city constituted an independent state. Each of these cities had their own governments, laws and rulers. The governments of these city-states were at the hands of an aristocratic class that numbered no more than a couple of hundred families. The rulers governed these states with the assistance of the notables [*ayan*]. There were more than ten city-states in ancient Greece. The most important was Athens, followed by Sparta; less important ones included Thebes and Corinth. Athens gained particular renown and occupies a glorious place in world history due to the city’s cultural prominence in a time of darkness.

After a couple of centuries the notables abolished the monarchy in almost all Greek states except Sparta (750 BC). Hence, the notables oppressed the people with their despotic and tyrannical rule. By arrogating all rights and power,

1 İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1997, pp. 67–69 (hereafter cited as Kara, *Türkiyede*).

they limited justice only to themselves, depriving the farmers and workers, in sum the lower classes, of their legal rights. Nobody could sue the notables and ask for their rights. Nobody's life, liberty, honor or property was guaranteed under the protection of the law. Notables could imprison and even sell into slavery those who owed them money that they were unable to pay back. Under such a cruel rule, people were reduced to selling their children into slavery in order to survive. For a few centuries people remained subdued to the notables, then finally the Athenian people rebelled against their notables. The notables tried to suppress the rebellion by introducing harsh legislation to intimidate and coerce them into submission, but their attempts failed. The notables were finally forced to compromise with the people and applied to Solon for mediation.

Solon belonged to an aristocratic family. He possessed great wealth and was equally virtuous, just and learned. As a well-known judge who gained the sympathy and respect of all thanks to his integrity, maturity and justness Solon had traveled widely in Asia and Egypt and examined and before returning to his home country had learned the society, administration, laws and institutions of the most advanced societies of his time. He was therefore the ideal person to call upon in order to create new legislation to solve the crisis. Solon solved the social crisis not by using force but by using his wise words to persuade the people and notables to reach an agreement and create a system accepted by both sides.

At first, Solon provided civic rights to the common people. Henceforth, the life, property and liberty of the people were guaranteed by the protection of law. Everybody obtained the right to have recourse to the courts in order to obtain justice and protect their interests if necessary. Everybody became equal before the law. Solon also abolished the exclusive privilege of notables to serve in the administration. Henceforth, wealthy commoners could also be appointed to the civil service. Previously the notables scorned the commoners and did not accept them into the military service; equally the commoners were not taxed. Solon changed this and decreed that wealthy commoners, also as a principle of equality, must serve under arms and pay taxes as full citizens; only the poor were exempt from both the military service and taxation. Although the social and economic condition of these latter improved drastically thanks to Solon's reforms, they nevertheless remained outside of the political decision-making circle and could not become a member of the political assembly. Only later, after ninety years and during the terrible invasion of the Persians (491 BC), when the notables and wealthy commoners realized that alone they could not defend their country against the Persians, did they consent to recruit the poor by granting them the right of citizenship. Henceforth, there remained no

difference among the various social classes in Greece, and equality and true democracy were established throughout ancient Greece, except in Sparta.<sup>2</sup>

#### How People Governed Themselves

Under Pericles, Athens was governed by the people. Therefore, the senators [notables] and all civil servants were elected and appointed by the people. Every year each citizen would vote and the winning candidates would be nominated to the Senate to serve as senators. Only those who had an unscrupulous reputation, debtors, insolvents and prodigals and those with a reproachable morality would be excluded from serving in politics. The Senate convened every day; its function and duty, however, were quite dissimilar to the senates of today. Instead it functioned rather like a council of state, as the function of the Athenian Senate was merely to discuss and deliberate on bills drafted by the government. Once ratified by the Senate, a bill would be presented for the people's approval. If rejected in Senate, the bill would not be passed and would be dropped. On the other hand, people could not legislate by themselves. People would meet three times in an amphitheater on the Acropolis hill. The bill was then opened up to public discussion in which every attendant could participate. Every voter freely voiced his opinion about the proposed law and discussions ensued. The deliberations would take place with no fights, and even the passionate debates proceeded with civility and without insult or violence. After the end of the deliberations, the proposal was submitted to a vote. If accepted by a majority of voters, the bill was then adopted as law. The success of that system was assured due to the strict rules of procedure. Under the regime of democracy, the city-state of Athens developed and became a prosperous and advanced society. Many artistic and scientific achievements occurred under this benevolent and virtuous regime and under the wise leadership of Pericles. Many world-famous playwrights, poets and orators such as Achilleus and Sophocles, historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, architects such as Ictinus and Menesilos, sculptors such as Phidias, Myron and Praxiteles, and philosophers and scholars such as Plato, Zeno and Aristotle lived here and produced their magnificent works. During that time Athens was a small city of one hundred and fifty thousand people. In fact, of this population, one hundred and twenty thousand were slaves and foreigners; thus only twenty or thirty thousand citizens participated in the administration of the city. Despite its small size, the city had a substantial army of fourteen thousand soldiers and a fleet of two hundred warships. Similarly, its economy was large

---

2 M. Ali Ayni, *Demokrasi nedir?* Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1961, pp. 7–9 (hereafter cited as Ayni, *Demokrasi*).

and vibrant: the annual income of Athens exceeded twenty-four million francs in today's value. Education was compulsory and of excellent quality.<sup>3</sup>

#### Corruption and the Failure of the Democratic Regime

Although the benefits and fruits of democracy were obvious to all, over the course of time it became difficult for people to perform the duties necessary to maintain the democratic system: sitting at the assembly three times every month, serving as a jury member continuously for twelve months every three years, being a civil servant with no pay for twelve months every four years in rotation; in sum, serving the state and community without any remuneration and being a reserve soldier for life and, despite all these sacrifices, still paying high taxes to the state, began to weigh heavily on the citizens of Athens. People of all social classes, rich and poor alike, found this burden unbearable for various reasons. Gradually, citizens began to neglect their public duties, lost interest in political affairs and became alienated from the state. The result of this alienation showed itself in the weakening of the army and the navy, and the regime lost its former power and efficiency.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Philosophical Aspects*

Did Muslim and Turkish philosophers mention philosophy?

When Muslim scholars translated Greek philosophical texts into Arabic, they read and studied the complete works of Plato and Aristotle. Thus they learned the meaning of the concept of democracy. In fact, Plato expounded his thoughts on democracy when he wrote his dialogues *The Republic*, *Laws*, and *Politics*. Turkish and Arab scholars therefore became acquainted with the concept of democracy through the study of Greek philosophical texts. They equally deduced some democratic concepts through the interpretation of Islamic legal sources. Some of these Muslim jurists even penned some treatises on democracy in Islam. One of the best examples of these essays is *Şejere-ilahiyye* by Şehrizuri Şemseddin Mehmed. Moreover, other Muslim scholars conceptualized and imagined the perfect community/state, basing their ideas on the Greek notion of the city. The best-known example of such adaptations is the *Medinat-ul Fazila* (the Ideal City) by renowned Turkish philosopher Al-Farabi (d. 950). This work has also been translated into German, and appeared much earlier than Thomas More's *Utopia* or Campanella's *The City of the Sun*.

On the other hand, although many Muslim scholars – including Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Najib, Hasan Kafi of Bosnia, Sururi of Gallipoli (Gelibolu), Minkarizade

3 Ayni. *Demokrasi*, pp. 10–11.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–12.

Dede Efendi of Bursa, Hoca Nevali, Sari Abdullah Efendi, Mehmed Emin of Skopje (Üsküb) and Hayreddin Pasha of Tunis – expounded in their works some basic political concepts such as justice, assuring the welfare of the people, efficient administration or the protection of the state's borders, they nevertheless did not write about or discuss the notion of democracy in particular. This notion was dealt with directly by İbrahim Müteferrika in his *Usul el Hikem fil Nizam-i Alem*. In this work, after providing an explanation of the concepts of monarchy [*monarhiya*] and aristocracy [*aristokrasya*], İbrahim Muteferrika gave readers a description of democracy [*demokrasiya*]. According to Democritus the sovereignty must belong to the common people [*reaya*], who could thus defend themselves against oppression. For example, he says: the inhabitants of every ten villages could elect and appoint one or two people and send them to represent their villages in government affairs. These ten representatives will sit in a council and defend the interest of their villages as do the representatives of other villages or counties. The following year other people would be elected to exercise the same authority. This is called *Demokrasiya* or government according to the ideas of Democritus. Currently the Dutch and British states are governed in this manner.

Why did earlier Muslim thinkers or writers not mention democracy? In my opinion there may have been two reasons for this. The first could be the fact that these writers lived under despotic rulers. Writing about anything that would contradict the ruler's authority could endanger their lives. Despite this, some ancient writers had enough courage and integrity to advise the despotic sultans and kings to follow the true path and to rule justly.

The second reason could be the fact that in ancient times political systems were mostly described in legal manuals rather than in books on ethics or politics. The earlier Muslim thinkers based their ideas of electing a caliph on the theories expounded in these law books. These theories were in themselves democratic, since according to them the legitimacy of a Muslim ruler could be based only on a free election by the *ummah*. Medieval Muslim thinkers did not therefore feel the need to refer to the ideas of Plato or Aristotle, since these concepts were already available to them in Islamic law manuals. Nevertheless, these democratic theories were confined only to books, and were not applied in practice. Moreover, some autocratic sultans were opposed to the inclusion of such legal manuals in the curriculum of the *madradas*. We should remember that Sultan Abdülhamid II gave the order for the destruction of these books in the furnaces of the Çemberlitaş Hamam.<sup>5</sup>

---

5 Ayni, *Demokrasi*, pp. 13–15.

### Classical Writers' Concept of Democracy

In ancient times the ideas of democracy existed neither in India, nor in the pharaoh-ruled Egypt nor in Iran under the *shahanshahs*. Historically, democracy only existed in ancient Greece, where it was born together with philosophy and fine arts.

#### Plato's Ideas

According to Plato, there exist four types of government: Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy and Tyranny. Nevertheless, these are not perfect forms of government. The perfect political regime can only assured by entrusting power to the hands of philosophers, because politics is a sophisticated form of art and requires a great deal of care in order to learn it. The lessons of gymnastics and music that were given to [ordinary] citizens are not sufficient for the art of administration [politics]. Therefore the philosophers who would take the reins must also study military tactics and other useful sciences for the military, such as mathematics, geometry and astronomy. Who must learn these sciences? According to Plato, these men must be chosen from among the most robust, beautiful, intelligent and studious youth who also have a very strong memory. These young men must finish their education in the gymnasium at the age of twenty, and again study useful sciences for another ten years. When they reach their thirties they must be taught dialectics for five years. After that, at the age of thirty-five, they start their military service which is to last another fifteen years. Finally, said Plato, at the age of fifty these men would be ready to assume the governance of their states. According to Plato that was the perfect form of government. Besides this there exist other types of government that could be considered imperfect; these are: Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy and Tyranny. The first of these imperfect governments, timocracy is dominated by the warrior caste, therefore military arts and violence are considered paramount in this regime. In an oligarchy money rules and people are divided into two main classes: the poor and the rich. In oligarchic regimes, the poor, finally fed up with the exploitation and oppression exerted by the ruling wealthy class, rebel and overthrow the government. After this popular revolution, a democratic government is installed.

One of the most peculiar characteristics of democracy is its excessive freedom. In this regime people can easily free themselves from their responsibilities or obtain the positions for which they are properly qualified. In democracies, the most efficient means to assume high public functions is to pretend and convince the people that one is very enthusiastic and willing to carry out that job. Since in a democracy everybody wants to be free, many instigators incite and provoke the populace and lower classes against the wealthy class. In order

to defend themselves, the rich seek the protection of a powerful warlord who establishes himself as a tyrant. For these reasons Plato was not in favor of democracy. In short, for Plato the best form of government was the one led by wise and virtuous people. This is very similar to the [Ottoman] stratification of the urban population into three social and economic classes: the first class is composed of the virtuous and educated people [*hikmet ve fazilet sahibi*], the second is composed of soldiers [*ehl-i kılıç*] and the third of artisans and workers. Accordingly, the government must be conferred to those who are virtuous and educated.

#### Aristotle's Ideas

*Politics*, the work of renowned philosopher Aristotle, seems preferable to the ideas of Plato. According to Aristotle, human beings or mankind are a *zoon politikón*, or political animal, and are naturally apt to live in society. While family is a union of a man and a woman, the state is the union of these families. All citizens are equal within the state, and each has the right to serve in the civil service. Nevertheless, these public positions must be reserved for those who are properly qualified in terms of skills, education and loyalty.<sup>6</sup>

**The following passages are taken from Mehmed Ali Ayni's work *Milliyetçilik (Nationalism)*, Istanbul: Marifet Basımevi 1943**

#### *Nationalism*

The existence of human communities that are called nations has been attested in history since time immemorial. The members of a particular nation belong to the same race or ethnic group, speak the same language and practice the same customs; they also live in the same territory. Therefore throughout history the members of any one nation shared a common ethnicity, language, religion, form of government and inhabited the same land. All of these factors shaped the formation of the nation. Nevertheless, today there exist many nations formed by different ethnic groups who speak different languages. For example in Switzerland the members of the Swiss nation speak different languages and have different religious or sectarian affiliations. Another example would be members of different nations who belonged to the same community. Jews are the best example of this. Scattered all over the world and members of various nations, including Britain, France, Italy and Russia, they are nevertheless united by a common faith. The Jewish banker Jacques living in New York city and the tinker Mishon who is an Iranian Jew living in Isfahan

<sup>6</sup> Ayni, *Demokrasi*, pp. 15–18.

consider themselves as belonging to the Jewish nation and remember this every day when reading their holy Torah. On the other hand there are some people that share the same language but belong to separate nations; the British and Americans [U.S citizens] and most other North Americans are a good example of this situation. Equally we can give the same example for Spanish-speakers living in Spain and most South Americans who speak Spanish as their mother tongue but do not consider themselves Spanish. France and Belgium are other similar cases.<sup>7</sup>

Although religion also plays a very important role in the formation of a nation, the members of any nation could belong to different religious groups. In *What is a Nation*, the French philosopher Ernest Renan studies various ancient states and empires such as China, Egypt, the Achaemenid Empire, Babylon, peoples such as Hebrews and Arabs, and city-states such as Athens and Sparta. According to Renan the most effective factor in the formation of the modern nation states was the dynastic tie that bound together various ethnicities under the rule of one crown. According to this view, the birth of the nation states occurred in Europe only after the collapse of the Roman Empire. 125 Nations had begun to be formed before the Germanic invasions of Roman lands. The invaders had managed to impose their ethnic rule and national characteristics on the countries that they conquered. The names of many of today's European countries and provinces, such as Burgundy, Lombardy and Normandy are the legacy of that. One of the most important factors of the merging of the [Germanic and Hunnic] invaders with the native [Roman or Romanized] populations that they conquered was the conversion of the former to the religion of the latter, in other words to Christianity. The second important factor was the adoption by the conquerors of the language of the countries that they occupied and the abandonment of their own languages. The third important factor was the intermarriage of the conquerors with the conquered native populations. Subjection to the same ruler was also a fundamentally important factor for the formation of these [post-Roman] nation states. According to Prud'hon, nationality is the result of the hegemony exerted by the ruling power. Nevertheless this view is not fully correct.<sup>8</sup>

Although it is an undeniable fact that the ruling groups, and the institutions created by them, had an important influence and impact on the subject populations (in terms of unifying them culturally under a central administration), it is also a historical fact that a French nation had existed even during the heyday

---

7 Mehmet Ali Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, Istanbul: Marifet Basımevi, 1943, pp. 17-19 (hereafter cited as Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*).

8 Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, pp. 19–20.

of feudalism in [Medieval] France. The French nation was united [during the Hundred Years' War] against the English invasion of their country. Equally, the Ottomans fought hard to unite Anatolia under their rule by eliminating the Anatolian Turkish *Beyliks* [principalities]. Nevertheless, a Turkish nation existed in Anatolia before the Ottoman conquest. According to the philosopher Herbert Spencer, who expounded his ideas on this issue in *The Principles of Sociology*, these wars [the Hundred Years' War] also contributed to the consolidation of English nationhood. The German nation was born of the wars fought against Napoleon. Equally, the Spanish nation is the creation of the wars against the Arabs [Moors].<sup>9</sup>

Language also plays a pivotal role in the formation of nations. The renowned French philosopher Voltaire declared that the French language had conquered more lands than Charlemagne. Despite many periods of upheaval and transformation experienced by a nation throughout its history, many of the national characteristics, including its mores and customs, are preserved in its language. The language is the depository of the national genius. Foreigners who learn and speak the language can penetrate into the nation's geist and even become part of it.<sup>10</sup>

In order to define the word *millet* [nation], we first have to differentiate this word from other synonymous terms such as *ırk* [race], *kavim* [ethnic group], *ummah* [religious community], *halk* [people] and *devlet* [state]. In Turkish the term *ırk* or *kök* [root] is used as the equivalent of the French word *race*, such as the white race, yellow race, red race or black race. The word *kavim* is the closest to *ırk*. *İrk* or *kavim* is defined as a community whose members share a language, mores and customs, such as Arabs, Turks, Germans or Serbs. There are also ethnic families [*kavm-i gruplar*], such as Semitic, Indo-European or Ural-Altaiic. The word *ummah* has its French equivalent in the word *église* [church, religious community]. *Halk* is sometimes used with the meaning of *kavim* and sometimes to refer to the subject population of a state. *Devlet* is any particular government that has authority and political control over a land and the people living on it. We can classify states into three categories: a] ethnic [*kavmi*], b] imperial [*sultani*], and c] national [*milli*] states. For example, the Umayyad state was an ethnic state because under the Umayyads the state was in the hands of the Arab ethnic group. Non-Arabs were deprived of many important rights and were called *mawali*.<sup>11</sup>

9 Ibid., pp. 20–21.

10 Ibid., pp. 22–25.

11 Ibid., pp. 27–29.

Nation states are founded after the collapse of empires. In Europe the nation states began to form after the collapse of the Roman and German empires. Nevertheless, today we can find no nation state in Europe other than Germany. The other European states are a combination of nation states and ancient dynasties. For example England [United Kingdom] is a nation state in the British Isles but its relationship with Ireland is hegemonic and dynastic. France is also a nation state but the relationship of the French state with its colonies is hegemonic and imperialist. The ultimate objective/goal of an ethnic group [*kavim*] is to have a national religion, a national state and a national civilization [*medeniyet*]. However, most nations have failed to reach that objective. Politically, some ethnicities lived as tribes or as city-states. Sometimes the identity of the state is only represented by a ruling elite or politically dominant class that gives its name to the state; sometimes the whole nation shares the same religion and culture [by assimilation]. Religiously and culturally homogenous nations are rare in history, yet all nations eventually move towards becoming a homogenous entity. Geographical factors also cause an obstacle to nations becoming homogenous. When a state becomes an empire its ruling elite imposes its religion and culture on all the subjects of the empire. Empires are different from nation states and from ethnic states. The main religions, such as Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, united many ethnicities in a single religious community. Eventually they prepare the ground for the formation of a common civilization, such as the Islamic civilization. But ethnic religions belong only to one ethnicity. How we can understand the weakening of ethnic identity? Here, the best criterion is language. When an ethnic group begins to lose its language under the influence of these three factors [shared religion, shared state, shared civilization] it will eventually lose its identity and become assimilated to a shared entity. This phenomenon is called denationalization. For the religion, state and civilization to be shared, one ethnicity must assimilate the other. The ethnic group with the stronger culture assimilates and represents the other. This assimilation does not necessarily occur as a consequence of political domination. Sometimes nations that have been defeated militarily and politically go on to culturally conquer and assimilate their victors. For example although the Romans conquered Greece and ruled the Greeks, culturally they fell under the influence of the Greeks and adopted the Greek culture, becoming Hellenized. This was a result of the superior Greek culture and civilization. On the other hand, conquerors sometimes assimilate the vanquished and conquered nations. This occurs as a result of political influence. For example in Moesia [present-day Bulgaria] and Dalmatia, Romans became Slavized after the Slavic conquest of those lands. Bulgar Turks who occupied Moesia later also became Slavized when they converted to Christianity. The Mongols of

Genghis Khan became Turkified by accepting the religion [Islam] and culture of the Turks. Romans imposed their language on the Celts of Gaul [France] and Iberia by culturally influencing them and by conquering these countries [by establishing their political rule]. Syrians and Egyptians became Arabized when the countries were conquered by Arabs. In Iran, on the other hand, the same conquering Arabs became Persianized under the influence of the Sasanian Civilization. When Germanic Franks invaded Gaul they eventually became Latinized and adopted the Latin language. The Varangians who conquered Russia became Russian [Slavized], Normans became French in Normandy and became Italian in Southern Italy. Whereas the conquering Spanish imposed their language on the native Mexicans and Peruvians, the Lombards were assimilated to the Italian culture after conquering the north of Italy [Lombardy].<sup>12</sup>

Religion plays an important role in the interweaving and blending of different ethnicities and their assimilation by another ethnicity. More often, religious differences became an obstacle for the fusion of different ethnicities, which is why the Irish were not Anglicized. The Romanian land-owning aristocracy in Transylvania became assimilated to the Hungarian culture only after they converted to Catholicism, whereas the Orthodox Romanian peasantry preserved their culture and language because they remained Orthodox. Catholic Hungarian Kings invaded and ruled Transylvania for almost nine hundred years. Another example are the Poles, who preserved their language and culture by successfully resisting cultural assimilation despite heavy pressure from the Tsarist government, because they remained Catholic and did not convert to Russian Orthodoxy. In the Diyarbekir Province of the Ottoman Empire, Turkmen tribes such as Turkan, Karakeçi and Halıkan were Kurdified because they were Sunni like the Kurds, whereas the Alevi Turkmen retained their language and culture.<sup>13</sup>

Prior to their conversion to Islam, Turks often faced assimilation by other cultures. In China Turks were Sinicized, and they were also assimilated in Europe by local cultures. After their conversion to Islam they became exposed to the influence of Persian and Arabic cultures among others. Cities and urban life play a crucial role in the shaping of cultures and the formation of civilizations. In Kurdistan the majority of the townsfolk are Turkish. Therefore the Kurds who settled in towns and cities in this country became assimilated to the Turkish culture, whereas in Arab lands such as Syria and Iraq the cities were inhabited by Arabs and therefore other ethnicities such as Turks and Kurds became Arabized after settling in these Arab cities. Ethnic groups lose

---

<sup>12</sup> Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, pp. 28–30.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

their identity when they lose their language, becoming assimilated into other groups. In ancient France the Gauls coalesced and merged with the Latins and Franks, completely losing their language and identity. Nevertheless, certain ethnic groups managed to revive their identity. In such national revivals, language again played a crucial and primordial role. For example, the Czechs in Austria were assimilated by the Germans before regaining their ethnic and national identity with the birth and rise of a new movement. The Czech language was revived and the literature flourished. A similar national awakening occurred for the Ukrainians in Russia and the Irish in the British Isles. In the Ottoman Empire in Central Anatolia, after losing their languages to Turkish, the Greeks and Armenians managed to revive them. In some cases nations only adopt a foreign tongue as an official language and in such cases linguistic revival becomes easier. For example, the official language of the Anatolian Seljuk Turks was Persian, and their bureaucracy used the Persian language. Later, during the reign of Karamanid Mehmet Bey, Persian was replaced by Turkish. Latin was the official language in Hungary until 1849 and all official documents were written in Latin rather than in the Hungarian language. Linguistic revivals often occur during the decline and the fall of multi-ethnic empires. The Czech, Ukrainian and Irish national awakenings took place during the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and British Empires respectively. Similarly, the national awakening of the Balkan nations coincided with the decline and collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>14</sup>

The birth of the Albanian nation also began with a language revival. However the birth and rise of a national movement can be triggered as a reaction to the domination of a shared civilization. The German national movement began as a reaction to the French culture and civilization that dominated Germany. The birth of a nation is demonstrated by the use of the ethnic language in religious documents; the nationalization of a religion is one of the conditions for a national revival. An ethnic group first loses its identity by joining a religious community like the Islamic *ummah*, or by being a part of a multi-ethnic empire like the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian Empires. Later, when the same ethnicity liberates itself from the cultural and political domination of this religious commonwealth or of the empire and gains its independence, it becomes completely transformed. It is no longer the “old ethnic group.” This transformation is always beneficial to the new nation, because during the period when they lived under the empire they adopted many constructive cultural elements from other societies. For example, after gaining their

---

14 Ibid., p. 31.

independence from the Ottoman Empire, the new Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek nations found themselves radically transformed, becoming new nations quite different in many aspects from their medieval ancestors. After liberating themselves from the Ottoman Imperial rule, these Balkan nations were unable to revert to their pre-Ottoman social and cultural life. Four hundred years of Ottoman rule added many cultural, political and social elements to the make-up of these societies. As a result of this historical experience, these societies can easily become democratic. In multi-ethnic empires the dominant class was always cosmopolitan, a fundamental factor for the improvement of these societies. Ethnicity is generally formed of different tribes and city dwellers; it becomes a nation by being centralized, homogenous and by having a society based on the division of labor. The imperial phase, or the period during which these ethnicities lived under the rule of an empire, help them to improve their social qualities and become a nation. The phases of common existence under an *ummah* or an empire are in fact necessary for the evolution of these nations. When a nation begins to be formed it becomes impossible for it to remain in a multi-ethnic empire.<sup>15</sup>

The formation of a nation cannot be considered complete before the national *hars* [ethnic culture] becomes dissociated from the shared civilization. The Turkish ethnicity existed before the formation of the Islamic *ummah* and the foundation of the Seljuk and Ottoman Empires. Turks had a particular ethnic culture and civilization before entering into the orbit of the shared Persian civilization. The influence of the Persian civilization on the Seljuk Empire destroyed most Turkish ethnic institutions. At the same time, however, it caused the Turkish ethnicity to become a nation. When the Tanzimat movement wanted to emulate European civilization, it undeniably harmed our national ethnic values. On the other hand, Tanzimat helped Turks to liberate themselves from the cultural domination of the Persian civilization. Finally, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the Turkish Republic, a new Turkish national life began under the influence of the European civilization. Today the nations are approaching each other towards forming a common international civilization; while on the other hand their national culture has started to become distant from each other. Therefore civilization forms a platform for international cooperation, whereas nationality is based on culture.<sup>16</sup>

Societies formed two categories of political entities: “tribe” and “state”. In primitive societies the political entity was a “tribe”. In tribes neither the ethnic

---

15 Ibid., pp. 31–33.

16 Ibid., p. 33.

group nor the individual has any rights; only the clans has rights and this demonstrates itself as vendettas [blood feuds]. In order to understand if a society has passed from the stage of a tribe to the stage of a state, we have to primarily consider one aspect. If in a society the blood feuds come to an end and are replaced by “state punishment” then we can safely say that the transition from tribe to state has indeed taken place.

There exist three categories of state formation: a) ethnic state, b) empire and c) nation state.

**Ethnic state:** In this formation the state is based on an ethnic army. The basis of this state is ethnic populism and the government derives all its authority from an ethnic religion and an ethnic culture [*hars*]. For ancient Turks, *tengri* or *tanrı* was an ethnic god and *töre* was an ethnic law based on *hars*. The dominant ethnicity ruled the state. In the Western part of the state this ruling ethnicity was called *Gök Budun* and in the eastern part of the state it was called *Ak Budun*. The state was based on an ethnic army, an ethnic religion, an ethnic morality and a shared ethnic consciousness. In this period we see populism as part of the ethnic culture.

**Empire:** An imperial organization, known as a “sultanate” in the Islamic world, was based on a multi-ethnic army. Since the Umayyad Caliphate was an ethnic Arab state it relied on an ethnic army formed exclusively of Arabs. The Abbasid Caliphate, on the other hand, was an imperial state, and was therefore defended by a multi-ethnic army composed of Khurasanians, Berbers, Turks and Daylamite Iranians. Moreover, there were palace guards who were black and white slaves. The Seljuk Sultanate was also based on a multi-ethnic army recruited from various ethnic groups. Nizam-al Mulk, who served as vizier to the Seljuk sultan Melik-Shah (r. 1072–1092), considered the formation of an army from a single ethnic group to be risky. In his famous work *Siyasatname* [the book of politics] he advised the sultan to form an army composed of various ethnic groups, such as Arabs, Kurds, Daylamites, Greeks, etc. In the twenty-fifth chapter of his book, Nizam-al Mulk wrote, “Every year five hundred noble youth must be brought to the sultan’s palace and, after being educated and trained, they must be used as palace’s guards for one year before being replaced by new ones”. The vizier considered this recruitment as a way of ensuring the loyalty of the empire’s landed nobility. In the twenty-sixth chapter of his book he also recommended the same form of recruitment for the unruly Turkmen tribes. In short, the imperial army was not an ethnic or tribal army but was a multi-ethnic army formed of many ethnicities. Moreover in imperial regimes, shared religions such as Islam and Christianity replaced the former ethnic and tribal religions. Unlike the ethnic and tribal religions that remain the religion of a particular ethnicity, the communal religions are global and

world-embracing and aim to convert the entire world. Turkish was one of the many ethnicities in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman State did not rest on a particular ethnicity but on many ethnicities. The Feudal Age began in Europe after the collapse of the Carolingian Empire. In Europe, Feudalism constituted a legal as well as a political and economic system.<sup>17</sup>

### *The Principles of the Nation State*

In Europe the invention of artillery put an end to the privileges of the ruling classes of Feudalism. Now the infantry, backed by artillery, could easily defeat the cavalry forces. As a result of this the states [monarchies] formed armies by recruiting peasants and began to capture the castles of the feudal lords, such as barons and counts. The gradual elimination of these small feudal governments united the people of the country under the authority of a monarch and a national army was formed. Another of the inventions that ushered a new era was undoubtedly the printing press. The newspaper appeared as a result of that invention and contributed to the rise of nationalism by using a popular language that addressed the whole nation. The increase of the division of labor in societies undermined the power of communal sentiments. With the rise of a professional consciousness, individualism became dominant in societies. This social development undermined the political authority of empires, which until then had strictly controlled social life through a formalist legal system.<sup>18</sup>

### *Populism and Nationalism*

The social situation of individuals in a society depends on the ranking of social classes. During social evolution, certain social classes dominate others. The study of this social movement can show us the formation of the people [*halk*] in society.

Clan Era: In some tribes, society is formed by clans. In these tribal societies the clans can be equal or unequal to one other. Since there exists no inequality among clan members, the members of a clan are usually equal to each other. In every clan the individuals are guardians of each other. The chief of the clan is the “first among equals”, and is usually the father. In case of blood feuds [vendettas] or tribal raids [*ghazw*], every member of the clan is liable for military service. In these societies, therefore, the “people” is formed by the totality of the members of the clan. All individuals in a clan possess “citizenship” rights. There exists no other social class or organization outside the “people”. In tribal societies every clan forms a separate “people”. Usually these clans are in a state

---

17 Ibid., pp. 34–35.

18 Ibid., p. 36.

of warfare with other. The relationship between them is similar to today's international relations. Thus, if inside the clan there is populism, outside the clan there is imperialism; the clans fight with each other and conquer each other's territory and seize each other's property.

Caste Era: In ethnic states, society is divided into castes. In ancient Greece and Rome society was divided into three castes: 1) Patricians, 2) Clients and 3) Plebs. In Islam during the Umayyad period, the Arab society was divided into three castes: 1) Arabs, 2) *Mawali* and 3) *Dhimmi*. For the ancient Turks, society was again divided into three castes: 1) *Buyruklar* 2) *Kara Budun* 3) *Kara Kemik*. During the reign of Genghis-Khan, the dominant caste in Mongol society was the *Gök Moğol* or Celestial Mongols. For Oghuz Turks and Kazakhs the word *gök* became *ak* [white], as seen in the *Ak Koyunlular* [White Sheep] or *Kara Koyunlular* [Black Sheep] and *Ak Kemik* [White Bone] or *Kara Kemik* [Black Bone]. In this age there were two main social classes in Turkish society; first the nobility or aristocratic class, called *Ak Budun* or *Ak Halk* [White People]. This class had extensive political, social and economic rights over society; they were the ruling class. The *Ak Halk* of the Oghuz Turks was the equivalent of the Patrician class in Roman Society or the "Arab ethnic class" during the Umayyad Empire (661–750 AD). For the ancient Oghuz Turks the lower segment of the society was called *Kara Budun* or *Kara Halk* [Black People]. They were the equivalent of the Roman Plebeians and the *Ehl-i Zimmet* of the Umayyad. For ancient Turks the division between the *ak* and *kara* groups is determined by belonging to a particular ancestry. The *Ak Halk* are the descendants of the conquering tribe whose members founded the state, while the *Kara Halk* are the descendants of the vanquished and conquered tribes. The middle class was known as *Client* in Rome, *Mawali* under the Umayyads and *Buyruk* for ancient Turks. These people originally belonged to the lower class of the ancient Turks, but were later manumitted or emancipated and became associated to the upper class.<sup>19</sup>

The place of an individual in ancient Oghuz society was determined by birth. If a person's parents were *Ak Kemik* he was also *Ak Kemik*, if his parents were *Kara Kemik* he would also be the same. This system is therefore both populist and imperialist. However, here the populism was reserved only for the *Ak Kemik* class. They were the ones who could participate in the *Kurultay* [Assembly] and use their votes. On the other hand, the members of the *Kara Kemik* caste were deprived of political rights and they were a class of subjects.

Today, all the aspects of the caste system are present in India, where there exist four major castes: 1) Brahmin 2) Kshatriya 3) Vaishya and finally 4)

19 Ibid., p. 37–38.

Shudra. Elsewhere the caste system was dynamic and therefore disappeared over time. In India, however, the caste system was static and as result of that it has continued to exist until today.<sup>20</sup>

### *Transition Period*

In Islamic history the caste system was abolished with the Abbasid Revolution. The *Mawali* or non-Arab Muslims, who were considered second-class citizens, formed a political party called *Shu'ubiyya* and overthrew the Umayyad government. Since the Abbasid government relied on the *Shu'ubiyya*, all discriminatory measures against them were abolished. The *Shu'ubiyya* became fully equal with the Arabs. Nevertheless two new distinct classes were eventually formed in Islamic society. They were the *umera* [military ruling class] and the *ulema* [Islamic scholars]. In Ottoman history the *umera* were called *Seyfiye* [men of the sword] and the *ulema* were called *İlmiye* [men of science]. In the Ottoman period the previous *Ak Kemik* and *Kara Kemik* classes became united/fused and began to be called the *Raiya* [tax-paying subject class]. Consequently people lost all their political rights. Only the *Seyfiye* and *İlmiye* classes, as the ruling elite, had political rights. In the Ottoman Empire most of the *Seyfiye* were non-Turkish converts. They were outsiders. They were not from the people. At the same time the *Seyfiye* had the status of *kul*, who were the slaves of the sultan. On the other hand the Turks in the Ottoman Empire lost the dominant status that they had enjoyed in the Oghuz State. They became a subject ethnic group like the other ethnicities. Therefore the form of government in the Ottoman Empire was autocratic. The only dominant group was the Ottoman imperial family [*Al-i Osman*]. The Ottoman family ruled their empire through converts who were cut off from their families. These converts were called *devshirme* and they formed the backbone of the state bureaucracy. In the Ottoman Empire everybody was the slave or subject of the sultan, including the *Seyfiye* and the *İlmiye*. Only these two were entrusted by the sultan with some power to administer his empire. Thus, populism had completely disappeared and imperialism became dominant. The backbone of the Ottoman land system was *timar* and *zeamet*, a system that was very different from the European Feudal system.

### *Feudal System*

When Ottoman Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520) conquered Kurdistan with the assistance of Idris Bitlisi, he granted some administrative autonomy to the feudal lords in that country. These administrative privileges were called *Yurtluk* and *Ocakluk*. Moreover, after conquering Egypt Selim left the previous Mamluk

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

administration completely intact. Soon after, a Turkish corsair called Barbarossa Hayreddin conquered North Africa [Algeria] and submitted to the sultan. This new province was called *garb ocakları* [the western organizations]. Sultan Selim I altered the existing Ottoman administration by introducing a new system that was drastically different from the previous one. These changes are clearly explained in the *Kanunname* [Regulation] of Ayni Ali Efendi:

“The Province of Diyarbekir is formed of 11 Ottoman *sanjaks* (a sub-division of a province, district). Among them eight *sanjaks* are assigned to the local Kurdish *Beys* and five to local governments. The *sanjaks* assigned to the Kurdish *Beys* were hereditary.”

This document shows that since the reign of Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520), three categories of *sanjak* were formed in some provinces. These were called 1) *Osmanlı sancağı* (Ottoman *Sanjak*), 2) *Yurtluk ve Ocaklık* (estates and domains) and 3) *Hükümet* (local government). However, before the reign of Sultan Selim all *sanjaks* were exclusively Ottoman *Sanjaks*, and *Sanjak Beys* [administrators of the *Sanjaks*] were the bureaucrats [servants of the sultan] and therefore had no hereditary rights. This new administrative reform introduced decentralization to the Ottoman system. The provinces were divided into two categories: a) *Haslı* and b) *Salyaneli*. In the *Salyaneli* provinces the governors' expenditure was first deducted from the general of the provinces. In *Haslı* provinces the income was assigned to three offices a) the sultan, b) the central bureaucracy, and c) the local administrators. Prior to Sultan Selim I, there was only *Haslı* province. The *Salyaneli* provinces were those that were conquered during and after the reign of Sultan Selim I. They were: Egypt, Baghdad, Yemen, Eritrea [Habesh], Basra, Eastern Arabia, Libya [Tripolitania], Tunisia and Algeria.

During the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566), new practices were introduced. Previously only the *devshirme* or Christian born youth recruited and converted by the state authorities could attend the *Enderun* [Palace School]. Sultan Süleyman extended this right to the sons of the Janissaries. Thus the appointment to bureaucratic positions became hereditary, since the *Enderun* was the school of political science where future bureaucrats studied. The traditional Ottoman system was eroding. In the late sixteenth century the system based on *timar* [state-owned military lands] began to be undermined by the introduction of the tax-farming [*iltizam*] system. State-owned lands began to be leased to local magnates in the provinces and a new land tenure called *malikane* was becoming increasingly common. *Malikane* was the name given to the lifetime tax-farming right.<sup>21</sup>

21 Ibid., pp. 40–42.

*Nationalism among Ancient Turks*<sup>22</sup>

The idea of nationalism that emerged in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century was already held by the ancient Turks even before their conversion to Islam. In Europe, the concept of state was formed before the concept of the nation. It was only after the nineteenth century that the term “nationality” gained its current connotation. In England, for example, this word was first used in 1691. Nevertheless, its usage in its current meaning did not appear until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In France the word *nationalité* first appeared in the dictionary in 1835. In Germany the word *Nationalität* derives from its French equivalent. The word began to appear in many Eastern European languages at around the same time. For example, the Russian writer Plekhanov, writing on the meaning of the word *Narodnost*, says, “We do not know its real meaning but since it is a totally new concept for us it is not yet used in excess and vulgarized.” This vagueness was not particular to Eastern Europe alone. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the same indecisiveness about the concept of nationality was also found in Central and Western Europe. This situation caused the rise of some semi-imaginary ideologies, such as “Pan-Germanism”, “Pan-Slavism” or “Pan-Latinism”, that emerged in the 1860s. The French scholars divided the idea of the Slavic union into two categories: the exclusively cultural, linguistic, intellectual and sentimental union of the Slavic nations was called “Slavism”. But when this union also took on a political form, it was called “Pan-Slavism”. The principle of nationality only takes a scientific and rational form after completing these imaginary and mythical phases of its evolution. It reached its present stage at the cost of bloody wars between various nations. The scholars of these nations defined their national self with regard to the “enemy other”. French and German scholars laid down the foundations of their “nationalist ideologies” as a result of historical debates between the historians of these two nations. In particular, the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 triggered important historical debates. The debate was opened by two great historians: the German Mommsen and the French Fustel de Coulanges, author of *La Cité Antique*, expounded their views on the concept of nationality. According to Fustel de Coulanges, the French nation was formed as a combination of various races but based on a common culture, whereas the German Mommsen argued that the German nation was based on the German race. Fustel de Coulanges states that, “If nationality meant race, Belgium and France must have been united as one nation.” Or, he said, “Holland and Germany must be united and considered as one nation”. For Fustel de Coulanges,

---

22 Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, p. 57.

a nation is formed of individuals who share the same culture and history, similar sentiments and a common interest.

Other nationalities are based on different concepts. The Swiss nationality, for example, is based on a shared homeland, for Romanians and Arabs nationality is based on a common language, for Americans on a shared citizenship, for the Chinese an old culture.<sup>23</sup>

The concept of nationality in the Turkish world arose long before it did in Europe; it was even present among ancient Turks in pre-Islamic times. Until the Ottoman era, when then Turkish nationality was submerged in Islamic identity, the Turks managed to preserve their national characteristics throughout their history. The oldest historical evidence for this dates to the early periods of the *Göktürk* Empire in the sixth century AD. Like the Roman Empire, the *Göktürk* Empire was also divided into two parts. According to the famous scholar Édouard Chavannes, who published the Chinese documents of the *Göktürk*, this division in fact started at a very early stage of that state. There were two factors behind this: one internal, the other external. The internal factor was the struggle for power within the ruling dynasty. For the ancient Turks, unlike Ottoman Turks, the ruler must also have royal blood from his mother's side. In 581 AD when Ta-lo-Pien, one of the *Göktürk* khan princes, wanted to ascend to the throne, the nobles objected to his claim because his mother was not a princess. This crisis eventually caused the division of the empire when Ta-lo-Pien established his control over the western part of the *Göktürk* Empire with the help of the western *Yabgu* [vice-emperor] Tardu who also wanted to establish a separate state. This internal political crisis was soon exploited by the Chinese, who considered the formation of a strong nomadic empire to the north as threat to their security. The Chinese therefore plotted against the *Göktürk*, first finding their weak points and then trying to exploit these weaknesses to divide and conquer. According to the report submitted by Chinese envoys to their emperor, the *Göktürk* Empire was made up of four autonomous provinces, each ruled by a prince. Furthermore the empire was divided between two *Yabgus*, one of whom bore the title *khagan* [supreme ruler of the empire]. It was difficult to defeat the *Göktürks* through external aggression but easy to plot and play these four princes against each other, and it was therefore this policy that the Chinese followed. They supported the western *Göktürk Yabgu* and recognized him as the supreme *khagan* by sending him royal regalia. This support encouraged the western *Yabgu* to revolt against the supreme *khagan* [Ishbara Khagan, r. 581–587 AD] who was also the eastern *Yabgu*. The nephews of the *khagan* also joined the rebellion against their uncle. All of these political

23 Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*. p. 59.

events brought an end to Turkish unity and China became the overall winner of these developments. The Chinese emperor established his political control over the *Göktürks* by playing the two states against each other. Nevertheless, when the emperor also wanted to Sinicize the Turks, he failed. The Chinese also wanted cultural control over the *Göktürks*, but although they accepted the political control of China, they refused to accept its cultural domination. This refusal was documented in a letter sent by the *Göktürk* ruler to the Chinese emperor, which stated that the *Göktürk* ruler recognized the emperor as his suzerain but adamantly refused to adopt Chinese cultural values.<sup>24</sup>

A study of historical documents clearly shows that the idea of nationality has existed among Turks since pre-Islamic times. After their conversion to Islam, the Turks continued to preserve their national identity despite the negative effects of the *madrasa* education. For Turks, the important factor in the preservation of their culture was their strong attachment to their language. Throughout history, until their final conversion to Islam, Turkish societies adhered to many different religions and adopted different writing systems, but always kept their language. In fact this characteristic of the Turks influenced some other ethnicities in which they entered into contact, causing them to adopt the Turkish language. In Asia, many Mongol, Finnic-Samoyed and Tungusic groups eventually abandoned their own languages and adopted Turkish instead. Throughout history, the strong bond that tied the Turks to their language helped them to maintain their ethnic culture and to avoid disappearing among other nations through assimilation. After entering into the orbit of Islamic civilization, the Turks faced the influence of the Arab culture, but ultimately managed to retain their own cultural characteristics.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Differences among Muslims*<sup>26</sup>

More than three hundred and fifty million Muslims living on earth belong to various ethnicities, live in different countries and have different languages, different mentalities and different cultures. Although the Arabic language constituted a common bond among all Muslims for religious matters, different spoken dialects of this language remain mutually unintelligible. Today the Arabs who live in the desert still live in the age of *Jahiliyya*, far from civilization. The climatic and geographical conditions in which they live prevent them from achieving any level of civilization.

---

24 Ibid., p. 62.

25 Ibid., p. 69.

26 Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, p. 137.

The mission of the Prophet Muhammad was to take the people out of the darkness and into the light, teaching them good ethics and showing them the right path. Thanks to his teachings, people would be united in truth and form a society based on fraternity. Unfortunately the noble values brought by the Prophet Muhammad were soon forgotten by the Arabs, who were still under the influence of their ancient pagan beliefs. A leader was now needed to unite the Muslim society. This person must be just, honest and knowledgeable, and the position must not be hereditary. But we know that not long after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the descendants of Hashim and sons of Umayya began a bloody struggle to establish their supremacy over the Islamic community. This was completely contrary to the teaching of the messenger of God. The Islamic *ummah* was divided into two hostile camps: some became the partisans of Ali and the others supported the leadership of Muawiya.<sup>27</sup>

The Question of the Caliphate: The division among Muslims began very early. Even before the burial of our lord the messenger of God [Muhammad] the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar* had begun to fight for supremacy in the Islamic nation. Finally Abu Bakr (r. 632–634), a close companion of the prophet, was elected as the head of the Muslim community. However Ali, the cousin and son-in law of the prophet, first refused to recognize the leadership of Abu Bakr, consenting only six months later. Abu Bakr appointed Umar (r. 634–644) to replace him as the new caliph. And when Umar was assassinated, a *shura* [elective council] was formed, which elected Uthman (r. 644–656) as caliph; Ali was again pushed aside. Finally after the murder of Uthman in 656, Ali was elected as caliph by his supporters. Nevertheless, Muawiya, who was then governor of Syria, did not recognize the caliphate of Ali and rebelled against him. As a result of this the forces of Muawiya confronted Ali's army in a battle in Siffin [central Syria] in 657–58. When his forces began to lose the battle, Muawiya resorted to a ruse suggested to him by his shrewd advisor Amr ibn al-'As. According to this plan, Muawiya's soldiers would attach the pages of the Quran on the tip of their pikes and march towards Ali's army. This was intended as a message to Ali's soldiers to reach an agreement according to the Quran. As expected by Muawiya the move proved successful and many of Ali's soldiers stopped fighting and put pressure on Ali to accept an arbitration to solve the political crisis. In Islamic history these people were called Kharijites or *Khawarij* (the ones who leave). According to the Kharijites, the caliphate did not belong exclusively to the Quraysh tribe and any Muslim from any tribe and race could be elected as a caliph if he could provide a just rule to the community. The Kharijites also believe that if the caliph commits injustice,

---

27 Ibid., p. 138.

oppresses the people and becomes a tyrant, it is permissible to dismiss and overthrow him; he could even be killed. Kharijites are divided into many branches. Today only the Ibadi branch survives. The Ibadi live in southern Algeria and in Oman.

**Cursing Ali:** After agreeing to arbitration to solve the issue of the caliphate, Ali returned to Kufa. Nevertheless, this agreement worked against Ali and undermined his authority, because while his representative Abu Musa al-Ashaari accepted to delegate the issue of the caliphate to an electoral council, Muawiyah's representative Amr ibn al-'As refused this offer and declared Muawiyah as the rightful caliph, once again causing uproar among Ali's supporters. This time the Kharijites forced Ali to take action against Abu Musa and even insulted him. Told him that he is a weak ruler. Then, Ali was forced to march against them. In a battle fought in Nahrawan [Iraq], Ali's forces killed two thousand Kharijites but also suffered substantial casualties. In the meantime, Muawiyah consolidated his power by militarily occupying most of the provinces previously controlled by Ali. He also started a campaign of defamation against Ali, whose name was cursed in mosques. Soon after, Ali was assassinated by a Kharijite in Kufa while praying in a mosque. After the martyrdom of Ali, Muawiyah also convinced Hasan to renounce his rights to the caliphate. Muawiyah sent letters to his governors and instructed them to arrest and punish anybody who pronounced the *hadith* in favor of Ali and *Ahl al-Bayt* [Family of the Prophet]. The cursing of Ali in the mosques continued even after Muawiyah, until it was finally banned by the pious Caliph Umar bin Abdulaziz (r. 717–720), who was an exception among the Umayyad Caliphs.<sup>28</sup>

**Shia:** Despite Muawiyah's campaign of defamation, many Muslims continued to support Ali and wanted him to become caliph. According to them the issue of the caliphate was based on a sacred text [*nass*]. They believed that both the imamate and the caliphate must belong to Ali and his descendants, arguing that the Prophet Muhammad solved this problem in his own life and appointed Ali as his successor. In Islamic history the partisans of Ali are called *Shiat al-Ali* [Party of Ali]. The Shia declare that they separated the imamate from the caliphate. To them only imams are *masum* [infallible] and the imamate belongs only to Ali's family. Thus Ali and Husayn are both imam and caliph, whereas Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman can only be qualified as caliphs. The Shia are divided into many sub-categories.

- Zaydiyyah: Although they consider Ali the most eligible candidate to the caliphate with a superior claim over the others, they nevertheless also

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

condone the caliphates of Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) and Umar (r. 634–644). The Zaydiyyah descended from Zayd b. Zayn al-Abidin. Today the majority of Zaydis live in the highlands of Yemen.

- Imamiyyah: This sect is divided into two sub-categories: a) *Ithna Asharis* [Twelvers] and b) Ismailiyah. According to the former, the imamate belonged to the descendants of Ali, up to the twelfth generation. The Twelve Imams, including Ali, were: 1) Ali b. Abi Talib, 2) Hasan, 3) Husayn, 4) Zayn al-Abidin, 5) Muhammad al-Baqir, 6) Jafar al-Sadiq, 7) Musa al-Kadhim, 8) Ali al-Ridha, 9) Muhammad al-Taqi (Jawad), 10) Ali Naqi, 11) Hasan al-Askari, and 12) Muhammad al-Mahdi. This last imam became lost in 878 AD during his childhood in Samarra (Iraq). The Twelver Shia believe that Muhammad al-Mahdi is still living in hiding/occultation [*ghayba*] and will one day reappear as the expected *Mahdi* to dispense justice to all humanity. Iranian Shias call him *masum* [infallible], *mektum* [hidden] and *kaimi zaman* [everlasting]. According to their belief, this imam is still alive and in communication with his apostles. When the constitution was proclaimed in Iran in 1906, the Shia *ulema* in Najaf declared that opposition to the constitution would mean “drawing swords” on Imam Mahdi. When the parliament was opened in Iran two years before the declaration of the constitution, politicians and *ulema* declared that the *Mahdi* was actually present at the inauguration of the parliament [*majlis*].<sup>29</sup>
- *Gulat-i Shia* [Extreme Shia Islam]: In Iran besides these religious sectarian groups there exist also some other groups that are considered *gulat* [extremist]:
  - 1) Ali Allahis: This group emerged in the sixteenth century AD and spread among Turks, Kurds and Lurs in Iran.
  - 2) New Ismailis and Hurufis: These groups appeared in Northern Iran around the eleventh century AD by establishing their headquarters at the Alamut Castle. They are found in Gilan, Kerman, Sirjan, Birjand and Nishapur.

Until the end of the fifteenth century, the majority of the population in Iran was Sunni. The most renowned and greatest scholars of the *Ahl as-Sunnah* are from this country.<sup>30</sup>

Mahdi: One Shia belief, the coming of the *Mahdi*, was also adopted by the Sunni. Some Sunni Muslims believe that at the end of time a *Mahdi* will appear

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

and establish a just rule over the world by killing a certain *Masih ad-Dajjal*, or false messiah [unjust and oppressive ruler]. Because of this belief, these Muslims rebelled many times by following some unscrupulous leaders, causing great strife. Nevertheless, the coming of a *Mahdi* is mentioned in some *hadith* books. However in the past, reliable and renowned Islamic scholars usually refused to accept the credibility of these *hadiths*. Moreover, although in the past some scholars informed the people that the *Mahdi* would soon appear, this never happened. Therefore the people who discredited these *hadith* proved to be right. After the end of the First World War, when our country was occupied by the Allied Powers and our people were oppressed under foreign occupation, a certain Muslim cleric told me that a *Mahdi* would appear soon to liberate the country. Therefore the belief in a *Mahdi* was still alive in the minds of the people until very recently. Today, under the Republican regime, we expect that such superstitious beliefs will disappear with the introduction of a modern education.

When discussing the *Mahdi* I should also give some information about the Messiah and Jesus. When the Children of Israel began to multiply and increase in number in Egypt, the native Egyptians were alarmed. The pharaoh ordered certain measures to reduce their numbers and to eventually destroy them. He ordered the killing of newborn Hebrew baby boys. Moses saved them from this peril by taking them out of Egypt to the Sinai together with their livestock. After living for a while in the Sinai desert for a while, the Israelites – led by Joshua, who succeeded Moses – crossed the River Jordan and conquered the land of Canaan. Joshua then divided the Israelites into twelve tribes and settled them there. Since this division of tribes caused many wars and disasters among them, the tribes were finally united by Samuel. The most glorious and powerful period of the Jewish state established in Palestine was during the reign of Solomon. Nevertheless, this state was later divided into two, in a division that was to cause their ruin. First the state of Israel [Northern Kingdom] was destroyed in 721 BC. The victorious Assyrian emperor Sargon [Sargon II 722–705 BC] captured Hoshea ben Elah the King of Israel, and brought him to Nineveh, the Assyrian capital. Then Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was conquered and destroyed by the Babylonian king Nabuchadnezzar (r. 605–562 BC) in 586 BC. Zedekiah (r. 597–587 BC), the last king of Judah, was captured and brought to Babylon in chains. The slavery of the Israelites in Babylon lasted for seventy years. Finally, in 529 BC the Shah of Persia, Cyrus the Great (r. 559–530 BC), liberated them [after conquering Babylon], allowing them to return to Palestine to build their temple there, and forty-two thousand Jews returned to Jerusalem led by Zerubbabel. The Israelites completed their temple in 516 BC.

During the reign of Persian Shah Ardashir, more Jews were encouraged to emigrate to Jerusalem and were told to obey the commandments of Moses. Under Persian rule, Palestine lived in peace and prosperity, a situation that continued during the reign of Alexander the Great. After the death of Alexander, Palestine was ruled by Egyptian kings [Ptolemaic Kingdom] for about fifty years, after which they fell under the rule of the Seleucids, in around 200 BC. The Seleucid Empire ruled from 311–63 BC. When the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV (r. 215–164 BC) placed Jupiter's bust on the temple (and slaughtered a pig on the temple's altar), the Jews revolted, because it meant that they were expected to abandon their monotheistic religion and adopt paganism [Greek polytheism]. The Jews revolted and liberated themselves. Nevertheless, for the following two hundred years they suffered great oppression. Although Palestine prospered and developed during the reign of the King Herod (37 BC–4 AD), they soon fell under the yoke of Rome.

During all these ages of slavery and oppression, the Children of Israel always expected a savior who would liberate them. God the almighty had promised them this savior and finally, four years before the death of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, a man named Jesus of Nazareth declared himself that long-awaited savior. At the time nobody believed this young man who was the son of Mary. Later he was betrayed by one of his apostles, Judas, who denounced him to his enemies [the Roman authorities]. They hanged [*sic.*] Jesus after a trial.

In the gospels written by four of Jesus's apostles, it was announced that God would send another prophet to the world and that his name would be Ahmed. But when this person came into existence and later declared his prophecy, neither the Jews nor the Christians believed in him. The Prophet Muhammad did much and made a great effort to convince the Jews that he was the awaited messiah. The Quran describes the refusal of the Jews to accept Muhammad as the messiah. In fact, the Christians did not oppose his claim. The Prophet Muhammad wrote a letter to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (r. 610–641) inviting him and his subjects to convert to Islam. According to a reported tradition Emperor Heraclius ordered his administrators not to show any hostility to that new religion. The veracity of this report is highly probable, because Emperor Heraclius wanted to replace the doctrine of the Trinity with the notion of the unity of God. But was there any mention in the Bible of Muhammad? There was great debate among Muslim and Christian scholars on this issue. In the fourteenth and sixteenth chapters of the Saint John's Bible, a person named "Paraclete" or "Peryklytos" is mentioned. This could be Muhammad, since the direct translation of the Greek "Peryklytos" into Arabic is "Ahmed" [admirable one]. In the seventeenth century, some Jews living in the Ottoman Empire accepted a person called Sabatay Levi [*sic.*, actually Sabbatai Zevi, 1626–1676] as

the messiah, but Levi was later forced to convert to Islam by Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687).<sup>31</sup>

**The Ahmadiyya Sect:** The founder of this sect was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who was born in the town of Qadian in Punjab India, after whom the sect was named. According to Ahmad, Jesus did not in fact die on the cross but escaped to India and later died there. This contradicts the Quranic story of Jesus, according to which Jesus was saved by God and elevated to the skies. The Muslims who declared him a *Mahdi* based their claim on a *hadith* that reports that a *mujeddid* [religious reformer] would appear at the beginning of each century. Ahmad also based his claim on this *hadith* and announced that not only was he the expected *Mahdi* but that he was also Jesus. There are about half a million followers of this Ahmadiyya sect in the Punjab province of India, and there are Ahmadiyya mosques in London, England and Germany. The Ahmadiyya publish many journals to disseminate their views, with the objective of spreading their beliefs among other Muslims and even among Christians. After the death of Ghulam Ahmad, his sect was divided into two opposing branches. One of the branches, *Qadian*, is guided by Ahmad's son Miyay Mahmud. The second branch is based in Lahore, India [now Pakistan] and the leaders of this branch seek a rapprochement with Sunni Islam. They also try to disseminate their views among Hindus. The Ahmadiyya also translated the Quran into English, Urdu and Malay. There is no doubt that the Ahmadiyya sect is used by the British as a political instrument.

Can we call Muawiyah a Caliph? Our beloved prophet, Muhammad, declared that the caliphate would last thirty years after him, following which the caliphate would be assumed by the “powerful kings”. This *hadith* is reported by Abu Abd er-Rahman Sefine. Thirty years elapsed between the caliphate of Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) and Hasan's resignation from the caliphate. Muawiya, was therefore not a caliph, but a despotic ruler. During his life Muawiya appointed his son Yazid as his successor in 56 AH/675 AD, in a practice that was against the principles of Islam, following instead the monarchical tradition. He acted like the Roman emperors and Persian shahs and his decision was therefore met by fierce opposition in Mecca and Medina. However, he silenced this opposition by visiting these cities and buying off his opponents. Consequently, Muawiyah managed to impose the caliphate of his son, Yazid.<sup>32</sup>

**The Martyrdom of Husayn:** When Yazid succeeded his father to the caliphate in Damascus, the people of Kufa in Iraq invited Husayn to come there from Medina. When Husayn accepted this invitation and went to Iraq he fell into a

31 Ibid., pp. 142–146.

32 Ibid., p. 148.

trap, in a waterless and arid place called Karbala. Husayn and his followers were surrounded by a strong Umayyad army sent by Ibn Ziyad. The following day Umar, son of Saad b. Abi Waqqas, also joined the Umayyad army with a cavalry force of four thousand soldiers. Umar was bribed by Yazid who promised him the governorate of Rey in Iran if he killed Husayn. Husayn asked Umar to allow him to return to Hejaz but Umar had received specific orders from Ibn Ziyad to capture Husayn alive. He expected Husayn to surrender when they cut his access to water, but despite being tormented by heat and thirst Husayn refused to surrender. Umar then attacked Husayn and his followers. Umar had six thousand soldiers, whereas Husayn had only thirty-two cavalry and forty foot soldiers. The outcome of this confrontation was inevitable; Husayn's loyal defenders sacrificed their lives to save their leader. In the massacre, Husayn's sons Ali al-Akbar and Abdullah, and his nephews Abu Bakr and Qasim and many other of Ali's followers were killed. When Husayn approached the Euphrates River to drink water he was hit in the mouth with an arrow and wounded. Umayyad soldiers surrounded Husayn, dismounted him by striking him with a sword and finally murdered him by decapitation, after which the soldiers looted his camp. On his body they found thirty-three spear wounds. Husayn was fifty-five years old at his martyrdom.

The Consequences of the Karbala Massacre: This event caused a great deal of animosity and hostility among Muslims and deeply divided the Islamic community. Thousands of sad elegies [*mersiye*] written in Turkish, Arabic and Persian caused Muslims to shed tears every year in the month of *Muharram*. The martyrdom of Husayn had a great influence on the Islamic world and the hatred against the perpetrators of this murder was eventually to cause the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty.<sup>33</sup>

The *Tevvabun* Party: Although the people of Kufa invited Husayn to Iraq they did not help him against the Umayyads, leaving him alone in Karbala. These people later deeply regretted their actions, and after the tragedy of Karbala they formed a secret society called the *Tevvabun* [Repenters] to avenge the murder of Husayn. The Kufans and other supporters of Husayn then waited for an opportunity to rise against the Umayyads, who were eventually overthrown by a general uprising. The murder of Husayn was finally avenged by this bloody rebellion.<sup>34</sup>

---

33 Ibid., p. 149.

34 Ibid.

### *The Righteous Sects*

The Maturidi Sect: *Ahl as-Sunnah* [Sunni Islam] is the community that follows the path of the Prophet Muhammad by modeling their actions on those of the Prophet. The sect has two great imams: the first is Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari and the second is [Abu Mansur] Maturidi. There is disagreement between these two imams on the interpretation of the religious texts. The Maturidi sect is more inclined to accept the use of human reason, therefore the majority of Hanafis accepted his ideas. The official creed of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad was Sunni Islam. The Sunni creed is divided into four sub-categories: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali. These are also legal schools or schools of Islamic law.

- Hanafi School: The most renowned jurist of this school of law is Imam al-Azam Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit (80–150 AH/696–767 AD). All Turkish lands and the majority of Indian Muslims belong to this sect or school of law [*mazhab*], and Hanafism was also the official creed of the Ottoman Empire. According to this school the bases of Islamic jurisprudence [*usul al fiqh*] are the Quran, *hadith* [*sunnah* of the Prophet], *ijma* [legal consensus] and *qiyas* [juristic analogy].
- Shafi'i School: The founder of this school was Imam Shafi'i (150–204 AH/767–820 AD). Since Imam Shafi'i was related to the Abbasid family, for a while his school gained an authoritative position in Iraq. Later, however, under the influence of Abu Yusuf who was a student of Abu Hanifa, Shafi'ism lost its former importance. It later spread in Southern Arabia, Eastern Africa, Indonesia, Palestine, Hejaz and Lower Egypt. The center of this school is Cairo.
- Maliki School: The founder of this school was Malik bin Anas (83–179 AH/702–795 AD). Imam Malik established his school in Medina, the city to which the Prophet Muhammad emigrated in 622 AD and where he lived until his death in 632 AD. Malik therefore argued that his school was the closest to the practice and ideals of the Prophet Muhammad and his close companions. Malikism first spread in Al-Andalus and today it is the dominant sect in Northern and Western Africa, Sudan and Eastern Arabia.
- Hanbali School: The founder of this school was the preacher Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (164–241 AH/780–855 AD). It was only after bloody struggles that the Hanbali managed to receive acceptance of their sect as an official school of law. The Hanbali School is the strictest among the Sunni Schools of law, because this school only accepts the external meaning of the Quran and greatly limits the use of the *ijma* and *qiyas*. They are fiercely opposed to the ideas of the followers of al-Ash'ari. In the past there were many

Hanbalis in Syria and Iraq, but as a result of the religious policy of the Seljuk Sultans who supported Hanafism, their numbers sharply declined in these countries. The religious policy of the Seljuks was continued by the Ottomans who also opted for the Hanafi school. Therefore today the Hanbali school is mostly confined to central Arabia [*Najd*].<sup>35</sup>

*Heretical Sects: Qaramita, Batiniyya, Ismailiyah*

**Qaramita and Batiniyya:** One of the sects that caused to so many bloody wars in Syria and Iraq was the Qaramita. The founder of this sect was a man called Qarmit who lived in the vicinity of Kufa, and whose ideas were quickly adopted by the neighboring Bedouin tribes. This sect is an extreme [*ghulat*] form of Shia Islam. The Qaramita refused to accept the Sunni form of Islam and deviated from the right path to heresy. They sowed the seed of vice and immorality among Muslims. Their ideas are very close to those of the Batiniyya.

**Ismailiyah:** This sect is named after Imam Ismail (721–755 AD) who was the eldest son of the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq (80–148 AH/699–765 AD). Since Ismail died before his father the imamate passed to his son, Muhammad Mak-tum [Muhammad bin Ismail]. This latter imam is considered the seventh imam, therefore the sect of Ismailiyah is also called the *Sabiyya* [Seveners]. According to the Ismaili, the inability and incompetence of the imam does not necessarily cause his discharge from the imamate, because in his office he was assisted by certain *dais* [agents], who always counsel the imam. The emergence and foundation of the Fatimid Caliphate in Tunisia in 909 AD was prepared by these *dais*, who declared a man called Ubaydullah to be imam. The Fatimid Caliphate later expanded to the east by conquering Egypt in 969 AD as well as Palestine and Syria.

**Hasan Sabbah:** In 469 AH/1012 AD, a *dai* called Hasan Sabbah was sent to Egypt by his superior, the Great *Dai* Ibn Attash who resided in Iran. In Egypt, Hasan asked the ruling Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir (r. 1036–1094) for the authority and permission to spread the Ismaili faith in the mainly Sunni lands of Iran and Khorasan. After being granted this authority Hasan returned to Iran to begin his missionary activities. In 483 AH/1090 AD Hasan established his headquarters in the Alamut castle built on the top of the Albruz Mountains in Iran. From there he intensified his activities of disseminating the Ismaili doctrine and converting people to that faith. Hasan was a very well educated man; he was extremely knowledgeable in mathematics, algebra, geometry and philosophy. He soon became very powerful by expanding his authority over many towns and castles in Iran. He later gave the order for the assassination of the

35 Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*. pp. 152–154.

famous Seljuk Vizier Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092). The Ismailis of Alamut were called also the *Hashshashiyun* [Assassins] and the small state established by Hasan was called Melahide. Hasan died in 518 AH/1124 AD after ruling for thirty-five years, and was succeeded by Kiya Buzurg Umid, during whose reign the Ismaili faith was spread into Syria. Kiya Buzurg died in 557 AH/1162 AD and was succeeded by his son Hasan, who was an impious and wicked heretic. In 599 AH/1202 AD, on the day of the martyrdom of Caliph Ali, he summoned all of his supporters to a meeting and told them not to respect the letter of the Quran [*zahiri shariat*] but only to believe in the inner meaning [*batini*] of the Quran. He then redeemed all the sins of his followers. Moreover he drank wine in their presence and allowed them to do the same. He declared the lifting of all the restrictions of Islamic law and urged his followers to indulge in their pleasures.

Finally the Ilkhanate ruler Hülagu (r. 1256–1265) put an end to the Ismaili presence in Iran by capturing their strongholds and exterminating them en masse. The Sunni Muslims of Iran were thus delivered from the aggressions of these heretic Ismailis. After this, only a few Ismaili communities continued to survive in Syria. Today there are twenty thousand Ismaili in Syria, who mainly live in a region situated between Latakia and Hama. Elsewhere there are Ismaili minorities in India, Yemen, Afghanistan and Khokand [Central Asia]. The main center of the Ismailis is found in India. There they were considered *mawla* (non-Arab client dependent on an Arab patron) and form wealthy communities. The Ismailis in India are called *Nizariya* because they supported the imamate of Nizar, son of Caliph al-Mustansir. After Nizar was pushed aside, al-Mustansir's younger brother al-Musta'li (r. 1094–1101), ascended to the throne. Ismailis living in Bohore, India follow the imamate of Musta'li and are divided into two categories. The main branch is the *Davudi*, whose number is around one hundred and thirty thousand people. Today the leader of the Ismailis is called *Aga Khan*, and his real name is Muhammad Shah ibn Agha Ali (b. 1877); he is a descendant of Hasan Sabbah and is recognized as the 47<sup>th</sup> imam since the Imam Ali al-Murtaza (Ali ibn Abi Talib, d. 661).<sup>36</sup>

### *Religious Controversies in the Abbasid Period*

After the collapse of the Umayyad Empire and the foundation of the Abbasid Caliphate religious disagreements among Muslims again divided the *ummah*.

- Was the Quran created or not: The Prophet Muhammad communicated the Quran to his followers. The six thousand six hundred and sixty six *ayat* [verses] of which the Quran is comprised were revealed to the Prophet and

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 155–157.

communicated by him to the people over a period of twenty-three years. These verses are the word of God. Consequently the word of God must be eternal like God himself. Therefore the Quran should be considered as uncreated. Nevertheless, the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun (r. 813–833) disagreed with that view. He also forced the *ulema* of his empire to accept his view on the createdness of the Quran. He forced the *qadis* [judges] and the *faqih*s [jurists] to openly adhere to his doctrine and declare that the Quran was the created word of God, if not they would be persecuted. He instituted a system of persecution called *Mihnah*, which functioned like an inquisition. Despite heavy persecution, the majority of the *ulema*, led by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780–855 AD), refused to accept the doctrine of the “createdness of the Quran.” According to Ibn Hanbal the question of the creation of the Quran should not even be discussed. Caliph al-Mu'tasim (r. 833–842), who succeeded his brother al-Ma'mun, maintained the same religious policy and under his reign the persecution of the *ulema* continued. One day, al-Mu'tasim summoned Ibn Hanbal and ordered his flogging when he refused to concede. Despite the severity of the torture, Ibn Hanbal persisted in his views. He was also imprisoned but was later released by the Caliph under pressure from the public. The official policy of the “createdness of the Quran” continued during the caliphate of al-Wathiq (r. 842–847), who succeeded al-Mu'tasim. In the meantime an abominable event took place: when the caliphate decided to pay the ransom of 4,600 Muslim prisoners of war from the Byzantines, the Abbasid authorities only paid the ransom of those who adhered to the official creed. The rest were not rescued. The policy was later abolished by Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861).

- Conflicting Views on Ali: The Abbasid caliph al-Mansur (r. 754–775) imprisoned Imam al-Azam Abu Hanifa (80–148 AH/699–767 AD), who died in prison. The caliph also ordered the beating of Imam Malik (93–179 AH/711–795 AD), but his son and successor Caliph al-Mahdi was a pious man who respected the *sharia*. He tried to suppress heresy and reestablish the orthodox Islam [*sunnah*]. During his reign, heretics and Kharijites were pursued and eliminated. During the reign of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 786–809), Abu Yusuf, the most important disciple of Abu Hanifa, was appointed as chief judge. Imam Shaybani (750–805) also contributed immensely to the legal literature of the Hanafi School, but later the seventh Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun adopted the Mu'tazilah creed, according to which the Quran was created. Moreover, al-Ma'mun publicly declared that Ali was the best among the companions of the prophet. This situation continued until the reign of al-Mutawakkil, who condemned Ali's

memory. Al-Mutawakkil was later killed while sleeping by a Turkish soldier called Bugha al-Saghir.<sup>37</sup>

### *Some General Information on the Caliphate*

When our venerable Prophet Muhammad passed away, his position as leader of the Muslim community had to be taken over by a successor. On this issue a lively discussion and heated debate took place between the companions of our prophet [*sahabah*]. Finally Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) was elected as caliph. The burial of our beloved prophet could finally take place after the election process was complete. First, the Muslims wanted to call Abu Bakr the Caliph of Allah [representative of God], but this idea was opposed on the grounds that Allah is omnipresent and does not need a representative. Abu Bakr then adopted the title Caliph of the Messenger of God [*Khalifat-ul Resul Allah*]. It was then that the question of his legitimacy arose, with some even questioning the need for such a community leader.

Sunni scholars supported the idea of the caliphate and argued that there was indeed a need for such a political and religious leader. The Kharijites rejected this idea and declared that Muslim society could exist without such a leader and that every Muslim must be perfectly aware of his/her religious and social responsibilities without the influence of a leader. Moreover, Kharijites do not accept the condition that the caliph must be from the Quraysh tribe. Today, the eminent Egyptian jurist Sheikh Ali Abd ur Rezzak also argued in his famous work *Islam and the Principles of Government* that there is no legal or rational requirement in Islam for the institution of the caliphate. According to Rezzak, Islam is purely a religion and our greatest prophet never wished to found a state. Therefore, he says, there is no valid basis for the existence of the caliphate, since it is a political office and since not all Muslims belong to the Quraysh tribe [or are even Arab]. Are Persians not Muslims also? Some were even dissatisfied with the condition of the caliph belonging to the Quraysh and required the caliph to be a member of the Banu Hashim family [the Prophet's clan]. Indeed, who was more suitable for that office than the members of Banu Hashim? After the death of our prophet, only his uncle Abbas and his cousin Ali remained of his kin. According to a religious sect called the *Rawandiya*, the caliphate must belong to the descendants of Abbas, whereas according to the Shia the descendants of Ali must be nominated to the imamate [caliphate]. Following this, the most important issue was that of who would elect the caliph and how. Abu Bakr was elected by Ahl-i Saqifa, but his successor Umar was not elected but nominated by Abu Bakr. Therefore in this second case there

---

37 Ibid., p. 159.

was no election but nomination. After being mortally wounded, Umar (r. 634–644) nominated six electors who in turn designated Abdur Rahman bin Awf to choose the next caliph from the six electors. Bin Awf chose Uthman (r. 644–656) who became caliph. Where was the election from the nation? And finally, when Uthman was murdered, the rebels chose Ali (r. 656–661) to take his place. But, Muawiyah (r. 661–680), the governor of Syria, rejected this choice and revolted against Ali and had a military confrontation with him. Since then Muslims were split in two major parties. After the martyrdom of Ali and after Hasan's renouncement, under duress, of his rights to the caliphate six months after his father's death, Muawiyah appointed his son Yazid (r. 680–683) as the next caliph to succeed him. Henceforth the caliphate and imamate became hereditary and turned into an autocratic monarchy. The descendants and partisans of Ali [*Shiat al-Ali*] never accepted this caliphate of the Umayyads (661–749), nor did they accept the caliphate of the Abbasids (749–1258), which succeeded the Umayyads. Among other Shia groups, the Qaramita also rejected the caliphate of the Abbasids. In the tenth century AD, the Islamic world was divided into three rival caliphates. The Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt (973–1171) and the Umayyad Caliphate in Spain (931–1031). In Baghdad, the Abbasid caliphs could preserve their rule thanks to the Turkish soldiers brought from Turkestan. These Turkish soldiers soon gained important political power and became caliph-makers, appointing and deposing caliphs according to their interests. In 945 AD an Iranian dynasty, the Buyids (934–1062) established their rule in Baghdad and took the Abbasid caliphs under their control. During the Buyid era, the authority and prestige of the Abbasid Caliphs diminished further, and they were not even allowed to appoint their own vizier. When, in 1055 AD, the leader of the Seljuk Turks entered Baghdad and put an end to the rule of the Buyids, the Abbasid Caliph welcomed him. As Tughril Beg was a sincere and devout Sunni Muslim, he respected the Abbasid Caliph and recognized his spiritual authority.

The caliphs regained some authority under the protection of these Seljuk Turks. However, Egypt severed all relations with the Baghdad caliphate and a Shia Fatimid Caliphate was instituted. Nevertheless, Egypt had become independent from Baghdad much earlier. During the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tazz, Ahmed ibn Tulun was appointed as governor of Egypt (868 AD). This Turkish general cut all ties with Baghdad during the reign of Caliph al-Muwaffaq and only mentioned the caliph's name in the Friday *hutba* [prayer calling], though he was later to put an end to this practice also. After the Tulunid dynasty, Egypt fell under the rule of Ahsid Bey sic (Ikshid) who was also a Turk. Later, the Fatimids established their rule over Egypt (973 AD).

In 1258 the Mongol khan Hülagü captured Baghdad and massacred Caliph al-Musta'sim along with all his family and abolished the Abbasid Caliphate. Only al-Muta'sim's youngest son managed to escape the massacre. Finally, during the reign of the Mamluk sultan Baibars (r. 1260–1277) of Egypt, a man called Hakim came to Egypt, claiming that he descended from the Abbasid family and Baibars declared him caliph. In fact, the family of the prophet [*Ahl-al Bayt*] had previously recognized the sultanate of Baibars, therefore Baibars considered his decision suitable to his policy (legitimization of the Mamluk rule by the Abbasid Caliphate). Nevertheless, the caliphs in Egypt had no real authority; their names did not appear on Egyptian *Mamluk* coins, and the *hutba* was only recited in the name of the *Mamluk* sultan in Egypt. This caliphate therefore had no significance in Egypt.

When Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520) conquered Egypt in 1517 the *Sharif* of Mecca, Abu al-Barakat, submitted himself to Selim and sent his son, Jamal ad-Din, to Cairo to present the keys of the Kaaba to the Ottoman sultan, while Selim brought the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil to Istanbul (2 June 1517). The historical account that stated that al-Mutawakkil transferred his caliphal rights to Sultan Selim I in Haghia Sophia later proved to be a forgery according to research by renowned historian Barthold. Indeed, since al-Mutawakkil did not possess any real spiritual authority, he would also be unable to transfer it to the sultan. In fact, since the Sunni Muslim population in Iran and Central Asia acknowledged the Ottoman sultan as the *Imam-ul Muslimin* [the religious leader of Islam] such justification was needless. Nevertheless, despite the *Sharif* of Mecca presenting the keys of the Kaaba to Sultan Selim or the fact that he was acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the Muslims, the Arabs refused to accept the last Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed V (r. 1909–1918), as a legitimate caliph.

In June 1916 the *Sharif* of Mecca, Hussein bin Ali revolted against Mehmed V. The *Sharif* tried to justify his revolt by declaring the Turks as oppressors. He later announced that if the Muslims in Turkey (Ottoman Empire) did not also rebel against the caliph he would remove the caliph's name from the *hutba*. Atatürk responded to that ridiculous threat by abolishing the Caliphate in 1924.

It would be unnecessary and pointless for the new Turkish Republic to keep the Caliphate after losing Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Arabia and particularly Hejaz. Turkey committed itself to living in peace within its national borders as an element of contemporary civilization. [At the beginning of the war] Sultan Mehmed V [Reşad] called on the Muslims of the world to wage *jihād* [against Britain, France and Russia]. Instead of answering this call, Muslims in the colonies fought against their caliphs under the command of British and French

officers. Therefore, by taking into consideration all of these realities and the interests of the nation, the Turkish National Assembly adopted a law to abolish the caliphate on 3 March 1924, and also decreed that the Ottoman Imperial family be exiled outside the country.<sup>38</sup>

### *The New Turkey is a Republic*

Finally the moment came to give the real name to the Grand National Assembly. As a result of the deliberations that took place at the National Assembly a new law was adopted by the Parliament on 29 October 1923, according to which the name of the state that had existed since 23 April 1920 would be the Republic of Turkey. The establishment of the Republic was announced at midnight on 29 October 1923 and was celebrated throughout the country by joyous popular demonstrations.<sup>39</sup>

### *The Capital of the New Turkey is Ankara*

The Ottoman sultanate was the heir of the Byzantine Empire, as a result of which the capital of the sultanate was moved to Istanbul [then Constantinople]. The new capital was renamed *Der-Saadet* [the Abode of Happiness], *Dar-Aliye* [the Sublime Place], *Dar-ul Hilafet* [the Seat of the Caliphate]. However, the Ottoman sultans had not always wanted to live there, perhaps because its climate did not suit to them and made them lethargic. The Ottoman sultans had always preferred to lead their armies on horseback, but later they remained confined inside the walls of Topkapı Palace, becoming totally isolated from the outside world, as a result of which they did not even want to leave Istanbul. After serious discussions that took into consideration all of these historical facts, the new Turkey finally found its capital: Ankara. One must see Ankara in order to understand the New Turkey and to appreciate the capability of the New Turks.

### *Reformation of Family Law and Prohibition of Polygamy in the New Turkey*

In ancient Ottoman Turkey a man could, in a moment of anger and with no real reason, repudiate his wife. For a man it was extremely easy to throw his wife, the mother of his children, out of her house. In fact, the religion of Islam condemned such actions, but very few men obeyed these moral principles. Moreover, a man could marry four wives. He could later divorce some or all of his wives and marry other women. There was no limitation on the number of

38 Ibid., pp. 385–388.

39 Ibid., p. 388.

concubines. This situation weakened the family institution and caused instability in Ottoman society. The newly introduced laws in Turkey outlawed polygamy, and divorce can now only be obtained by a court decision.<sup>40</sup>

#### *Women's Participation in Social Life in the New Turkey*

During the Ottoman Empire, hundreds of concubines belonging to the most beautiful races of the world served the Ottoman sultans. Whichever of those concubines gave birth to a boy received the title of *haseki*. If this boy one day acceded to the throne, his mother became *valide sultan* [mother sultan]. As well as the Sultan's household, other dignitaries of the state, grandees and rich men also kept many concubines and odalisques in addition to their legal wives. These women lived in the *harem* quarters under strict supervision. When they went out they were bound by many restrictions, and it was strictly forbidden for them to come into contact with men. Under such circumstances it was impossible for Ottoman women to participate in the country's social life. In the new Turkey, women gained all their civil rights. Today we have female judges, physicians, chemists, engineers and journalists. These women are freely practicing their professions and are fully equal with their male colleagues.<sup>41</sup>

#### *Ranks, Decorations, Medals and Uniforms*

In the Ottoman Empire there was a variety of ranks, decorations medals and uniforms. High-ranking officials wore gold-embroidered uniforms on public holidays and official occasions. During the reign of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) these ranks and decorations were distributed arbitrarily without merit [to the favorites of the sultan]. Therefore in 1908, when the Constitution was re-established in Turkey, the public expressed their indignation at the bestowing of these ranks. The constitutional government thus discontinued the previous regime's policy but continued to confer the decorations. Later, the CUP government introduced a new uniform for ministers. In the new Turkey such distinctions were abolished, and today the Turkish government only confers the "medal of independence" to those who fought for their homeland during the War of Independence (1919–1922).<sup>42</sup>

#### *Secularism in the New Turkey*

During the Ottoman Sultanate the dominant factor in the political administration and in people's private life was religion. A *fatwa* was needed for declaring

---

40 Ibid., p.389.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

war or making peace. Any kind of activity had to be sanctioned by the religious law. In some cases where no *sharia* rulings could be found, the *ulema* would manage to find an acceptable formula to make it permissible according to *sharia*. Although earning interest was strictly prohibited in Islamic law, the *ulema* managed to find some legal loopholes to make it permissible. The Turkish nation was greatly harmed by this meaningless dogmatism of the *ulema*. Our effort to preserve traditions and customs prevented us from implementing reforms on time and without delay. Even the establishment of the printing press in the Ottoman Empire became possible only after the *Şeyhulislam* of the time issued a *fatwa* allowing only the publication of dictionaries and books on geography, history, astronomy and medicine. The printing of books on the subjects of Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], Quranic exegesis [*tafsir*] and *hadith* were still not permitted. When *Tanzimat* was proclaimed, it was declared that the new laws would conform to the *sharia*, which shows how timid a reform program it was. That mentality still has not changed. In 1878 the Istanbul Law School was opened, and Roman law was included in the curriculum. Despite being known as a progressive, one member of the *ulema*, Haydar Efendi, objected and wanted Roman law to be dropped from the curriculum. The grand vizier, Said Pasha, who was quite knowledgeable in Islamic law, told them that Mullah Husrev's *Mirat ve Mirkat*, an important source on Islamic law that was widely used in the *madrasas*, was in fact based on Roman law. However, after the dismissal of Said Pasha, Roman law was dropped from the curriculum. If the progressive members of the *ulema* still had this mentality, imagine the conservative ones. Therefore in the newly born Turkey it became indispensable to separate religion from politics. As a result Turkey became a secular state on 3 March 1924 with the abolition of the Caliphate. Later the Administration of Islamic Law and Pious Foundations (*Şeriye ve Evkaf İdaresi*) was abolished, *madrasas* were closed and public instruction became unified by the *Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu* [the Law of the Unification of Education]. The Ministry of Islamic Law [*Şeriye Vekaleti*] was converted to the Administration of Religious Affairs [*Diyanet İşleri Riyaseti*] and became attached to the Prime Ministry. Separately, a General Directorate of Pious Foundations [*Vakıflar Umum Müdürlüğü*] was founded, also under the jurisdiction of the Prime Ministry.<sup>43</sup>

### *Turkish Citizenship in the New Turkey*

In the Ottoman Sultanate there was an office called *Nakibüleşraf* [Representative of the *Sharif* of Mecca]. The function of this office was to record the persons who claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. These people

43 Ibid., pp. 390–391.

are called *sharifs* and *sayyids* and had many privileges. Besides these there were many other titles, such as *emir*, *sheikh*, *dede* and *baba*. These people also had many prerogatives. In the new Turkey such privileges and prerogatives were abolished and all members of the nation were proudly called Turkish citizen.<sup>44</sup>

### *Nationalism in the New Turkey*

During the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) censors scrutinized/perused newspapers and books, and if they found any words such as homeland [*vatan*], nation [*millet*] or progress [*terakki*] they would immediately remove it. If these words accidentally appeared in the published material, both censor and publisher would be severely punished. During the Hamidian Era, therefore, nationalism was unthinkable. When the Constitution was re-established in 1908 these previously forbidden words began to be used profusely in the press. At the same time the nationalist activities of Greeks, Armenians, Arabs and Albanians had drastically increased. Against all these increasing ethnic nationalisms what would the Turks, the real owners of the empire, do? Some Turkish intellectuals subscribed to the Pan-Turkist ideology. The Committee of Union and Progress [CUP], which controlled the government at that time, was unable to pursue a clear and sincere policy. When all of these different ethnicities became separated from us as result of our defeat in the First World War, it became an obvious necessity to opt for a clear ideology. Atatürk, the great savior of the Turkish nation, showed this path to all Turkish citizens. Now we are openly nationalist.<sup>45</sup>

### *A Great Service by Atatürk*

In order to awaken nationalism among the Turks, it was necessary to show them the glorious past of the Turks and their contribution to civilization. This was an extremely important but equally difficult task, because for centuries an intense anti-Turkish propaganda had spread a deep feeling of hatred against the Turks. Popular sayings about the Turks were: Turks are like a wolf, Turks have no compassion, Turks are cruel, Turks are bloodthirsty, Turks are ignorant, Turks are uncivilized, Turks are not intelligent etc. According to an untrustworthy *hadith* falsely quoted by some obscure reporters, the Prophet Muhammad said, “Kill the Turk, even if he is your father.” How is it possible for the prophet of Islam to have said such a thing about a nation that defended Islam against their enemies with great sacrifice, and that rendered great

44 Ibid., p. 391.

45 Ibid., p. 392.

services to the religion throughout history. Dishonest people who were jealous of Turks' bravery, courage and virtue shamelessly slandered our glorious prophet by attributing to him such a false remark. However, one of the greatest scholars of Islamic sciences said, "None of the hadith that accuse the Turks can be sound." Unfortunately, however, such accusations can be found in some Arabic and Persian books. On the other hand, a great number of hostile remarks are found in books written in Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and French. But this can be understood due to the enmity nurtured against the Turks by these Christian nations for religious and historical reasons. Throughout history the papacy has incited anti-Turkish sentiments. When in 1571 the Turkish [Ottoman] fleet was defeated in Lepanto, the French king Charles IX, who was on good terms with the Turks at that time, celebrated the Christian victory at Lepanto with a *Te Deum* ceremony in Paris. In the Ottoman Empire the ruling elite called themselves Ottoman and used the word "Turk" in order to describe the peasants of Anatolia whom they looked upon with contempt. "Turk" was a derogatory term. Therefore, in order to declare to the world the greatness of the Turks and to assert their glorious history, someone like Atatürk was needed. Only such a great military commander and brilliant statesman has enough credibility to convince the world of the high qualities and glorious history of the Turkish nation. Atatürk assumed this task and published a book printed by the Turkish Historical Society. In 1937 he also organized an exhibition on Turkish Art in Dolmabahçe Palace, with the aim of demonstrating to the world the artistic heritage of the Turks throughout history. Because of Atatürk's activities during his great revolution and his creation of the New Turkey, new publications in Europe have started to recognize the high achievements of Turks in the history of the world and their important contributions to civilization.<sup>46</sup>

*Capitulations [Foreign Concessions and Privileges] are Abolished in the New Turkey*

When Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror captured Constantinople, he allowed the Genoese to continue to live in the area of Galata without granting them official autonomy. Although he abrogated the previous agreements of the Byzantine State with foreign powers, he did not object to certain privileges of foreign nationals, such as the right to be represented by their consuls in court. When Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520) conquered Egypt he confirmed the previous concessions given by the Mamluk rulers to foreign merchants, but in fact none of these can be considered capitulations [important concessions]. In the

<sup>46</sup> Ayni, *Milliyetçilik*, pp. 392–394.

Ottoman Empire capitulations were granted to the foreign powers by Sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520–1566). In 934 AH/1528 AD Süleyman granted a capitulation to the French by issuing a *ferman* [royal mandate] that he sent to Francois I. Following this, Sultan Selim II (r. 1566–1574) granted another capitulation to Charles IX, King of France. The third capitulation was granted by Murad III (r. 1574–1595) to Henri III.<sup>47</sup>

---

47 Ibid. pp. 395–396.

## Mehmed Seyyid Çelebizâde (1873–1925)

### Life

Mehmed Seyyid Çelebizâde was born in Izmir in 1873. His father was Abdullah Takiyuddin Bey. After studying at the local *madrassa* he enrolled at the *Darülfünûn* Law School in Istanbul. After graduation he was appointed as an instructor in the Law School, where he taught *usul al-fiqh* among other subjects, and later he worked as a lawyer. After the 1908 Revolution and the re-establishment of the Constitution, Mehmed Seyyid was elected to the *Meclis-i Mebusan* (Parliament) and was later appointed senator. Following the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, he was again elected to the Parliament and later served as Minister of Justice in the cabinets of Fethi Okyar and İsmet İnönü. During parliamentary discussions on the abolition of the caliphate he gave a long speech on the nature and characteristics of the institution of the caliphate (1924), in which he advocated the abolition of the caliphate, stating that it would not be against the *sharia*. Mehmed Seyyid's speech helped the government to overcome opposition in Parliament. Mehmed Seyyid also participated in the preparation of the 1924 Constitution (First Constitution of the Republic of Turkey). Nevertheless his later legislative activities during the preparation and adoption of the Turkish Civil Code were met by strong opposition by his colleagues in the government. Mehmed Seyyid was in favor of drafting a civil law by reforming Ottoman and Islamic law. He believed that the Ottoman Family Law of 1917 (*Hukuk-u Aile Kararnamesi*) must form one of the bases of the new civil code, but his proposal did not find favor with the secularists, who were increasingly gaining power in the new Turkish Republic, and he was forced to resign. He then returned to Academia and continued to teach at the *Darülfünûn* (university) in Istanbul until his death on 8 March 1925.

### Ideas

The following passages are taken from Mehmed Seyyid's work *Hilafetin Mahiyet-i Şeriyesi*. (The legal Character of the Caliphate) The same passages are also published by İsmail Kara in his *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi* (Islamist Thought in Turkey), Istanbul: Kitabevi, 1986.

First of all let me say that the question of the caliphate is a political rather than religious issue. It is not pertinent to the tenets of faith but relates instead to the rights of the people and to public law. Despite the fact that the issue of the caliphate is described in detail in theological books, this is not because it is considered to be a subject related to faith, but in order to clarify certain issues related to that institution. As you know, many sects and religious denominations emerged in the history of the Islamic world. One of those was the Shia denomination. Shia Islam later became sub-divided into many branches and minor sects. One of these branches is Ismailiyah, also known as Batiniyya, Talmiya and Sabiyya. Ismaili Shias believe in the divinity of their religious leaders, known as the imam. According to their belief, the imam receives his science and knowledge directly from God. After the imam the second most important authority is the *hujjat*, followed by the *bab* and then the *mu'min*. According to the Ismailis, the imam receives revelations from God and then transmits them to the *hujjat* and the *hujjat* transmits them to the *mu'min*. Adherents of the Ismaili sect believe that the Quran in fact has two meanings: one apparent, or *zahir*, and the other hidden, or *batin*. The sect is also called Batini because they believe in the *batin* or hidden meaning of the Quran. The Ismaili faith is pure superstition, so much so that in fact the Ismailis are atheist. In the past, one of their most able and famous leaders, Hasan Sabbah, established his headquarters in northern Iran near the city of Qazvin on the Alamut fortress built high in the mountains. The Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan tried many times to capture him. Today the dominant Muslim denomination in Iran is called the Imamiye. According to their belief, the *Mahdi* [the twelfth and final imam who, according to the Twelver Shias, disappeared in 874] is still living and will one day appear once more and establish justice throughout the world. Because sects such as the Imamiye and some others believe in such superstitions on the issue of the caliphate, the religious scholars of the *Ahl as-Sunnah* [Muslims who accept the caliphate of Abu Bakr (632–634), the closest companion of the Prophet Muhammad] included the subject of the caliphate in their religious [*aqaid*] books.

After providing this preliminary information, I will now begin to explain the legal and religious aspects of the institution of the caliphate. First of all I must clarify a very important point within this topic: the caliphate is the equivalent of the government. It is therefore political and pertains to public matters. That is why our prophet Muhammad, when he was dying, refused to explain this issue to his followers. The holy book of Islam, the Quran, does not contain any *ayat* [verses] on the issue of the caliphate. The Quran gives us two principles on the issues of the politics: the first is the principle of the *shura* [council] (*Shura 42/38*); this *ayah* was indeed revealed to the people of Medina. Since

the people of Medina always solved their problems by debating in a council, the Quran approved that useful practice. The second principle mentioned in the Quran is the obedience to the *ulul amr* [head of state, political leader]. The Quran says, “Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” (*Nisaa* 4/59). This second principle is revealed in order to prevent anarchy and lack of authority in society. This verse means that obedience to political authority is a religious duty. Apart from these two verses there is no other verse in the Quran pertaining to the issues of politics and government.

In the Quran the caliphs and imams are mentioned; however, these are not the caliphs that succeeded the prophet Muhammad but those that existed before him. Another verse of the Quran reveals: “O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth” (*Sad* 38/26). God tells David to dispense justice among people and protect their rights. This is already the duty of every government. The Quran also uses the term “imam” for Abraham. One verse in the Quran (*Al-Baqarah* 2/24) relates a conversation between God and Abraham: “[Allah] said, ‘Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people.’ [Abraham] said, ‘And of my descendants?’ [Allah] said, ‘My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.’ This *ayah* clearly shows that God does not condone an oppressive and corrupt rule.

Let me now explain the meanings of the *khalifa* [caliph] and the imam. The dictionary meaning of the *Khilafat* [Caliphate] is to succeed someone, to be a successor, while the meaning of “imam” is leader. Neither of these titles includes a meaning of holiness. Instead there exists a relationship of generality-particularity between the terms of caliph and imam: caliph is a more specific and particular title, whereas imam is more general. In other words, every caliph is an imam but every imam is not a caliph. This subject is therefore explained in Islamic literature under the title of “imamate”. As you know, in Islam the basis of law or *sharia* is the Quran. The *hadith*, or recorded statements or reports of the Prophet Muhammad, have an explanatory function, interpreting and understanding the text of the Quran. When we speak of *hadith* we refer to the *sahih* or authentic *hadith*. Today, some of the *hadith* found in *hadith* manuals are false or apocryphal. They were invented later and some are weak. In such important matters these weak *hadith* have no value and cannot serve as evidence. We must therefore be very careful and selective when using a *hadith* for religious and legal matters.

I repeat: the issue of the caliphate is a political and temporal issue rather than a religious matter. It directly concerns the *ummah* or nation and there is therefore little information in the *nass* or sacred texts on this issue. How is the caliph appointed? What are the requirements of the caliphate? Is it incumbent

upon Muslims [the *ummah*] to nominate a caliph? There is no explanation of these issues either in the Quran or in the *hadith*.

It is very interesting that although several *hadith* exist on the least important and minor issues such as cutting nails or growing a beard, almost no authentic and clear *hadith* are found on the election or appointment of the caliph or the requirements of the caliphate. The reason for this is that the issue of the caliphate is a political matter and our Prophet Muhammad therefore preferred to remain silent on the issue. Despite this, however, a few *hadith* on the caliphate do exist; for example, imams must belong to the Quraysh tribe, or if two caliphs are appointed, the second must be killed. These *hadith* are totally insufficient for the appointment of a caliph or the requirements of his office.

Therefore, our prophet left the issue of the caliphate entirely in the hands of the *ummah*. He did not appoint any successor and did not give any indication of that. Although, according to some *Ahl as-Sunnah*, there exist some *nass* [prophetic reports] in favor of Abu Bakr's succession, we in fact have no clear evidence for this. If such evidence did exist, the *Ashab-i Kiram* [Sahabah] would not be divided on the issue. After the passing of Muhammad, the companions of the prophet congregated in a place called Sakifa-yi Bani Saïda and held deep discussions and fierce debates on the issue, finally electing Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) as the successor of Prophet Muhammad. Abu Bakr appointed Umar (r. 634–644) as his successor, and Umar was called *Khalifat-ul Khalifat-i Resulallah* but also *Amir al-Mu'minin*. Then, as you know, Umar was attacked and wounded. On his deathbed he was asked to appoint Uthman as the next caliph, but he refused, saying, "If I appoint Uthman, he will favor the Banu Umayyads and place them over the Muslims [*ummah*], then the Muslims would kill him." This was exactly what was to happen. Then came the Hashemites, who wanted Ali to be appointed as caliph; Umar did not accept this either. In the end, as you know, the issue of electing a new caliph was entrusted to a *shura* [council] of six electors: Uthman, Ali, Abdur Rahman bin Awf, Zubayr ibn al-Awam, Saad ibn Abi Waqqas. These electors left the choice to Abdur Rahman bin Awf, who chose to appoint Uthman as the new caliph. After the martyrdom of Caliph Uthman, Muslims paid their homage [*bay'ah*] to Ali (r. 656–661). These four caliphs are called *Khulafa ar-Rashidun* [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] and the total period of their caliphate was 30 years. There is an interesting *hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad on this issue. Our Prophet said, "After me the caliphate is only thirty years and after that it will become an oppressive kingship." This *hadith* is well known and is found in the most authoritative *hadith* manuals, such as *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*. Although some scholars consider this *hadith* to be a weak one, this cannot be the case. The reason the *Sahabah* did not explain the issue of the caliphate properly and clearly is because there

is no sufficient and clear information of this issue in the Quran and the *hadith*. Now let us look at the different views of Islamic scholars on the issue of the caliphate. As you know today the *Ahl as-Sunnah* or *Ehl-i Sünnet* that represent mainstream Islam is formed by four different legal schools [Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali]. These Sunni Schools of law represent different views on the conditions and requirements of the caliphate. According to the Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools, the caliph must possess the qualities of a *mujtahid*; this means he must legislate, be capable of rendering absolute justice, and be from the Quraysh tribe. Imam al-Shafi'i even considers that the authority of a caliph who cannot legislate justly should be considered annulled without even being dismissed by the *umma*. Hanafi Scholars are less strict in the requirements of the caliphate. They are willing to accept an *alim* or a knowledgeable caliph instead of a *mujtahid*; furthermore, if the caliph is unable to render justice properly he must be dismissed by his electors in order to lose his authority. If you examine the *aqaid* [faith] books you will see that Sunni scholars of Islamic law divide caliphate into two categories: a) *Hilafet-i Hakikiye* [Genuine Caliphate or Legitimate Caliphate] b) *Hilafet-i Suriye* [Fictitious Caliphate or Formal Caliphate]. The *Hilafet-i Hakikiye* has all the necessary requirements and conditions of a legitimate caliphate: having been elected by the nation/*umma* and gained authority after receiving homage (*bay'ah*) from the electors. When the Prophet Muhammad said, "After me the caliphate is thirty years and after that it will become an oppressive kingship," he was referring to the first category of caliphate [the legitimate]. This *hadith* is quoted in the works of famous legal scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328), who called *Hilafet-i Hakikiye* the *Hilafet-i Nubuvvet* [Prophetic Caliphate]. There are ten requirements for a legitimate caliphate: 1) be Muslim, 2) be a free person, 3) be of sound mind, 4) be an adult, 5) be male, 6) be healthy, 7) be a skillful and intelligent administrator, 8) be a just ruler, 9) be from the Quraysh tribe, and finally 10) be knowledgeable [an *alim*] and if possible a scholar. There are differences of opinion among Sunni jurists regarding this last condition. The majority of the Sunni *ulema* require the caliph to be a *mujtahid*, a jurist who can legislate or can make laws on religious and legal matters. Only Hanafi *ulema* are less exigent on this issue: for them it is not necessary for a caliph to be a *mujtahid* as long as he holds sufficient knowledge in legal and religious matters. Here let me also explain the eighth condition, that of being a just ruler. In *sharia*, justice has two meanings: one is providing rightfulness to the people and eliminating wrongdoing [*ihkaki hak* and *ibtal-i batil*], while the second is being on the right path, living a righteous life. In fact, this second definition also includes or covers the first definition. Surely an unjust and cruel person cannot be eligible for the caliphate. I earlier quoted from the Quran the spiritual conversation between God

and Abraham. In that verse, when Abraham wanted his descendants to be appointed as caliph, God told him, "My covenant does not include the wrongdoers." The main purpose of appointing a caliph is to eliminate the injustice of the oppressor. All Islamic scholars [*ulema*] therefore agree that it is not acceptable to nominate an unjust and corrupt person, an oppressor, as caliph. Moreover a caliph who begins to oppress the people would be immediately discharged from office and deposed by a decision of the *ulema*. According to Shafi'i scholars, in such a case the caliph would lose his authority without even being discharged. According to Hanafi scholars, the removal of the caliph is acceptable if it will not cause civil strife. Some academics argue that Hanafi scholars do not consider justice as a condition of validity for a caliph; this is incorrect. In fact, if we consult the works of famous Hanafi jurists such as Sadr al-Sharia and Ibn Humam we can clearly see that they most certainly consider justice to be a condition of validity for a legitimate caliphate. Hanafi jurists do not consider justice as a condition for the kingship or sultanate, and correlate these with the second category of caliphate, *Hilafet-i Suriye*, because this category of caliphate does not derive from a legitimate election but is obtained by pure force and is like a sultanate. This is the fundamental difference between the caliphate and the sultanate. As unanimously agreed upon by all Islamic scholars, the caliphate of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs belonged to the second category of caliphate because they were based on takeover by force constituted by election. Those who are acquainted with Islamic history know very well that the Umayyad caliphs committed many massacres and acts of cruelty. They did appalling things to the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. Abbasid caliphs were no less bloodthirsty. The Abbasid Caliphate was fully built on injustice and oppression. Abu Muslim Khorasani massacred six hundred thousand partisans of the Umayyad regime. The first Abbasid caliph was extremely cruel; after entering Damascus [the capital of the Umayyads] he set up his dining table over the half-dead bodies of the toppled Umayyad grandees. He also opened the graves of the Umayyad caliphs, desecrating their bodies and burning their bones.

In reality, both Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs were not true caliphs, they were merely rulers, sultans; they were called caliphs simply because of the existing tradition. In *Tafsir al-Kashshaaf*, Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs were called tyrants, usurpers and oppressors. We should not delude ourselves; we should well know that we cannot deceive the Islamic world. Today there are many Islamic scholars in various Muslim countries who are very knowledgeable in the matters of the *sharia* and who have access to the important books. There is no doubt that many of them know the issue of the caliphate better than us. Scholars from Egypt, Yemen, Najd and Kurdistan all know very well

that the caliph must be from the Quraysh. Therefore, none of the *ulema* [scholars] of these countries accept our *padishahs* [sultans] as caliph from a religious perspective. If you consult the *Minhaj al-Nabawiyah*, which is the most authoritative legal source for the Shafi'i, you will see that according to the Shafi'i school our *padishahs* were not recognized as caliphs. The same is true for the Maliki and Hanbali schools. Even our Ottoman Hanafi scholars did not recognize the caliphate of the Ottoman sultans. In the famous book of the illustrious Hanafi scholar Imam Nejmeddin Ömer Nasawi, it is clearly mentioned that the caliph must be from the Quraysh and this book is studied by students in most of the *madrasas* in our country, including in the Fatih *madrasa* in Istanbul.

It is a well-known fact that today we Muslims are the most backward nations on earth. In every part of the Islamic world one can see misery, destitution and weakness. It is almost impossible to find a Muslim land where modern civilization exists. Muslim countries, which for centuries were the beacon of civilization, are now sunk in the darkness of ignorance. Through the study of history, one can only witness with bewilderment that dramatic decline of Islamic civilization. Today many nations, including the one that has a primitive religion such as worshipping the sun [Japan], have reached an advanced level of civilization. Only Muslims, with such a rational religion, are the least advanced and undeveloped. I cannot imagine a single Muslim who would not be afflicted and saddened by this situation. However, affliction and sadness cannot help us; we must understand the reality. Muslims cannot continue to live in this current situation; our only option is to adapt to the realities of the modern world. I do not think that it is now possible to resist the strong current of civilization that is approaching us from the West. Looking at the backward state of the Muslim countries, some believe that it is our religion, Islam, that is the cause of this decline. Nothing could be more wrong. This is an idea purposely propagated by the Europeans. I wonder if there exists any religion other than Islam whose tenets encourage science and progress. Indeed, the essence, the pillar of Islam is science. The holy book of Islam, the Quran, is replete with verses praising science and knowledge and condemning ignorance. Our Lord orders the Prophet Muhammad to pursue and pray for the rise of science. Hundreds of sound *hadiths* encourage the Islamic *ummah* to study *ilm* (science). Just take a look at history: is the basis of European civilization not Islamic civilization? Still today, many scientific terms are those invented and coined by Muslim scientists. In summary, Islamic civilization was much more advanced in those centuries [Middle Ages] than other civilizations. We should therefore seek the cause of the decline of the Islamic world not in its religion but in other factors. These factors are continuous wars, civil strife, the despotism and oppression of Muslim governments, and above all the corruption of Islam by

certain superstitious beliefs and practices. These are the real causes for the decline and backwardness of the Muslim world. The invasion and conquest of the Muslim lands by the Spaniards in the West [al-Andalus] and by the Mongols in the East inflicted a blow on Islamic civilization. In Spain, libraries were burnt by the Catholic Inquisition, and in Baghdad the books of famous libraries were thrown into the Tigris River by the Mongols. The Islamic books that we have today are but a very small number compared to what was destroyed in those years. The majority of scientific works written by Muslim scientists and scholars were destroyed by the invaders. After 800 AH, Muslim scholars opened a new chapter in writing scientific works. These writers were more concerned with demonstrating their literary and stylistic abilities than explaining the essence of the matter, whereas earlier scholars were only preoccupied with expounding their ideas in a plain language without embellishing them. The consequence of this new approach was the unnecessary increase in the number of scholarly books. Unfortunately, in later centuries the quality of education in Muslim countries fell drastically. Many important works on *tafsir* [Quranic exegesis], *hadith*, ethics and history were excluded from the curriculum of the *madrasas*. Even today this situation continues, and students mostly spend their time trying to understand the grammatical rules of the Arabic language without really grasping them, instead of studying other useful subjects. These are the real factors for the decline of the Islamic education system. Moreover, various new religious sects emerged in Islam, and in order to support their claims they invented some fictitious *hadiths* and falsely ascribed them to the Prophet Muhammad. Throughout history people even adopted into Islam some superstitious beliefs from other religions. Consequently, the Muslim religion became increasingly replete with these new additions, as a result of which it became unrecognizable from its original form.

The most important social duty of a person is to know to which nation or religious community he belongs. For that he should be able to differentiate *millet* (nation) from *ummah* [religious community]. In the socially-developed European countries, people are able to differentiate these two concepts and can clearly see their national and religious affiliations, whereas in the East the meaning of these two expressions are not yet fully clear. Therefore, in Muslim countries people were unable to correctly answer the questions "What is your nationality?" or "To which religious community do you belong?" In order to better understand our social life, we must first determine the real meanings of these two concepts.

*The ummah* is the sum of individuals belonging to the same religion. For example, the Christian *ummah* is formed by the totality of the Christians living on earth. Thus, in the *ummah* individuals are tied to each other only by their

faith, whereas the composition of a nation (*millet*) is different. A nation is formed by individuals who, as well as adhering to the same religion, share the same language, live under the same legal system, participate in the same economic system and have the same artistic values. In a religious community, cultural values, and legal, economic and political systems can be different, but in a nation these components must be commonly shared.

We can say, therefore, that a nation is the sum of the individuals belonging to the same *hars*. Modern societies are made of nations [*millet*] not religious communities [*ummah*]. Religious communities are generally comprised of many nations and are therefore international. Historically, internationality was in fact based on the religious community and the European unity of nations in the Middle Ages was a Christian union.

In Europe, International Christendom was under the control of the Church, and throughout the history of Europe the institutions of the nation developed separately from those of the church. Until recently these two institutions in our country were welded together. With our social development these two institutions became separated in our country also. Particularly after the end of the war [First World War], two important factors accelerated this separation. Firstly, after the collapse of the multi-ethnic and multi-national empires, each nation founded its own national state. In the past, different nations were united under a ruler who united in his person spiritual and temporal powers. After the establishment of separate independent nation states this became impossible, because the government of each nation naturally had to represent the national interests of that nation, which contradicted internationality. Secondly, the principle of national sovereignty has recently become prevalent throughout the world as a result of political evolution. History has proved that the interests of monarchs were different from those of the people. Especially after the end of the war, a treacherous sultan and his treacherous grand vizier sold themselves to the enemies of the nation and committed serious crimes against their country. This was a result of the usurpation of the nation's rights by a monarch for his private interest. These tragic events showed the Turkish nation that it would henceforth not be acceptable to leave its political destiny to the hands of a monarch who is only concerned with his private interests. Therefore the Turkish nation correctly assumed the right of sovereignty and delegated the functions of legislation and executive powers to the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Thus, the nation was represented independently and separately from the Muslim religious community.

The title of the person who presides over the Muslim community is “caliph”. The institution of the caliphate came into being as a result of Prophet Muhammad’s delegation of the imamate during prayers to his close companion Abu

Bakr when the prophet himself was not able to lead the prayers due to illness. As it is commonly known, in Islam the public prayers were led by an imam. The Friday prayers and prayers performed on religious holidays must be held by the whole *ummah*. Therefore the real function of the caliph is to be the first or greatest imam in the Muslim world. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad there was only one imam and that was the prophet himself. Later, with the increase in the number of mosques, the number of imams also increased. The institution of the caliphate was founded to preserve the unity of Muslims. The greatest imam had an overseeing authority over the other imams and the unity of the Muslim world was realized in the person of that highest imam, or the caliph. Throughout the most of Islamic history the temporal and spiritual leadership was separate. This was the case during the Seljuk Empire in the Middle East and during the reign of the Mamluks of Egypt. The temporal or political power was assumed by the sultan, and the caliph was a spiritual leader with authority only in religious affairs. The religious authority of the Ottoman caliphs was exerted exclusively on their Muslim subjects. Muslims living under other governments did not consider the Ottoman caliph as their spiritual leader. This was prevented by their governments, because these governments were suspicious of the political designs of the Ottoman government, which could use the office of the caliphate to spread its influence over the Muslims of the rest of the world. This situation also limited the spiritual and religious authority of the Ottoman caliphs. Today the office of the caliphate is separated from the sultanate, since this latter no longer exists, and thus no valid ground for such a fear can be found. The institution of the caliphate today is therefore purely spiritual, and is stronger and more influential than in the past because its authority is not limited by any political considerations.

## Said Halim Pasha (1865–1921)

### Life

Said Halim was born in Cairo at the palace of Shubra on 28 January 1865. He was the grandson of Muhammad Ali, the founder of modern Egypt. In 1869, Said Halim's father, Prince Halim Pasha, was forced to leave Egypt in the wake of a dispute with the ruling *khedive*, Ismail Pasha (r. 1863–1879), over the matter of succession. In 1866 Prince Halim, the youngest son of Muhammad Ali, had been deprived of his right to assume the *khedivate* by a *ferman* (imperial edict) issued by the Ottoman sultan, Abdülaziz (r. 1861–1876), suzerain of Egypt. The new law of succession was based on primogeniture, thereby depriving the other male members of the *khedive's* family of any claim to the throne. The real motive behind this exclusion was *Khedive* Ismail's desire to secure the Egyptian throne for his own son Tawfiq (r. 1879–1892). The *khedive* won the support of the sultan for his case by means of some fiscal concessions. Reacting to this change, which excluded him from the line of succession to the Egyptian throne, Prince Halim attempted a *coup d'état* in order to overthrow the *khedive*. The *coup* was aborted and Prince Halim was exiled.<sup>1</sup>

After leaving Egypt, Prince Halim and his four-year-old son Said Halim moved to Istanbul. Upon arriving in the Ottoman capital Halim Pasha bought a *yalı* (seafront mansion) in Balta Limanı. Halim Pasha also erected a smaller residence on the edge of the forest facing his property, which was named *Süngerli Köşk* (Sponge Pavilion) because of the texture of its marble walls. Halim Pasha also constructed a hunting lodge in Alemdağ, a hill near the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus. Sultan Abdülhamid immediately built a gendarme station just outside the boundaries of Halim Pasha's property in order to watch him. In his father's mansion, the young Said Halim learned Arabic, Persian, French and English, among other subjects, from his tutors. In 1880, when he was fifteen, Said Halim was sent with his younger brother, Abbas Halim, to Geneva to further pursue his education. Said Halim remained in Switzerland for five years, where he studied political science.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ahmet Şeyhun, *Said Halim Pasha, Ottoman Statesman Islamist Thinker (1865–1921)*, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2003, p. 45 (hereafter cited as Şeyhun, *Said Halim*).

2 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 46.

After returning to Istanbul in 1885, Said Halim and his brother Abbas Halim were presented by their father to the sultan with the words, "I raised two slaves for your majesty." Sultan Abdülhamid decorated Said Halim with the second rank *Mecidi* Order, and bestowed upon him the title of pasha on 13 May 1888. On 21 May 1888, he was appointed to the State Council. This was followed by a series of honors and decorations awarded by the sultan. In February 1889, he received the order of *âli -i Osmani*, second rank (*ikinci rütbeden nişan-i âli -i Osmani*); on 23 April 1892, the order of *âli -i Osmani*, first rank (*birinci rütbeden nişan-i-âli-i Osmani*); and on 17 November 1899, the jeweled medal of Sultan Mecid (*Murassa Mecidi nişan-i zi sani*). On 22 September 1900, Said Halim Pasha was promoted to the rank of Governor-General of the European provinces of the empire (*Rumeli Beylerbeyi*). All of these awards and honors were bestowed upon Said Halim by the sultan to assure the pasha's loyalty and to prevent him from joining the opposition. In 1894 Said Halim's father, Halim Pasha, died. The following year Said Halim Pasha married Princess Emine Tosun Hanım, and from this marriage Said Halim fathered two sons: Prince Mehmed Abdel Halim Bey Turkhan (1896–1960) and Prince Ömer İbrahim Halim Bey (1898–1954).

Disturbed by this suffocating atmosphere, Said Halim lost interest in public affairs and began to neglect his duties on the State Council and to withdraw to his mansion on the Bosphorus. There he devoted most of his time and energy to the study of Islamic history and institutions and began to reflect on the crisis that afflicted the contemporary Muslim world. Even these intellectual activities did not pass unnoticed by the vigilant censors of an autocratic regime, which was intolerant of any activity that raised the suspicions of the sultan. Consequently, upon a report by a *jurnalci* (an informant for Abdülhamid's intelligence service), Said Halim's residence was searched and he was forced to leave the country.

First, in the winter of 1905, Said Halim went to Paris, where he officially became a member of the CUP. Later he went to Egypt where he had a palace built on Champollion Street by Italian architect Antonio Lasasciac. There he became the biggest shareholder of the *Société Belgo-Egyptienne de Ezbekié*, founded in 1899 in Cairo's Azbakeya district. He also established direct close relations with the Young Turk movement and provided financial support for the journal *Osmanlı*. Said Halim took on the job of inspector of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1906. Presumably Said Halim had already been in contact with the Young Turks while living in Istanbul. After the restoration of the Constitution on 24 July 1908, Said Halim and other expatriates returned to Istanbul. Although he was in exile, Said Halim's membership on the State Council had continued, and it was only on 3 September 1908, following the restoration of the Constitution, that he was officially relieved of his position. In

the same year, Said Halim was elected to public office as mayor of Yeniköy under the CUP banner. His re-entering politics after the restoration of the constitutional regime did not prevent him from severely criticizing the adoption of the 1876 Constitution as the political charter of the new regime. According to Said Halim, this Constitution did not suit the realities of the Ottoman Empire. “The Constitution,” writes Said Halim, in his article entitled *Meşrutiyet* (Constitutional Regime), “was designed for a country whose political traditions and social fabric was totally different from those of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>3</sup>

In March 1909, Said Halim Pasha was nominated to the board of directors of the National Bank of Turkey. This bank was founded by the British Foreign Office and was also encouraged by the CUP in order to counterbalance the influence of the French-dominated Ottoman Bank and to curb its predominance over the financial and economic life of the empire.

On the same day that Mahmud Şevket was assassinated, several ministers formed a special committee and held an audience with the sultan to recommend the nomination of Said Halim Pasha, minister of foreign affairs, to the grand vizierate. However, Sultan Mehmed V (r. 1909–1918) already had Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, the Ottoman ambassador to Vienna, in mind for the position. Instead, he appointed Said Halim as deputy grand vizier until Hüseyin Hilmi returned from Austria to assume the post. This arrangement was not acceptable to the CUP, who insisted that Said Halim Pasha be appointed as grand vizier. Finally, the following day, 12 June 1913, the sultan yielded and Said Halim was appointed by imperial decree (*irade*) to the grand vizierate.<sup>4</sup>

One of the most important events of Said Halim’s grand vizierate was the settlement of the Armenian Question by engaging multi-lateral negotiations with the Great Powers on the future of eastern Anatolia, which was inhabited by a sizable Armenian minority.

On 17 June 1913, an international conference of the ambassadors of the six Great Powers convened in Istanbul to find a solution to the ongoing Armenian Question. During the conference, Michael De Giers, Russian ambassador to Istanbul, submitted to his colleagues a reform project prepared by André Mandelstamm, the first dragoman of the embassy. According to the terms of the project, the six Ottoman provinces in eastern Anatolia would form one administrative entity and be placed under the authority of a Christian Ottoman governor, appointed by the sultan, for five years. This governor would have under his command a *gendarme* force, composed half of Muslims and half of Chris-

3 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, pp. 48–59.

4 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, p. 85.

tians. Equally, a half-and-half Muslim-Christian assembly would be formed to assist the governor.<sup>5</sup>

On 1 July, Grand Vizier Said Halim Pasha submitted the Ottoman counter-proposal to the conference. The document was based on a reform project already designed during the grand-vizierate of Mahmud Şevket Pasha. According to the Ottoman proposal, the lands that fell under the eastern Anatolian reforms would also include the province of Trabzon and the *sanjak* of Samsun. The implementation of the reforms in this area would be entrusted to two general inspectors, both from a neutral country and between whom the task of supervision would be divided geographically. The general inspectors would be appointed by the sultan for a duration of five years

In the end the Ottoman project was dismissed as unsatisfactory by the Russian government. In order to break the deadlock, the parties agreed to submit their differences to an international commission that would hold a new conference at the summer residence of the Austrian ambassador in Yeniköy.

Eventually, Said Halim's determined stance against the Russo-German scheme, which in his eyes posed a challenge to Ottoman sovereignty in eastern Anatolia, appeared to bear fruit. According to the British ambassador in Istanbul, Sir Louis Mallet (1864–1936), the Russian ambassador De Giers was forced to yield to the persistent attitude of the grand vizier and to accept that the inspectors should be Ottoman subjects assisted by foreign advisers, as demanded in a note communicated by the Porte to the Russian embassy on 7 November 1914.

The diplomatic maneuvering between the Great Powers and the *Porte* finally yielded the 8 February 1914 agreement on the reform project for the empire's eastern provinces. Said Halim Pasha, the grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire, and Constantin Goulkevitch, *chargé d'affaires* of the Russian embassy in Istanbul, were the signatories of the agreement.<sup>6</sup>

Another important event during the grand vizierate of Said Halim Pasha was the signing of a mutual defense agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Germany. This treaty was negotiated by Said Halim and the German Ambassador at the *Porte*, Hans Von Wangenheim, and eventually prepared the legal ground for the Ottoman entry into the First World War on the side of the Central Powers. Although he was in favor of that treaty, Said Halim was against an immediate entry to the war, preferring instead to wait for a suitable moment. In Said Halim's opinion, the wisest policy for Turkey's entry into the con-

5 Ibid., p. 91.

6 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, pp. 91–95

flict would be to wait until the right moment came for the *Porte* to cast its lot with the victorious side. He felt that this moment had not yet come.<sup>7</sup>

On 29 October, after Enver Pasha issued a specific order to the German Admiral Souchon, the Ottoman fleet, which included the *Yavuz* (Goeben) and the *Midilli* (Breslau), began to bombard Sebastopol, Novorossiysk and Odessa, destroying these cities' military and civil facilities and sinking several vessels. When informed of the situation, Said Halim Pasha was extremely distressed. He ordered an immediate end to these operations, but by the time the order had been issued the fleet was already on its way back to Istanbul. The grand vizier was strongly opposed to Ottoman participation in the war and told Cemal Pasha that he would take no responsibility for the action. Furthermore, during the Kurban Bayram festival the grand vizier declared that he would resign, since the attack meant a declaration of war. Nevertheless, the members of the cabinet reminded him that he himself had signed the treaty of alliance with Germany. Therefore, he, more than anyone, should be perfectly aware of the consequences of such a military alliance.<sup>8</sup>

After the Sarikamış disaster in January 1915, the Ottoman government felt vulnerable along the eastern front, which had a sizable Armenian population. The *Porte* was highly suspicious about Armenian loyalty in the event of a renewed Russian offensive and an eventual occupation of the region by the Tsarist armies. On 26 May 1915, Talat Bey, minister of the interior, submitted a bill to the cabinet asking for the adoption of a special law regarding the deportation of the Armenian populations living in areas adjacent to the war zones.<sup>9</sup>

The proposed bill was adopted by the government on 30 May 1915 and issued on 1 June 1915 as the Temporary Law of Deportation. Although Said Halim had endorsed the law as head of cabinet, he later affirmed during his interrogation by the Post-War Inquiry Commission that “he did not know that the deportations would lead to the massacres and insisted that the plight of the Armenians was caused by the misapplication of the deportation orders.” Curiously, Said Halim Pasha also affirmed during the same hearings that “following the massacre of the Armenians, commissions were formed; these commissions carried out their duties well. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Interior prevented me from publicizing the results of the investigation despite my insistence. It then became evident that as long as Talat Pasha remained at the Ministry of Interior, nothing would come of these investigations.”<sup>10</sup>

7 Ibid., pp. 98–106

8 Ibid., pp.104–106

9 Ibid., pp. 111–112

10 Şeyhun, *Said Halim*, pp. 113.

Later in 1915, while the Ottoman armies were victoriously resisting enemy attack at Gallipoli, a government crisis was taking place in Istanbul. Using the successful military situation to consolidate their position in the government, Enver Pasha and Talat Bey were trying to isolate Grand Vizier Said Halim Pasha and reduce his authority. In June 1915, Talat Bey began to put pressure on Said Halim in order to compel him to relinquish the foreign affairs portfolio. Talat Bey's aim was to secure the appointment of his close friend and protégé, Halil Bey, as minister of foreign affairs, thus establishing his control over the cabinet.<sup>11</sup>

On 5 June 1916, the Bedouin troops of Sharif Husayn attacked the Ottoman garrison in Medina; the long contrived Hejazi revolt had finally broken out. The effect of Husayn's revolt on Said Halim's political career was fatal. When the *amir* of Mecca, a key symbolic figure in Islamic officialdom, joined forces with an enemy upon whom the empire had declared *jihad*, Islamic ideology was dealt a severe blow, and Said Halim, a leading proponent of this movement, was largely discredited in the cabinet. Consequently, he resigned from his position as grand vizier on 3 February 1917 and was replaced by Talat Pasha who represented the Turcocentrist tendencies within the CUP.<sup>12</sup>

Before tendering his resignation, Said Halim Pasha sent a short note to his brother Abbas Halim informing him of his intention.

### Ideas

The following passages are taken from Said Halim's works, *Les institutions politiques dans la société musulmane*, (Political Institutions in the Muslim Society) Imprimerie Editrice Italia, Rome, 1921 and *Essai sur les causes de la décadence des peuples musulmanes*, (An Essay on the Causes of the Decline of the Muslim Societies) Istanbul: Imprimerie Loeffler, 1918.

Nowadays we see with great satisfaction that the Muslim people have begun to awaken from their torpor and aspire to liberate themselves from foreign domination. Finally Muslims have realized that the most sacred duty of the Muslim is to live freely. Without freedom there is neither happiness nor progress for humankind. Nevertheless, I must also admit that this satisfaction is not without some skepticism and apprehension, since I see that at the same time the overwhelming majority of Muslim intellectuals desire to adopt for their

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 113–115.

country the Western political institutions, and firmly believe that the social and political development and the progress of their country is possible only by adopting Western principles. This state of mind of the Muslim intellectual class is deeply distressing because it clearly shows that Muslim leaders have not realized that Islam is not just a religion but also a social and political system as well. The Muslim religion is the most humane religion. It represents the most complete and highest form of human civilization in its spirit and in its signification. It is the most genuine and most perfect religion, to the degree that salvation can be assured by it alone. Our intellectuals seem to forget that for the Western world all roads lead to Rome, whereas for the Islamic world all roads lead to Mecca.<sup>13</sup> In other words, each of these two different worlds and civilizations follow a separate path and different direction, a different destiny, in order to fulfill different missions in the evolution of humanity.

There is no doubt that between the ideal, aspirations as well as the moral and social conceptions of the Muslim and Western worlds are quite different. It would be a grave error to believe that the social and political institutions of the Western world would suit the needs of the Islamic worlds. Even modified and adapted versions of Western institutions would not be suitable for our society.<sup>14</sup> The weakening of Islamic values among the Muslim intellectual class is the result of the Western colonial domination of Muslim countries since the last century.

The entire social system of Islam is based on the sovereignty of the *sharia*. The Muslim society should submit totally to the sovereignty of the *sharia*, which is the sum of the moral and social rules revealed by the Creator to our prophet, Muhammad, and then communicated to us by him. The ultimate human happiness depends on the *sharia*. The sovereignty of the *sharia* derives from the fact that this divine law is in perfect accordance with the laws of nature. The consequence of the sovereignty of the *sharia* was paramount for human history because it created a new society based on new foundations, totally distinct from other societies.<sup>15</sup>

By instituting the sovereignty of the *sharia*, Islam established the genuine principles of liberty and solidarity for humanity, therefore creating the highest ideal in the history of humankind.

The Islamic social system is based on equality and liberty in the most natural and genuine sense of the term. In this system the class rivalries and

13 Said Halim Pasha, *Les institutions politiques dans la société musulmane*, Rome: Imprimerie Editrice Italia, pp. 2–3 (hereafter cited as Said Halim, *Institutions*).

14 Said Halim, *Institutions*, p. 4.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

struggles that never existed and instead a real solidarity embracing the whole Muslim world unites the diverse nations living in different climates, thus creating a great global Muslim family of 400 million human beings of different races.

It is considered liberal to declare that human beings are born with certain natural rights, including freedom. I would say that nothing is more erroneous and more anti-liberal than such an assertion. At the beginning of their life human beings have no natural rights. They acquire their rights by educating themselves and by adapting themselves to their social environment and by fulfilling the duties imposed on them by society.

Although the advocates of Westernization in Muslim countries were always insignificant in number, this small minority represented the majority of the educated class who thereby exerted a strong influence on the decision-making process and determined the destiny of Muslim society. Its power derived mainly from support provided by the Western powers through the medium of their agents in Muslim lands. The main channel for the spread of Western ideas in Muslim countries was education. The Muslim elite became acquainted with Western ideas either by studying abroad or attending schools established by Western powers in Muslim countries. The main purpose of the latter was to impregnate Muslim minds with Western ideas and values. In this way, the West was able to extend its hegemony over Muslim countries by penetrating into their intellectual and cultural spheres. The result of Western cultural domination is the alienation of Muslim intellectuals from their own culture and society, because they soon found themselves incapable of understanding the real meaning of their religion. Indeed, some became completely indifferent or even hostile to it. In other words, they lost faith in the principles of their religion.<sup>16</sup>

Every nation has its own way of feeling, thinking and acting, and every nation has a mentality that is peculiar to it. The fundamental dissimilarity between East and West is that Europe, even after being converted from paganism to Christianity, kept political and social institutions (e.g. feudalism), whereas after espousing the Muslim faith the East abandoned its pre-Islamic political and social institutions.

However, the problem of underdevelopment had nothing to do with religion itself but needed to be viewed as a sociological phenomenon. This paradigm was valid for the Muslim world as well as for the West. Religions are molded by the diverse customs and cultural characteristics of their adoptive lands. Just as historical and social developments in Christendom engendered Catholicism and later Protestantism, similar developments gave birth to the

---

16 Said Halim, *Institutions*, p. 18.

Sunni and Shia branches of Islam. Furthermore, within the same religious denomination one can detect different characteristics: for example, Catholicism in Germany is different from Catholicism in Spain or Italy. The same is true of Islam, where different schools adapted themselves to various local realities and developed distinct characteristics. Turkish Sunnism for example is distinct from its Arab variety, while Shi'ism in Iran differs from that in India.<sup>17</sup>

By suppressing all ancient superstitions and prejudices, Islam enabled man to use his intellectual capacities without hindrance; thus the coming of Islam could be said to have paved the way for a scientific revolution to which, historically, Muslims made a considerable contribution. Although man has proven himself capable of discovering the laws of nature [physics and chemistry] and understanding them objectively, he has completely failed to discover moral and social laws through his own efforts. This was due to man's incapacity to remain objective when examining and understanding the laws governing humanity. For this reason, the Prophet revealed these moral and social laws to humankind and urged Muslims to try to learn and discover scientific knowledge themselves, even if it meant travelling to China to obtain it.<sup>18</sup>

The real cause of Muslim decline lay in the misunderstanding of the Prophet's sayings by conservative Muslim scholars in their study of *ilm*. These scholars reduced this concept to the level of religious and legal knowledge, thus leaving out natural and positive sciences. This led to the development of a certain scholasticism, which thereafter had a detrimental effect on the development of the Muslim world; indeed, it severely discouraged all intellectual activity other than in religious sciences. The anathema of natural and positive sciences and their exclusion from the curriculum of Muslim institutions of learning rendered Muslims completely incapable of acquiring the knowledge necessary to discover the secret forces of nature or of exploiting them for their economic welfare and material progress. It was because of this that the economic state of the Muslim world deteriorated and Muslim countries became weak and vulnerable to external threats. Ultimately, by showing a total disinterest in the natural and positive sciences, Muslim nations were themselves responsible for their own economic and political breakdown.<sup>19</sup>

Western social systems are in constant change, and these changes reflect the unstable nature of the Western social structure. The source of this instability is the continual struggles that occur among the different social classes that make

---

17 Mohamed (Said Halim), *Essai sur les causes de la decadence des peuples musulmanes*, Constantinople: Imprimerie Loeffler, 1918. p. 6–8 (hereafter cited as Said Halim, *Essai*).

18 Said Halim, *Institutions*, p. 8.

19 Ibid., p. 16–17.

up Western societies, caused by the differing needs and aspirations of these groups. These, in turn, are a direct consequence of that society's material and technical evolution. Therefore, unlike the Islamic world, the West has never had a constant and immutable social idea that is capable of inspiring and guiding its evolution. On the contrary, its continually changing social ideas are generated and transformed by its social evolution, which in turn is shaped by its material development. The Western society had not yet reached the ideal stage where its moral and social principles took on their final and immutable form.<sup>20</sup>

However, solidarity in Western society occurs only among members of a certain social class. In any society it is impossible to change the age-old values and mentalities that are laden with deep-rooted anti-liberal and anti-egalitarian prejudices simply by decreeing so-called liberal laws. Change can only come with the implementation of proper moral education, carried out with patience and intelligence over generations. The assiduous application of such a curriculum will liberate man of his traditional prejudices of class and caste and cause him to embrace the idea that all men are equal, regardless of their origins or social position; understanding that it is only by merit that they can distinguish themselves. Western democracy has its roots in the aristocratic regime of Europe. Therefore, since Muslim societies never had such an aristocracy in their past, it would be unrealistic for Muslim societies to adopt Western democratic institutions.<sup>21</sup>

These Western thinkers, for lack of any other common quality among these backward [Muslim] nations, blamed their religion as the major cause of their backwardness compared to Christian nations. This superficial and erroneous assumption, he asserted, comforted orientalist and caused resentment among Muslims, a situation that undermined all possibility of dialogue between Islam and the West

The decline of Muslim societies could be explained by the influence of their pre-Islamic heritage. Since the nations that adopted Islam were heirs to old and distinct civilizations, it was inevitable that their respective ancient histories would still exert a strong influence during their Islamic period. This phenomenon prevented Muslim nations from fully understanding and implementing the religious tenets of their faith, thus depriving them of the blessings of Islam.

The decline of the Muslim peoples was due to their failure to renounce their pre-Islamic legacy, a failure that shackled their progress. This same legacy prevented them from comprehending the maxims of their faith. Consequently, a

---

20 Ibid., pp. 22–24.

21 Ibid., pp. 23–24.

paralysis set in, leaving Muslim societies inert between this pre-Islamic legacy and a genuine Islamic ideology, forming a continuous hindrance to the development of these societies. The only way to achieve progress was for Muslims to swing the pendulum in favor of genuine Islamic principles.

It was the mutual hostility between Islam and Christendom perpetuated throughout the centuries by long and frequent warfare, and the contempt that Muslims harbored against the Christian West that prevented them from becoming fully acquainted with and benefiting from the scientific and technological achievements of the West.

While the Westernized elites of Muslim countries espoused the Western way of life and adapted it to their local Muslim environment, the masses continued to live according to the principles of their religion, acclimatized to their local culture, be it Egyptian, Turkish, or Persian. Being thus deprived of their elite's intellectual and social guidance, Muslim populations lost their orientation and their evolution was interrupted.

The decline of religion proved to be fatally detrimental to Muslim societies because, unlike the Christian West, the social structures of Muslim countries are based on religious principles. Therefore any attempt to reduce the role of religion in Muslim societies would unravel the social fabric and bring about their ruination.

Islamization should cover every aspect of society, by inoculating it with high, pristine Islamic values and by purifying it of any corruptive pagan elements inherited from a pre-Islamic past. Nationalism is one of the detrimental notions that, in a latent form, survived in Muslim societies centuries after their conversion to Islam. Spurred, however, by the injurious impact of Western ideas, nationalism constituted a fatal threat to Muslim polities. Nationalism is a destructive ideology and is considered as one of the major causes of the First World War. Each part of the Islamic world is a separate political unit. Each unit should be bound by the general principle of Islam but also responsive to its more specific reality.

Once humanity has survived the catastrophic consequences of the First World War, it will adopt internationalism. In the West, socialism will create this internationalism, whereas in the East, the Muslim lands will be united by Islamic internationalism.

The Islamic Political Regime: The ideal political system is that which best corresponds to the social order found within a society.

The most inept political regime is that which forces the society it governs to change its social regime. The ideal Muslim society is one that submits itself to the sovereignty of the *sharia*. In such a society it would be incumbent on every person to fulfill the obligations required of him/her by the rules of the *sharia*.

Similarly, one is entitled to expect others to fulfill the same duties. As for the government, its main function is to assure the implementation of these rules. Indeed, every Muslim should require of his or her government the secure establishment of the authority of the *sharia*.

The Islamic political regime is representative. Unlike its Western counterpart, Muslim society has not experienced any of the classic rivalries typical of Western political systems, because all of its members hold to the same basic values and ideals that were sufficiently well developed, and that are inclusive and broadly appealing to the Muslim masses. Consequently, the ideal Islamic Parliament would be composed of members who unanimously share the same political conviction, which is to serve the *sharia*. The main function of this Parliament would be the supervision of the deeds and actions of the government. The drafting and passing of legislation, which constitutes the major function of parliaments in the West, however, would not be the task of this body in an Islamic context and polity. Instead, promulgating legislation would be the duty of a special body of legists, the *ulema* or doctors of law. This corresponds to classical Islamic legal doctrine and practice.

Authority in Muslim society should not be invested in an executive council where many people participate in the decision-making process; rather, it should be concentrated in the hands of one person. Dividing executive decisions among many people or groups who may be working at cross-purposes will paralyze the government. In a Muslim political system, supreme authority should be entrusted to one person elected by adult suffrage. The authority must derive from the mandate obtained from the nation through general elections. Muslim societies should be governed by heads of state directly elected by the nation and these heads of state should have an exclusive right to hold the executive power.

The role of political parties in Islamic societies is bound to be different from that of political parties in the Western world. Whereas in the West parties serve the interests of different social classes and have as their goal the establishment of the domination of one social class over another, thereby subverting the existing social order; in Islamic societies, their function is to preserve the social institutions created by Islam.

Excessive party discipline imposed on government members deprives them of even the most basic freedom of action and strips them of their initiative. Thus, party discipline undermines individual talents such as problem solving. Ultimately, the strict adherence by government members to the party line can only result in mediocrity. A political regime may be considered imperfect when its values do not represent the characteristic values intrinsic to the society over

which it rules. Political regimes are the product of societal and historical evolution and each political entity embodies the socio-cultural values of its society.

This constitution was designed by the dignitaries of the Porte as a means to check the power of the sultan and to curb his absolutism. The Ottoman constitution of 1876 “provides to the people of the Ottoman Empire, which stretches out to the deserts of Arabia and the majority of whose population lives a primitive life under the absolute authority of a religious or tribal chief, such extensive rights that even the most advanced nations of our time do not possess.”

The parliamentary regime that was reestablished by the Revolution of July 1908 proved itself to be unsuited to the realities of the Ottoman Empire. Far from being beneficial, this form of government disturbed the social peace and threatened the political existence of the empire. Any political regime that forces a society to change its social institutions is the worst, for unlike merchandise, such institutions are not items that can be easily imported from abroad. Instead, social and governmental institutions are the products of a long process of social evolution, which are developed by every nation and by every people; they evolve according to the needs and demands of their environment.

What makes a government corrupt is the absence of a real and efficient control mechanism. Lack of accountability would cause even the most liberal regime to degenerate into tyranny. If the former Ottoman regime became arbitrary, it was because of the inability and unwillingness of Ottoman society to exert its control over the government despite the fact that this is the social and political duty of every Muslim.

### *The Senate*

The institution of the Senate developed in the West as an aristocratic institution designed to defend the rights and privileges of the upper class. In Western political systems, the role of this institution was to moderate and restrain the “democratization” of society by preserving and defending aristocratic values, thus assuring social equilibrium. Such an institution does not have a *raison d'être* in the Islamic political system, since Muslim society is based on legal and social egalitarianism. The evolution of Muslim society must, therefore, occur under the guidance of a national assembly assisted by a legislative corps; both are inspired and guided by the *sharia*.

The role played by the Senate was mostly a formal one, since the constitution empowered the sultan with the right to veto any proposed legislation. Nevertheless, as the parliamentary system of the empire was modeled on those operating under the European monarchies, most of which had bicameral systems, the Ottoman Parliament also had an upper and a lower house.

Western and Muslim societies had different social and political dynamics because of their historical backgrounds and religious systems. Consequently, it would be an error for Muslims to adopt Western models of development. Western political and social institutions such as aristocracy and democracy do not have exact equivalents in Islamic history and social consciousness. Indeed, social transformation in Islamdom has traditionally followed different patterns. Thus, while Christian Europe's history has been marked by continual class struggle, such social upheavals were far less dramatic in Muslim societies.

The apprehension felt by the European powers about their Muslim colonies was caused by their misconception of the nature and aims of this Pan-Islamic revival. Contrary to what Europeans thought, this movement did not harbor a belligerent nature and certainly did not preach the rallying of Muslims around a despotic authority that would encourage supporters to commit massacres. Pan-Islamism did not represent a political union of peoples belonging to the same faith, nor was it an occult religious sect or secret political association; rather, it was the leading voice of progress and liberty in Muslim societies.

The idea of Pan-Islamism represented the desire of the intellectual elites of Muslim countries to ensure the salvation of the Islamic world through liberty and progress. Pan-Islamism represented the revival of an Islamic consciousness among Muslims all over the world who were determined to liberate themselves from the shackles of ignorance and servitude by improving their intellectual prowess, capacities and material condition. The oppressors of the Muslim peoples were not only their Western colonizers, but also their own despotic rulers, who were directly responsible for the present degradation of Muslims by keeping them, through coercion, in a state of ignorance and servility and hindering their development. Muslims had to unite not only against European colonialism, but also against despotic potentates who ruled over them oppressively, even if one of these were the caliph himself. It was accepted that the revolutions that took place in European history were pursued in the name of liberty and progress; the West had no right to accuse the Pan-Islamic movement of fanaticism when, like the revolutions in Europe, it aspired to establish the rules of liberty and progress in Muslim lands. The Pan-Islamic revival would restore to the Islamic World its former might and splendor by emancipating it from the decay of its civilization. Muslim *ulema* had come into contact with the scholastic ideas during the Crusades through their dealings with Christian European clergy. Eventually, this scholasticism began to dominate Islamic intellectual life and to hinder its development.

The following passages are taken from Said Halim Pasha's typescript work "Political Crisis" (unpublished), provided to Ahmet Şeyhun by the author's family in July 1997.

*Political Crisis*

By trying to remedy the administrative weakness of the country we created a very serious political crisis that deeply troubled the country and threatened its social and national existence. The facts clearly showed that all hopes attached to the adoption of a parliamentary regime proved deceitful. We soon learned that in thinking that we had achieved a great success we had in fact committed a great error. It is a well-known fact that the outcome of the 1908 Revolution was in short a radical change of the country. This change was thought to be beneficial because we believed that the ills with which the country was afflicted were the result of its political regime. A political regime is considered flawed when it does not correspond to the social system of the country that it represents, instead contradicting it. Because the political regime is an outcome of the historical evolution of a people, it represents the people's mentality and morality, and their understanding of authority and power. The political regime reflects that people's understanding of power relations. Therefore, a change in the political regime is in fact a very radical change. It must be fully justified with a parallel change in the society that it governs. Has the social situation of the Ottoman Empire really changed recently so as to require a new political regime? We do not believe it has. During the old regime all the complaints that came from every corner of the country were directed merely at the deplorable administration of the empire. Other than a small minority of intellectuals who were influenced by some extreme Western ideologies, nobody wanted a regime change. Those who did want a regime change hoped to put an end to the misadministration of the empire. They sincerely believed that such a measure would make the administration effective. In fact, replacing an existing political regime with a new one could only be justified if important changes took place in the social fabric of the country. A radical change in the political system of a country can only be justified by a similar change in the socio-political values of the society itself. Otherwise such a change can only be the outcome of an arbitrary decision that would do nothing but harm the society and bring trouble to the country. Such an arbitrary decision would be taken with total disregard for the customs, traditions and culture of the country and with no consideration of its real situation. Such a political regime is condemned to be a regime of disorganization and dissolution. By changing the political regime of the country in the hope of improving its situation [the Young Turks] committed a grave error. The situation became even worse when a Latin constitution was

adopted. The Constitution of 1876 is modeled on European constitutions and is therefore unsuitable for the realities of our country unless we change our values and culture. Such a change is unthinkable since it would mean going against the natural course of the historical evolution of society according to social factors. In fact, the worst kind of political regime is that which forces a society to change its core values. Adopting Western social norms and values would undermine the social fabric of Muslim society and cause its decline.

Although accepted by the civilized nations of Europe, the principle of majority rule is far from being a wise and just principle. It represents only the naked force of the majority; it is merely the force of numbers, the power of the majority over the minority. Politicians do all in their power in order to obtain this majority of votes; it is obtained at the price of merciless fights between people and when obtained it becomes oppressive, partial and despotic. It is obvious that a political authority based on majority rule cannot be an ideal one. Again it would be an error to think that in the West the people adopted this regime of majority rule by choice. On the contrary, it was in fact imposed on them by their social situation and social necessities.

The social system of Islam is not based on the inequalities between different social classes. The aristocratic system of Europe is unknown in Muslim countries. In the Islamic world people are divided into upper, middle and lower classes but this division is quite different from the European feudal and aristocratic system. The Ottoman social system differs from its Western counterpart in the lack of constant struggles and rivalries between socio-economic classes. The nations who lost their independence suffer under foreign domination because the political [colonial] regime imposed upon them is totally different from their own political system, hence incompatible with their social values. The Westernization of society creates animosity and social tension between the different segments of that society, which until then had existed happily and harmoniously. Such a change would also undermine the fabric of Islamic society and erode its noble principles of equality and justice. Consequently, a political regime that forces a society to change and adopt foreign norms and values is the worst political regime, but also the most tyrannical. Moreover, such a change would cause a calamity if the new social system imposed on the Muslim society were inferior to their own Islamic system. Nowadays it has become very popular to denigrate the old regime of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909). Nonetheless, what people do not realize when condemning the era of the deposed sultan is that the sultan and his absolutism were a historical and social product of this country. Nevertheless, this regime, which is now often severely criticized and despised, was for many decades perfectly suited to the realities of the country. It was in perfect harmony with the culture and belief

system of its people and it best represented their traditions and their social and political understanding. The problems that existed during the Hamidian era did not emanate from the regime itself, which was suited to the social and cultural structure of the country, but from an absolutist government and a paranoid ruler. Therefore it would be wrong to equate the *ancien régime* with the Sultan's government, because political regime and government are not necessarily one and the same. Today the new parliamentary regime, despite being a regime of checks and balances, has proved to be unable to control the executive power since the electors themselves are not interested enough in the political destiny of their country. Nevertheless, many centuries ago, when this country was ruled by an autocratic regime, this control existed through a system of checks and balances applied by some political and social groups on the executive power of the sultan to limit his authority. In the past, for many centuries our dignitaries, notables, scholars and prominent members of society knew how to perform their social and political duties and exert a real and effective control on the executive [sultan's government]. The real cause of the problem was not the regime itself but the citizens who were unable to pay their debt to the society by exercising control over the actions of the executive. The section of society best equipped to oversee the actions of the government is the country's elite. This elite must assume their responsibility and form a responsible body to scrutinize the actions of the administration and hold the government to account. Since this is a task of primordial importance and has a national character, this body of elites must be elected by the citizens. This controlling body must represent the spirit and mind of the nation but must not be an exact image of the society that it represents. Our failure derives from the fact that our understanding and interpretation of the principles and ideas of the West are greatly flawed. Instead of adopting Western civilization and adapting ourselves to it, we have to adapt it to our realities, namely we have to acclimatize it. We can call this process "the orientalization of Western civilization". In a country like ours where the individual has never fulfilled his political duties, it would be useless to give more rights to the people than those provided by the old regime. The best example for this situation is the complete lack of interest shown by the citizens of the empire in the Constitution of Midhat Pasha. The only way to ensure that people fulfill their political duties is to educate them about these duties. For that reason, the education of a people is a very delicate task that requires a great deal knowledge and patience for those who undertake it. It would be naïve to believe that merely adopting a European constitution would be sufficient to convince people to fulfill their political duties.<sup>22</sup>

---

22 Said Halim Pasha, *Crise Politique* (typescript).

The following passages are taken from Said Halim Pasha's work "Islamization" in typescript form (unpublished), provided to Ahmet Şeyhun by the author's family in July 1997.

### *Islamization*

We have always stated that the salvation of the Muslim Peoples was in their complete Islamization. Islam is the most complete religion. Its morality is based on its creed, and its sociology derives from these moral principles. Islam is the religion that is comprised of all the experimental knowledge and metaphysical beliefs. It represents the highest level of human consciousness. It is both idealism and positivism. In order to be Islamized we have to conform to the moral, social and political principles of this religion. The Islamic credo is the key to human happiness, as long as Muslims feel, think and act according to the fundamental principles of this religion.

A Muslim who believes in the morality of Kant or Spencer and adopts the French social ideal or English political ideal would be an individual without character despite his immense knowledge. What would we think of a German or Frenchman who adopted Chinese moral principles, Indian [Hindu] philosophy or Mexican Policy? From that moment he would cease to feel, think and act like a Frenchman or a German despite expressing himself in French or German.<sup>23</sup>

### *Belief*

For the Muslim, the unity of his God is essential and this is expressed in a very clear form. Islamic faith is our conception of immutable and absolute Wisdom and Justice expressed in the 99 names of God. This faith assures the perpetual harmony and balance in the world. We believe in His prophet because it is through him that God revealed to us the immutable principle of human happiness and felicity. This principle is expressed by the form of an Islamic trinity: liberty, equality and solidarity.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Said Halim Pasha, *Islamization* (typescript).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

## Şehbenderzâde Ahmed Hilmi (1865–1914)

### Life

Şehbenderzâde Ahmed Hilmi was born in Filibe (today Plovdiv, Bulgaria). His father was Süleyman Bey who was a consul (*şehbender*) and his mother was Şevkiye Hanım. After completing his primary education in his birthplace, Ahmed Hilmi moved to Istanbul, where he graduated from the *Sultani* of Galatasaray. After living in Izmir for a while he returned to Istanbul, and in 1890 began to work at the *Düyun-u Umumiye İdaresi* (Public Debt Administration). He was later sent to Beirut on a political mission, where he established contact with the Young Turks and then went to Egypt. In Egypt he joined the *Terakki-i Osmani Cemiyeti* (Ottoman Society of Progress) and started to publish a satirical journal named *Çaylak*. In 1901, after returning to Istanbul, he was arrested and charged as a political opponent to the regime and was exiled to Fezzan (in today's Libya). In Fezzan he became acquainted with Sufism and joined the Arusi sect. The influence of this religious movement would be seen in his later works. In 1908, after the reestablishment of the Constitution, he returned to Istanbul and began to publish a weekly paper called *İttihad-i İslam* (Islamic Union). In his newspaper Hilmi wrote numerous articles on the Islamic Union or Pan-Islamism. After the closure of this journal he continued to write on political and philosophical subjects in the newspapers *İkbal*, *Şehbal* and *Tasvir-i Efkar*. In 1910 he established a publishing house, *Hikmet Matbaa-i İslamiyesi*, and started to publish a new weekly paper of the same name (*Hikmet Ceride-i İslamiyesi*). In this new publication, Hilmi continued to pursue his Pan-Islamist activities and copies of this paper were sent to various Muslim countries. On 9 September 1911 Hilmi founded another newspaper called *Hikmet*, in which he began to write articles criticizing the CUP government, as a result of which the newspaper was closed five times by the authorities in a period of just one and half months. In October 1911 he was exiled to Bursa after the closure of *Hikmet*. In August 1912 Hilmi again began to publish *Hikmet*, and in his writings he predicted the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the First World War. During this same period he also launched another satirical magazine called *Coşkun Kalendar*, only one issue of which was published. Later he also published some other papers called *Münakaşa*, *Kanat* and *Nimet*. Besides his publishing career, Hilmi also pursued an academic career, for a while teaching philosophy at Darulfu-

nun [University] in Istanbul. Ahmed Hilmi died suddenly in 1914. According to some rumors, he was poisoned by his political opponents.

### Ideas

The following passages are taken from Ahmed Hilmi's work *Yirminci Asırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa – Müslümanlara Siyaset Rehberi* (The Islamic World and Europe in the Twentieth Century – a Political Guide for Muslims), published in İsmail Kara's *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi* (Islamist Thought in Turkey), vol 1.

#### *General European Policy in the Twentieth Century*

Never, in any period of the history of humanity, have science and scholarship reached such a high level. Today politicians are using all the available scientific possibilities to distort reality and to support their false practices. In the past, even during the darkest periods of human history, we encounter the presence of some lofty and noble ideas. In the practices of European politics it is almost impossible to see any trace of humanity. Because the "civilized barbarity" was skillfully planned and designed, we can call it mathematical barbarity. All of the theories on Natural Selection and Survival of the Fittest that Darwin expounded in his works reflect this mentality. In the past the victors showed a kind of mercy and compassion to the defeated and conquered peoples. Tolerance and benevolence towards them was considered a noble and magnanimous quality. According to Darwin, on the contrary, the weak and defeated did not deserve any mercy or compassion; since they had lost they deserved to be annihilated. Those condemned by nature must also be condemned by man. In the past, religion and ethical values had an influence on political decisions and administration. A nation would prefer glory and dignity to its interests, honor and nobleness to material gains. A ruler was obliged to respect his word and keep promises. Today, in Europe such high and noble values have no influence on politics because religion has lost its influence on society. Instead everything is determined by interest and benefit. Therefore we can say with confidence that the current European political system is based on unethical values. Today the noble values of the past are considered foolish and nonsensical. By considering our criticism of the European value system, some people would accuse us of being the enemy of the contemporary civilization. But, on the contrary, we are the most sincere admirer of Europe's material civilization. Today, the scientific and technical advancement of the European nations is paramount, and it is impossible not to acknowledge that achievement. On the other hand,

however, the moral decadence of the European peoples is also a reality. The current social system in Europe has encouraged the development of a political ideology called "Socialism". Socialism is not the final goal or objective; it is only a phase in the long path towards the ultimate objective, which is Communism. In fact even Communism, which is desired by all as an ideal, but which becomes a hateful and detested regime when applied, is just a phase before the final stage: anarchy and chaos. Today, Europe moves rapidly towards an abyss of catastrophe, and in fact drags the rest of the world to that abyss. Currently material misery in Europe is appalling and spiritual misery is even worse. The tyranny of corporations has replaced the despotism of monarchs. The old monarchs were merely oppressing their subjects; the new tyrants also spread corruption among the people. It is an interesting and noteworthy phenomenon: the masses in Europe, who in the past resisted the despotism of the monarchs, today remain today totally passive, even submissive, to the oppression of the new corporatist rulers. We believe that this attitude of the masses derives from the fact that the new masters know how to please them by satisfying their ambitions. Today Europe shows us a façade of opulence but we must not be deceived by this, it is a false impression. We must know that the ideals and principles of the Europeans are totally contradicted by their actions and practices. Europe can only retain its social system with the strength of its armies. The force of these armies prevents the outbreak of a revolution. However we can also see that the revolutionary ideas are also increasingly influencing the armed forces of European states, and it is only a matter of time before these armies turn their weapons against their the false democracies of Europe, as happened in our country during the 1908 Revolution. Every man needs noble ideas and valid reasons to sacrifice his life. Nowadays in Europe there are no such high values to justify such sacrifice. When it comes to economic reasons, the ideal and goal of European socialists today is not to appropriate the wealth of other countries, instead they want to expropriate the wealth of the rich who acquired their fortune by illegal means. Therefore the socialists in the West can wage a war against their own wealthy countrymen but are not willing to fight for the nationalist cause. In less than a quarter of a century the majority of Europeans will subscribe to the Socialist ideology and will start a revolution against the capitalist class, also overthrowing their government if this government defends the rights of the capitalists. Influenced by Socialist ideas and the decline of nationalism, the armies of the European states would not attack other nations, therefore these armies would lose their *raison d'être*. The foundations of European civilization are shaking, and today this great civilization is doomed. European intellectuals see the external threats very clearly but are unable to find a solution to them. These threats are the Yellow Peril (Japan and

China), in the words of the German Emperor Wilhelm II, and the Black Peril (Africa).

The export of Western civilization to the Islamic world could be called "lethal". On the other hand, Muslims who are already living in decadence are also to blame for accepting and even seeking out this export. Yet Western civilization is not made up of only decadent and immoral elements. Surely, this great civilization has many good and praiseworthy aspects. Nevertheless, in order to keep us underdeveloped, the European governments do not want to give us the beneficial and constructive elements of their civilization, only the decadent and harmful ones.

There are no engineers or expert technicians among the natives of countries occupied by the European colonial powers. In Muslim countries people understand Westernization as imitating European fashion or adopting Western musical and culinary traditions. Instead of adopting Europe's technical and scientific skills we prefer to adopt their extravagant ways of amusement. It is obvious that such harmful imports will prevent our progress and development and keep us forever backward and economically dependent on the advanced European nations. Such harmful foreign influences would weaken even strong and developed societies, let alone underdeveloped and weak nations like ours. The objective of our lives must be happiness in this world and in the next. However this can only be obtained through hard work. Today vanquished nations are not even allowed to exist let alone be prosperous and happy. Freedom is earned not given. Therefore in order to be a strong, free and happy society we must be determined, strong-willed and industrious. Unfortunately our wealthy countrymen today provide their children with an incorrect and harmful education by encouraging them to adopt the frivolous and decadent aspects of European culture. For us the real threat is not the armies and navies of the European states but our strong desire to adopt the decadent and harmful elements of European civilization. The leaders of our nation must see this reality and take the necessary measures to protect our society from these harmful Western influences, otherwise our demise is imminent. In our country there is no industry; we import all manufactured goods from Europe, while our agricultural techniques are very archaic and date from the Middle Ages. In order to liberate ourselves from the tutelage of Europe we must establish a national economy and build factories according to our needs. We must also protect our markets from foreign [European] competition. In order to give our national industry a chance we should buy only our own industrial products, even if they are inferior in quality to European products, even if they are more expensive. These are necessary measures in order to protect our new and nascent industry and to give it a chance to survive and develop. We should not be individual-

istic but collectivist. Individualism can cause our demise and is a loathsome idea.

The Ottoman nation is formed of various ethnic groups. Since in a constitutional regime every ethnic group would seek their own advancement, two different elements emerged: a) the interest of the individual ethnic groups, and b) the union of the ethnic groups. If the goal and aim of every ethnic group was the interest and the advancement of Ottomanism, the union of the different groups would easily be achieved. Nevertheless, every ethnic group in the empire considered their interests separately, and therefore this union became artificial, even fictitious. We Muslims must seriously consider this problem and find a solution to it. The various ethnic groups that live with us in this country must also support our efforts for the elevation and advancement of our homeland. If instead of doing so they choose to become our rivals and adversaries, the situation would be unacceptable to us. We cannot tolerate that. When our ancestors, the Turks, conquered these lands, they put an end to the political domination of various ethnicities and nations. Although non-Muslims did not have equal rights with Muslims, they were allowed to practice their religion and retain their language and national customs. In issues of union and balance between different groups, we should always remember these historical realities. In order to live together with the various non-Muslim groups we Muslims should first know the demands of these groups and decide whether or not these demands are acceptable. First of all the different groups, be they Muslim or non-Muslim, desire and demand the protection of the characteristics of their ethnicity and the preservation of their language, religion and ethnic customs. We should accept these demands on condition that the superiority of Islam is maintained and that the ultimate interests of Ottomanism, which should become our highest common objective, are protected and supported.

Unfortunately the desires and demands of the various Ottoman ethnic groups have today become incompatible with this common ideal of Ottomanism. It is undeniable that for our Greek compatriots today, the center of national interest is not Istanbul, the capital of our empire, but Athens; similarly our Bulgarian compatriots consider Sofia as their center. We should therefore consider the issue of the union of the different Ottoman ethnicities in two categories – the union of non-Muslim groups, and the union of Muslim groups – because the unions of these two categories are quite different. Today we cannot accuse Muslim Ottoman ethnicities of harboring the same ideals and goals as their non-Muslim compatriots. Muslim Ottomans have no hope other than the survival of the Ottoman Empire. The collapse and partition of the Ottoman Empire, God forbid, by the European Powers would be a total slavery not only for the Turks but for all Muslims. It would be impossible for the Albanians,

Arabs and Kurds to preserve their independence as separate nations. When the most combatant and the Arabs, 25 million North Africans [Egyptians, Algerians and Tunisians], have lost their independence it is almost impossible to expect the three million Syrian or five million Yemeni to remain independent after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The same could be said for the other Muslim nations. Muslims in the Empire cannot expect to live under another Islamic government, since today there remain only four independent Muslim governments [including the Ottoman Empire] on earth: Afghanistan, which is remote and small; Iran, under British and Russian control; and Morocco, still independent but under threat of foreign occupation. Today the hope of all Muslims in the world is the survival and strengthening of the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate. Our primary objective, therefore, must be the unity of all Muslims living in the Empire, and this union would be the basis for a larger Ottoman union, comprising all ethnic groups including non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. In a constitutional regime sovereignty belongs to the nation. But naturally we cannot expect all the members of this nation to share the same ideal. In this case national sovereignty must be understood as the will of the majority. Consequently, since Muslim Ottomans form the majority in the Empire, they must be in a dominant position. Non-Muslims in the Empire can only be a part of the Ottoman Union by acknowledging this reality and by loyally serving Ottomanism. This would allow them to benefit from this union.

Now I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of an alliance with the Great Powers. Should we or should we not enter into a [military and political] alliance with a Great Power or Powers. Today we cannot find any European state that seeks salvation by isolating itself. Currently Europe is divided into two camps: the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Due to our intense relations with Europe we cannot remain immune to this political and military polarization. The various European Powers can agree to act against us. Nevertheless their conflicting interest in our empire will always clash. Neutrality will always work against our interests; we will not benefit from a neutral policy. Such a policy would increase our weakness and make us more vulnerable to the ambitions of the Great Powers. Therefore we should opt for an alliance with a Great Power. But in order to realize such an alliance with any of the Great Powers we should have a strong government that is supported by our nation. In the first place all important political parties in our Parliament must reach an agreement for an alliance with a European military and political bloc; after this we can make an alliance with any of the European blocs. Both of the European alliance groups know very well that our friendship is valuable and beneficial to them. The religious and even political influence of the Ottoman Caliphate over the millions of Muslims living under British and French

colonial rule should not be underestimated. European Powers are fully aware of this. Nevertheless, so far they have preferred to ignore or not to admit this important reality. Only a competent and effective Ottoman government can force European governments to acknowledge our importance. Only such a strong government can negotiate a beneficial alliance for us. From such an alliance the European Powers will receive the wholehearted support of their Muslim subjects, as well as countless economic interests in the Ottoman Empire: rich agricultural lands, important mines and construction contracts. In return for this we ask only for their recognition of our full sovereignty, including the abolition of the Capitulations.<sup>1</sup>

---

1 İsmail Kara, *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, vol 1. İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1997, pp. 101.

## Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır (1878–1942)

### Life

Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi was born in Elmalı, a district of Antalya, to a family originally from Burdur. His father, Hoca Numan Efendi, migrated from the Yazır village of Gölhisar and settled in Elmalı, where he later completed his education and became the Head Clerk of the Religious Court (*Şeriye Mahkemesi Başkatibi*). Hamdi's mother was Fatma Hanım, the daughter of a local family of *ulema* in Elmalı. Hamdi completed his primary and secondary (*Rüşdiye*) education in his native town of Elmalı. In 1895 he came to Istanbul with his maternal uncle, who was also an educated man in religious sciences. In Istanbul the young Hamdi continued his studies at the *madrasa* of the Bayezid Mosque, where his mentor was Kayserili Mahmud Efendi, also studying under some other important scholars of the time before he graduated. In 1905 he passed the *Ruus* examination and entered *Mekteb-i Nuvvab* (School for Islamic judges). In 1908 he graduated from that school with distinction and became a *qadi* (Islamic Judge). Between 1905 and 1908 he also taught as a lecturer at the *madrasa* of the Bayezid Mosque and was also appointed to the *Meşihat Mektubi Kalemi* (Secretariat of Religious Affairs). He also taught different subjects of Islamic Sciences, such as *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *mantık* (logic) and *ahkam-i evkaf* (legal provisions on the pious foundations) in various institutions. In 1908 he was appointed as a member of the *Meclisi Maarif* (Educational Council), and in the same year he attended *Huzur Dersleri* and became a *ders-i am* (public lecturer). After the 1908 Revolution and the reestablishment of the Constitution he was elected as a deputy to the Ottoman Parliament. During the deposition of Sultan Abdülhamid II in April 1909, Hamdi penned the deposition decree. Later, on 4 August 1918, he became a member of the *Dar-ul Hikmeti İslamiye* (Faculty of Islamic Sciences) and on 2 April 1919 was appointed as president of this institution. He served as the Minister of Pious Foundations (*Evkaf Nazırı*) in the cabinets of Damad Ferid Pasha. On 15 September 1919 he was appointed as a member of the Senate. When the Turkish Republic was proclaimed on 29 October 1923 Hamdi was teaching logic (*mantık*) as a lecturer in the *Medresetul Mutehassin*. As he was a member of the Damad Ferid Pasha cabinet, he was held responsible for Ferid Pasha's policy against the Nationalist Liberation Movement and arrested. He was condemned to death but later acquitted of the charges against him and set free by

the Ankara Independence Court, following which he returned to Istanbul and retired into seclusion in his house. During his retirement he completed the translation of the work entitled *Metalib ve Mezahib* from Arabic, upon which he had begun working previously. In the introductory section of this work he criticized the closure of the *madrasas*. He also started work on a large Islamic legal dictionary commissioned by Prince Abbas Halim Pasha and during the same period the Turkish Grand National Assembly commissioned him to write a large Quranic Exegesis. Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır died on 27 May 1942.<sup>1</sup>

## Ideas

The following passages are taken from Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Makaleler, Din Felsefe, Siyaset Hukuk*, edited by A. Cüneyd Köksal, Murat Kaya, Istanbul: Klasik, 2011.

Islam is not an obstacle to progress but a cause of it. Firstly I want to explain the meaning of the word progress. Progress is a term that can only be explained in relation to a certain goal, and progress can therefore be understood as steady movement towards that objective. If we assume that the whole of humanity is moving and advancing towards a certain objective, this can be called “the progress of the humanity”. But this goal, this objective can be different for every person. Every individual has a personal objective to reach in life according to his/her ideals and priorities. Therefore we can say that progress is relative. There exist so many things that can excite the desire and ambitions of the people and cause them to move towards bad and evil things. In reality this is not progress [*terakki*] but decline [*tedenni*]. But on other hand there exist so many other things that are useful and beneficial to the people. Therefore, real progress is moving and advancing towards a good and beneficial objective. Those who consider religion as an obstacle to progress are people for whom the objective is nothing but “sensual delights”. Such people consider life from an extremely personal perspective. Even sensuality, however, could be understood as a driving force or an incentive to obtain nobler and higher objectives. Mere sensual pleasure has no value, because in environments where social happiness is missing or non-existent, those who appear to have a prosperous existence are actually unhappy. The greatest happiness for any person is that which

<sup>1</sup> Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Makaleler, Din Felsefe, Siyaset Hukuk*, edited by A. Cüneyd Köksal, Murat Kaya, Istanbul: Klasik, 2011, pp. 13–34 (hereafter cited as Elmalılı, *Makaleler*).

he receives from his social environment. This social happiness can only exist through virtue, and virtue is a sacrifice for the general welfare or common good. The only basis for virtue is duty and a sense of responsibility and reward. The only factor that creates this sense or feeling is religion. Religion is therefore the only factor that assures the progress of humanity towards goodness. The Islamic religion, like other religions, is not an obstacle to progress but a cause of it.

Centuries of experience have proven to us that individual life can only be sustained in a social environment. Even if society could be built on a temporary and ephemeral life, such societies are egoistic and unable to expand and thrive. A mature and perfect society, on the other hand, always wants its experience to benefit the entire world, the whole of humanity, and to convey its high values to other societies. Atheists who deny the afterworld only aim to enjoy a limited life, eventually becoming saturated with the pleasures of this world and always willing to oppress others to obtain their desires. This would cause a moral and social crisis and would eventually destroy the whole of humanity.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The Ottoman Constitution and the Codification Movement*

The preservation and continuation of the human race is possible through civilization, and civilization is measured by justice. Justice depends first on laws and the correct and proper implementation of these laws. These laws must primarily assure the freedom and equality of the people and thus they must conform to natural laws. These laws must also be enacted according to the needs of the people. The legal system of a society must also consolidate the social bonds between the people that form the society and between different societies. Therefore states need international as well as domestic laws. They need international laws in order to regulate their relations with other states according to their mutual interest. They also need domestic laws according to their national interests. The political systems of the great nations are quite similar to each other. For example, according to Roman law, which forms the basis of the European legal systems, the rights of a person begin with his or her birth and end at death. Therefore, according to that law the unborn child had no right. But today this legal conception has changed and the unborn child is legally protected. Our auspicious state, which occupies an important place in the international community like a comet in space, is reborn like a new star, a new Ottoman star. The constitution has been declared. The Ottoman state has proven its capacity to play a pivotal role in the community of nations. The first

---

<sup>2</sup> Elmahlı, *Makaleler*, pp. 261–282.

reaction to the declaration of our constitution was quite skeptical and doubtful. It has been argued that our constitution would be incompatible with the *sharia* or Islamic law. Foreign [European] circles openly expressed their concern about this, because everybody knew that any form of government or administration that does not appear under the guise of *sharia* could not last in this country. In fact Islamic law, which is founded on the principles of liberty, justice, fraternity, spreading civilization, promoting science, safeguarding people's rights, eliminating immorality, preserving social harmony and establishing a representative regime, welcomed and embraced the constitutional regime, which was always dear to it. The constitutional regime conforms perfectly to Islamic law. Now everybody knows that if our constitutional regime did not present itself in the guise of the *sharia* it would receive no support from the people and would not be greeted with deference.

Today we have to act and act fast. Our Parliament has convened and has decided to amend the constitution. Today one of the important questions is how the constitutional regime, which received the warmest welcome from the *sharia*, will respond to it? How will the constitutional regime treat the *sharia*? All of the calamities that befell our country came about not because of the lack of laws; in fact we did have laws, but they were not implemented correctly because they were incompatible with our national spirit. Now, instead of enacting these copies of European laws that are not suitable to our culture and spirit, we have to legislate new laws that are suitable and compatible with our national spirit. It is only after restoring the *sharia* that we can again revive our glorious empire. The laws we have to adopt must be in accordance with the sentiments, rights and aspirations of the Muslim and non-Muslim peoples living in Ottoman lands, which in the past stretched from the Adriatic Sea to the Indian Ocean. Our political horizon and our national affairs should be enlightened by a peaceful and constructive policy. This new policy can only be enforced by our national will. Our nation is formed of Muslim and non-Muslim elements. Our non-Muslim fellow citizens know very well that their present and future welfare depends on the progress of the Muslim citizens of this empire. Now they know that all of the unwanted and unfortunate events that happened in the past between these two communities were created not by their religious differences but by a despotic regime. The establishment of lawfulness among Muslims would also preserve the rights of non-Muslims.

Since Muslims would obey no law other than the *sharia*, in order to establish the rule of law in our country we must Islamize our legislation. It is only after doing so that we can begin the real and genuine development of our country.

Some people express concern on this issue, stating that the following three questions must first be answered:

- a) What would be the European reaction to such legal reform?
- b) In the case of the Islamization of our legislation, what would happen to the legal rights of non-Muslim Ottomans?
- c) Can *fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence] answer and solve all the issues of modern civilization or would it drag the country towards dark ignorance and fanaticism?

To us these questions have no value? To see why, let us begin by answering the first question: What Europe expects from us is no more than to honor our international agreements according to international law and to fulfill our responsibilities. If we also protect the basic rights of our citizens, ensure the equality of all Ottomans before the law, develop our trade and industry, expand education etc., these things will all assure our respectability in the international arena, and nobody can object to that.

Second question: This is a very clear issue. History has shown that the *sharia* treats Muslims and non-Muslims equally. In the Islamic court a poor Christian and a Sultan stand equal before the law and receive fair justice.

Third question: It is well known that in Islamic jurisprudence there are two categories of legal decisions. The first is those based on sacred texts: the Quran and the *hadith*. The second category is the decisions obtained by *ijtihad* [process of legal reasoning]. Legal judgments based on the sacred texts of the Quran and the *hadith* are immutable and cannot be changed or revoked. Legal decisions obtained by *ijtihad* are subject to change. In Islamic law the maxim “by the changing of times judgments also change” justifies the practice of *ijtihad*. In history various *sharia* replaced previous *sharia* by abrogating them [*nasikh*]. The new needs and modern developments constantly necessitate a new interpretation of the *sharia* according to new realities.

Both the natural and divine laws are covered in the Quran. Many verses of the Quran tell believers not to make their life difficult, but on the contrary to make the things easy for themselves. In Islamic law there is some divergence of views. Today such divergences in Sunni Islam are reduced to four schools of law. All of these are products of the philosophy of law; they are in fact the fruit of the tree of *sharia*. These divergences or disagreements are such a natural necessity that if the Quran, which contains all of them, explained these disagreements openly then it would be made of millions of volumes and the scholars who study and explain the Quran would be deprived of their spiritual rewards.

Today we have all the necessary and required sources, the sources of Islamic jurisprudence and the Western legal codes to create a large and comprehensive fundamental legal work based both on Islamic and European laws. Such a legal monument would be not a hasty translation from European sources but the fruit of a long, painstaking and meticulous study and labor based on the sources of all accepted Islamic legal schools and European law and philosophy. It would be such a huge work that even our *Mecelle* would be but a single page of it. On this issue Japan should be an example to us.

Moreover we have to introduce the subjects of comparative law, comparative legal philosophy (both Western and Islamic) and Islamic legal theory in order to advance the study of law in our educational institutions.<sup>3</sup>

*Islam and the Caliphate and the Office of the Şeyhülislam [Meşihat]*

First of all Islam never accepted an office of presidency for the clergy because Islamic law does not deal with spirituality; if in Islam there is such a thing called spirituality it is only science and knowledge. The Muslim learned class [*ulema*] is called “men of education” [*arbab-i maarif*]. Spirituality derives from a philosophy based on the belief that worship pertains only to inner consciousness and spiritual feelings and no material activities can be accepted as worship. For example, earning a livelihood by lawful means and avoiding illegal gain cannot be considered a form of worship. It is not possible to gain religious reward pertaining to the afterworld through worldly activity. Therefore, those who practice spirituality are obliged to go into retirement and seclusion and abandon worldly things [*tarik-i dunya*]. Moreover in spirituality there is the belief of reincarnation and the spiritual leader was surrounded by an aura of holiness. These religious heads are considered divine, infallible and superhuman by their followers. Islam fully rejected such spirituality. In Islam, the clergy as a class does not exist. Today Islam is not applied correctly. In the faith of Islam there is no spirituality even in worship, only science and knowledge. The practices on which this faith is based are material: prayers, fasting, the pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) and doing good deeds are all material activities. In Islam, accepting the spirit does not mean accepting spirituality, because it is not even clear if that spirit is matter or not.

In Islam, the caliph can only appoint the preacher for communal prayers, such as those on Fridays, the Feast of Sacrifice and during the Pilgrimage, in order to inform the believers of worldly and spiritual affairs, to awaken their awareness of their duties, and to consolidate Islamic solidarity. The Caliphate is an exception and is pertinent not to spiritual but to temporal affairs. Islam

3 Elmalili, *Makaleler*, pp.75–81

considers the obligation of implementing the *sharia* pertaining to criminal, civil and political affairs for the believers. The appointment of a caliph was considered necessary for the proper implementation of the community's religious and worldly duties, to ensure people's progress in their life towards their ultimate goal of happiness, and to preserve the rights of God and the rights of mankind. The caliph is empowered by the representation of the people who took the oath of allegiance [*bay'ah*] to him. Nevertheless, he is also subjected to the *sharia*, which he is entrusted and obliged to apply, and of which he cannot transgress any part. If he does transgress the law the nation would exercise its sovereignty. Since the caliphate in Islam is nothing but an executive power to implement the *sharia* it is not a spiritual leadership. The Ottoman caliphate therefore has no authority over Muslims living in other countries outside the empire. But of course the Muslims of the world can feel a kind of religious attachment to the caliphate. Since the meaning of the sultanate entails absolutism, the new constitutional regime must differentiate the caliphate from the sultanate and recognize the importance of this institution in this new era of liberty. According to the justice and equity established by the Islamic fundamental laws in the Constitution of 1908, the divergence of religion and ethnicity should not form an obstacle to the existence of the caliphate, since the duties of non-Muslim citizens, like those of Muslim citizens, remain the same towards the sultan and the government of the constitutional regime regardless of the caliphate. As explained in books of constitutional law and Islamic politics, the caliph appoints a government according to the time and place. This government that supervises the administration and military but also the judiciary is formed of Muslim as well as non-Muslim members. The caliph can, as necessary, entrust the entire government, including religious affairs, to a prime minister or a grand vizier while retaining his own personal rights. A Muslim chief judge [*qadi-al kudat*] or a general mufti [*mufti'l-enam*] must also be part of this government. During the reigns of the Umayyads, Abbasids and Seljuks, the *şeyhülislams* were actually a *Qadi al-qudat*, and none were recognized by Muslims as a spiritual leader.

During the Ottoman Empire the *şeyhülislams* were again considered as [chief judges], although some of their duties differed from the previous periods. In the Ottoman Empire the *şeyhülislams* had the duties of supervising justice and education. The *madrasas* and *sharia* courts were under their control. With the introduction of the *heyet-i vukela* [cabinet] in the Ottoman political system they became part of the government and were placed under the grand vizier's authority. With the formation of the *Maarif Nezareti* [Ministry of Education] educational institutions, except the *madrasas* and *Mekteb-i Nuvvab* [School for Islamic Judges], remained under the jurisprudence of the *Meşihat*

[Office of the *Şeyhülislam*]. On the other hand, since the necessary legal reforms were not introduced to accommodate or adapt the adopted European legal codes into the Islamic judicial system and combine with it, separate courts [*Nizamiye Mahkemeleri*] were instituted. As a result of this, the judicial organization of the country as split into two parts – Islamic [*sharia*] and European – and a new ministry, the Ministry of Justice [*Adliye Nezareti*] was instituted to administer the new court system. This new practice caused confusion in our legal and judicial matters. Since they do not have the exclusive authority to represent the caliph in temporal and spiritual matters, the authority of the *şeyhülislam* derives only from the fact that he is a member of the grand vizier's cabinet. Thus the authority of the *şeyhülislam* is only moral, and derives from the fact that Islam values knowledge and respect scholars.<sup>4</sup>

### *Our Religion, Our State*

The minds that expressed their opinions on the reform issue in the Ottoman Empire mainly agreed on two points regarding the cause of these reforms. Firstly religion, and second the lay or secular administration that derives from the neglect of religion. In order to study and discuss these two ideas as the potential sources of reform, we have to study our history from a scientific perspective. On this issue, two important scholarly works caught my attention. The first of these was the *History of Reforms in the Ottoman Empire* by Engelhardt who served as a diplomat at the *Porte*. The second was Malthe Brunn's *General History*, in which the author examines the general situation of our state and government. According to Engelhardt the cause of the reform movement was religion. Brunn, on the other hand, argued that although Islam played some role in the reform movement, its role was limited by the military and secular administration. Let us first look at what Brunn says. In the second volume of his work dealing with Asia, the author wrote: “the weakness and decline of the Ottoman Empire cannot be the absolute and despotic rule of the sultans, because Ottoman sultans do not possess unlimited power that went unchecked by Islamic religious law [*sharia*]. The sultans are bound by the principles enshrined in the Quran and the *sunnah*. Like any Muslim the sultan is also subjected to this sacred law. The sultan cannot even change ordinances based on previously-established ancient customs without risk to himself. He can only appoint, and dismiss, whomever he wants to the military and administrative positions. In this manner he is the master of the bureaucracy. He exercises almost total power on these issues. Even here he can face opposition from the rebellious governors and pashas who can form an obstacle to his absolute

---

4 Elmalılı, *Makaleler*, pp. 97–101.

rule. Nevertheless, the rule of the sultan is not limited and constitutional as understood by the Europeans. The Ottoman Empire is not a constitutional state based on fixed laws. One can say that the ordinances or administrative laws of this country were originally based on military force, later becoming corrupted and degenerated, as a result of which the sultan became unable to control his empire solely by the sacred law derived from the Quran and the *sunnah*. The riot of the people and the rebellion of the pashas caused the devastation of the country render these provincial forces unreliable. Consequently sultans had to depend exclusively to their own military forces.

According to that writer, who correctly described the absolute and constitutional rules of our country, the Ottoman Empire was already a constitutional state even during the reign of Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807). The legal provisions of the Quran and the *sunnah* served as the basis of this constitutional regime. In order to fully convert this system to the European representative regime it would be sufficient to form a general assembly and empower this elected body with the control of the government's actions. However sultans Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839) became totally engaged in the military reforms and neglected the political reforms. The consequence of this policy, says Brunn, caused the rise of absolutism, which prevailed in the country. According to this author, therefore, the cause of decline in the Ottoman Empire should not be sought in religion but rather in the weakening of religion as a social and political force. In fact Brunn's viewpoint is consolidated and justified by the political and cultural life in the early era of the Ottoman state. In its early stage, when the administration of the Ottoman state was controlled by the military, science and scholarship in Ottoman lands were not developed and the thriving cultural and scholarly development that took place in Arab lands, in Iran and in Muslim Spain [al-Andalus] did not occur in our country. The development of cultural, scientific and scholarly activities only began during the reign of Mehmed II, the Conqueror (r. 1451–1481) and continued until the end of the reign of Süleyman I (r. 1520–1566). This situation was well understood and explained in the verses of the famous Persian poet Sayyid al-Sharif al-Jurjani: "The Sun of the Science first rose from the horizon of the Arab lands, reaching its height in the heart of Persia but later sinking in Anatolia because of this country's domination by military rule. All that was left was a dim and dark star in this sad country." This reality was expressed first by an Easterner and later by a Westerner.

The Ottoman state only began to protect science and scholarship during the reign of Mehmed II, the Conqueror (r. 1451–1481). The politics of the reform were based not on scientific analysis but on individual feelings and attempts. The reform politics did not adapt to the social and cultural environment of the

country but rather it wanted to shape society and assimilate society to foreign cultural norms. In order to understand this phenomenon, let us now look at what Engelhardt said about it:

“The aim of the *Tanzimat* was to bring the Islamic community culturally closer to the Christian European community. There is no doubt that keeping the Ottoman Empire in the darkness of the Middle Ages would continue its decline and eventually cause its demise. The main factor for this was religion, which kept the Ottoman State outside the European community of states.

In fact Islam, which is the foundation stone of the state, remained the dominant factor. The Quran and civil law are the same. In Islam the political system and religion were merged to form one body. It was now necessary to isolate or weaken the religion and free the Ottoman state from its influence, as happened in the West. The first option was to convert the state to a secular one. The second was to interpret Islamic rules in a liberal way, bringing about secularization gradually and slowly. Fearing the reaction of a conservative and ignorant population to radical Westernization, the Ottoman government opted for the second choice: a gradual and slow Westernization.”

Describing so well the objective of the *Tanzimat*, Engelhardt said that such a policy would on the one hand please the European governments and cause them to treat the Ottoman state more leniently and on the other hand make the transition easy and free of social upheavals.

Engelhardt wrote: “Without making the necessary preparations, such an important change in administration cannot have a lasting effect on the absolutist bureaucracy. In such an important administrative transformation it is necessary to examine and take into consideration the customs and cultural habits, social values and customary laws and even the superstitions of the various ethnic groups and nations to whom this reform would be applied. Even in countries that are more advanced, that have a more homogenous population, and that are stronger than Turkey [Ottoman Empire], such reforms are implemented gradually, although at the cost of bloody uprisings. Therefore it is not realistic to expect that these Westernizing reforms would be readily and immediately accepted in a country like the Ottoman Empire, that is made up of various nationalities and that remained for centuries outside European civilization. This simple idea was unfortunately neglected. Its importance, however, is clear. Those who wanted to examine the social and political consequences of the *Tanzimat* movement must not neglect or overlook this point.” This analysis by Engelhardt correctly points out a very important aspect of our reform movement. It is only after taking these factors into consideration that we can fully understand the causes, aim, main principles and feasibility or workability of these reforms.

The cause of the *Tanzimat* reforms is religion; its aim is the salvation and preservation of the state. However the underlying principles of the *Tanzimat* reform movement are presented as:

1. The complete removal of Islam from the public sphere.
2. The separation of state and religion.

However, among the divergence of opinions on the issue of the reforms that today reigns in our country, many people subscribe to at least one of these ideas. According to these people, Islamic fanaticism harms the interests of the state and prevents the progress of the nation and of humanity.

This is the core issue of our social and political life that has been discussed so many times: Does Islam form an obstacle to progress? To these people the answer is affirmative, since for them the word progress is equated either with Christianity or atheism. None of these polemicists that try to distort reality can eliminate from the face of the earth the truth, which is that Islam is the only religion that can assure the general happiness or felicity of humanity. In fact we must look at religion from two angles: firstly, from an abstract angle, and then from a concrete angle. Even if a religion is perfect from an abstract point of view, it cannot provide the people with a prosperous and bountiful life based only on abstract ideas. It needs to be applied, to take a concrete form. After showing the most important social and moral principles of humanity through the Holy Quran and demonstrating the exemplary period of prophethood of our glorious Prophet, which lasted for twenty-three years, and after bequeathing to the *ummah* the two important duties of *ijma* [consensus of scholars on a legal practice] and *ijtihad* [process of legal reasoning], Islam also showed humanity the example of a perfect government like that of Caliph Umar, which is unique in the whole history of humanity, by the implementation of the most just rule. One must be unjust and ignorant to condemn such a religion, which has sent, and will continue to send, beams of light to every corner of the world, from only an abstract perspective; ignorant of the history of Islam and its main source, the religion of Islam. This kind of condemnation of such a religion is nothing but foolishness, if not treachery. In order to benefit a nation from its blessing and bounty, the Islamic religion requires that first the leaders of that nation and then the whole nation sincerely believe and implement its principles. Islam orders every Muslim to obey God and His prophet and to follow the *ulul amr* [the leader of the community]. The *ulul amr* is said to be equal even with the lowliest pauper, but bears a great and heavy responsibility due to the position that he occupies. His responsibility covers every part of the country and he is accountable for everybody's safety and welfare. If

a Muslim or non-Muslim citizen is wronged in the most remote part of a country, Islam holds the leaders of that country responsible. It was obvious that a reform movement based on principles that aim to disestablish the religion were doomed to failure. Since nothing in this world can be reformed or improved by changing the identity [of people, of the nation] such change can end only in destruction. You cannot cure a patient suffering from heart disease by removing the heart. On the contrary, the heart must be supported and reinvigorated with proper medical treatment. The principal consequence would be to push the state toward absolutism, which is against its natural character, and to separate national public opinion from the government and concentrate the power in the hands of a few. Due to the Tanzimat reforms, the government was inclined towards absolutism and despotism and the administration was based more on arbitrary governmental decrees than real law and justice. Today, under this constitutional regime, the clouds of the absolutist rule of the past still cast a shadow and still threaten our representative regime. This point is explained by Engelhardt, who wrote, "Such a political transformation cannot have an immediate impact on an absolutist regime." Therefore, none of the laws enacted during the *Tanzimat* era proved to be effective and remained only as reform projects. The enacted laws must be permanent and fixed and should be according to the national spirit. According to Gustave Le Bon, changing and transforming society by the force of law is against the social order and contradicts the science of legislation. Yet our laws are always enacted arbitrarily with the purpose of changing society. These laws of the *Tanzimat* did not, therefore, have any influence in the hearts of the people. Change cannot be made by laws. Change is the result of natural and social evolution; laws can only be made to legalize and institutionalize these changes.

The idea that directed the reform movement against Islam aimed to separate religion from the state, and thus created a split in the country. Advocates of this idea wanted to remove Islam from the Constitution, to exclude the *şeyhülislam* from the cabinet and to separate the caliphate from the sultanate, thus eliminating Islam from the public sphere entirely. With these reforms there would be no difference between Istanbul and Paris or London. For one century this [Westernizing] ideology gained no support from friend or foe [*yar-ü ayyar*]. It also failed to establish an orderly civil administration and end arbitrary rule. Despite the loans and heavy expenditure, no important building activity was carried out and the economic progress of the country remained non-existent. What did increase in the country was not economic activity but all kinds of debauchery, alcoholism, immorality and poverty. In the past, when the jurisdiction of the *Meşihat* [Office of the Şeyhülislam] was encroached and its judicial authority was given to the newly founded *Adliye* [Ministry of

Justice], this act that benefited neither our interests nor European interests was not considered harmful and damaging. The separation or division of state functions is damaging because it is against the unity of the state, it is the division between the religious and the irreligious. For Muslims the link or relationship between themselves and God is assured not by men of religion [*hoca*] but by the government. Muslims have two kinds of obligation: personal and communal. For personal obligations they are attached directly to God and to His Prophet. But Muslims also have communal obligations, which are performed by participating in communal religious practices, such as prayers in the mosque. For these prayers Muslims need only an imam [any Muslim who directs the prayer]. For the Friday prayers or prayers during religious holidays Muslims are united by the existence of an Islamic government. Moreover, in order to live according to their religion and practice their religious law Muslims need the existence of a political authority that will implement the *sharia*. The foundation of an Islamic government is also required by the *sharia*. The despotic government is described in the Quran as the “government of the Pharaoh who slaughters the sons of his subjects and violates their daughters.” A Muslim knows very well that the Islamic religion was revealed to humankind for the establishment of humanist governments in the world. Since today’s Christian states are fundamentally different from ancient pre-Islamic states, one can clearly see how the coming of Islam also benefited communities other than the Muslim one. The improvement in morality throughout the world since the birth of Islam is undeniable. The law of humanity borrowed many principles from Islam. Islamic law is in contradiction neither with the science nor with the needs of the modern world. Muslims are perfectly aware that their worldly and otherworldly interests [*menfaat-i dünyeviye ve uhreviye*] are dependent on the existence of their state and their government.<sup>5</sup>

---

5 Elmalılı, *Makaleler*, pp. 199–210.

# Bibliography

## Primary Sources

- Ayni Mehmed Ali, *Demokrasi nedir?* Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1961
- , *Milliyetçilik*, Istanbul: Marifet Basımevi 1943
- Berkes, Niyazi *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization (selected essays of Ziya Gökalp)*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1959.
- Gökalp, Ziya, *Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak*, Ankara: Yeni Matbaa, 1960,
- Günlaltay Mehmed Şemseddin, *Zulmetten Nura*, Istanbul: Evkaf-ı İslamiye Matbaası, 1341 AH,
- , *Hurafetten Hakikate* Istanbul: Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, 1332 AH.
- İskilipli, Mehmed Atıf, *Medeniyet-i Şeriye ve Terakkiyat-ı Diniye*, Istanbul: 1920.
- , *Şeriyat Medeniyeti*, edited by Sadık Albayrak, Istanbul: Şamil Yayınevi, 1976.
- İskilipli Mehmed Atıf's booklet, *Frenk Mukallitliği ve Şapka*, Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Kader (1340) 1924.
- İskilipli (Mehmed) Atıf, *Frenk Mukallidliği ve Şapka*, edited by Ömer Faruk, Istanbul: Nizam Yayınları, 1994.
- Kara, İsmail , *Türkiyede İslamcılık Düşüncesi*, Istanbul: Kitabevi,1991.
- Musa Kazım, *Dini ve İctimai Makaleler*, Istanbul: Evkaf-ı İslamiye Matbaası, [1334] 1919.
- Şeyhulislam Musa Kazım Efendi, *Külliyat, Dini Ve İctimai Makaleler*, edited by Ferhat Koca, Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2002.
- Ahmed Naim, *İslam'da Dava-yı Kavmiyet*, Istanbul:Tevzi-yi Tabiat Matbaası, 1332 AH.
- Mustafa Sabri, *Yeni İslâm Müctehidlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi*, Istanbul, 1919.
- , *Dini Mücedditler Yahud Türkiye için Necad ve İttıla Yollarında bir Rehber*, Istanbul: Evkaf Matbaası, 1340/1922.
- Mustafa Sabri Efendi, *Hilafetin İlgasının Arka Planı*, Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2007.
- Said Halim Pasha, *Islamization*. Typescript. N.D
- , *Political Crisis*. Typescript. N.D
- , *Essai sur les causes de la decadence des peuples musulmanes*, Istanbul: Imprimerie Loeffler, 1918.
- , *Les institutions politiques dans la société musulmane*, Imprimerie Editrice Italia, Rome, 1921.
- , *Buhranlarımız*, Istanbul: Şems Matbaası, 1335–1338.
- Yazır , Elmalılı M. Hamdi, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Makaleler, Din Felsefe, Siyaset Hukuk*, edited by A. Cüneyd Köksal, Murat Kaya, Istanbul: Klasik, 2011.

### Secondary Sources

- Adams, Charles, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt. A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad Abduh*, New York: Russel and Russel, 1933.
- Akarlı, Engin Deniz, *The Problems of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics under Abdulhamid II (1876–1909): Origins and Solutions*, PhD diss., Princeton University, 1976.
- Akşin, Sina, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, İstanbul: imge Yayınları.
- Altınsu, Abdülkadir, *Osmanlı Şeyhülislamı*, Ankara: Ay Yıldız Matbaası, 1972.
- Bayur, Yusuf Hikmet, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991.
- Charmes Gabriel, *L'avenir de la Turquie – Le Panislamisme*, Paris: Calman-Levy, 1883.
- Farah Caesar, "Reassessing Sultan Abdulhamid II's Islamic Policy," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 14 (1995/1996).
- Hanioglu Şükrü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1981.
- Heyd Uriel, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp*, London: Luzac, 1950.
- Karpat Kemal, *The Politicization of Islam: reconstructing identity, state, faith and community in the late Ottoman State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001
- Laoust Henri, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Tak-id-din Ahmad b. Taimiya*, Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1939.
- Mardin, Şerif, *The Genesis of the Young Ottoman Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.
- Montesquieu Charles de Secondat, baron de, *De l'esprit des lois*, Paris: Garnier, 1973.
- Said-i Nursi, *Risale-i Nur Külliyatından Tarihçe-yi Hayat: Bediüzzaman Said-i Nursinin Hayati*, İstanbul: Sah Damar Yayınları, 2011.
- Şeyhun Ahmet, *Said Halim Pasha (Ottoman Statesman and Islamist Thinker, 1865–1921)*, İstanbul: İsis Press, 2003.
- Ülken, Hilmi Ziya, *Türkiyede Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, Konya: Selçuk Yayınları, 1966.

# Index

- Abbasid Caliphate (749–1258)
- Barmakids as chief viziers of 80
  - hereditary succession of 87–88
  - al-Mamun (r. 813–833) 70, 80–81, 127
  - al-Mansur 70, 127
  - misrule of 142
  - al-Mu'tazz, Ahmed ibn Tulun 129
  - al-Qaim Billah (r. 1031–1075) 109, 126
  - al-Rashid (r. 786–809) 70, 87–88, 127
  - religious and administrative duties neglected by 40
  - scientific and cultural activities supported by 71
  - and the three rival caliphates of the tenth century 129
  - Turkish support of 129
- Abbasid Revolution
- and Abu Muslim 79–80, 112
  - and the *Shu'ubiyya* 112
- Abd al Malik (r. 685–705) 88
- Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Muhammad (1703–1792) 2–3
- Abduh, Muhammad (1849–1905) 17–18
- Abdülaziz (r. 1861–1876)
- deposition of 8, 172
  - khedivate* on succession ordered 147
  - Pan-Islamism policy of 8
- Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) 17
- deposition of 8
  - Islamic law manuals destroyed by 100
  - Pan-Islamist policy of 8–9
  - Turkish nationalism suppressed by 134
- Abd ur Rahman bin Awf 129, 140
- Abu al-Kasim 71
- Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (r. 632–634)
- and Ali 117
  - election of 86
  - Karbala Massacre death of Husayn bin Ali 123
  - and Shia views of the caliphate 40, 118
  - and Umar I 75–76, 87, 117, 128, 140
- Abu Hanifa, Numan ibn Thabit, Imam
- al-Azam 124, 127
- Abu Musa al-Ashaari 118
- Abu Muslim Khurasani (700 ca–755) 79–80, 142
- Afghanistan
- Barmakids (Iranian family) from 80
  - Ismaili minorities in 126
  - Muslim government in 170
- al-Afghani, Jamal ad Din (1839–1897) 17–18
- Ağaoğlu, Ahmed (1869–1939) 50
- ahadith* on consulting the *ummah* 29
- Ahl al-Bayt* [Family of the Prophet] 118, 142
- Ahl as-Sunnah* or *Ehl-i Sünnnet* [Muslims who accept the caliphate of Abu Bakr] 138, 140, 141. *See also* Sunnism
- Ahmadîyya*, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's founding of 122
- Ahmed Agayef 51
- Ahmed Cevdet Pasha (1822–1895) 27
- Ahmed ibn Tulun 129
- Ahmed Mithat Efendi (1844–1912) 27
- Ahmed Naim. *See* Baban, Ahmed Naim
- Aisha (the Prophet's wife) 77
- Akarlı, Engin Deniz 8–9
- Akçura, Yusuf (1875–1935) 3, 50–51
- Ak Kemik* [White Bone] 111, 112
- Albania and Albanians 15, 21, 107, 134
- Mehmed Tahir Efendi (father of Mehmed Akif) 19
- Alexander the Great 57, 121
- Alexandrian School 70
- Ali abu Talib. *See* Ali ibn Abi Talib
- Ali al-Murtaza. *See* Ali ibn Abi Talib
- Ali ibn Abi Talib (r. 656–661) 129
- assassination of 118
  - hadith* on caliph selection of 86, 118
  - Ithna Asharis* [Twelvers] 119
  - Prophet Muhammad's selection of 118
  - and the six electors chosen by Umar I 117, 129, 140
- Ali ibn Abi Talib (r. 656–661). *See also* *Shiat al-Ali*
- Ali, Kör (blind) 10–11
- al-Amin, Muhammad (r. 809–813) 81

- Anas, Malik bin (711–795)  
 Maliki School founded by 124  
*Muwatta* by 64
- Anatolian provinces. *See* Kurdistan
- Ancient Greece  
 cultural influence of 42, 79, 98, 99, 101, 105  
 and democracy 96–99, 103  
 failure of democratic regime of 99  
 social castes of 111  
 and statehood formation 96, 103
- Ancient Rome, cultural influence of 79, 106, 107
- al-Andalus. *See* Spain
- Ansar* (Medinese helpers) 40, 63, 86, 117
- Aristotle 102
- Armenians  
 eastern Anatolia settlement of 149, 151  
 massacre of 151  
 and nationalism 107, 134
- Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938) 45, 55, 130, 134–135  
 Sabri's criticism of 48–49
- Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938). *See also* Kemalists
- Aws (Arab tribe) 63
- Ayni, Mehmed Ali (1868–1945) 95–96  
*Demokrasi Nedir* (What is Democracy) 96–136
- Baban, Ahmed Naim (1872–1934) 14–15, 20
- İslam'da Dava-yı Kavmiyet* (Ethnicity in Islam) 15, 59–64
- Baghdad, Abbasid Caliphate established by Iranian Buyids 129
- Baibars (r. 1260–1277) 130
- Banu Hashim [the Prophet's clan] 86, 128
- Barmakids 80
- Batinis 82
- Beyan ül Hak* (The Statement of Truth) 11, 14, 15, 36, 44, 45
- Beyazid Mosque 10, 172
- Bible  
 Muhammad in 121–122  
 New Testament 33–34  
 Old Testament 34
- al-Muktefi Billah 71
- Bitlisi, Idris (1452–1520) 112
- Bosnia-Herzegovina 9
- Britain  
 British Foreign Office 149, 150  
 as a colonial power 24, 55, 107, 122, 170  
 as a combination of nation states 105  
 democracy 100
- Britain. *See also* Europe
- Brunn, Malthe 179, 180
- Buddhism 105  
 Islam in Japan disguised as 25
- Buyids (934–1062ca)  
 Abbasid Caliphate established by 129  
 Seljuk Turk defeat of 81, 88, 129
- Byzantium 4, 70, 77, 78, 127  
 Heraclius 121  
 and the Ottoman sultanate 131, 135
- caliphate  
 caliphs viewed as state officials 92  
*hadith* on caliph selection 40, 86, 140–141  
*hadith* on caliph selection of Ali 86, 118  
*hadith* on the thirty year duration of 122, 140, 141  
 imamate separated from 118  
 Mehmed Seyyid on 137–146  
 sultanate separation from 183  
 Sunni Schools of Law requirements of 141–142  
 Turkish National Assembly's abolition of 131
- caliphate. *See also* Abbasid Caliphate; Fatimid Caliphate; Rashidun [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] (632–661); Umayyad caliphate
- Çelebizâde, Mehmed Seyyid (1873–1925) 16, 137–146  
*Hilâfetin Mahiyet-i Şeriyesi* (The legal Character of the Caliphate) 137–146
- Cemiyet-i İttihad-i İslamiye* (Islamic Union Association) 11, 44  
*Beyan ül Hak* (The Statement of Truth) periodical of 11, 14, 15, 36, 44, 45
- Cemiyet-i Müderissin* (Society of Islamic Scholars) 36
- Cevdet, Dr. Abdullah (1869–1932) 5
- Chavannes, Édouard 115–116

- China  
 scientific knowledge and culture  
 of 67, 106, 116, 155  
 and the Turks in pre-Islamic Times 4,  
 115–116
- Christian-Shamanistic Turkic Yakuts of  
 Siberia 61
- Circasians 21, 60, 88, 89
- civilization, *medeniyet-i kamile* (mature  
 civilization) 32–33
- civilization. *See also* Muslim civilization—de-  
 cline of; Western civilization
- colonialism  
 Ahmediyya sect as a political instrument  
 of 122  
 and European imperialism Muslim  
 Spain 22, 26, 106  
 and European subjugation of Muslim  
 empires 1
- Committee of Union and Progress. *See* İttihad  
 ve Terakki Firkasi
- Constitution of 1876  
 criticism of 10, 11, 12–13, 149, 162–163  
 and the power of the sultan 12–13, 159  
 quranic principles enshrined in 14–15  
 restoration of 9, 29–30
- Constitution of 1908  
 declaration of 52  
 Islamic fundamental laws in 178  
 nationalist activities 134
- Constitution of 1908. *See also* Second  
 Constitutional Period (1908–1920)
- Constitution of Midhat Pasha. *See* Constitu-  
 tion of 1876
- CUP. *See* İttihad ve Terakki Firkasi (Commit-  
 tee of Union and Progress)
- Cyrus the Great (r. 559–530 BC) 120
- Dar-ul Hikmet-ul İslamiye* (Islamic Univer-  
 sity) 19, 44, 55, 172
- Darülfünûn (university) 19, 27, 59, 95  
 Divinity School at 36, 65  
 Law School at 133, 137
- democracy  
 in Ancient Greece 96–99, 101–102  
*Demokrasi Nedir* (Ayni) 96–136  
 and Medieval Muslim thinkers 99–100  
 Müteferrika on 100
- Ottoman political system as a harbinger  
 of 7
- Democratic Party of the Republic of  
 Turkey 55, 65
- devshirme* [converts] 64, 112
- education. *See* Darülfünûn (university);  
 Islamic education system; *Maarif*  
*Nezareti* [Ministry of Education];  
*medreses*; science (*ilm*)
- Egypt  
 Abbasid Caliphate in 88, 129, 130, 147  
 Baibars (r. 1260–1277) 130  
 caliphate issues understood by scholars  
 of 142–143  
 cultural influence of 78–79  
 and the Fatimid Caliphate 129  
 Abbas Halim Pasha 20, 23, 147–148, 173  
 Ismail Pasha (r. 1863–1879) 147  
 Muhammad Ali Pasha (r. 1805–1848) 3,  
 137  
 rule of Ahsid Bey sic (Ikshid) 129
- ehl-i kufr* [unbelievers] 41
- Elmalılı, Hamdi Efendi (1878–1942) 16–17,  
 172–173
- Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Makaleler, Din*  
*Felsefe, Siyaset Hukuk* 173–184
- Enderun* [Palace School] 113
- Engelhardt, E. 179, 181, 183
- Ersoy, Mehmed Akif (1873–1936) 19–20  
 “Say ve Amelin Nazar-i İslamdaki  
 Yeri” 19, 21–35  
 Turkish national anthem penned  
 by 20
- ethnicity  
 and assimilation 105–106  
*Mawali* (non-Arab Muslims) 104, 111,  
 112
- ethnic nationalism  
 Ahmed Naim on 15, 60  
*Jahiliyya* period tribalism 60  
*kavim* [ethic groups] 104, 105  
 Prophet Muhammad on 21–22, 63  
 and social castes 111–112
- ethnic nationalism. *See also* Turanism;  
 Turkish nationalism; Turkism;  
 Turkist-Islamists

- Europe  
 Ahmadiyya mosques in 122  
 Akif on 22–24  
 as a combination of nation states 105  
 diverse languages in 103  
 Hilmi's criticism of 166–171  
 Muslim subjects living in 170–171  
*Rumeli* [European lands of the Ottoman Empire] 54, 58, 62, 148  
 Europe. *See also* Britain; colonialism; feudal system; France; French thinkers; Germany; Western civilization; Western religious values
- family law  
 during the Second Constitutional Period 10  
 Islamic 31–32  
 in the new Turkish Republic 131–132  
 Ottoman Family Law of 1917 (*Hukuk-u Aile Karamamesi*) 137  
*talaq* (divorce in Islamic law) 31–32  
 al-Farabi, Abu Nasr Muhammad (870–950) 69, 71, 72, 99  
 German adaptation of *Medinat-ul Fazila* 99  
 Farah, Caesar 8, 9  
 Fatih Mosque 27, 36, 44  
 Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt (973–1171) 129  
 Al-Azhar University endowed by 71  
 formation of 129  
 rule over Egypt established 125, 129  
*fatwa* [non-binding legal opinion]  
 allowing the publication of books 133  
 condemning the *Kuva-yi Milliye* (Nationalist Resistance Forces) 55  
 required for declaring war and peace making 132–133  
 and *ulema* discussions 76  
 Fazl ibn Sahl Serahsi 80–81  
 feudal system  
 in Europe vs. the Ottoman land system 103–104, 110, 112, 154, 162  
 and *Tanzimat* period reforms 181–184  
 and *Yurtluk ve Ocaklık* (estates and domains) 112–113  
 feudal system. *See also* Ottoman land system; social classes
- fiqh*. *See* Islamic jurisprudence
- France  
 Charles IX 135, 136  
 as a colonial power 105  
 French Revolution 12  
 Mehmed V's call for *jihād* against 130–132  
 nationhood of 103–104, 114–115  
 Ottoman Empire capitulations granted to 136  
 France. *See also* French thinkers; Western civilization  
 French thinkers  
 on Pan-Islamism 8  
 on Pan-Slavism 114  
 and Turcology 3  
 French thinkers. *See also* Fustel de Coulanges; Guignes; Locke; Montesquieu; Renan; Voltaire  
 Fustel de Coulanges, Numa Denis 114–115
- al-Gazali, Abu Hamid Muhammad (1058–1111) 72  
 Genghis Khan (r.1204–1227) 62, 88, 105–106, 111
- Germany  
*Medinat-ul Fazila* (the Ideal City) available in translation in 99  
 nationhood of 104, 114  
 and the Ottoman Empire 150–151  
 Germany. *See also* Europe; Western civilization  
 Gökalp, Ziya (1876–1924)  
 and Mehmed Ayni 95  
 theories of Turkish nationalism 3–4, 50  
 Göktürk Empire (552–744) 115–116  
 Golden Horde 63
- Greece  
 anti-Kemalist newspaper published by Sabri in 45  
 center of national interests of 169  
 Greece. *See also* Ancient Greece  
 Guignes, Joseph de 3  
*Gulat-i Shia* [Extreme Shia Islam] 119  
 Günaltay, Mehmed Şemseddin (1883–1961) 65–66  
*Hurafetten Hakikate* (From Superstition to Truth) 74–83

- and *İslam Mecmuası* 65  
 and progressive Islam 11  
 and Turkism 17  
*Zulmetten Nura* (From Darkness to Light) 66–74
- hadith* (transmitted sayings of the Prophet Muhammad)  
 al-Bukhari's collection of 59, 91, 93, 94  
 on the caliphate's thirty year duration 122, 140, 141  
 on caliph selection 40, 86, 140–141  
 on caliph selection of Ali 86, 118  
 on the demise of the caliphate (reported by Abu Abd er-Rahman Sefine) 122  
 on equality 29, 63  
 forbidding Muslims from resembling non-Muslims 41  
 forbidding tribalism 63  
 on imams from the Quraysh 40  
 interpretation and modern innovations 31–32, 41  
 and Islamic jurisprudence 176  
 and *medreses* studies 133  
 on military service 94  
 on *mujeddid* [religious reformer] appearance 122  
 on pride in pagan ancestry 64  
 printing of books of 133  
 reported by Tirmizi from Sehl Ibn Saad 46  
*sahih* (authentic *hadith*) 139  
 science (*ilm*) study encouraged by 143  
 on worldly life 68
- hadith* (transmitted sayings of the Prophet Muhammad). *See also sharia* laws
- hajj* [pilgrimage]  
 and caravans robbed by Bedouins 75  
 exchange of ideas during 71  
 and Islamic spirituality 177  
 of Prophet Muhammad 75, 77
- Hak-Dini, Diyanat-i Hakka* (rightful religion) 32–33
- Abbas Halim Pasha 20, 23, 147–148, 173  
 Said Halim Pasha (1865–1921) 3–4, 8, 12–13, 147–164  
 on the decline of the Islamic world 3–4, 17
- essays on Muslim Society 152–160  
 and Grand Vizierate 3, 27, 148–149, 150, 152  
 “Islamization” essay 164  
 “Political Crisis” essay 161–163  
 on political parties 12–13
- Hamdullah Suphi. *See* Tanriöver
- Hamidian Regime, collapse of 1
- Hanafi School  
 caliphate selection views of 141, 142, 143  
 and the four Sunni Schools of law 141, 176  
 Hanafi jurists 142  
 Imam al-Azam Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit 124, 127  
 and Maturidi sect ideas 124  
 and the Seljuk Sultans 125
- Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad (780–855), and Wahhabiyya ideology 2–3
- Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad (780–855). *See also* Hanbali School
- Hanbali School  
 caliphate selection views of 143  
 Ibn Taymiyyah 2, 3, 141
- Al-Haramain* (Two Holy Places of Islam). *See* Mecca; Medina
- Hasan bin Ali (625–670) 79, 118
- Hayreddin Pasha, Barbaros (1478–1546) 100, 113
- Heraclius (Byzantine Emperor) (r. 610–641) 121
- hereditary succession  
 of the Abbasid Caliphate 87–88  
 primogeniture as a base 147
- Herod (king) (74 BC–4 AD) 121
- Herodotus (ca 484–425 BC) 98
- Hijra* [migration to Medina] 41
- Ahmet Hilmi, Şehbenderzade (1865–1914) 16–17, 165–166  
*Yürminci Asyırda Alem-i İslam ve Avrupa—Müslümanlara Siyaset Rehberi* 166–171
- Hülegü Khan (r. 1256–1265) 62, 88
- Hürriyet ve İtilaf* (Liberal Entente) 44
- Husayn bin Ali (626–680) 118, 119  
 martyrdom of 122–123  
*Tevvabun* Party supporters of 123

- Hüseyin Avni Pasha (1820–1876) 8, 149  
 Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha 149
- Ibn Humam 142  
 Ibn Ziyad 123
- İbrahim Hakki Pasha (1863–1918), cabinet of 27
- Ibrahim ibn al-Mahdi 87  
*ijtihad* [process of legal reasoning]  
 legal decisions based on the Quran and *hadith* compared with 176  
 necessity of 73–74  
 teaching in Medina led by Ali 76
- Ibmiye* [men of science], Seyfiye [men of the sword] contrasted with 112
- Imam Ismail (721–755 AD) 125
- Imamiyye* 119
- Ithna Asharis* [Twelvers] 119, 138
- Imam Malik. *See* Anas, Malik bin
- immorality  
 as an aspect of Western civilization 42–43  
*hadith* forbidding Muslims from resembling of *ehl-i fiska* [immoral people] 41  
 of modern Islamic states 24–25
- India  
 Ahmadiyah Sect in 122  
 caste system of 111–112  
 cultural influence of 79  
 Ismaili minorities in 126
- Iran  
 Barmakids 80  
 cultural influence of 79  
 Safavids (1501–1736) 73, 81–82  
 Tahir ibn Husayn 80–81  
 and Zoroastrianism 79, 80–81, 82
- Iran. *See also* Persia
- Iraq  
 Battle of Nahrawan 118  
 caliphate of Abd al Malik 88  
 Kufa 118, 122, 123, 125
- Iraq. *See also* Buyids; Seljuk Empire
- İskilipli, Mehmed Atif (1876–1926) 36–43
- Islam  
*Ahl as-Sunnah* or *Ehl-i Sunnet* [Muslims who accept the caliphate of Abu Bakr] 138, 140, 141  
 and prohibitions [*al-amr bil Maruf wal nahy an al Münkar*] 29, 30, 34, 43, 92, 133  
 and *takwa* (piety) 46, 63, 85  
 and *Tanzimat* reforms 181–182
- Islamic civilization, Sufi role in 73
- Islamic education system  
*Dar-ul Hikmet-ul İslamiye* (Islamic University) 19, 44, 55, 172  
 decline of 144  
*Tanzimat* period reforms of 15  
 and women 30–31, 67
- Islamic education system. *See also* Darülfünûn (university); *Maarif Nezareti* [Ministry of Education]; *medreses*; science (*ilm*)
- Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*]  
 earning interest prohibited 133  
*Hülafehin Mahiyet-i Şeriyesi* (The legal Character of the Caliphate) (Mehmed Seyyid) 137–146  
 legal theory of. *See usul al fiqh*  
*Mejelle* law professorship of Musa Kazım 27  
 Ministry of Islamic Law [Şeriye Vekaleti] 133  
 and modern civilization 176–177  
 and the Quran 124, 176  
 and rights of the state 90–91
- Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*]. *See also* family law; *Şeyhülislam* (Chief Mufti); *sharia* laws; *usul al fiqh*
- Islamic modernism, non-Ottoman Islamist modernists 17
- Islamic modernism. *See also* modern society; Young Ottomans
- Islamism  
 of Günaltay 17  
 pro-Hamidian Islamist groups 10  
 and the roots of political Islam 1
- Islamization  
 and Islamic thinkers of the Second Constitutional Period 11–12  
 “Islamization” (Said Halim Pasha) 164  
 of Ottoman legislation 175–176, 178–179, 184
- Islamization. *See also* Islamism; Pan-Islam

- Ismail Hakki. *See* İzmirli İsmail Hakki (1868–1946)
- Ismailiyah 119, 125, 126, 138
- Israel, Jewish state established in Palestine 34, 120–121
- Ithna Asharis* [Twelvers], *Mahdi* beliefs of 119–120, 138
- İttihad-i Muhammedi Firkası* (Muhammedan Union) 10, 54
- İttihad ve Terakki Firkası (Committee of Union and Progress)  
criticism of 15, 16, 44, 134, 165  
and Günaltay 65  
and Said Halim Pasha as grand vizier of 3, 148–149, 152  
insurrection against 10  
and Talat Pasha 152  
uniforms for ministers of 132
- Izmirli İsmail Hakki (1868–1946)  
about 84  
ideas 85–94  
Islamist intellectuals of the Second Constitutional Period 16
- Ja'far al-Sadiq (699–765) 119, 125
- Jahiliyyah* period 3, 60, 63, 116
- Jesus of Nazareth 34, 121  
Ahmad's views of 122  
prophet announced in the gospels of four apostles of 121  
Quranic story of 122
- Jews  
global community of the Jewish nation 102–103  
and Muslims with similar dress and customs 41  
and Palestine 34, 120–121
- jihad* [holy war] 85, 152  
against ignorance and poverty 57, 68  
as a duty 54  
and Mehmed V, 130
- jurisprudence. *See* *ijtihad*; Islamic jurisprudence; *sharia* laws; *usul al fiqh*
- Kaaba* 62, 87, 130
- kanun (promulgated sultanic law) 72
- Kanunname* [Regulation] of Ayni Ali Efendi 113
- Kara Kemik* [Black Bone] 111, 112
- Karbala Massacre 122
- Karpat Kemal 1–2, 9
- kavim* [ethnic group] 104, 105
- Kemalists, Turkish Historical Thesis of 16, 65, 96
- Kemalists Westernizing reforms 15–16, 20  
criticized by Mehmed Akif 20  
criticized by Mehmed Atif 15–16, 36–37  
criticized by Sabri 45, 48–49, 50, 51–52
- Kemal, Namik (1840–1888)  
European liberal ideas expressed in  
Islamic discourse by 5–7  
political ideas of 7–8  
*Tanzimat* reforms criticized by 11
- Kharijites  
and the Battle of Nahrawan 118  
and caliph selection 85, 86, 117–118, 128  
Ibadi branch of 118  
al-Mahdi' suppression of 127
- Khazraj* (Arab tribe) 63
- Khokand [Central Asia], Ismaili minorities in 126
- al-Kindi, Abu Yusuf Yaqub (801–873) 69, 72, 72
- King Herod. *See* Herod
- Koloğlu, Orhan 8
- Kör Ali 9–10
- Kufa (in Iraq) 118, 122, 123, 125
- Kurdistan (Anatolian provinces)  
and Baban 14–15  
*Medrese-tül-Zehra* (Anatolian university in Van) 53, 54  
medresses of 15, 53  
and Said-i Nursi 15, 53, 55, 56  
scholarly views of caliphate issues in 142–143  
*Yurtluk* privileges granted by Selim I 112–113
- Kürd Neşr-i Marif Cemiyeti* (Kurdish Educational Publication Society) 55
- Kurish Beys 113, 113
- Kurultay* [Assembly] 111
- Landau, Jacob 8, 9

- law. *See* family law; Islamic jurisprudence;  
*Mufti* (legal advisor in Islamic law);  
*sharia* laws
- Le Bon, Gustave (1841–1931) 42, 183
- legal theory. *See usul al fiqh*
- Locke, John 6
- Maarif Nezareti* [Ministry of Education]  
 and Ahmed Naim Baban 59  
 control of the *medrese* system by 178  
 and Mehmed Ayni 95
- Maddiyun* (materialists) 35
- al-Mahdi, Muhammad ibn Mansur (Caliph  
 al-Mahdi) 127
- Mahdi* [the twelfth and final imam]  
 and Jesus 120, 122  
 Twelver Shia belief in 119–120, 138
- Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839) 7, 180
- Mahmud Şevket Pasha 36, 149, 150, 180
- Maliki School, caliphate selection views  
 of 141, 143
- Mamluk rule 88, 146  
 Mamluk sultan Baibars (r. 1260–  
 1277) 130  
 and Selim I 112–113, 135–136
- al-Mamun, Abu Jafar Abdallah (r. 813–  
 833) 70, 80–81, 127
- al-Mansur, Abu Jafar Abdallah (r. 754–  
 774) 70, 127
- Marwan I (r. 684–685) 78, 88
- Maturidi sect 124
- Mawali*. *See* non-Arab Muslims
- Al-Mawardi (974–1058) 99
- Mecca, Turan viewed as 62
- Mecca. *See also hajj* [pilgrimage]; Mecca and  
 Medina
- Mecca and Medina  
 Islamic introduction of science and  
 civilization to 76  
 and Muawiyah 122  
 Sultan Selim I's protection of 88–89,  
 130
- medeniyet-i kamile* (mature civiliza-  
 tion) 32–33
- Medina 122  
*Ansar* (Medinese helpers) 40, 63, 86,  
 117  
*Hijira* migration 41
- as one of the Two Holy Places of Is-  
 lam 88–89, 130
- Medina. *See also* Mecca and Medina
- medreses* (institutions)  
 of the Beyazid Mosque 172  
 Hanbaliyya Madrasa 2  
 Sukkariyya Madrasa 2  
 of Süleymaniye 65
- medreses* instructors  
 Efendi as 16  
 Günaltay as 65  
 Hamidi's teaching at *Medresetul*  
*Mutehassin* 172  
 Mehmed Akif Ersoy as 19  
 Mehmed Atif (İskilipli) as 36  
 Mehmed Ayni's position at *Medrese-tul*  
*İrşad* 95–96  
 Said-i Nursi as 55
- medrese* system 172  
 closure of criticized 173  
 deterioration of 72  
*hadith* study excluded from 144  
 Hakkr's studies at 84  
 invention of 144  
 Islamic law manuals banned from the  
 curriculum of 100, 133
- Maarif Nezareti* [Ministry of Education]  
 control over 178  
 and modern reforms 14  
 and modern schools 56–57  
 Said-i Nursi's ideas about 56–57  
 Said-i Nursi's schooling at 15, 53, 55  
 Ottoman state establishment of 70,  
 178  
 and the Sufi Order 73  
 and Turkish national identity 116
- Medreset-ül Kuzat* (religious law school for  
 judges) 36
- Mehmed Akif. *See* Ersoy, Mehmed Akif  
 (1873–1936)
- Mehmed Atif (İskilipli) 15–16, 36–43  
*Medeniyeti Şeriye ve Terakkiyat-ı Diniye*  
 (The Civilization of the Sharia and  
 Religious Progress) 37–43
- Mehmed II (the Conqueror) (r. 1451–  
 1481) 180
- Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687) 122
- Mehmed Şemseddin. *See* Günaltay

- Mehmed v (Resad) (r. 1909–1918) 54,  
130–131, 149
- Mehmed vi (Vahidedin) (r. 1918–1922) 28,  
47, 48–49
- Melik-Shah (r. 1072–1092) 109  
*Siyasatname* [the book of politics]  
of 109
- Meşihat [Office of the *Şeyhülislam*] 177,  
178–179, 183–184. *See also Şeyhülislam*
- Midhat Pasha (1822–1884) 163
- military  
absolutism of rule of 180  
*fatwa* required for declaring war and peace  
making 132–133  
*hadith* on military service 94  
Said-i Nursi's speech to rebel  
troops 54  
Seyfiye [men of the sword] vs. İlmiye [men  
of science] 112  
social classification of soldiers [*ehl-i*  
*kiliç*] 102  
*timar* [state-owned military lands] 112,  
113  
and tribalism 63  
women's participation in activities  
of 77
- military. *See also jihad* [holy war]
- millet* (nations)  
censored by Abdülhamid II 134  
and *ummah* (Islamic community) 3,  
104, 144–145
- Ministry of Education. *See Maarif Nezareti*
- Mirza Ghulam Ahmad 122
- Modernist-Islamist intellectuals, and *Strat-i*  
*Müstakim* 11, 15, 19, 36, 65, 84
- modern society  
and *hadith* interpretation 31–32, 41  
and the Quran 12  
and *sharia* laws 41, 176
- modern society. *See also* Islamic modernism
- Montesquieu, Charles Louis de Secondat  
(1689–1755) 6, 7–8, 11
- Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (r. 661–680)  
and Ali ibn Abi Talib 117–118, 129  
caliphate of 122–123  
greeted as “the employee” by Abu Muslim  
al-Halani 92
- hereditary caliphate instituted by 79,  
87
- Yazid (son and successor of) 79, 87,  
122–123, 129
- mufti* (legal advisor in Islamic law) 178.  
*See also Şeyhülislam* (Chief *Mufti*)
- Muhajirin* (Meccan emigrants) 40, 63,  
86, 117
- Muhammadan Union. *See İttihad-i Muham-*  
*medi Fırkası*
- mujtehid* [Islamic legal scholars] 40, 41,  
82  
caliph required to be a 141
- Murad III (r. 1574–1595) 136
- Murad v (r. 30 May–31 August 1876) 8
- Şeyhülislam* Musa Kazım Efendi (1858–  
1920) 14, 27–28  
*Külliyyat* 28–35
- Muslim brotherhood 58  
and the *hadith* reported by Abu Hureyra  
God 61
- Musa Kazım's views of 14
- Ottomanism 9, 56–57, 169–170  
and the Pan-Islamism of Abdülha-  
mid 8–9
- Quran on 21, 38, 60, 63–64  
and Turkish identity 60–62
- Muslim brotherhood. *See also* Pan-Islamism;  
*ummah* (Islamic community)
- Muslim civilization—decline of  
causes of 143–144  
and military rule 180  
and nationalism 4, 22, 25  
and non-Islamic values 17, 24–25, 160  
revivalist movements as a response  
to 1–3  
and the status of women in Islam 5
- Mustafa Kemal. *See* Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal  
al-Mutasim, Abu Ishaq Abbas (r. 833–  
842) 81
- al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861) 127–128
- al-Mutawakkil III (r. 1508–1517) 88, 130
- Müteferrika, Ibrahim (1674–1745) 100
- Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha (1811–  
1882) 8
- Nabuchadnezzar (r. 605–562 BC) 120

- Najd (Central Arabia)  
 caliphate issues understood by scholars  
 of 142–143  
 Hanbali school in 125  
 popular Islam in 2  
 Nasawi, Imam Nejmeddin Ömer 143  
 Nasrullah Mosque 19  
 nationalism  
 and ethnic consciousness 3–4, 14, 21  
 and feudalism 103–104, 110  
*hars* (national culture) 4  
 and Islam 21–22  
 Mehmed Ali Ayni on 102–110  
 Pan-Slavism 114  
 in pre-Islamic times 114–116  
 nationalism. *See also* Turkish nationalism  
*nesih* (abrogation) 34  
 New Testament 33–34  
 New Turkey  
 citizenship in 133–134  
 family law in 131–132  
 nationalism in 135–136  
 secularism in 132–133  
 and the Turkish Historical Thesis 16,  
 65, 96  
 women's participation in the social life  
 of 132  
 Nizam al-Mülk (1018–1092) 109, 126  
 Non-Arab Muslims (*Mawali*)  
 discrimination against 104, 112  
*hadith* on equal rights of 63  
 Ismailis in India 126  
*Shu'ubiyya* formed by 112  
 Said-i Nursi (1876–1960) 53–56  
 and the 31 March Incident 54  
 and Kurdistan 15, 53–55, 56  
 progressive ideas of 15, 36  
*Risale-i Nur* 55  
 selected writings 56–58  
 Oguz Khan 62  
 Oguz Turks 111, 112  
 Old Testament 34  
 Ömer Nasawi, Imam Nejmeddin 143  
 Ottoman Empire  
 and Byzantium 131, 135  
 capitulations granted by  
 Süleyman I 136  
 and Hanafism 124, 125  
 Islamization of Ottoman legisla-  
 tion 175–176, 178–179, 184  
 limitation of political rights during 112  
 and Persian cultural domination 108  
 printing of Quranic exegesis prohibited  
 during 133  
 reforms of Mahmud II, 7, 180  
*Rumeli* [European lands] of 54, 58, 62,  
 148  
*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (Ottoman secret  
 service) 19, 54  
 Two Holy Places of Islam protected  
 by 88–89  
 Ottoman Empire. *See also* Mehmed II; Porte  
 bureaucracy; Selim I; Talat Pasha;  
*Tanzimat* period reforms  
 Ottomanism 1, 6, 9, 56–57, 169–170  
 Ottoman land system  
 feudal system in Europe compared  
 with 103–104, 110, 112, 154, 162  
*timar* and *zeamat* system of 103–104,  
 110, 112, 113  
 Palestine 130  
 and the Fatimid Caliphate 125  
 Jewish state established in 34, 120–121  
 religious traditions of 78, 124  
 trade 68  
 Pan-Germanism 107, 114  
 Pan-Islamism  
 Abduh's ideas 17–18  
 Abdülhamid's policy of 8–9  
 al-Afgani's ideas 17  
*Cemiyet-i İttihad-i İslamiye* (Islamic Union  
 Association) 44  
 and the Hamidian Regime 8  
*İttihad-i İslam* (Islamic Union) published  
 by Hilmi 165  
 and liberty and progress 160  
 pan-Turanian opposition to 50–51  
 Sultan Abdülaziz's policy of 8  
 Western criticism of 160  
 Pan-Islamism. *See also* Islamism  
 Pan-Ottomanism. *See* Ottomanism  
 Pan-Slavism, Plekhanov, Georgji, on  
*Narodnost* 114  
 Pan-Turkism. *See* Turanism

- Pan-Turkist ideology. *See* Turanism
- Persia  
 and the Buyids 81  
 cultural domination of 107, 108  
 Daylamite Iranians 40, 109  
 invasion of Ancient Greece 97
- Persia. *See also* Iran
- piety (*takwa*) 46, 63, 85
- pilgrimage to Mecca. *See* *hajj*
- Plato (ca 423–348 BC) 57, 98, 99, 101–102
- Plekhanov, Georgij, on *Narodnost* 114
- polygamy  
 Musa Kazim on 14, 31–32  
 prohibited in New Turkey 131–132
- popular Islam  
 in central Arabia [Najd] 2  
 folk Islam among Kurds in eastern  
 Anatolia 15  
 as a political force 1–2, 9–10
- popular Islam. *See also* Islamism; Wahhabiyya
- populism  
 ethnic populism of ancient Turks 109,  
 111  
 and Oghuz society 111
- Porte bureaucracy  
 and the Constitution of 1876 12, 159  
 Englehardt's diplomatic service in 179  
 European domination of 5, 150–151  
 and the First World War 150–151  
 Hüseyin Avni Pasha 8, 149  
 Mütercim Mehmed Rüşdi Pasha (1811–  
 1882) 8  
 Süleyman Pasha (1838–1892) 8, 53
- Prophet Muhammad  
 commercial activities encouraged  
 by 68  
 communication of the Quran by 38,  
 126–127  
 conversation with Muaz b. Jabal (governor  
 of Yemen) 73–74  
 as the messiah prophesized by Jesus's  
 apostles 121  
 as a moral example 25, 58  
*mushawara* (consultation) practice  
 of 29  
 on nationalism/regionalism 21–22, 63  
 rise of science supported by 143  
 silence on caliphate issues of 140
- Prophet Muhammad. *See also* *hadith*; *sunnah*  
 (acts and deeds) of the Prophet
- Prud'hon, Pierre-Paul 103
- al-Qaim Billah Abbasid Caliph (r. 1031–  
 1075) 109, 126
- Qaramita 125, 129
- Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr  
 as-Siddiq 87, 123
- Quran  
 afterworld [*uhreviye*] discussed in 28,  
 38  
 and the caliphate 40, 85, 138–139,  
 140–141  
 and civil law 181, 182  
 and the Constitution of 1876 14  
 and the constitution of the Ottoman  
 Empire 179–180  
 creation of 126–127  
 on despotic government 184  
 divergences of views embraced by 176  
 Hanbali School strictness toward 124  
 and Islamic jurisprudence 124, 176  
 Ismaili understanding of 126, 138  
 Jesus in 122  
 Jews refusal of Muhammad in 121  
 justice and equity of 29  
 on man's insignificance 46  
 memorization of 44, 84  
 and modern society 12, 92–93  
 on Muslim brotherhood 21, 38, 60,  
 63–64  
 and the Mu'tazilah creed 127  
 natural and divine laws covered in 176  
 pages on the pikes of Muawiyah's  
 soldiers 117  
 and popular Islam 2  
 representative government as a concept  
 in 6  
 science and knowledge praised in 143  
 shared by Sunnis and Shiites 82  
 supremacy of 30, 38  
 on *talaq* (divorce) 31  
 translations by Mehmed Akif 20  
 translations by the Ahmadiyya 122  
 worldly affairs [*dünyevîye*] discussed  
 in 29

- Quran chapters  
 2. *Al-Baqarah*:  
   (24) Conversation between God and Abraham 139, 141–142  
   (143) on government responsibility 92  
   (213) on revelations by the prophets 33  
   (verse 243) commentary by Abduh on 18  
 3. *Ali Imran*:  
   (103) on social unity 91  
   (104) on principles of government 92  
   (159) on justice and equity toward non-Muslims 29  
   (159) on the temptations of disbelievers 46  
 4. *Nisaa*:  
   (34) on the role of husbands 31  
   (58) on political duties and obligations 89  
   (59) on political duties and obligations 93, 139  
 5. *Ma'idah*:  
   (8) on being just 85  
 8. *Anfal*:  
   (60) on facing enemies 91  
 23. *Al-Mu'minun*:  
   (71) on truth 49  
 38. *Sad*:  
   (26) David commanded to dispense justice in 139  
 39. *Zumar*:  
   (9) on science 90  
 42. *Shura*:  
   (13) on solidarity 85–86  
   (38) on principles of government 92, 138  
 58. *Mujadila*: (11) on knowledge 80  
 Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*)  
   by Hamdi Efendi 16–17, 173  
   *medrese* curriculum exclusion of 144  
   by Musa Kazim 27  
   Ottoman Empire prohibition against printing of 133  
   *Tafsir al-Kashshaaf* 142  
 Qurayshis  
   and caliph selection 4, 85–86, 117–118  
   power and influence of 40  
   tribal solidarity [*asabiyet*] of 85–86  
 al-Rashid, Harun (r. 786–809) 70, 87, 127  
 Rashidun [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] (632–661) 1, 29  
   and disagreement in *ijtihad* 76  
   non-hereditary succession caliphate of 87  
   republican system similarities of 39  
   *sharia* laws followed by 39  
 Rashidun [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] (632–661). *See also* Abu Bakr; Ali; Umar I; Uthman  
 Rasid Rida (1865–1935) 17  
 al-Razi, Muhammad ibn Zakariya (854–925) 71  
 Renan, Ernest 103  
 Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*—CHP) 55, 65–66  
 Republic of Turkey 120  
   First Constitution of 16, 137  
   Günaltay as prime minister of 65–66  
   1950 elections 55, 65  
   Turkish Civil Code of 17, 137  
   Turkish national anthem penned by Mehmed Akif 20  
 Republic of Turkey. *See also* New Turkey  
 rightful religion (*Hak-Dini, Diyanat-i Hakka*) 32–33  
*Risale-i Nur* (Said-i Nursi) 55  
 Roman Law 133, 174  
 Rome 75  
   despotic emperors 122  
   rise and fall of 68  
   social caste in 111  
 Rome. *See also* Roman Law  
 Rousseau, Jean Jacques 6  
*Rumeli* [European lands of the Ottoman Empire] 54, 58, 62, 148  
 Rumi (d. 1273) (Mawlana Jalal ad-Din) 73  
 Ibn Rushd, Muhammad bin Ahmed (1126–1198) 24, 69, 72  
 Saad bin Ubada 86  
 Saad ibn Abi Waqqas 140  
 Sabahaddin, Prince (1877–1948) 10

- Hasan Sabbah (1050 ca–1124) 125–126, 138
- Sabbatai Zevi (1626–1676) 121–122
- Mustafa Sabri, *Şeyhülislam* (1869–1954) 14, 36, 44–45, 95  
*Hilafetin İlgasının Arka Planı* 47–52  
*Yeni İslam Müçtehdilerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi* 45–47
- Sadr Al-Sharia 142
- Safavids (1501–1736) 73, 81–82
- sahaba* [companions of the Prophet] 64, 128, 140
- Sasanian dynasty (224–640) 4, 75, 79, 80, 106
- science (*ilm*)  
 Abbasid Caliphate support of 71  
*İlmiye* [men of science] 112  
*Maddiyun* (materialists) 35  
 in Mecca and Medina introduced by Islam 76  
 Muslim nations neglect of 66–67  
 and the Quran 90, 143
- Second Constitutional Period (1908–1920)  
 and Islamization 10–12  
 and İzmirli İsmail Hakkı 16  
 and Said-i Nursi 15–16  
 partisans of Westernism during 5–6, 11–12  
 and Şehbenderzade Ahmet Hilmi 16–17  
 and traditional Islamists 13–14  
 and the Young Ottoman thinkers of the 1860s and 1870s 5, 17
- Second Constitutional Period (1908–1920). *See also* Constitution of 1908
- Selim I (r. 1512–1520) 88, 113, 135–136  
 defeat of Shiite Safavid ruler Shah Ismail 81–82  
 inauguration of 88–89, 130
- Selim III (r. 1789–1807) 180
- Seljuk Empire (1038–1157) 88  
 multi-ethnic army of 109  
 and Persian cultural domination 107, 108  
 rise of 81, 88, 129  
 separation of powers during 146, 178
- separation of powers  
 Abbasid Caliphate 130  
 Ahmed Naim on 64  
 Mamluks of Egypt 146  
 and Sabri's criticism of 45–47, 47–52  
 Seljuk Empire 146, 178  
 Shia views of 118  
 Suavi's views on 7–8  
 and *Tanzimat* period reforms 182–184  
 Umayyad Caliphate 88  
 and *ummah* (Islamic community) and *millet* (nations) 144–146  
 in the West 64, 145
- separation of powers. *See also Tanzimat* period reforms
- Seyfiye [men of the sword], İlmiye [men of science] contrasted with 112
- Şeyhülislam* (Chief *Mufti*)  
*fatwa* allowing the publication of books 133  
*fatwa* condemning the *Kuva-yi Milliye* (Nationalist Resistance Forces) 55  
 Meşihat (Office of) 177, 178–179, 183–184  
 as *qadi-al kudat* [chief judges] 178  
 and *Tanzimat* reforms 183
- Shafi'i School 124, 141, 142
- Shah Ismail (r.1501–1524) 82
- sharia* laws  
 and the caliphate 39, 40  
 equality of Muslims and non-Muslims in 176  
 forbidding Muslims to dress like a non-Muslim 41  
 and the Islamization of Ottoman legislation 175–176, 178–179, 184  
 justice and equity of 29, 85  
*Medeniyeti Şeriye ve Terakkiyat-i Diniye* (The Civilization of the Sharia and the Religious Progress) 37–43  
 and modern society 41, 176  
 Said Halim on the sovereignty of *sharia* 153, 157–158, 159  
 and Sunni Islam divergences 176  
 and *Tanzimat* reforms 133  
 and the Turkish Civil Code (Meccelle) 16, 17, 137
- sharia* laws. *See also hadith*; Islamic jurisprudence

- Shia Islam  
 and the Abbasid civil war 80–81  
 Batinis 82  
 and the Fatimid Caliphate 129  
 Jafari branch of in Iran 82  
 Qaramita 125, 129  
 regional differences of 155  
 and Sunnism tensions 81, 82, 129  
*Zaydiyyah* 118–119
- Shia Islam. *See also* Buyids; Shah Ismail
- Shiat al-Ali* [Party of Ali] 118, 129. *See also*  
 Ali ibn Abi Talib
- Shiism. *See* Shia Islam
- shura* [elective council]  
 and caliphate selection 86–87, 138–139  
 six electors chosen by Umar I 117, 129,  
 140
- shura* [elective council]. *See also* Quran  
 chapters, 42. *Shura*
- Shu'ubiyya* 112
- Ibn Sina, Abu Ali al-Husayn (980–  
 1037) 24, 69, 72
- Sirat-i Müstakim* (periodical)  
 Günaltay's articles in 65  
 Modernist-Islamist views in 11, 15, 19,  
 19, 36, 65, 84  
 "Say ve Amelin Nazar-ı İslamdaki Yeri"  
 (Mehmed Akif) 19, 21–35
- social classes  
 in Ancient Greece 101–102  
 Ottoman stratification of 102  
 in the Umayyad period 111  
 Western hereditary classes 12
- social classes. *See also* feudal system
- Solon 97
- Spain [al-Andalus]  
 and the Catholic Inquisition 144  
 Catholicism in 155  
 as a cultural and scholarly center 42,  
 71–72, 180  
 and European imperialism 22, 26, 106  
 invasion of Muslim lands by 144  
 last sultan of 26  
 Malikism in 124  
 nationhood of 104
- Spain [al-Andalus]. *See also* Umayyad  
 caliphate
- state and religion separation. *See* separation  
 of powers
- state and religion unity  
 and the Abbasid Caliphate 88  
 and the *Rashidun* caliphs 88  
 and the *Umayyad* caliphs 88
- Suavi, Ali (1839–1878) 5, 7, 11
- Sufi Order, and the *medresse* system 73
- Süleyman I (r. 1520–1566) 8, 72, 113, 136,  
 180
- Süleyman Bey 165
- Süleyman Nazif 95
- Süleyman Pasha (1838–1892) 8, 53
- sunnah* (acts and deeds) of the Prophet  
 and *ijtihad* 73–74, 76, 77  
 and Islamic government 85, 92–93,  
 173, 180  
 and Islamic jurisprudence 124, 141  
 reestablishment of 1, 127
- Sunnism  
*Ahl as-Sunnah* [Muslims who accept the  
 caliphate of Abu Bakr] 138, 140, 141  
 four schools of Islamic law of 124, 141,  
 176  
 Maturidi sect of 124  
 and the *Qadian* (in Lahore) 122  
 regional differences of 155  
 and Shia Islam tensions 81, 82, 129  
 and Tughril Beg 81, 129
- Sunnism. *See also* Hanafi School; Selim I
- Syria 68, 95  
 and Muawiyah 117  
 Muslim conquest of 75, 76–77, 106, 125  
 religious traditions of 78, 126
- Tafsir al-Kashshaaf* 142
- takwa* (piety) 46, 63, 85
- talaq* (divorce in Islamic law) 31, 131–132
- Talat Pasha  
 cabinet of 28, 95  
 as minister of the interior 151  
 Turcocentrist tendencies of 152
- Ta-lo-Pien 115
- Tanriöver, Hamdullah Suphi (1885–  
 1966) 50
- Tanzimat* period reforms 15  
 ineffectiveness of 183–184  
 and Midhat Pasha 163

- Second Constitutional Period reforms  
 contrasted with 4–5, 11–12  
 and the separation of state and religion 182–184  
 and *sharia* laws 133  
 underlying principles of 181–182  
 Westernizing intent of 11–12, 108, 181, 183–184
- taqlid* (following the established practice) 18
- taxation  
 of the citizens of Athens 97, 99  
 military service as a form of 94  
*Raiya* [tax-paying subject class] 112  
 and the six obligations of citizens 94  
 tax-farming [*iltizam*] system 113
- Ibn Taymiyyah, Takiyeddin Ahmed (1263–1328) 2, 3, 141
- Teali-i Islam Cemiyeti* (Society for the Elevation of Islam) 36
- Teceddüd* (Renovation) Party 65
- tesettür-u nisvan* (veiling of women) 14, 30
- Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (Ottoman secret service) 19, 54
- Tevvabun* Party 123  
 31 March Incident 36, 54
- Thomsen, V. 3
- Thucydides (ca 460–395 BC) 98
- timar* [state-owned military lands] 112, 113
- Tughril Beg (r.1038–1063) 81, 129
- Tulunids (868–905) 71  
 Ahmed ibn Tulun 129
- Turanism 50–51, 62, 134
- Turcology 3
- Turkey. *See* New Turkey; Republic of Turkey
- Turkish Historical Society 65, 84, 135
- Turkish Historical Thesis 16, 65, 96
- Turkish national anthem 20
- Turkish National Assembly  
 abolition of the caliphate 131  
 and Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi 17
- Turkish nationalism 3–4, 16, 104  
 in pre-Islamic times 115–116
- Turkish nationalism. *See also* nationalism; New Turkey
- Turkism  
 and the “grey wolf” issue 49–50  
 of Mehmed Şemseddin Günaltay 17  
 and Second Constitutional Period  
 ideological movements 1
- Turkist-Islamists 17, 60, 61–62, 64, 65
- Türk Ocağı* 65
- Two Holy Places of Islam [*Al-Haramain*—Mecca and Medina], and Sultan Selim I 88–89, 130
- Two Holy Places of Islam [*Al-Haramain*—Mecca and Medina]. *See also* Mecca; Mecca and Medina; Medina
- ulema* [Islamic scholars]  
 and caliph selection 85  
*fatwa* based on discussions among 76  
 as *Ilmiye* [men of science] 112  
 and *taqlid* (following the established practice) 18
- Ulug Beg (1394–1449) 69
- Umar bin Abdulaziz (r. 717–720) 87, 118
- Umar bin al-Khattab. *See* Umar I
- Umar bin Saad ibn Abi Waqqas 123
- Umar I (r.634–644)  
 Abu Bakr’s appointment of 87, 117, 128, 140  
 assassination of 78, 117, 129, 140  
 caliphate of 75–76, 78, 87, 118, 182  
 council of consultation presided over 75–76  
 election of 86  
 and the *Khulafa ar-Rashidun* [Rightly-Guided Caliphs] 140  
 six electors nominated 117, 129  
 son Abdullah 76, 87
- Umar II. *See* Umar bin Abdulaziz
- Umayyad caliphate (661–750) 129  
 Abd al Malik (r. 685–705) 88  
 Ali defamed by 118  
 as an ethnic state 104  
 and the martyrdom of Husayn 79, 123  
 Marwan I (r. 684–685) 78, 88  
 misrule of 77, 142  
 overthrow of 112  
 Umar bin Abdulaziz (r.717–720) 87, 118
- Umayyad Mosque 54

- ummah* (Islamic community)  
*église* [church religious community]  
 compared with 104  
*millet* (nations) compared with 3, 104,  
 144–145  
 and *mushawara* (consultation) by Prophet  
 Muhammad 29  
 and Turkish cultural revival 61–63
- ummah* (Islamic community). *See also*  
 Muslim brotherhood
- usul al fiqh* [legal theory for juristic interpre-  
 tation]  
 books printed on the subjects of 133  
 of the Hanafi School 124  
 study of 177  
 supremacy of 91  
 taught by Çelebizâde 137  
 taught by Hakkı 84  
 taught by Hamdi Efendi 172  
 and worldly matters 29
- usul al fiqh* [legal theory for juristic interpre-  
 tation]. *See also* Islamic jurisprudence
- Uthman (r. 644–656) 118  
 election of 86–87, 117, 129, 140  
 factionalism during reign of 77–78  
 martyrdom of 129, 140  
 and the six electors chosen by Umar  
 I 117, 129, 140
- Vahdeti, Derviş (1869–1909) 10  
 Vahideddin (Mehmed VI) (r. 1918–  
 1922) 28, 47, 48–49  
 Voltaire 104
- Wahhabiyya  
 emergence of 2–3  
 and the Two Holy Places 89  
 Wahhabiyya. *See also* popular Islam
- Western civilization  
 immorality of 42–43  
 Mustafa Sabri's criticism of 14, 45  
 needs of Muslim civilization contrasted  
 with 12–14  
 orientalizing process of 162–163  
 and the Turkish nation 3–4
- Western civilization. *See also* Europe; France;  
 French thinkers; Germany; Western  
 religious values
- Westernism (*Batıçılık*), during the Second  
 Constitutional Period 1, 4–5, 11–12
- Western religious values 24, 166  
 and the Christian union of the Middle  
 Ages 145  
 church/state separation in 64, 145  
*église* [church religious community]  
 compared with, *ummah* (Islamic  
 community) 104  
 praised 24
- Western religious values. *See also* *Tanzimat*  
 period reforms
- women  
 Aisha (the Prophet's wife) 77  
 education of 30–31, 67  
 equal rights of 5, 67, 77  
 and the New Turkey 131–132  
 and polygamy 14, 31–32, 131–132  
*talaq* (divorce) of 31, 131–132  
*tesettür-u nisvan* (veiling of wom-  
 en) 14, 30
- Xenophon (ca 430–454 BC) 98
- Yavuz Selim Mosque 84  
 Yazid (r. 680–683)  
 massacre of Husayn ordered by 79  
 Muawiyah succeeded by 79, 87,  
 122–123, 129
- Yazır, Elmalılı M. Hamdi. *See* Elmalılı, Hamdi  
 Efendi
- Yemen  
 Bedouin tribes settled in 75  
 caliphate issues understood by scholars  
 of 142–143  
 Ismaili minorities in 126  
 and Mehmed Ayni 95  
 Muaz b. Jebel (governor) 73–74  
*Zaydiyyah* in 119
- Yemin, *Sabyaneli* provinces conquered during  
 or after Selim I 113
- Young Ottomans  
 and Islamic modernism 5–6  
 and the statesmen of the Porte 8  
*Tanzimat* reforms criticised by 11  
 Ziya Pasha 5, 7, 11
- Young Ottomans. *See also* Kemal, Namık  
 Young Turk movement

- and Ahmed Agayef 51  
 criticism of 161  
 and Said Halim 3, 148  
 and pro-Hamidian Islamist groups 10  
 and Şehbenderzade Ahmet Hilmi 16–  
 17, 165  
 and Yusuf Akçura 50–51  
 Young Turk movement. *See also* Constitution  
 of 1908; İttihad ve Terakki Firkasi  
 Young Turk Revolution of 1908 16  
*Cemiyet-i Müderissin* (Society of Islamic  
 Scholars) 13  
 and ethnic nationalism 60  
 Zayd b. Ali Zayn al-Abidin (695–740) 119  
*Zaydiyyah* 118–119  
*zeamet* (state-owned land) 112, 113  
 Ziya Pasha (1825–1880) 5, 7, 11. *See also*  
 Young Ottomans  
 Zoroastrianism 79, 80–81, 82  
 Zoroaster (ca 660–583 BC) 82  
 al-Zubayr, Abd Allah ibn 88, 140